March 8, 2021

Metro Parks Tacoma

4702 South 19th Street

Tacoma, WA 98405

To the Metro Parks Tacoma Board and Staff,

On behalf of the Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness I am writing to thank you for responding so powerfully to the need for emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness. During the coldest days and nights of our Winter season, you opened the doors of two of your facilities to our neighbors in need. Our coalition is made up of service providers and concerned volunteers who see the plight of those living homeless, not as the result of poor choices, but rather the consequence of what happens when there are no options. When there are no resources, be it financial or family, the street sometimes becomes the only place for respite. Add in the worst pandemic in a century, and it is no wonder that the numbers multiply of those who find themselves in dire circumstances.

We believe in the dignity of all people, even those who are vulnerable, and without a voice. We rely on partnerships of like-minded folks who can help build the safety net for those in need. We are grateful that you stepped up to do the right thing, giving safe shelter to those who would otherwise suffer physical harm, or worse, by being exposed to the elements of the weather. We are proud of your leadership.

The Coalition recently committed to ending Street Homelessness throughout Pierce County by November 1, 2020. We hope to continue to work with you along with other community partners as we work together to find appropriate shelter options, be they Congregate Shelters, Safe Parking sites, Sanctioned Encampments or other models.

In grateful appreciation for your support of our entire community.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

Director of Special Projects

Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness