



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Erica Azcueta, Program Manager, Neighborhood and Community Services
Linda Stewart, Neighborhood and Community Services *las*
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Ordinance – Declaration of State of Emergency – Extension – November 19, 2019
DATE: November 6, 2019

SUMMARY:

This ordinance would authorize extension of the declaration of emergency and the emergency authority granted pursuant to Ordinance 28565, as amended by Ordinance No. 28430, Ordinance No. 28457, and Ordinance No. 28477, to remain in effect and to continue the City’s efforts to mitigate the impacts of homeless encampments, until emergency shelter is available for most individuals without shelter identified in the Annual Point In Time count.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

The strategic policy priorities aligned with this action are:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

BACKGROUND:

On May 9, 2017, the City Council enacted Ordinance No. 28430 (the “Emergency Ordinance”) declaring a state of emergency related to the conditions of homeless encampments and authorizing such actions are reasonable and necessary to mitigate the conditions giving rise to the public emergency. Upon issuance of the declaration of emergency, the City began implementation of a Temporary Emergency Aid and Shelter Plan, which was formally approved by the City Council on June 9, 2017, with an estimated cost of \$3.4 million through December 2017. On October 3, 2017, the City Council determined that the conditions giving rise to the public emergency were still present, and adopted Ordinance No. 28457, extending the declaration of emergency through December 31, 2017. On December 12, 2017, Council approved Ordinance No. 28477, extending the declaration of emergency to December 31, 2018, and authorizing additional expenditures of nearly \$7.0 million through the end of 2018. City Council approved Ordinance No. 28565, extending the declaration of emergency through the end of 2019, and providing continued funding for the Temporary Emergency Aid and Shelter Plan.

Efforts made to address conditions giving rise to the declaration of the public emergency and the extension of that emergency are summarized as follows:

- In 2017, a mitigation site was established at 18th street and Portland Avenue (the “mitigation site”) which was occupied by 118 individuals, 70 tents and 9 vehicles, and occupants of the mitigation site were provided with health and sanitation facilities together with assessments and screening and other needed services.
- A majority of mitigation site occupants were transitioned to a City-owned property located at 1423 Puyallup Avenue (the “Stability Site”).



- As of October 31, 2019, 350 individuals have received services at the Stability Site. Of the 87 individuals currently receiving services at the Stability Site, 62 have developed housing stability plans, housing referrals or are enrolled in a housing program.
- Regardless of the lack of available, appropriate housing for the high-needs individuals entering the Stability Site, a total of 113 have transitioned from the Stability Site to housing which represents 32% of the total population served at the site to date.
- Conditions similar to those at the onset of the emergency declaration continue to exist, resulting in homeless encampments throughout the City, as evidenced by 162 homeless encampments cleaned up in Tacoma to date in 2019.
- Tacoma Police Department Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) has:
 - Received 311 homeless encampment requests to respond to homeless related concerns:
 - Public Property – 1,573 requests (City, Port of Tacoma, Washington State Department of Transportation, Tacoma Schools and Sound Transit)
 - Private Property – 743 requests
 - Contacted 306 individuals experiencing homelessness at encampments; and provided referrals for 154 individuals accepting referrals to supportive services.
- There have been 162 public property clean-ups completed.
- Consistent with the Affordable Housing Action Strategy, the City continues to evaluate and pursue opportunities to increase sustainable housing options and partner with Pierce County and other jurisdictions to address the challenges of addressing homelessness.
- Plans are currently underway to address the four strategic objectives in the Affordable Housing Action Strategy:
 - Create more homes for more people.
 - Keep housing affordable and in good repair.
 - Help people stay in their homes and communities.
 - Reduce barriers for people who often encounter them.



ISSUE:

The 2019 annual Point in Time Count data reflects that 1,486 (436 in Tacoma) individuals are experiencing homelessness in Pierce County and there are 450 shelter beds available in Tacoma.

Significant numbers of individuals and families continue to experience homelessness due to factors related to job loss, stagnant and declining wages, family crisis and domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, loss of housing, and lack of affordable housing. Although the conditions for many individuals' formerly occupying homeless encampments have been mitigated through the Temporary Emergency Aid and Shelter Program, unsanitary and unsafe conditions remain in homeless encampments throughout the City. While these encampments are mostly smaller in size that prior to the emergency declaration, conditions continue to create potential for disease transmission within and external to encampments. Without the declaration of emergency and the power and authority granted therein, intervention and provision of needed services to mitigate impacts will be delayed by normal contracting, budgetary and regulatory processes.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could choose to not to extend the declaration of emergency and follow standard contract, budgetary and regulatory processes to address the continuing emergent issues. Standard processes do not afford the flexibility and responsiveness required to quickly mitigate issues associated in homeless encampments as soon as they are identified.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council amend Ordinance No. 28430, as amended by Ordinance No. 28457, and Ordinance No. 28477, and Ordinance No. 28565, by extending the sunset date of the declaration of emergency until there is shelter availability for 95% of unsheltered individuals as noted in the annual Point in Time Count for the previous three years, and keeping in place the declaration of public emergency and the power and authority granted therein to the appropriate public officials to exercise their power and authority under the City Charter, state law, and City code to take and continue to take such actions as are reasonable and necessary to respond to the public health emergency.

The emergency can be terminated by the issuance of another proclamation when the City Council determines that measures are no longer required to address the public health and safety issues posed by unauthorized encampments. Before termination of the emergency, the City Council shall consult with agency and department heads including, but not limited to, the City Manager, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, and Director of Neighborhood and Community Services to determine if there are any fiscal, public safety response or other recovery imperatives that require the continuation of emergency measures.



FISCAL IMPACT:

NCS plans to spend \$1,825,000 on stability site operations in 2020 if City Council approves. The rest of the \$3,038,559 is currently budgeted and will support other activities under the emergency declaration. These activities will be brought to City Council in the future.

FUND NUMBER & FUND NAME *	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
0010 – General Fund	91101 – Phase II 2 GF	5330100	\$1,808,159
1185-MHCD – HRHS Mental Health	859101 – Phase II 2 MHCD	5330100	\$1,230,400
TOTAL			\$3,038,559

* General Fund: Include Department

REVENUES:

FUNDING SOURCE	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
0010 – General Fund	Various	Various	\$1,808,159
1185-MHCD – HRHS Mental Health	858200	4313250	\$1,230,400
TOTAL			\$3,038,559

ARE THE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES PLANNED AND BUDGETED? YES, EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES ARE IN THE 2019-2020 BUDGET BIENNIUM.