



## King County

# Metropolitan King County Council Committee of the Whole

### STAFF REPORT

|                      |           |              |                 |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>Agenda Item:</b>  | 7         | <b>Name:</b> | Brandi Vena     |
| <b>Proposed No.:</b> | 2021-0318 | <b>Date:</b> | October 6, 2021 |

### SUBJECT

The proposed motion would request that the King County Executive transmit a report to the King County Council related to City Hall Park.

### SUMMARY

Throughout 2020 and into 2021, City Hall Park, which is owned and operated by the City of Seattle and is adjacent to the King County Courthouse, was the site of an encampment of people experiencing homelessness. The proposed motion would request that the Executive transmit a report to the Council which would include an exploration of options related to acquisition of the park by King County for future county uses and a plan for relocating any occupants of an encampment at City Hall Park.

### BACKGROUND

During the course of its COVID-19 response, King County appropriated \$50 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to support emergency homelessness response and related behavioral health services to assist at least 500 people living outside or in vehicles in downtown Seattle and the urban unincorporated areas of the county in finding alternative shelter options.

King County has also allocated funding to the local JustCARE alliance, which is an alliance of "multiple organizations that emerged in 2020 as many neighborhoods experienced an upsurge of people living unsheltered during the COVID-19 crisis . . . as response that [is] an alternative to enforcement or sweeps."<sup>1</sup> JustCARE works to resolve encampments in public space "by providing non-congregate, dignified emergency housing options like tiny homes and hotels."<sup>2</sup>

Throughout 2020 and into 2021, City Hall Park, which is owned and operated by the City of Seattle and located at 450 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave, adjacent to the King County Courthouse, was the site of an encampment of people experiencing homelessness. As of August 12, 2021, JustCARE placed a total of 65 people who had been living in City Hall Park in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://coleadteam.org/justcare/>

<sup>2</sup> Id.

safe shelter and emergency housing that they voluntarily accepted.<sup>3</sup> The City of Seattle has since temporarily closed City Hall Park.

## **ANALYSIS**

The proposed motion requests that the Executive explore options for acquiring City Hall Park from the City of Seattle for the purpose of using the park for future county purposes and transmit a report that includes all financial, operational, legal, and use considerations for the park. The proposed motion would request that the report also include a plan for relocating any occupants of an encampment in the park. The report would be transmitted to the Council by November 15, 2021.

## **AMENDMENTS**

There is a striking amendment to the motion. The striking amendment would add the following to the contents of the report requested of the Executive:

- Crime and incident statistics from Seattle police department, the King County Facilities Management Division, and the King County Sheriff's Office;
- Mapping nearby homeless shelters and services active in the summer of 2021;
- A description of engagement and workgroups with the City of Seattle, neighborhood groups, business organizations and service providers;
- A description of programs funded by King County and the City of Seattle that are designed to address homeless encampments in the park; and
- A plan to address safety concerns using methods such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) or another similar multi-faceted approach.

Lastly, the striking amendment changes the due date for transmittal of the report from November 15, 2021 to January 15, 2022.

The title amendment reflects the addition of assessing and addressing safety concerns relating to City Hall Park in the requested report.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Motion 2021-0318
2. Striking Amendment S1
3. Amendment 1
4. Title Amendment T1

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<sup>3</sup> JustCARE Update on City Hall Park, August 12, 2021 [\[LINK\]](#)