FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New Haven’s Response to Tent City Another Example of Mismanagement and Failure of Leadership; City Needs an Ambitious Pro-Homes Agenda

NEW HAVEN, CT - Liam Brennan released the following statement today regarding the city’s reaction to Tent City.

“Homelessness is a housing problem.” Brennan said today. “Choosing a cold winter morning to evict a homeless encampment three years after the city became aware of its existence is an example of leadership failure and unnecessarily cruel government mismanagement.”
New research has indicated that housing conditions are the greatest contributing factor to homeless rates in the United States.¹ The news of the destruction of the encampment came arrived on the same day as news of the failure of the city’s ADU policy to produce any affordable housing.

“The city needs an ambitious, pro-homes policy.” Brennan said. “The city also needs leaders who are going to be honest with the public about the scope of the problems that we face. In a city with a vacancy rate of less than 2%, we can expect to see more tent cities if we don’t take bold steps to create more housing that is affordable to residents.”

Brennan also cited the lack of vision in the city budget and the city’s approach to zoning as contributing factors to a potential increase in homelessness.

“As I have said before, a city’s values are found in its budget. The new budget proposed by City Hall adds 34 new positions to the government, none of which are in the woefully under-resourced housing inspection service. Addressing homelessness will require an attention to maintaining our current housing stock, while also incentivizing and creating new housing. We only see further deterioration of current housing conditions with the resources currently given to the Liveable City Initiative.”

“Moreover, we need to be laser-focused on updating our current zoning rules to allow for the creation of more housing. This is an urgent issue.”

In the weeks to come, Liam for New Haven will be releasing a budget template outlining improved budgetary priorities.

¹ See also “The Obvious Answer to Homelessness.” Also compare mental health rates by state with homelessness rates by state - e.g. Hawaii tops both mental health rates and homelessness rates; Alabama has very high levels of mental health problems, but low rates of homelessness.
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