



## ORDINANCE NO. 28800

1 BY REQUEST OF COUNCIL MEMBERS THOMS, HUNTER, AND McCARTHY  
2 AN ORDINANCE relating to public health and safety, entitled "Pathways to  
3 Shelter and Stability"; and amending Title 8 of the Tacoma Municipal Code  
4 by enacting a new Chapter 8.19 thereto, to be known and designated as  
"Use of Public Property"; and providing for severability.

5 WHEREAS it is the policy of the City Council that all individuals residing in  
6 the City have adequate shelter, and this ordinance entitled "Pathways to Shelter  
7 and Stability" is intended to encourage and promote this objective, and  
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9 WHEREAS it is the City Council's intent that this ordinance will provide for  
10 and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the general public and not to create,  
11 either expressly or implicitly, or otherwise establish or designate any particular  
12 class or group of persons or individuals who will or should be especially protected  
13 or benefited or discriminated against by the terms of this ordinance; additionally,  
14 the purpose of this ordinance is to divert calls to the City requesting enforcement  
15 of criminal laws to using these calls for service to locate and provide shelter for  
16 persons currently experiencing homelessness, and  
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18 WHEREAS the Tacoma City Charter grants the City Council the authority to  
19 exercise the police power of the City established pursuant to Article XI, Section 11  
20 of the State Constitution, to preserve the public peace, health, and safety, and to  
21 regulate public property within the City, and  
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23 WHEREAS it is the City Council's intent that camping on public property is a  
24 public health and safety concern due to interference with other intended uses, such  
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1 as daily operations of the City; park recreational activities; pedestrian, bicycle, and  
2 vehicular traffic; and other public uses, and

3 WHEREAS it is the City Council's intent that camping without adequate  
4 sanitation services, such as sewer, water, and garbage, presents a public health  
5 and safety concern due to increased risk of spread of disease and potential for  
6 residents and visitors contracting illness, and

7 WHEREAS camping in such public property areas does not allow the public  
8 to use those areas for their intended purposes, and

9 WHEREAS it is the City Council's intent that this ordinance will provide that  
10 camping should only occur in designated campgrounds with proper facilities, when  
11 possible, and

12 WHEREAS the homeless population in the Puget Sound region continues to  
13 grow, and the City has experienced increasing use of its parks and public spaces  
14 property for camping and the storage of personal property, and

15 WHEREAS, pursuant to *Martin v. City of Boise*, 920 F.3d 584 (9th Cir. 2019),  
16 the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals determined that the United States Constitution  
17 prohibits the imposition of penalties for sitting, sleeping, or lying outside on public  
18 property, on homeless individuals who could not obtain shelter, and

19 WHEREAS the City Council hereby finds that the regulatory requirements  
20 established by the proposed ordinance are necessary to preserve the public peace,  
21 health, safety, and welfare; Now, Therefore,

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BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

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Section 1. That Title 8 of the Tacoma Municipal Code is hereby amended by the addition of a new Chapter 8.19 thereto, to be known and designated as "Use of Public Property," to read as set forth in the attached Exhibit "A."

Section 2. If any provision of this ordinance of its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

Passed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney



**EXHIBIT "A"**

**TITLE 8  
PUBLIC SAFETY**

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- Chapter 8.01 Penalty Provision
- Chapter 8.02 Abandoned Iceboxes
- Chapter 8.03 Defenses
- Chapter 8.04 Advertising
- Chapter 8.06 Aircraft
- Chapter 8.07 Baby Chicks And Rabbits
- Chapter 8.08 *Repealed*
- Chapter 8.09 *Repealed*
- Chapter 8.10 Deposit Of Trash In Or Around Charitable Donation Boxes
- Chapter 8.11 Arrest Of Persons Subject To Court Order
- Chapter 8.12 Disorderly Conduct
- Chapter 8.13 Obstructing Pedestrians Or Traffic
- Chapter 8.13A Regulation Of Solicitation
- Chapter 8.13B Solicitations To Occupants Of Vehicles On Public Roadways Prohibited
- Chapter 8.14 Display Of Certain Flags Prohibited
- Chapter 8.16 Display Of U.S. Flag Regulations
- Chapter 8.17 False Reports Of Crime
- Chapter 8.18 Impersonating Peace Officer
- [Chapter 8.19 Use of Public Property](#)

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**Chapter 8.19**  
**USE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY**

**Sections:**

- [8.19.010 Purposes.](#)
- [8.19.020 Defined Terms.](#)
- [8.19.030 Unauthorized Use Of Public Property.](#)
- [8.19.040 Unauthorized Storage Of Personal Property On Public Property.](#)
- [8.19.050 Penalty For Violations.](#)
- [8.19.060 Rules.](#)

**8.19.010 Purposes.<sup>1</sup>**

A. It is the purpose of this Chapter to promote the public health, safety, general welfare, and economic health and well-being of the City, its residents, and its visitors by making the areas of City of Tacoma Public Property open to the general public readily accessible, and to prevent the uses of Public Property which interfere with the rights of others to use Public Property for which it is intended and to prevent harm to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

B. It is also the purpose of this Chapter to provide for and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the general public and not to create, either expressly or implicitly, or otherwise establish or designate any particular class or group of persons or individuals who will or should be especially protected or benefited or discriminated against by the terms of this Chapter. Additionally, the purpose of this Chapter is to divert calls

<sup>1</sup>This ordinance is entitled "Pathways to Shelter and Stability."



to the City requesting enforcement of criminal laws to using these calls for service to locate and provide shelter for persons currently experiencing homelessness.

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C. For purposes of interpreting this Chapter, if any definition, requirement, or provision in this Chapter conflicts with those in a different provision or Chapter of the Tacoma Municipal Code, the definition, requirement, or provision in this Chapter shall apply.

**8.19.020 Defined Terms.**

As used in this Chapter, the following terms shall have the following definitions:

“Camp” means to pitch, erect, or occupy Camp Facilities, or to use Camp Paraphernalia, or both, for the purpose of, or in such a way as will facilitate, remaining overnight. The term shall not include overnight use of Public Property by the City or the governmental entity that owns or has a property interest in such Public Property.

“Camp Facilities” means, without limitation, tents, huts, and temporary shelters.

“Camp Paraphernalia” means, without limitation, blankets, pillows, tarpaulins, cots, beds or bedding, sleeping bags, hammocks, non-City designated cooking facilities, and/or other similar equipment.

“City” means the City of Tacoma, Washington, the area within the territorial limits of the City.

“Pier” means any pier, wharf, dock, float, gridiron, or other structure where watercraft may anchor or moor.

“Public Property” means all property in which the City or any other governmental entity has a property interest, including easements. The term includes, without limitation, all parks, Piers, Streets, trails, forests, park museums, pools, beaches, open spaces, public squares, public schools and associated athletic facilities, grounds around City or other publicly owned or leased buildings, including, but not limited to, parking lots, and any other property in which the City or any other governmental entity has a property interest of any type.

“Store” means to put aside, accumulate, or leave on Public Property for later use, or for safekeeping.

“Street” means, without limitation, any easements, highway, lane, road, street, right-of-way, boulevard, alley, and all Public Property open as a matter of right to public vehicle travel or parking.

**8.19.030 Unauthorized Use Of Public Property.**

Unless otherwise permitted by the Tacoma Municipal Code, it shall be unlawful for any person to Camp within any Public Property.

**8.19.040 Unauthorized Storage Of Personal Property On Public Property.**

It shall be unlawful for any person to Store personal property, including, without limitation, Camp Facilities and Camp Paraphernalia, on any Public Property.

**8.19.050 Penalty For Violations.**

Violation of Section 8.19.030 or Section 8.19.040 of this Chapter is a misdemeanor offense and shall be punished upon conviction of such violation by a fine of not more than \$1,000, or by imprisonment not to exceed 90 days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

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