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8.19.010 Purposes.

A. It is the purpose of this Chapter to promote the public health, safety, general welfare, and economic health and well-being of the City, its residents, and its visitors by making the areas of City of Tacoma Public Property open to the general public readily accessible, and to prevent the uses of Public Property which interfere with the rights of others to use Public Property for which it is intended and to prevent harm to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

B. It is also the purpose of this Chapter to provide for and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the general public and not to create, either expressly or implicitly, or otherwise establish or designate any particular class or group of persons or individuals who will or should be especially protected or benefited or discriminated against by the terms of this Chapter. Additionally, the purpose of this Chapter is to divert calls to the City requesting enforcement of criminal laws to using these calls for service to locate and provide shelter for persons currently experiencing homelessness.

C. For purposes of interpreting this Chapter, if any definition, requirement, or provision in this Chapter conflicts with those in a different provision or Chapter of the Tacoma Municipal Code, the definition, requirement, or provision in this Chapter shall apply.

8.19.020 Defined Terms.

As used in this Chapter, the following terms shall have the following definitions: “Camp” means to pitch, erect, or occupy Camp Facilities, or to use Camp Paraphernalia, or both, for the purpose of, or in such a way as will facilitate, remaining overnight. The term shall not include overnight use of Public Property by the City or the governmental entity that owns or has a property interest in such Public Property.

“Camp Facilities” means, without limitation, tents, huts, and temporary shelters. “Camp Paraphernalia” means, without limitation, blankets, pillows, tarpaulins, cots, beds or bedding, sleeping bags, hammocks, non-City designated cooking facilities, and/or other similar equipment.

“City” means the City of Tacoma, Washington, the area within the territorial limits of the City.

“Pier” means any pier, wharf, dock, float, gridiron, or other structure where watercraft may anchor or moor.

“Public Property” means all property in which the City or any other governmental entity has a property interest, including easements. The term includes, without limitation, all parks, Piers, Streets, trails, forests, park museums, pools, beaches, open spaces, public squares, public schools and associated athletic facilities, grounds around City or other publicly owned or leased buildings, including, but not limited to, parking lots, and any other property in which the City or any other governmental entity has a property interest of any type.

“Store” means to put aside, accumulate, or leave on Public Property for later use, or for safekeeping.

“Street” means, without limitation, any easements, highway, lane, road, street, right-of-way, boulevard, alley, and all Public Property open as a matter of right to public vehicle travel or parking.

8.19.030 Unauthorized Use Of Public Property.

Unless otherwise permitted by the Tacoma Municipal Code, it shall be unlawful for any person to Camp within any Public Property.

8.19.040 Unauthorized Storage Of Personal Property On Public Property.

It shall be unlawful for any person to Store personal property, including, without limitation, Camp Facilities and Camp Paraphernalia, on any Public Property.

8.19.050 Penalty For Violations.

Violation of Section 8.19.030 or Section 8.19.040 of this Chapter is a misdemeanor offense and shall be punished upon conviction of such violation by a fine of not more than $1,000, or by imprisonment not to exceed 90 days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

8.19.060 Rules.

The Chief of Police is hereby authorized to adopt rules, regulations, administrative policies, and procedures for implementing and enforcing Section 8.19.030 or Section 8.19.040 of this Chapter as to any Camping and/or Storing of personal property within outdoor portions of Public Property or Streets against persons experiencing homelessness that complies with Constitutional requirements.