

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Action: An Ordinance Continuing to Allow Tent Camping at Vehicle Campsites by Amending Section 5 of Ordinance 20484 to Extend the Sunset Date to December 31, 2014

Meeting Date: November 26, 2012
Department: Planning and Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 5
Staff Contact: Michael Wisth
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5540

ISSUE STATEMENT

This action is to consider an amendment to Section 5 of Ordinance No. 20484. Section 4.816 of the Eugene Code, 1971 (EC) allows people to sleep overnight in a vehicle, camper or trailer in a parking lot of a religious institution, place of worship, business or public entity that owns or leases property on which a parking lot and occupied structure are located, with permission of the property owner.

Ordinance No. 20484, which amended EC 4.816 to define tents as vehicles for the purpose of legal car camping is set to sunset on December 31, 2012. The council may choose to allow the amendment to sunset or extend the sunset date of Ordinance No. 20484.

BACKGROUND

EC 4.816 provides for the regulation of overnight sleeping. EC 4.816(1)(a) and (c) contain provisions for overnight sleeping in a vehicle, camper or trailer under certain circumstances and in certain areas.

On December 20, 2011, Ordinance No. 20484 was adopted granting a temporary exception to the provisions contained in EC 4.816(1)(a) and (c) concerning overnight sleeping, thus allowing overnight sleeping in a tent where overnight sleeping would be allowed in a vehicle. Without council action, Ordinance No. 20484 would have sunset on April 15, 2012.

On March 12, 2012, the council adopted Ordinance No. 20490, extending the April 15, 2012, sunset date to December 31, 2012. As amended, without council action, Ordinance No. 20484 will sunset on December 31, 2012.

Current Status

The homeless car camping program managed by St. Vincent de Paul provides important insights on the effects of the amendment to EC 4.816. At present, the program manages 25 permitted non-family sites accommodating between one and three vehicles each. These sites currently serve 56 people, two of whom are residing in tents. The waiting list for the program currently stands at 84 requests, 10 of which are for tents.

Issues

There are a number of issues to be considered when defining tents as vehicles for the purpose of car camping. Allowing tents does offer flexibility for siting homeless campers, as many of the homeless in the community do not have vehicles for camping.

Unlike vehicles, however, tents and the possessions within, are much less secure and may present more problems related to theft at managed car camping sites. Also, tents may appear less contained and compact than vehicles, leading to increased community concerns regarding the placement of managed sites. Further, sites considered adequate for tent campers (close to transit and services, proper surfaces for establishing a tent) are less prevalent when limited to parking lots, and paved and graveled surfaces.

St. Vincent de Paul and City staff continue work to identify potential sites adequate for managed car camping and engage the surrounding community to ensure a proper fit for campers and neighbors.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Eugene City Code provisions related to overnight camping (Eugene Code Chapter 4).

Council Goal for a Safe Community: A community where all people are safe, valued and welcome, including desired outcomes for decreased property crime, a greater sense of safety, visible and accessible police presence, and better police/community relations.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The council may choose to extend the sunset date of Ordinance No. 20484, or allow the amendment to sunset on December 31, 2012.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends extending the sunset date of Ordinance No. 20484 to December 31, 2014.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move to adopt Council Bill 5082 extending the sunset date of Ordinance No. 20484 to December 31, 2014.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Amendment to Ordinance 20484

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE CONTINUING TO ALLOW TENT CAMPING AT VEHICLE CAMPSITES BY AMENDING SECTION 5 OF ORDINANCE NO. 20484 TO EXTEND THE SUNSET DATE TO DECEMBER 31, 2014.

The City Council of the City of Eugene finds as follows:

A. Section 4.816 of the Eugene Code, 1971 (EC) provides for the regulation of overnight sleeping. EC 4.816(1)(a) and (c) contain provisions for overnight sleeping in a vehicle, camper or trailer under certain circumstances and in certain areas.

B. On December 20, 2011, Ordinance No. 20484 was adopted granting a temporary exception to the provisions contained in EC 4.816(1)(a) and (c) concerning overnight sleeping, thus allowing overnight sleeping in a tent where overnight sleeping would be allowed in a vehicle. Without Council action, Ordinance No. 20484 would have sunset on April 15, 2012.

C. On March 12, 2012, Council adopted Ordinance No. 20490, extending the April 15, 2012, sunset date to December 31, 2012. As amended, without Council action, Ordinance No. 20484 will sunset on December 31, 2012.

D. The December 31, 2012, sunset date should be further extended to December 31, 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF EUGENE DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The findings set forth above are adopted.

Section 2. Section 5 of Ordinance No. 20484 is amended to extend the December 31, 2012, sunset date to December 31, 2014.

Passed by the City Council this

_____ day of November, 2012.

City Recorder

Approved by the Mayor this

_____ day of November, 2012.

Mayor