

Hello, my name is Peter Iliff. I am a resident of South Robertson. We love the diversity here. The residents are all flavors, all socio-economic classes, and because of Mid-City crime, we work together, care about each other and have each other's backs.

Cattaraugus Tunnel is the main pedestrian thoroughfare for residents to access schools, parks, Helms District, Metro, and Culver City. The 150-ft long dark passage can be a very dangerous place for both local residents and the unhoused who build encampments there. The issue is how do we strike a balance between a person's right to shelter, and a child's right to safely walk through on their way to school?

When an unhoused individual camped in the tunnel chased a resident walking through holding his 4-year-old daughter's hand while pushing a baby stroller, the community said enough. We raised money. Organized a clean-up, steam clean, and made plans for an art mural. But we made mistakes. And per the city's 24-hour or else mandate, neighbors worked together to remove the boulders this past Thursday.

On Saturday morning, a new "neighbor" living in the tunnel assaulted a female resident who was walking through. The incident was terrifying enough that a passing motorist stopped to help and get the woman safely out of the tunnel. LAPD was called. They did nothing.

The long list of violent incidents in Cattaraugus Tunnel has left our community desperate to implement a strategy to keep the passage safe. We tried what we felt was a peaceful solution. No unhoused were forced out. We offered the last individual, whose name was Motay, an apartment – not a shelter – an apartment. But he declined. Only when he had vanished for three days and the tunnel was empty did we go to work.

Those who oppose the boulders dox, defame, threaten and try to destroy our careers. Despite this, we have learned a great deal by listening to your views. But have you listened to us? What we need is to come together and get the city to find real solutions for residents and our unhoused brothers. Because those who came to protest the boulders, and those who defend them, are ALL on the same team — the team of people who CARE. INDIFFERENCE is the enemy.

The City has let down residents and let down the unhoused, allowing them and supporting them to live inside a tunnel, breathing car exhaust and living without services.

We believe all of you serving on SORO care. I serve on the Homeless Committee who last week asked SORO to endorse our plan to have the City purchase the closed down Venice Hotel, just two blocks from the tunnel, for \$2.7 million and refurbish it to provide 27 apartments for the unhoused. Let's see this plan move forward.

We all know it takes full hearts, hard work and collaboration to bring change. And although this world is full of suffering, it is also full of recovery. Let us work together. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter Iliff