



OFFICE OF MAYOR ANDY SCHOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Updated Regarding “Back 40” Property

On January 6, 2021, the Lansing Police Department (LPD) and the Lansing Fire Department (LFD) responded to a report of a suspected deceased person at the “Back 40” homeless encampment located in the 600 block of E. Shiawassee. Upon arrival, LFD medics confirmed that a 33-year-old male was deceased. LPD’s on-scene investigation determined the death was not suspicious in nature. The Medical Examiner will determine the exact cause of the death.

The City of Lansing Human Relations and Community Services (HRCS) Department, the Department of Economic Development and Planning, LFD and LPD have been working directly with Advent House, Holy Cross and The City Rescue Mission, to clean the property and move residents into adequate and safe housing.

Today, January 7, 2021, City staff and partners engaged with the individuals still choosing to live at the “Back 40” to assist them in areas that would provide them with safe and healthy shelter options as contractors continue to work toward clean up. The contractors were prevented by individuals who showed up to try to stop the clean-up. The City continues to be concerned for the health and safety for all individuals impacted by this complex and challenging situation.

“The loss of life at the so-called ‘Back 40’ is tragic. My administration and our social service partners have been working to house Lansing residents in need and attempting to remove the hazards in this space to avoid tragedies like this. Due to several ongoing issues at the ‘Back 40’, including potentially dangerous fires, and escalating issues relating to public health and building safety, including human waste and large amounts of trash found on the property, the City worked with local partners to find suitable alternative housing that is healthy and safe for those in the encampment. All who were living in the encampment were provided another housing option based on their individual needs. Unfortunately, some opposed this effort and blocked City staff from making this area safe, putting those individuals who chose not to leave the encampment at risk in these unsafe conditions. We are working to address the ongoing public health issues at the site. There are many resources available for those living at this site and we will continue efforts to make sure they know what options exist in order to ensure their safety,” said Mayor Andy Schor.

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