



Finance Committee

Consideration of Funding for Additional Homeless Actions

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Title

Consideration of Funding for Additional Homeless Actions

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve the recommendation to fund additional homeless actions and forward to City Council for consideration.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve funding for additional actions to address homelessness, including 1) a pilot program to support three faith community/non-profit emergency housing sites, and 2) mitigation steps to address public health and safety concerns in relation to encampments.

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development, 360.753.5847

Presenter(s):

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development

Background and Analysis:

On September 18, the City Council approved a funding plan and moving forward with implementation of four immediate actions to address homelessness (Establishing Plum Street Village, Secure Storage Partnerships, and Supporting both the Salvation Army Day Center Renovation and Community Youth Services Shelter 24/7 Expansion.)

Councilmembers expressed interest in further exploring funding needs to support faith-based or non-profit emergency housing facilities and a "street strategy," or more plainly steps to mitigate public health and safety concerns surrounding encampments. Staff is facing some urgency to address both of these issues.

Faith Community/Non-Profit Partnership Pilot

In an effort to enhance opportunities for faith-based, non-profit and other government entities to host temporary housing facilities subject to a permit, the City adopted interim changes to its Emergency (Homeless) Housing Ordinance last June. Providing some level of support to these sites was also discussed.

The United Churches of Olympia (TUCO) is hosting a tiny house workshop on October 27. The workshop is designed to be the next step in the process of identifying what faith communities in Olympia can do to overcome homelessness through the use of tiny houses. In preparation for the workshop, TUCO met with the Mayor and staff to encourage a commitment for a pilot project whereby the City would support three faith community/non-profit sites with services such as water, sewer, garbage and portable toilets. They are also requesting assistance from social service providers to provide residents connection to services. TUCO believes the City's commitment will encourage the faith community to step forward. Staff will present the framework for this potential pilot and an estimated budget at the meeting.

Street Strategy

Growing encampments throughout the City raise important public health and safety concerns. Staff will discuss the estimated costs of site mitigation, such as providing basic services like porta-potties and garbage pick-up, fencing or other security features. The full scope of a street strategy has yet to be defined, but this is a start.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The issue of homelessness is of significant public concern.

Options:

1. Approve recommended funding for additional actions to address homelessness, including 1) a pilot program to support three faith community/non-profit emergency housing sites, and 2) mitigation steps to address public health and safety concerns in relation to encampments.
2. Do not recommend the City fund additional actions to address homelessness at this time.

Financial Impact:

Estimated costs will be presented at the meeting.

Attachments:

None