

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-06

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the City of Lakewood, WA expressing its intent and commitment to: work with other Pierce County governments to launch a Unified Regional Approach to Homelessness (URA); direct the City Manager to work collaboratively with other Pierce County governments to develop an interlocal agreement; and to make progress in addressing homelessness by taking certain actions while agreement(s) are in development.

WHEREAS, homelessness is a persistent and complex challenge in Pierce County with many root causes; and

WHEREAS, 1% of City of Lakewood's General Fund finances totaling \$1,034,000 is allocated in the 2025-2026 biennial budget to support a number of non-profit agencies providing a range of human and social services, including emergency shelter and homeless prevention services; and

WHEREAS, Lakewood has historically assisted Living Access Support Network (LASA) by working in partnership to help secure state and federal funds for LASA's hygiene center and with direct one-time ARPA partial funding for 25 affordable housing units' construction; and

WHEREAS in 2025, 480 individuals who reported that they last slept in Lakewood or their last permanent zip code was in Lakewood were served by emergency shelters; and

WHEREAS, during the 2024-2025 school year, 527 students in the Clover Park School District were supported by the McKinney-Vento program for children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and

WHEREAS, between 2022 and 2025, approximately 645 clients were served by Tacomaprobono's Housing Justice Project Eviction Prevention Services program, funded through a City of Lakewood American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) subaward; and

WHEREAS, from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, 279 eligible households in Lakewood applied for rental assistance through Pierce County's Eviction Prevention program; and

WHEREAS, governments across Pierce County share a common interest in ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring; and

WHEREAS, addressing homelessness requires coordinated solutions across jurisdictional boundaries; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, Pierce County adopted a Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness (CPEH) which included a goal to “Create a Unified Homeless System”; and

WHEREAS in October 2024, the Pierce County Council contracted with Uncommon Bridges to work with governments across Pierce County to scope, design, and implement a Unified Regional Approach to homelessness (URA) in Pierce County; and

WHEREAS in 2025 Uncommon Bridges began convening multiple meetings with an Elected Leadership Group (ELG) consisting of elected officials from governments in Pierce County to scope and design the URA; and

WHEREAS the ELG included elected leaders from Pierce County and the Cities of Auburn, Edgewood, Fife, Gig Harbor, Orting, Lakewood, Puyallup, Tacoma, and University Place; and

WHEREAS, in April 2025, the ELG proposed that the purpose of the URA is “to substantially reduce homelessness so that it is rare, brief, and non-recurring”; and

WHEREAS, in March 2026, the ELG proposed a URA design that includes a governance board to direct URA operations, consisting of representatives from participating governments and limited staffing to support URA operations; and

WHEREAS, in March 2026, the ELG proposed that the URA be established via Interlocal Agreement (ILA) pursuant to Chapter 39.34 RCW, without the establishment of a separate legal entity; and

WHEREAS, in March 2026, the ELG proposed that while an Interlocal Agreement is in development, participating Pierce County governments begin coordinating actions by aligning data requirements for providers, processes to support homeless households, and inclement weather policies; and

WHEREAS, in April 2026, the ELG proposed that the mission of the URA is to “empower Pierce County governments to choose locally responsive solutions to respond to and prevent homelessness, while establishing a countywide framework that supports coordination and efficient use of shared resources”; and

WHEREAS, while an ILA is in development, the Lakewood City Council desires to express support for the establishment of the URA and identify actions that Lakewood can take to align its homeless response with other Pierce County governments;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City of Lakewood City Council expresses its intent and commitment to work with other Pierce County governments to launch a Unified Regional Approach

to homelessness (URA) across Pierce County as proposed by the URA Elected Leadership Group (ELG.)

Section 2. The Lakewood City Council directs the City Manager to work collaboratively with other Pierce County governments to develop an Interlocal Agreement and other agreements necessary and desirable to achieve the intent of this Resolution, and to return at a future date with proposed agreements for the Council's consideration. The Interlocal Agreement should include mechanisms to ensure strong fiscal oversight and transparency in communicating with the public on the URA's work, funding, budget, and outcomes.

Section 3. While agreements are in development, the City of Lakewood expresses its intent to make progress in addressing homelessness through the following actions with the support of the team leading URA implementation and in collaboration with other Pierce County governments:

- Develop or update data collection requirements for homeless service providers to align with other participating governments;
- Develop or update a procedure to connect homeless residents to housing and shelter via existing systems like Coordinated Entry (the County's access point for housing referrals) and the Shelter Access Hub (a 24/7 call center that connects people to shelter options in Pierce County);
- Develop or update an inclement weather policy that includes coordination and alignment with other governments to connect homeless people with resources during inclement weather events;
- Identify locations in the City of Lakewood that may serve as inclement weather shelter; and
- Support establishment or expansion of at least one homeless intervention in Lakewood.

Section 4. This Resolution does not authorize execution of an Interlocal Agreement, nor does it create binding legal or financial obligations for the City of Lakewood.

PASSED by the City Council this 3rd day of August, 2026.

CITY OF LAKEWOOD



Paul Bocchi, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to Form:



Briana Schumacher, City Clerk



Heidi Wachter, City Attorney