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City Council

Approval of an Ordinance Declaring a State of Public Health Emergency Relating to Homelessness - First and Final Reading

Agenda Date: 7/17/2018
Agenda Item Number: 6.C
File Number: 18-0657

Type: ordinance **Version:** 1 **Status:** Passed

Title

Approval of an Ordinance Declaring a State of Public Health Emergency Relating to Homelessness - First and Final Reading

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve the ordinance declaring a state of public health emergency relating to human health and environmental conditions caused by increasing homelessness in our community on first and final reading.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve an ordinance declaring a state of public health emergency relating to increasing homelessness in our community.

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development, 360.570.5847

Presenter(s):

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager

Background and Analysis:

Homelessness is an issue of urgent public concern facing Olympia and the region. On June 14 2018, the Thurston County Board of Health declared homelessness a public health crisis in Thurston County.

The latest Point-in-Time homeless census found at least 320 people sleeping unsheltered in unmanaged conditions countywide. In addition to this annual count, City staff periodically conducts an early morning count of people sleeping on the street in downtown; routinely finding approximately

130 people living unsheltered within the core of downtown.

The City of Olympia is in the process of identifying and implementing solutions-based actions to address this increasingly challenging issue.

Declaring a state of public health emergency provides a factual basis for the public health emergency, and references statutory authority that allows the City more flexibility to act quickly in response to homelessness. Under the ordinance, the City may, for example, obligate funds, enter into contracts or site facilities outside of normal time-consuming procedures.

The ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption by a vote of a majority plus one, and the emergency will be in effect through June 19, 2021, at which point the City Council will review the conditions that gave rise to this public health emergency to determine if keeping it in place is warranted.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Homelessness is an issue of significant concern to the Olympia public.

Options:

1. Move to approve the ordinance declaring a state of public health emergency relating to human health and environmental conditions caused by increasing homelessness in our community.
2. Move to take no action.

Financial Impact:

None

Attachments:

Ordinance