



Longfellow Whatever <longfellowwhatever@gmail.com>

My Statement on the Recent Gun Violence on Lake Street

1 message

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To: longfellowwhatever@gmail.com

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Council Member Jason Chavez

September 16, 2025

A message from Council Member Chavez

Dear neighbor,

I am writing this update regarding the senseless acts of gun violence on Lake Street. On Sunday, one person was killed and another was injured on the 1500 block of East Lake Street. Yesterday morning, there was a mass shooting near Lake Street and I-35W that left five people injured. Last night, there was another mass shooting at 27th and East Lake Street (Longfellow Encampment), where eight people were injured, four with potentially life-threatening injuries.

These acts of violence have no place in our society. Families, loved ones,

and neighbors should never have to experience this. It's important to recognize the humanity of our community, which has been rocked by gun violence. Unhoused individuals are human beings worthy of being supported, housed, and have been systemically failed by all levels of government.

[As I noted in my last newsletter](#), the City Council voted 6-4 to approve moving forward with a lawsuit against the property owner of the Longfellow Encampment at 27th and East Lake Street. My position was clear that instead of wasting time and money on a lawsuit, we should use those resources to move unsheltered residents into a navigation center or to another location that is safe and secure, both for those living at the encampment and neighbors who live in the area and the school next door.

We have seen a pattern under this administration when it comes to helping our unhoused neighbors. An encampment is formed, violence occurs, the encampment is removed, and the unhoused residents move to another location due to the fact there are insufficient shelter beds available. This is not a solution and it's not sustainable.

Here's what needs to happen:

- A commitment by the Mayor to work with the City Council to help establish a [Navigation Center](#), which is a government-sponsored center with both social services and beds meant to address unsheltered homelessness.
- An immediate deployment and consistent presence of violence interrupters to locations that have been rocked by gun violence.
- An immediate deployment of the [Medical Mobile Unit](#) to areas where displaced unhoused residents are located.
- A pathway to establish a South Minneapolis tiny home village with a Housing First approach.
- Collaboration with Hennepin County to help fund shelters, which are facing a major fiscal cliff. Service providers, mutual aid volunteers, and neighbors regularly report that after calling the County's shelter hotline, they learn that there are few, if

any, shelter beds available.

- Prioritizing the [Affordable Housing Trust Fund](#) for 30% AMI housing stock.
- Pass an ordinance that would enact regulations on components, possession, storage, and use of firearms that would go into effect immediately if the state legislature enacts a statute that gives cities local authority to enact gun control legislation.
- Adequately fund the Next Step Program, which provides immediate bedside support for victims of violence, like shootings and stabbings.
- Expand gun violence survivor services and fund a “Gun Violence Resiliency Needs Assessment” to identify gaps in service and develop strategies to address and prevent gun violence.

In the longer term, while the pace of progress is not as quick as I would like, I am continuing the work with City staff across multiple departments to develop a Safe Parking ordinance, inspired by [the Safe Bay program in Duluth](#); and a Safe Outdoor Space ordinance inspired by [a similar program in Denver](#). These two ordinances will make meaningful steps forward and help those who need them most, but there’s so much more we can do as a city. As we look at what else can be done, I am willing to work with anybody within or without City government to find solutions.

I am as frustrated as you all are with the confluence of epidemics facing our city. To my mind, solving them requires two things. First and foremost, we need to approach these issues with humanity. We need to remember that those who are most directly impacted are people too, and they need our support, our resources, and our action. Second, we need a vision and strategy that looks beyond removing an encampment and thinking only of how tomorrow will look. Offering temporary fixes to deep-seated problems is not how we improve the lives of our neighbors, housed and unhoused alike. It is my hope that the mayor will work with the Council to develop and implement the kind policies required in this moment.

Sincerely,

Jason Chavez

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