

**From:** [Jacob Trautman](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Keep Safe Bay Open  
**Date:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 12:33:07 PM

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Hello Councilors,

I am writing to strongly urge you to reopen Safe Bay while the complaint against it is being investigated. I don't want to speculate about the complaint or minimize it if it is actually serious, and I think the city is perfectly within reason to fully investigate it. But I don't think it's appropriate to immediately and completely shut it down before any investigation has taken place. This site has not had any issues before to my knowledge and it's a necessary resource for some of the most disadvantaged members of our community. Closing Safe Bay down sends the message that the city is willing to punish the entire group of people that use the site based on a single complaint that hasn't even been corroborated, and that in the future if a neighbor wants to get rid of the homeless people, all they have to do is make a false complaint and the city will shut it down for them. By all means investigate the complaint, but please don't stop people from going there until you have an actual reason to do so.

Thank you,  
Jacob Trautman

**From:** [Catherine Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Please Support the Safe Bay TUP  
**Date:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 11:12:03 AM

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Dear Duluth City Councilors,

I am writing in support of the Safe Bay program, and urge you to support the Temporary Use Permit to allow Safe Bay to operate in the Vineyard parking lot. This has been a program that benefits our entire community by providing safe and secure space for people experiencing homelessness, and ensures that neighborhoods are safe. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Anderson  
4322 Otsego St.  
Duluth, MN 55804

**From:** [Phyllis Bruno Peterson](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Safe Bay  
**Date:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 2:44:53 PM

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I am pleading with you to vote to allow Safe Bay to reopen at Vineyard Church. Please vote as if it were you or a loved one looking for a place to safely sleep overnight. Imagine only wanting a place to shower & use the toilet, & a safe place to be while enduring the hardship of sleeping in your car. Imagine how unsafe they feel & how unsafe they truly are sleeping in their cars at random places overnight, not to mention the possibility of being arrested now that homelessness is considered a crime in our city. I volunteer at the drop in center. I want you to know as a not very strong, female, senior citizen who could be easily overpowered by anyone I encounter, I feel entirely safe & secure in the ability of CHUM staff to handle any issues that may come up, they absolutely know what they are doing. Most of the homeless people I meet at the drop in center are vulnerable rather than a threat. Our fellow human beings have arrived at homelessness for a variety of reasons, none of us is immune from homelessness. Please vote from a heart full of compassion & a mind full of reason  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Jessica Asche](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Safe Bay permit appeal  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 11:40:33 AM

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Good Morning Council Members!

I wanted to send you an email in advance of the meeting scheduled for this Thursday to share my thoughts on the appeal that was filed regarding the permit for Safe Bay operations.

I am a member of the Vineyard church and became aware of Safe Bay when the church offered our space for Safe Bay guests to use. I wasn't familiar with it but it sounded like a good option so I attended the volunteer training. I have completed one volunteer shift and am scheduled to do more this month!

In the one time that I volunteered I learned a lot about the program and observed that the guests were very compliant with rules/expectations, were very quiet and were very thankful for a quiet peaceful place to park and sleep for the evening. They were also grateful for the clean bathroom and shower facilities. Some of the guests checked in and then immediately parked, tucked themselves in for the evening and I never heard from them again. Others came in for showers or coffee and some stopped to chat. I got to hear stories of a variety of situations and learned that they were at varying places in their journey to find permanent housing. One had a full time job and fell on hard times and lost his housing. Two had interviews the following day for possible apartments. One had an appointment with the Human Development Center to look at housing options. The thing they all had in common was a need for a place to get a good night's sleep in the meantime.

Not one of the people did one thing to cause a disruption to the neighbors or anyone around them. And on the hourly required "rounds" of the perimeter that the staff/volunteers do to pick up trash, no trash was found while I was there. I see more trash in my own neighborhood when I walk my dog!!

What I did hear was that despite the fact that it got cold that night and the staff and volunteers were wearing coats and thankful for a heated building, the guests weren't allowed to leave their cars running so they could have heat. Because a neighbor complained. And I heard every car that pulled in that evening and not one of them was a loud vehicle.

Another thing I heard was a report that a guest made to staff that the night before she and her significant other had gotten very poor rest because neighbors from the houses behind the church came up to their vehicles and shined lights in the windows, disturbing the guests and causing the guests' dogs to bark.

I also heard a report that a previous night, neighbors had lined up chairs and sat and watched the guests as they arrived, parked, got settled, and slept in their vehicles. And while people can do what they want on their own property it certainly gives the impression that they were trying to send a message that the Safe Bay guests were not welcome.

I did not witness these events myself but heard about them from various guests and staff.

I was really sad and frustrated to hear that these folks were essentially being harrassed while

doing nothing wrong and while participating in an approved activity and complying with all expectations.

I asked some staff members how neighborhood complaints were being handled and was told that CHUM is trying to do everything they can to maintain a peaceful relationship with the neighborhood and was complying with their requests even when they didn't need to or when it was a detriment to the program.

CHUM is clearly doing everything that is required of them to be allowed to operate this program at the Vineyard Church.

My biggest takeaway from the night that I was there was how much I enjoyed meeting some new people and hearing their stories. I left feeling proud to be a member of the Vineyard that was opening up this space for these folks and wondering what I could do to assist in providing needed supplies and other resources.

I left feeling very impressed by the program and how smoothly and effectively it was run and how such a simple thing could meet a basic practical need for numerous people.

I really hope that you as a council will look at the whole picture and see what a fantastic program this is and what a service it provides to our community members. I understand that sometimes fear of the unknown can make people act in ways that are not helpful or respectful and I'm hopeful that in time the neighbor that is voicing these concerns will see that this program is a benefit to our community and a way for us to all work together to help each other.

Respectfully, I am asking that you reject the appeal and allow the permit to stand and the Safe Bay program to continue operating on the Vineyard Church property.

If you have questions, please feel free to respond and ask!

Thank you all for serving our community!

Jessica Asche



6/4/2025

To: City of Duluth Council Members

From: YWCA Duluth

Re: Safe Bay

Dear City Councilors,

YWCA Duluth wholeheartedly supports the operation of Safe Bay and its goal of providing a safe place for people to rest that are currently living out of their vehicles. Regardless of housing or income status, we believe that all people deserve access to water, bathrooms, rest, safety, and a supportive community. These are basic rights and to deny them is to dehumanize people at some of the most challenging and vulnerable times in their lives.

As an organization that has worked to support vulnerable populations and create an inclusive community in Duluth for over 130 years, we strongly urge our elected officials to allow Safe Bay to reopen. Those that operate Safe Bay have reported that there have been no issues and its closure harms everyone who relies on this essential life saving resource.

We hope that each of you recognize the importance of this program, and the dignity that comes with access to our most basic needs.

Sincerely,

Savannah Swanson, Policy and Advocacy Director

Beth Burt, Strategic Advisor

Morgan Beryl, Executive Director

32 E 1st St. #202; Duluth, MN 55802 218.722.7425

[www.ywcaduluth.org](http://www.ywcaduluth.org)



**Duluth City Council**  
411 West First Street  
Duluth, MN 55802

Dear Members of the Duluth City Council,

I am writing to express our strong support for Safe Bay, operated by Chum, and to urge you to allow this critical program to continue without further disruption.

Safe Bay provides an essential safety net for some of Duluth's most vulnerable residents — people experiencing homelessness who need a secure and stable place to rest, especially during the night. Since relocating to the Vineyard Church site, Safe Bay has remained fully compliant with all city codes and regulations. The staff have managed the program with professionalism, compassion, and accountability, maintaining a respectful presence in the neighborhood.

The recent order to suspend operations pending the outcome of a neighbor's appeal has had a deeply disruptive impact on the guests who rely on this service. These individuals are already facing significant hardship, and Safe Bay offers a measure of safety and dignity that should not be taken for granted. It is heartbreaking to see this resource paused due to concerns that, from all accounts, have not been reflected in the actual performance of the program at its new site.

I urge you to prioritize the well-being of all Duluth residents by supporting Safe Bay's continued operation. Chum's commitment to community partnership, responsible program management, and humane care aligns with the values that make Duluth strong.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Alexia Reed Holtum, Executive Director  
Bob Tavani House for Medical Respite  
[Alexia@BTHrespite.org](mailto:Alexia@BTHrespite.org)  
651-308-8122

**From:** [John W Powers](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Safe Bay  
**Date:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 8:24:05 AM

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Councilors -

We urge you to support the Safe Bay proposal for the Vineyard Church property. It is a vital service providing essential help to people in need. And it's being done in a properly designed and supervised manner.

As to the demand that the privacy fence between the Safe Bay area and adjoining properties be a permanent fence, that demand is absurd. When else has the City demanded permanent fixtures for a temporarily permitted use? That demand should be rejected in favor of a temporary but as effective barrier.

John and Diane Powers

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181 Farley Lane / Duluth, MN 55803  
218-590-2332



**From:** [Jake Peterson](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Safe bay  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 7:12:07 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to please urge you to keep Safe Bay open. I personally know individuals that could greatly benefit from these services. Please consider the positives that could come from such a great cause.

Thank you for your time,  
Jake Peterson

**From:** [Rev. Jeffery Davis](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Safe Bay  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 8:46:38 AM

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Good day to you city councilors!

I am writing as Pastor of Concordia Lutheran Church at 2501 Woodland Ave to encourage you to support the Safe Bay program at the Vineyard Church. This is a needed service in our community, especially in light of increasing housing costs and limited shelter space. Faith communities should also be able to live out their mission to serve neighbors free from interference, whether they are homeless, have been recently incarcerated, or are refugees seeking sanctuary.

Thank you for the work you do in Duluth to nurture the common good!  
Pastor Jeffery Davis  
Concordia, Duluth

**From:** [Matt S](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Vineyard church Safe Bay  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 3:02:18 PM

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Dear City Counsel,

I was writing to show my support of the vineyard church being allowed to help people who are in a difficult season in there life and not as fortunate as others to have a safe place to rest and use the food shelf and other amenities the facility offers.

Sincerely,

Matt Scanlon

**From:** [Kathryn Stodola](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Vineyard Church Safe Bay Permit  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 8:42:21 AM

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As a Duluth resident and voter, I am writing to applaud the Planning Commission's unanimous decision to approve the temporary permit for Safe Bay to operate in the Vineyard Church parking lot. A few residents have appealed this decision which is now coming to the City Council. Safe Bay provides a way for unhoused people who live in their cars and usually have jobs to find a way to be productive until a more permanent solution to their needs can be found. I urge the Council to deny the appeal from a few ill informed neighbors of the Vineyard Church and to reinstate the permit. Thank you.

Zabelle Stodola

(Dr.) Zabelle Stodola  
Professor of English, Emerita  
University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
[kzstodola@ualr.edu](mailto:kzstodola@ualr.edu)

131 North Hawthorne Road  
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