



City Council

Approval of a Resolution Authorizing an Agreement between the cities of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater; Washington State Departments of Commerce and Transportation, Washington State Patrol; and Thurston County for Transitioning People Out of State-Owned Rights-of-Way

Agenda Date: 7/12/2022
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Title

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Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement between the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater; Washington State Departments of Commerce and Transportation and State Patrol; and Thurston County for Transitioning People Out of State-Owned Rights-of-Way.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement between the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater; Washington State Departments of Commerce and Transportation and State Patrol; and Thurston County for Transitioning People Out of State-Owned Rights-of-Way.

Staff Contact:

Darian Lightfoot, Housing Programs Manager, City Manager's Office, 360.280.8951

Presenter(s):

None - Consent Calendar Item.

Background and Analysis:

In May 2022, the Department of Commerce contacted members of the Regional Housing Council

(RHC) to share direction from the Governor's office regarding encampments along the I-5. Several locations throughout Thurston County were identified as priority sites to be cleared and monitored to discourage reestablishment by unhoused residents. The RHC was charged with creating a multi-phased plan to shelter/house all persons residing on the identified rights-of-way.

The MOU outlines the agreed upon goals and priorities established among the involved parties:

- Promptly identifying existing emergency and other housing that people living in rights of way can be referred to.
- Engaging people living in rights of way to assess their needs through coordinated entry or other assessments and refer them to identified emergency and other housing and other available services.
- Immediately begin to create additional emergency and other housing dedicated to people living in rights of way.
- Identify and implement strategies to keep cleared sites uninhabited.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in the short-term strategy to implement a more comprehensive long-term approach to individuals and families living in public places.

Anticipated engagement and projects aligning with these priorities are outlined for the next 3 years and will require ongoing collaboration with all parties associated with this MOU.

The Department of Commerce has noted several times that due to the strength and established commitment of the RHC, this initiative has been able to leverage available funding more successfully than neighboring jurisdictions and will see greater financial investment by state departments.

The requirement set by the funding proviso outlines how permanent shelter/housing must be available and provided to each person being cleared on the state-owned right-of-way prior to closure and will be offered continued support throughout the duration of the MOU. Rather, regardless of people remaining in housing upon exiting the rights-of-way, they will continue to be offered housing and supportive services as long as the need is there. The RHC sees this distinction critical to truly make an impact on the unhoused population in our community.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The homeless outreach team receives calls about people residing on the state-owned rights-of-way daily expressing concerns about resident's safety and compiling debris. The scheduled clearings would address those concerns and are of great interest to the community. People living near high-speed traffic, directly exposed to air and noise pollution with little access to support services is a major concern of the city and provider community. Funding and efforts solely directed to housing every person impacted by the clearings is imperative to the success of the MOU.

Options:

1. Move to approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement between the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater; Washington State Departments of Commerce and Transportation and State Patrol; and Thurston County for Transitioning People Out of State-Owned Rights-of-Way.
2. Amend and move to approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement between the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater; Washington State Departments of Commerce and Transportation and State Patrol; and Thurston County for Transitioning People Out of State-

Owned Rights-of-Way.

3. Do not approve the Resolution.

Financial Impact:

The proposed Memorandum of Understanding does not directly have funds associated with the work required, however, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Transportation have both entered into contracts with the City to support this effort financially covering costs for outreach, administration, supplies, cleans, tiny home village development, and right-of-way improvements.

Attachments:

Resolution

Agreement