



Legislation Text

File #: CB 121185, Version: 2

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to the City’s response to homelessness; amending Ordinance 127362, which adopted the 2026 Budget, including the 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Program (CIP); changing appropriations to various departments and budget control levels, and from various funds in the Budget; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts; all by a 3/4 vote of the City Council.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. In order to pay for necessary costs and expenses incurred or to be incurred in 2026, but for which insufficient appropriations were made due to causes that could not reasonably have been foreseen at the time of making the 2026 Budget, appropriations for the following items in the 2026 Budget are increased from the funds shown, as follows:

Item	Department	Fund	Budget Summary Level/BCL Code	Amount (\$)
1.1	Human Services Department	Downtown Health and Human Service Account - General Trust Fund (15030)	Addressing Homelessness (15030-BO-HS-H3000)	1,589,440
1.2	Finance General	Low-Income Housing Fund (16400)	Appropriation to Special Funds (16400-BO-FG-2QA00)	3,316,214
1.3	Human Services Department	Human Services Fund (16200)	Addressing Homelessness (16200-BO-HS-H3000)	3,316,214
TOTAL				8,221,868

Section 2. It is the Council’s intent that the Mayor’s Office (MO) should submit the following information to the Council’s Finance, Native Communities, and Tribal Government Committee by September 14, 2026:

A. A report on new shelter units funded in 2026 including:

1. For new shelter projects and expanded shelter projects:

- a. Location.
- b. Providers selected to operate the site and offer services.
- c. Number of shelter units added.
- d. Description of services to be provided, including information on the types of substance abuse disorder treatment that will be offered on-site.
- e. Staffing ratio for case management and behavioral health services.
- f. Whether this is a new project or an expansion of an existing project.
- g. Whether the new units are congregate or non-congregate.

2. Any new leases entered into by the City for micro-modular sites, the cost per square foot of those leases, the length of term of the lease and the size of the site.

3. How the \$17.5 million will be utilized, broken down by operating costs and capital costs for each shelter project receiving funds.

4. The timeline, if applicable, for transferring shelter contracts from HSD to the King County Regional Homelessness Authority.

5. Detailed budgets for all new shelters, both for operating costs and one-time start-up and capital costs.

B. A plan for how the MO intends to achieve 4,000 new shelter units including:

1. An assessment of the total number of new shelter units needed, including assumptions around number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, number of existing shelter units and the number of people that can be served by a shelter unit in a given year (turnover).

2. A timeline for opening up new shelter units, in six month increments.

3. Total operating and capital cost for 4,000 new units, broken down by year.

4. Assumptions about per unit operating and capital costs, service levels, and acuity of population being served provided that informed overall costs.

5. A plan for increasing the capacity or number of shelter operators and behavioral health services providers that will be needed to staff 4,000 new units.

6. The role of the King County Regional Homelessness Authority in administering funding for 4,000 new units.

7. Opportunities to share resources among shelters to create cost efficiencies, such as shared security or transportation programs.

C. Many people experiencing homelessness are high acuity and need a shelter that is designed and staffed to provide the appropriate level of services. The 2026 Point in Time count found that of those experiencing homelessness, 66 percent were chronically homeless, 34 percent of adults had a serious mental illness, and 47 percent had a substance abuse disorder. If a shelter is not designed and staffed to meet the acuity needs of its residents, the impact on the residents and the surrounding neighborhood will be negative. Therefore, in its responses to both subsections 2.A and 2.B of this ordinance, the MO should describe the acuity levels being served by any new shelter and provide specific information on how the shelter is designed to meet the physical and behavioral needs, including substance abuse disorder treatments, for its residents.

Section 3. It is the Council's intent that the Executive should develop and implement, for any new shelter created on or after the effective date of this ordinance, a plan to keep the area surrounding the shelter safe, clean, and free of unsanctioned encampments.

A. The plan should include the following:

1. An initial public safety assessment of the area in which the shelter is to be located, including an assessment of 911 emergency call data;

2. Completion of a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment prior to the opening of the shelter, and integration of any CPTED recommendations into the shelter's design and

operations;

3. Policies and procedures for keeping the area within 500 feet of the shelter free of any unsanctioned encampments or recreational vehicles that are in violation of the Seattle Municipal Code parking regulations;

4. A plan for how the Mayor's Office will promptly address illegal activity, behavioral health emergencies, and other challenges that impact public safety in the area surrounding the shelter; and

5. A City liaison that neighborhood residents can contact if there are issues occurring outside of the shelter boundaries that are beyond the shelter provider's control or authority to address.

B. Communication and engagement with the neighborhood should include:

1. The plan described in Section 3.A of this ordinance should be shared with the neighborhood at least one month prior to the shelter opening; and

2. Every City-funded contract with a shelter provider should require that the provider develop and maintain a Good Neighbor Agreement or Neighborhood Engagement and Mitigation Plan to proactively communicate with neighbors and address community concerns.

Section 4. It is the Council's intent that the Mayor's Office should develop and implement, for any new shelter created on or after the effective date of this ordinance, a monthly report with public safety indicators for the new shelter and surrounding area. The Mayor's Office should work collaboratively with Council to determine the content of the report, including the specific data and the geographic area covered by the report. Data sources should include but not be limited to:

A. Critical Incident Reports and Good Neighbor Agreements as required by the contract between the shelter operators and the City;

B. The Unified Care Team;

C. The Find It, Fix It Service Request Mobile Application; and

D. 911 call data, such as the type of response received from the Seattle Police Department, Seattle Fire

Department, and Community Assisted Response and Engagement Department, the kind of unit (e.g., aid car or Medic One unit), the number of units, the length of time spent responding, the time of day, the day of the week, and other trend information.

The reports should be provided monthly to the Councilmember in whose district the new shelter is located.

Section 5. It is the Council's intent that the Mayor's Office, in collaboration with the Council, should establish a shelter acuity work group, with representation from the Human Services Department, the City Budget Office, the King County Regional Homelessness Authority, shelter operators, shelter services providers, Councilmember offices, and Central Staff. The work group should:

A. Determine the target acuity level for the people to be served by the first 500 units and additional units created beyond those, based on the best available data regarding the needs of those who will be served. Many people experiencing homelessness are high acuity and need a shelter that is designed and staffed to provide the appropriate level of services.

B. Determine the specific services that will be provided for low, medium, and high acuity levels and the hours those services will be available (for example during business hours or around the clock). Services could include case management, behavioral health services, on site medical care such as psychiatry or wound management, and substance abuse disorder treatments including medication management.

C. In collaboration with the Council, set acuity level targets, number of shelter units, services, and cost per unit for the first 500 new units of shelter and additional units created beyond those, prior to the execution of any contract with a shelter operator or services provider.

Section 6. The Council's intent is for the Human Services Department (HSD), when opening new shelter units, to utilize providers who have expertise in delivering culturally appropriate services to those who are most disproportionately impacted by homelessness, including those who are Black/African American or American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Indigenous. It is also the Council's intent that HSD identify potential

providers with this expertise and work with those providers to build their capacity, if needed, to operate new shelter units. HSD should submit a report by September 14, 2026 detailing if any providers for new shelter units opened in 2026 have expertise in delivering culturally appropriate services to those who are most disproportionately impacted by homelessness, and the plan to identify and build the capacity of additional providers who have this expertise.

Section 7. The Mayor has stated that \$17.5 million, including the \$4.9 million allocated in this ordinance, will be used to create new or expanded shelter projects that contain an estimated 500 new units of shelter. It is the Council's intent that at least one of those new shelter projects should be exclusively for people in recovery from substance abuse disorders who are seeking a clean and sober environment. HSD should submit a report by September 14, 2026 providing details on the stand up of the recovery shelter, including location, providers, number of units, unit operating costs and operations start date.

Section 8. The Executive has stated a goal to create new or expanded shelter projects to produce 1,000 new units of shelter by the end of 2026. It is the Council's intent that at least two of those new shelter projects should be exclusively for families with children. The Human Services Department should submit a report to the Finance, Native Communities, and Tribal Governments Committee by September 14, 2026, providing details on the stand up of the two shelters for families with children, including location, providers, number of units, unit operating costs, and operations start date.

Section 9. For any new shelters created on or after the effective date of this ordinance, Council intends that priority for units in those shelters should be given to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the Council District and neighborhood in which the shelter is located. The Human Services Department should provide a report to Council prior to the opening of the first new shelter detailing how this prioritization will be implemented.

Section 10. Council supports creating new shelter units while prioritizing the importance of sustaining existing Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), especially if federal Continuum of Care dollars to support

existing PSH are reduced or eliminated. Council intends to work collaboratively with the Executive to address the structural budget gap while creating new shelter units and maintaining existing PSH and requests the Executive also works collaboratively with Council on these issues.

Section 11. Any act consistent with the authority of this ordinance taken after its passage and prior to its effective date is ratified and confirmed.

Section 12. This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

Passed by a 3/4 vote of all the members of the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2026, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2026.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)