

Your editorial "*Homeless people need housing everywhere. Including down the street from your house.*" failed to include any objective data or arguments on why the Midvale site is not a suitable location for a low-barrier homeless shelter. The editorial not only failed to inform readers of the serious problems facing this project but also failed to point out why the project simply can't be built – according to the Mayor.

First and foremost, the project is inconsistent with the Mayor's own Executive Directive 1 (ED1). The Mayor could not have been clearer when she stated that shelters should, "in no instance" "be located in a single family or more restrictive zone." 2377 Midvale is on a single-family zoned property. This project is an attempt to place a homeless shelter on a single-family property. Why CM Yaroslavsky and Mayor Bass chose to pursue a project that violated the Mayor's own executive directive is a mystery. Maybe they didn't know. Maybe they didn't care.

Second, the parking lot upon which this shelter would be built is the life-blood of dozens of businesses that depend on it for customer parking and especially ADA parking. These businesses employ hundreds of people. In fact, one business is having difficulty getting a permit as the parking lot represented the only ADA parking spaces in the area.

Third, the shelter is not just "down the street." Dozens of families reside just feet from the proposed shelter which is literally next door to a single-family home.

It is troubling that the Times seems to indicate that homeless individuals need housing at all costs and at any cost to small businesses and local residents. The Times knows, or should know, that the world is not so black and white. Some projects are better than others. Some are too expensive and/or will cause too much collateral damage to be considered. Some are unlawful like the Midvale project.

There is no logic in placing a facility that will house people with varying degrees of psychiatric problems, substance abuse problems and criminal histories (the meaning of "low-barrier") just feet from kids and on a crucial parking lot.

The costs to small, local businesses combined with the potential safety issues for families should make this option a last resort, not a first choice. Actually, it isn't even a last resort as the project isn't consistent with state law, local law or the Mayor's own directive. Laws matter.

It is not "brave," but rather self-destructive and disruptive to propose a project when even the most basic and superficial analysis demonstrates that it is not eligible for such a shelter and will cause too much harm to too many people.

Finally, your editorial states that people "always think there is another spot for it better than near wherever they live" and then goes on to state with a factless certainty: "There isn't."

But there is, and if the Times had sought out opposing views, they would have found that the community, recognizing the need, put forward two separate options that would house far more people – just 0.7 miles away, still in CD5.

We ask the Times to do their homework before writing one-sided editorials that fail to capture even the most basic facts, even if such facts are inconvenient for the Times' desired outcome.