



**WORK STUDY SESSION OF THE
ROSEBURG CITY COUNCIL**

**900 SE DOUGLAS AVENUE
AUGUST 31, 2020 – 6:00 PM**

*LA
8-26-2020*

Public Viewing Access:

In Person - City Hall Council Chamber

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CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Larry Rich

City Councilors

Beverly Cole

Sheila Cox

Bob Cotterell

Alison Eggers

Linda Fisher-Fowler

Ashley Hicks

Brian Prawitz

Andrea Zielinski

DISCUSSION ITEM

1. Council Goal #6 – Explore Strategies to Address Issues Related to Unhoused Individuals within the Community
 - A. Public Input
 - B. Staff Input
 - C. Council Input/Discussion
2. Follow-up from Local Agencies
 - A. Attached Agency Response – VA Mental Health

ADJOURNMENT – 8:30 p.m.

***** AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT NOTICE *****

Please contact the City Recorder's Office, Roseburg City Hall, 900 SE Douglas, Roseburg, OR 97470-3397 (Phone 541-492-6866) at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time if you need an accommodation. TDD users please call Oregon Telecommunications Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900.

ROSEBURG CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



POSSIBLE CODE AMENDMENTS/PROGRAMS AFFECTING HOMELESS ISSUES

Meeting Date: August 31, 2020
Department: Community Development
www.cityofroseburg.org

Discussion Item – Staff Input
Staff Contact: Stuart Cowie
Contact Telephone Number: 541-492-6750

ISSUE STATEMENT AND SUMMARY

The Community Development Department has been exploring three different options to possibly amend the City's zoning code or develop programs in order to better enable the following uses surrounding homelessness and homeless services:

1. *Emergency Shelters/Warming Centers*
2. *Authorized Vehicle Camping*
3. *Definitions of uses described within the zoning code*

These three items were selected as they are frequently discussed as issues that may more clearly be identified and/or addressed within the zoning code or developed into a program by which the use may operate to help facilitate relief or address issues resulting from our homeless population or homeless service providers.

BACKGROUND

A. Council Action History.

On August 10, 2020, Council made a motion to direct staff to begin the process of preparing draft municipal code language related to temporary shelters and other temporary housing for Council consideration.

Since that time, Community Development staff has begun to explore the framework surrounding the three items identified above and the best way in which we may be able to address each item. We are now returning to Council to provide more detail around how each of these items may occur and confirm that Council would like staff to continue to develop how each of these uses/amendments to the Municipal Code could happen.

B. Analysis.

1. *Emergency Shelters/Warming Centers*

An emergency shelter/warming center is a temporary shelter that is typically open during the coldest nights of the year when temperatures drop below a certain point and the need for shelter is immediate as a result of the weather. These shelters can also open in

extreme heat situations as well. Over the course of a year they are only open for a few days and nights. The use of an emergency shelter/warming center is not identified within the City's zoning code. The only avenue in which this type of use could occur currently is through the "homeless shelter" provision. This use although undefined, based on staff's interpretation is designed to be a permanent shelter and as a result requires a conditional use permit, a process that can take months to navigate and is subject to public notice and possible appeal.

Staff is proposing to utilize code language from the City of Medford, in which they categorize an emergency shelter/warming center as a "Severe Event Shelter". A Severe Event Shelter is defined as a temporary use within a building, typically not used as a residence, meant to provide relief during a Severe Event to individuals who are homeless or at risk of exposure to a severe event. A Severe Event is defined as an act of nature or unforeseen circumstances that constitutes an uninhabitable living experience for individual or groups.

These definitions would be added to our code and a Severe Event Shelter would be listed as a permitted use within zones that typically have larger buildings, like a church gymnasium, warehouse, or other area of assembly.

Barriers such as building sprinklers could be eliminated through the use of operational and location planning requirements identified by the Fire Marshall prior to the Severe Event Shelter being opened.

2. Authorized Vehicle Camping

The overnight use of an RV or other vehicle is prohibited within the city limits for periods longer than 48 hours. The code does not provide options for "car-camping" facilities on private properties. However, in our review of temporary housing programs around the state, it was discovered that the city of Salem passed an emergency declaration to authorize camping in vehicles as part of a pilot program. The order stated non-profit, public, or commercial entities owning or operating a property could apply to host a car camping location through a program regulated by the city of Salem. The following bullet items are program requirements:

- Properties eligible to host may not be located within or adjacent to a residential zone, or currently used for a residential use.
- Car camping locations must be registered with the City. No more than eight locations in the City can be registered at any one time.
- The program is not funded or sponsored by the City. Property owners hosting vehicle camping do so at their own risk and expense. All costs associated with hosting vehicle camping are the responsibility of the property owner. These costs may include providing toilet facilities, trash receptacles, supervision of the guests, and clean-up of the area.

If the City of Roseburg were to adopt a similar pilot project like Salem, it is likely that the majority of applications would be from churches and/or non-profit organizations. To review options for potential sites, staff conducted a brief inventory of locations that fit

these regulations with larger parking areas that could potentially meet the pilot project eligibility requirements. There were several sites found along Diamond Lake Boulevard, Douglas Avenue, the downtown area and Garden Valley Boulevard.

For perspective, The City of Salem (population 173,442) has 8 active sites, which is the maximum number of sites allowed by the program. These sites can accommodate 48 vehicles and up to 98 people.

3. Definitions of uses described within the zoning code

The zoning code currently uses a number of terms spread throughout different zoning districts that could relate to homeless service providers or other land uses associated with homelessness, such as: “*Public and semi-public buildings and uses*”; “*Charitable Institutions*”; “*Homeless Shelters*”; and “*Social Services*”. Most of these terms are undefined within the Code and left to staff to interpret how they would be applied. The City can assist in addressing land use issues related to homelessness or homeless service providers by establishing and/or amending a definition of each of these terms and taking a closer look at what zones would be most appropriate for allowing these types of uses to occur. This will assist in clearly classifying uses associated with low income and/or homeless related services, such as: food pantries; clothing distribution; meal programs; social service providers; laundry and shower services; day shelters; and overnight shelters. Providing a clear definition for these terms and outlining appropriate zones for them to locate will help to remove land use barriers that may occur when these uses are not clearly defined and identified within the appropriate zoning districts.

C. Financial/Resource Considerations.

Other than staff time needed to develop these programs and amendments it is anticipated that no other financial resources would be needed.

D. Timing Considerations.

The most pressing issue surrounding these amendments/programs involves the use of emergency shelters/warming centers. Amending the Code is a process which involves multiple public notices, public hearings, and can take several months to complete. In order to have something in effect by the time the weather begins to change and becomes cold enough to trigger a Severe Event Shelter, staff would recommend beginning the process now.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

Council can provide direction to staff to continue moving forward with all three of these items as indicated within the memo, or only items they determine are necessary at this time, until Council has held additional work-study sessions and made additional decisions.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends Council direct staff to continue moving forward with these changes as provided in this memo, with special emphasis surrounding emergency shelters/warming centers as colder weather approaches.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No motion required, just direction to staff to continue moving forward with developing code amendments/programs involving: emergency shelters/warming centers; authorized vehicle camping; and definitions of uses described within the zoning code involving homeless types of uses/services.

ATTACHMENTS

None

Response to Questions from Kevin Wagner, VA Mental Health

1. **How many veterans can you serve in your outpatient mental health/substance abuse programs?**

With all services and modalities included (outpatient mental health, community care, Clinical Resource Hub), we are tasked with offering SUD treatment for all Veterans in our catchment area. Wait times for outpatient services are lower than two weeks currently (same day access is available in emergencies). Residential treatment is more challenging as RRTP has been closed due to COVID contingencies and staffing issues, however we are working to provide those services either in the community or through a hybrid program in collaboration with other VAs in the region.

2. **How many for the inpatient services?**

10

3. **What are the barriers to service for these veterans, or what reasons do people give for not accessing them?**

I have put this question forward.

4. **Where do the people who are given vouchers stay?**

Veterans reside in a variety of situations after receive their vouchers and before they find housing. Frequently these Veterans are placed in Orchard Knoll transitional housing which allows them 2 years to find permanent housing. They have also been at the Rescue Mission. They can be on a friends couch. With COVID emergency services, the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Provider (UCAN) has been given broader latitude with providing emergency hotel placement to minimize or prevent exposure to Covid.

There is a limited amount of transitional housing, especially low barrier, options in Douglas County and Roseburg. It would be wonderful if a Community Provider would apply to provide VA Grant and Per Diem beds in Roseburg.

5. **Where do the 11 who are still looking go? I assume the street.**

They are in hotels, orchard knoll or with family/friends on couches

6. **You mentioned the United Gospel Rescue Mission. Is that the Roseburg Rescue Mission?**

My mistake. I apologize. The Shelter at my last duty station was called United Gospel Rescue Mission. I mean the Roseburg Rescue Mission.

Kevin D. Wagner

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Homeless Program Coordinator

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