



RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO DESIGNATE SAFE ZONES FOR HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS.

WHEREAS, homelessness in the City and County of Honolulu ("City") continues to be a pervasive problem in spite of efforts by government agencies and private service organizations; and

WHEREAS, the City has invested more than \$65 million in initiatives that aim to reduce homelessness on Oahu since the first "sit-lie" ban was adopted in 2014; and

WHEREAS, the City and the State of Hawaii, in addition to private and non-profit service agencies, provide services to assist homeless individuals, including temporary sheltering, housing, medical and psychological care, employment counseling, and substance abuse treatment; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Statewide Homeless Point-in-Time Count estimated that out of a total of 4,959 homeless persons living in the City, 2,324 individuals were unsheltered, an increase of approximately seven percent from last year; and

WHEREAS, homeless individuals may remain unsheltered for a variety of reasons, such as personal preference, lack of shelter space, and an inability or unwillingness to follow shelter rules and regulations; and

WHEREAS, alternatives to traditional homeless sheltering and housing programs might eliminate some of the barriers that prevent certain homeless individuals from seeking assistance; and

WHEREAS, designating suitable parcels of land, or "safe zones," would allow for low-cost, temporary shelters and facilities to be built for the homeless, offering them a place to stay without fear of eviction, providing access to shared bathroom and kitchen spaces, and enabling the delivery of social services in a secure setting; and

WHEREAS, the Low Income Housing Institute's Tiny House program in Seattle, Washington represents a successful model of city-sanctioned homeless encampments based around single room occupancy structures, shared facilities, and case management services; and



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, multiple experiments in providing temporary modular housing to Oahu's homeless are in various stages of development, including converted shipping containers at the Institute for Human Services-managed Hale Mauliola, prefabricated units at the aio Foundation-organized Kahauiki Village, and igloo-shaped shelters erected by the First Assembly of God, and could be replicated on future sites designated as safe zones; and

WHEREAS, safe zones or facilities for urban rest stops, navigation centers, and other community-focused projects could also offer a level of stability to homeless individuals, allowing them to address any pressing needs and eventually realize long-term solutions to their homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the Council appropriated \$18 million for Fiscal Year ("FY") 2017 and \$5 million for FY 2018 for the Community Revitalization Initiative capital improvement project, which would allow for "the land acquisition, lease, development and/or renovation of facilities for urban rest stops, navigation centers, workforce/affordable housing, and other community-focused projects..."; and

WHEREAS, in combination with other funding options, such as federal HOME Investment Partnerships and Community Development Block Grant funds, the \$23 million that the Council appropriated for the Community Revitalization Initiative capital improvement project for FY 2017 and FY 2018 could be used to help establish safe zones, or to expedite facilities for urban rest stops, navigation centers, and other community-focused projects for homeless individuals; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the City Administration is urged to designate safe zones for homeless individuals on Oahu, where these individuals would be provided temporary housing and would not be subject to ejection by government officials at any time of day or night and threatened with the loss of their possessions, or to expedite renovation of facilities for urban rest stops, navigation centers, and other community-focused projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, for the purpose of establishing safe zones, the City Administration is further urged to release the \$23 million from the FY 2017 and FY 2018 capital budgets as appropriated by the Council, for the Community Revitalization Initiative capital improvement project for the purpose of establishing safe zones or to expedite renovation of facilities for urban rest stops, navigation centers, and other community-focused projects, and to explore other funding options, such as federal HOME Investment Partnerships and Community Development Block Grant funds; and



RESOLUTION

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any safe zones established by the City Administration shall comply with the following:

1. Are not located within residentially zoned areas;
2. Shall not exceed 30 occupants for each encampment, and shall provide a minimum of 100 square feet for each occupant that is permitted to occupy the encampment site;
3. Shall be developed in consultation with and consideration of the best practices from the Low Income Housing Institute in Seattle;
4. Provides a sunset date for the safe zone of one year, with an option to extend for another year, to ensure that it does not remain open indefinitely; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is urged to prepare an official inventory of suitable City-owned sites, and of privately-owned sites for which agreements could be brokered, for safe zones throughout the island of Oahu, with the criteria for suitability to include cost estimates for the development of a parcel, adequacy of infrastructure, and a site's proximity to services, to transportation, and to temporary encampments previously established by homeless individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is urged to begin reaching out to potential partners, including nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and the construction industry, who may be interested in sponsoring and volunteering labor for the building of low-cost, temporary shelters and shared facilities in safe zones to be occupied by homeless individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration is requested to provide a progress report to the Council no later than 90 days after the adoption of this resolution; and



RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Community Services, and the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Housing.

INTRODUCED BY:

Ernest Martin

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

October 5, 2017
Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers