



City of Stevenson

Leana Kinley, City Administrator

Phone (509)427-5970
FAX (509) 427-8202

7121 E Loop Road, PO Box 371
Stevenson, Washington 98648

To: City Council
From: Leana Kinley, City Administrator
RE: Camping Ordinance
Meeting Date: August 12, 2021

Executive Summary:

The city has received complaints regarding people camping under Rock Creek Bridge and creating unsanitary conditions. There is no ordinance preventing people from establishing encampments on city property or rights of way. The expectation is to present a draft ordinance for public input at the September 16th council meeting.

Overview:

There is no city code preventing the establishment of encampments on city property or within city rights of way. The recent complaints have been around an encampment under Rock Creek Bridge and near Kanaka Creek Underpass creating unsanitary conditions (pictures enclosed). Rock Creek Bridge is used by utilities to cross Rock Creek and contains water, sewer and natural gas pipelines. In the past the Sheriff's Office has been able to prevent or extinguish fires due to the natural gas pipeline.

Past discussions on this matter took place on August, September and October of 2019. It was tabled to pursue additional options to address the homeless concerns and was to be brought back in the spring of 2020 to reconsider. The COVID-19 pandemic hit and this fell off the radar. Concerns raised included citing a person for sleeping or taking a nap in their vehicle and criminalizing homelessness.

The example ordinance allows for people to camp from 9:30 pm to 6:30 am. It does not criminalize a person stopping to take a nap in their car and allows for the ability to camp no more than 14 calendar days a year by permit, provided health and safety conditions can be met as outlined in the ordinance. The example ordinance is mirrored after the City of Washougal and the City of Vancouver's codes, which have held up to the recent *Martin v. City of Boise* case (a city cannot prevent camping in public spaces when there are no alternatives/shelter space available).

The goal is to prevent encampments from being established, which are prevalent throughout Portland.

Action Needed:

Direction to staff on how to move forward:

- Move forward with presenting ordinance at September council meeting
- Public engagement process-additional steps above and beyond a public hearing
- No changes, do not move forward