

Council Bill 121195: Shelter Census Limits

Land Use and Sustainability Committee

April 15th, 2026

Mayor's Office: Policy & Innovation



City of Seattle

Issue Identification

Land use code currently limits 100 people per site.

There are limited publicly owned sites suitable for microshelters.

Most already have an existing microshelter sited.
A few have significant unused land adjacent to the site.

As a result, public land sits unused while demand for shelter remains high.

Policy Overview

Legislation increasing census limits for transitional encampments

- Increases citywide census limit for transitional encampments limited to micro-modular shelters or RV safe lots from 100 to 150 people.
- Allows one site for up to 250 people, limited to micro-modular shelters or RV safe lots.
- Interim legislation that expires after 12 months.
- SDCI workplan established to complete SEPA analysis and develop and transmit permanent regulations in Winter 2027.

Proven Large-Scale Models Nationwide

Cities across the country have demonstrated that large microshelter programs can operate effectively

- Microshelter programs can scale to 100–220 units per site.
- At the largest site, more than 300 people are served in a single location.



Tampa Hope, Tampa FL

215 units plus 116 platformed tents

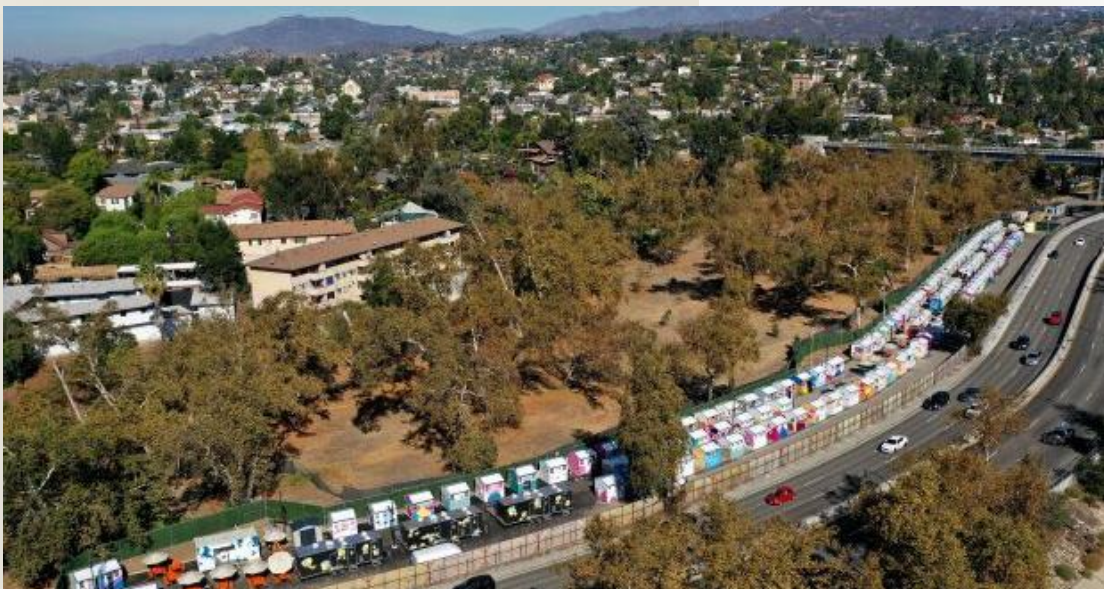
345 people served



Genesis Pallet Shelter, Chico CA

177 units

200 people served



Arroyo Seco Village, Los Angeles, CA

123 units

168 people served, capacity for 224



West LA Veterans Association

155 units

200 estimated people served

Large Site Profile: Tampa Hope

345 people served at single location

- Operated by Catholic Charities
- Tampa, Florida
- Executive Director Maggie Rogers
- 345 people served
- Plans to expand to 400 beds
- 215 shelter units, 116 platformed tents
- Services include, three daily meals, clothing, medical care, life skills and financial management classes, and substance use and mental health treatment.
- 8 case managers, 2 outreach staff, and 13 shelter monitors for 24/7 staffing.
- 550 people moved into housing since opening.



Public Safety is Community Partnership

Safe and welcoming neighborhoods are built through partnership, clear expectations, and shared responsibility.



Neighborhood Coordination and Site Safety



Supporting a Successful Launch

Close collaboration with SPD on neighborhood safety:

- The Seattle Police Department is in active development of specific strategies to target dangerous and illegal activities that may occur near or around existing PSH and shelter programs.
- The intent of these expanded efforts is to target criminal elements that attempt to take advantage of vulnerable populations found within encampments that may also be within the vicinity of existing shelter programs.



Questions and Discussion