



Legislation Text

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CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION endorsing a public health and public safety model to address the needs of people living in the I-5 East Duwamish Greenbelt (Greenbelt) and in the adjoining neighborhoods; devising a person-centered and strategic approach that prioritizes the offer of services and housing options to individuals based on their needs before the removal of persons or property from the Greenbelt; providing safety for police, fire fighters, and first responders who provide emergency services within and around the Greenbelt; and directing the physical cleanup of the Greenbelt to provide a healthier and safer environment for all.

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle and King County declared a State of Emergency on November 2, 2015, and is committed to addressing the homelessness crisis in Seattle; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the public health and public safety concerns for the needs of the people living in and near the Greenbelt, and for police, fire fighters and first responders to emergencies in and around the Greenbelt, and for those who use the I-5 freeway; and

WHEREAS, meeting the long term health and safety needs require the alignment of City, County, State, and other regional resources and investments; and

WHEREAS, the City and County have adopted the values of the King County All Home Strategic Plan and that of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness that promote the “housing first” model for stable housing and targeted person-centered services; and

WHEREAS, many first responders and human services providers recommend that the City implement these best practices to address the public health and public safety issues in the Greenbelt; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council support the cleanup of major health hazards, including human waste and garbage, and the removal of overgrown brush and other fire and safety hazards in the Greenbelt; and

WHEREAS, the region lacks critical, affordable permanent housing units to meet the needs of individuals, families and children experiencing homelessness in the region, leaving thousands without permanent shelter; and

WHEREAS, the region should increase the number of housing or shelter units available for those who are experiencing homelessness in the Greenbelt by aligning resources with the County and State of Washington, and offering appropriate services for those suffering from mental illness, behavioral health, and substance addictions; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The following policies are agreed upon and the following actions will be undertaken:

A. Neither residents of the Greenbelt, nor their possessions, will be removed from the Greenbelt until meaningful offers of appropriate shelter, housing, or alternative spaces in authorized encampments and services are made as described in subsection 1.B of this resolution. Council will receive an account of the outreach efforts and the results of those efforts before residents are removed from the Greenbelt. For the purposes of this Resolution, the Greenbelt is defined as the area east of I-5 from Dearborn Street to Spokane Street, and bordered on the east by 12th Avenue South and Hahn Place S.

B. Outreach workers will make contact with each individual living in the Greenbelt. The goals of outreach workers are to use religiously and culturally appropriate practices to reduce harm for individuals living in the Greenbelt and promote public health within the Greenbelt and adjoining neighborhoods. Outreach workers will:

1. Make every effort to engage and develop relationships with individuals living in the Greenbelt and determine their individual needs and potential barriers to shelter and housing.

2. Make meaningful offers of available shelter and services that appropriately meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in the Greenbelt, taking into consideration individual barriers such as

criminal background, eviction records, domestic violence, mental health, or addiction issues.

3. Document what offers of housing and services have been made. If shelter or services have been accepted, provide information about where the individual(s) went, and which agency is providing the service.

C. Outreach workers and responders will make available garbage/recycling bags and needle receptacles to improve public health while outreach engagement is underway.

D. Outreach professionals will coordinate service providers and advocates to offer available and appropriate shelter, housing and services for mental illness, behavioral issues, and substance addiction to residents of the Greenbelt. Clear information about the storage and location of belongings will be made to individuals to whom services and housing/shelter options are offered. The offered services shall be tailored to meet the needs of the individual resident, using best practices such as person-centered approaches. The City will work with advocates and service providers to create a common assessment tool.

E. Individuals who are unwilling or unable to accept offers of shelter and services pose a separate problem requiring a coordinated human services and public safety approach. After all reasonable efforts have been made to provide services and housing or shelter, outreach workers will coordinate with other advocates or service providers and/or notify the City's Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team. Prior to requiring people to leave the Greenbelt, the Executive will notify Council at least three business days in advance and provide information regarding how many people are expected to be present in the relevant area and what offers of shelter and service have been made to that population.

F. No person shall be arrested simply for being homeless.

G. Public health and safety rules restricting open fire and uncontrolled burning of materials under I-5 will be enforced.

H. The emergency-vehicle service road and environs will be improved in accordance with

recommendations made by law enforcement, fire fighters, first responders, and consultants to make the Greenbelt safer for all.

I. Human waste, needles, flammable items that pose an immediate risk, and garbage underneath I-5 and in and around the Greenbelt will be cleaned up using reasonable safety precautions.

J. Outreach professionals will provide monthly reports to City Council's Human Services and Public Health Committee or a joint committee that may include the Gender Equity, Safe Communities & New Americans Committee. The reports will provide data on the strategies described herein. The data to be collected will include but not be limited to the number of people contacted, a description of housing, shelter options and services offered, the number of people who have accepted offers of housing, shelter options and services and where they went, known demographics, and known information about barriers such as mental health, domestic violence, felony or eviction records and addictions. No personal identifying information shall be requested, collected, or publicly reported.

K. Consistent with and not in duplication of the Homeless Investment Policy Framework, the Mayor and Council will work together to create a strategic analysis and systems mapping approach to improve funder alignment and regional outcomes.

L. In order to make strategic changes to how and what investments and system improvements to the process of cleaning up the Greenbelt can be made, Council and the Mayor will seek advice from regional leaders. These leaders shall include, are not limited to the following: the King County Council and Executive; Seattle/King County Board of Public Health; All Home; outreach professionals, including REACH of Evergreen Treatment Services, HOST of Downtown Emergency Services, mental health and behavioral health advocates; experts involved in drug and substance addictions and physical health; law enforcement; fire fighters and other first responders; legal advocates; representatives from the City Attorney's Office and the Prosecuting Attorney's Office; jails and courts; the Seattle Human Services Department, representatives from impacted neighborhoods; people who are currently living in the Greenbelt or experiencing homelessness; as well as

experienced representatives from business, labor and the environmental community.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2016, and signed by
me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2016.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2016.

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2016.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)