

Community Raises Downtown Loitering Concerns at Council Meeting

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

Though it is a problem year-round, homeless people in Kodiak spend more time outdoors as the weather warms up. That was the complaint of Lisa Zeimer at Thursday's Kodiak City Council meeting.

Judi Kidder, part of the volunteer Project Kodiak Clean Up organization, agreed with Zeimer, saying the things left behind by downtown transients is troublesome.

Mayor Pat Branson suggested a committee could examine the issue, and suggested the city could strengthen its loitering laws. Councilmen Terry Haines, John Whiddon and Gabe Saravia agreed loitering is a problem, but both said a solution wouldn't be immediate.

Josh Fitzgerald, whose office is downtown, phoned into the meeting and cautioned the council from simply using jail time as a deterrent.

The mayor and city council suggestions did not appear to satisfy Zeimer, who spoke to the council again at the end of the meeting.

No solution was finalized at the meeting, but Mayor Branson did ask interested citizens, especially people who work downtown, to contact her to explore cleaning up the heart of the city.