

# **EMERGENCY ORDER – CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON**

**EO 2024-01**

**(Relating to Declaration of Civil Emergency 2023-01)**

## **REGARDING TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF SAFE STAY COMMUNITIES**

### **RECITALS**

**WHEREAS**, at 9:05 am on November 2, 2023, the City of Vancouver declared a civil emergency pursuant to Washington State Constitution Article VI, Section 11, Revised Code of Washington Chapter 38.52, and Vancouver Municipal Code (“VMC”) Chapter 2.12, due to the humanitarian crisis and public health emergency posed by homelessness (Declaration of Civil Emergency 2023-01); and

**WHEREAS**, the actions required by this Emergency Order are done pursuant to the legal authority cited in Declaration of Civil Emergency 2023-01; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is required by state law, by City Charter, and by the Vancouver Municipal Code to provide for the life, health, and safety needs of its citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, homelessness is a humanitarian crisis and those experiencing homelessness often suffer tremendous hardships, including job loss, mental health conditions, addiction, physical violence or even death; and

**WHEREAS**, homelessness has continued to increase in the City of Vancouver and, today, it is estimated that at least 522 individuals are unsheltered in the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Vancouver has taken aggressive efforts to increase the available supply of affordable housing, reduce incidents of homelessness, and mitigate the adverse impacts of homelessness, including by authorizing the operation of four Safe Stay Communities, which are permitted under VMC Chapter 8.22; and

**WHEREAS**, Safe Stay Communities have provided much needed shelter and services for approximately 430 previously unsheltered individuals, by offering temporary shelter, helping transition them to housing and to secure jobs, providing critical access to drug detox, inpatient, and/or medication-assisted treatment programs for sustained recovery, peer support, and by reuniting families; and

**WHEREAS**, under VMC 8.22.070(B)(2), an operator permit for a Safe Stay Community may be issued for a year and renewed no more than twice for a period not to exceed one year each; and

**WHEREAS**, Safe Stay 1, also known as the Outpost, is located at 11400 N.E. 51st Circle, in a portion of the public right of way that is not open to vehicular traffic, and the third and final operator permit for Safe Stay 1 will expire on December 22, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, Safe Stay 2, also known Hope Village, is located on City-owned land at 4915 E. Fourth Plain Blvd, and the third and final operator permit for Safe Stay 2 will expire on April 8, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Vancouver continues to explore ways to house more unsheltered individuals, including by opening winter and severe weather shelters and furthering plans to open a bridge shelter, which is anticipated to house up to 150 people and open during the second quarter of 2026; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to protect the life, health, and safety needs of its citizens, it is necessary for the City Manager to order the continued operation of Safe Stay Communities on City-owned land or in the public right of way as long as Declaration of Civil Emergency 2023-01 remains in effect.

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS DIRECTED AND ORDERED THAT:**

**Section 1. Safe Stay Operator Permits.** For the duration of this Emergency Order, the restriction on the duration of the operator permits under VMC 8.22.070, for purposes of Safe Stay 1 and Safe Stay 2 only, shall be suspended and the current operator permits will remain in effect.

**Section 2. Operation of Safe Stays.** The City Manager shall continue the operation of Safe Stay 1 and Safe Stay 2 and may enter into or extend contracts with service providers to maintain operation of the Safe Stay Communities.

**Section 3. Contracting and Procurement Authority.** The City Manager is hereby authorized to purchase goods and services deemed necessary to continue operation of Safe Stay 1 and Safe Stay 2 within the already-approved budget.

**Section 4. Community Outreach.** The City Manager shall direct staff to issue notification to City residents located within 1,200 feet of Safe Stay 1 and Safe Stay2, advising them of this Emergency Order, and seeking comment concerning the impacts of the respective Safe Stay Community in their neighborhood. After receiving community feedback, staff shall analyze the information and consider whether appropriate steps shall be taken to mitigate impacts. By April 7, 2025, the City Manager or their designee(s) will report back to City Council on the results of the community comment period and staff recommendations concerning whether the City should make efforts to mitigate the impacts of this Emergency Order.

**Section 5. Severability.** If any section or provision of this Emergency Order should be declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions of this Emergency Order shall remain in full force and effect for the duration specified herein.

**Section 6. Duration.** Unless modified, extended, or terminated by the Vancouver City Council or Vancouver City Manager, this Emergency Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until either the state of emergency is declared terminated under VMC 2.12.030 or the City Manager determines that there are sufficient resources to provide necessary shelter and services for the unhoused population in the City of Vancouver.

SIGNED, December 12, 2024, at 15 : 11 hours.

ATTEST:

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Natasha Ramras  
City Clerk

CITY OF VANCOUVER

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Lon Pluckhahn  
City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Jonathan Young  
City Attorney