

City of Tacoma Proposed Code Change

SAVE THE DATE - City Council Meeting, 747 Market St. First Floor
5pm, Oct 1- public comment on the final reading of the proposed ordinance and council vote.

You must sign in with the ordinance number to speak - #28615 You have up to three minutes.

There will be copies of the agenda at the meeting but there were no copies of the ordinance at the 9.24 meeting. It is possible that there will be a resolution amending the ordinance, there could be a substitute ordinance or the ordinance final reading could be put off for a later city council meeting. We won't know any of those until after the council's noon study session. And maybe not even then. I will send out whatever I find out.

We want to stop adoption of the section that limits permissible “shelters” and any risk of criminalizing homeless people through the civil infractions section.

We want to increase the number of emergency shelter beds and safe daytime shelter places through the winter to prevent harm to homeless people.

We want homeless people and their allies to have a voice in decisions affecting them.

Proposed Talking Points

1. Do not adopt the section that “limits permissible ‘structures’ in parks to only those specifically authorized or are temporary that have only a roof and no walls.”
2. If the above section is adopted, delay implementation until the City provides a list of daytime and nighttime safe shelters that have room to accommodate all people experiencing homelessness irregardless of their situation - children, behavioral health, age, physical disability, household composition...

and, until the City clarifies the impact of civil infractions so that everyone is clear about potential effect on people experiencing homelessness.
3. Call for a Safe Shelter Task Force to ensure every person experiencing homelessness has safe day and night shelter from Nov. 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020. Even if there is no task force, the city maintains a list of all day and night shelters available, makes public all sources and uses of funding for shelters and services and updates as it changes, provides a list of public and nonprofit spaces and buildings that could be used for shelter and creates an advisory group made up of homeless/formerly homeless people and their allies.
4. Call for an additional 700 beds for winter this would double our current capacity — suggest how to do it - such as - see back:

Adopt a safe parking ordinance, assume five safe parking programs, 10 cars each, three people per car, 24/7 = 150 beds

Create a KOA sort of camping places with 100 spaces for people who simply cannot maintain themselves within an existing shelter. Could be any size but probably not more than 25/place.

Create a "Mary's Place" for 25 families with children. Assume 4/household = 100 beds.

Speed up opening of the new Women's Shelter at TRM - 50 beds

Open the Tacoma Ave. Shelter - estimated 100 beds in downstairs shelter; 50 emergency beds on Tacoma Ave. Total = 150

Open shelter for families, single women, and couples at Bethlehem Baptist Church (Eastside). # of beds? estimated 50 beds?

Include the Freezing Nights program in Puyallup and any others inside/outside the City of Tacoma. # of beds? estimated 50 beds?

Maintain a late afternoon motel voucher program targeting children, people who are sick and/or disabled, pregnant women. Do not require proof of legal status. estimated 25 beds

Maintain a motel voucher program to close the gap for families with children and high risk couples and individuals who have secured permanent housing but have a three week or less wait until it is available. estimated 25 beds.

6. Update the city's Temporary Shelter ordinance to make it possible for multiple shelters within each TPD district. Review Planning & Land Use requirements for ease of use by faith community and nonprofits. If the update will require more than 30 days, commit to waiving certain requirements via an emergency ordinance to make it possible to open shelters before winter sets in. Consider a Mt. Vernon safe parking ordinance.

7. Prepare and post an Inclement Weather protocol developed with emergency shelters.

8. Encourage all, both full and part time, Tacoma Police, Firefighters and EMTs to take the 40 hour Crisis Intervention Training.