

# Council Letter

## City of Danville, Virginia



CL - 736

NEW BUSINESS L.

### City Council REGULAR MEETING

**Meeting Date:** August 1, 2023

**Subject:** Consideration of Amending Danville City Code Regarding Unpermitted Camping.

**From:** Ken Larking, City Manager

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### COUNCIL ACTION

An Ordinance to Add Section 23-9.1 Entitled "Unpermitted Camping on City Property" to Chapter 23, Entitled "Offenses - Miscellaneous" of the Code of the City of Danville, Virginia.

### SUMMARY

City Staff is seeking approval from City Council to adopt an ordinance prohibiting camping on city properties, except in permitted camping areas.

### BACKGROUND

The City is responsible for managing public streets, sidewalks, and other public property within the boundaries of the City. This duty includes keeping streets and sidewalks open and free from potential obstructions that could cause injury, as well as preventing misuse of and damage to public property that can jeopardize the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. A potential source of public property obstruction, misuse, and damage is outdoor camping in unpermitted areas.

The Cities of Roanoke and Bristol passed ordinances to prohibit camping on public property in unpermitted locations last year. Passing a similar ordinance in Danville would give the Police and other City staff tools to prevent potential issues related to unpermitted camping, including street and sidewalk obstructions as well as damage to City property, and dangerous conditions faced by unpermitted campers. The proposed ordinance would also require any police officer enforcing the ordinance to provide information on available shelters and other forms of assistance available to persons in need. This information would be printed on ticket books and could easily be given out to help direct person in need to safe facilities.

Recently, the City hired a consultant to provide recommendations on how to best address homelessness. Staff is working with outside partners to evaluate the recommendations and determine next steps. The report is attached.

### RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommends adopting the attached ordinance prohibiting unpermitted camping on City Property.

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### Attachments

1. Ordinance
  2. Understanding Homelessness Danville VA
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