

Memorandum

TO: City Council Workshop
FROM: Brad Martens , City Manager
DATE: February 17, 2026
SUBJECT: Response to unsheltered individuals
ITEM NUMBER: 1.c
SECTION: GENERAL BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

INTRODUCTION

Over the past year there has been a slight increase in the amount of interactions between city or county staff and unsheltered individuals in the City of Shoreview. Until recently these interactions have taken place in park areas in which applicable laws exist to guide staff on how to proceed. More recently an individual has set up a camp along Rice St, south of I-694 which applicable laws do not exist to guide staff on how to proceed. It is requested the city council review the information in this report and provide direction to staff.

DISCUSSION

The City of Shoreview has had limited experience with unsheltered individuals in our community. Over the past four years staff has interacted with 4-6 individuals in coordination with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation, and Ramsey County Housing Services and Support division. The goal in these situations is to connect the individual with available resources provided by Ramsey County in hopes of assisting in finding housing.

Until this past year, each of those interactions have taken place in the open space park area operated by Ramsey County. The interactions typically begin with a report to the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office who makes contact with the individual. The individual is then informed that they are not allowed to camp in the park area, is provided resources available to them, and given a deadline to remove themselves from the area which is usually 48 hours. If the individual does not leave on their own, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office is able to enforce the laws that exist in these areas and remove the individual. The area is then cleaned by city or county staff.

In the fall of 2025 an unsheltered individual set up camp along Rice Street, south of I-694 in Ramsey County right-of-way. Once reported, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office made contact with the individual to offer resources with the goal of assisting to find shelter. The individual refused multiple contacts related to assistance over the first initial weeks. Following the decline of the offered assistance, city staff in coordination with county staff, and the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office reviewed city and county ordinances for potential options to remove the individual. Upon review by city and county attorneys it was determined that neither the city or

county had enforceable laws in place to remove the individual from the county right-of-way (see attached memo from the city attorney). It was determined at that time to continue to offer support and assistance to the individual hoping they would accept the assistance and move along with winter weather approaching and then work to review applicable ordinances for potential updates moving forward.

Over the winter months, not only has the individual continued to not accept resources, they have enhanced their camp area and appear to not have any desire to move from the area. An example of this desire to stay is the fact that the individual was removed twice for unrelated activities and returned despite the removal of their camp. In addition, concerns from the community continue and the area is filled with trash and other unsightly debris. A number of meetings have been held with leaders in law enforcement, human services, and legal departments and all efforts have been exhausted. At this point additional tools are needed.

The goal for staff in bringing this item forward is to obtain support from the city council to draft ordinance updates to allow for the removal of individuals camping in public areas within the city. Exercising the removal option would be a last resort following a substantial coordination with Ramsey County Housing Services and Support in coordination with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office.

The ordinance would be drafted in a way to achieve the results desired while attempting to not harm the individual in a punitive way, as much as possible. Attached to this report is a recent study published in July 2025 showing the challenges with criminalizing these behaviors and while ultimately not making an impact on the broader issue.

City Council should share their level of support for this approach and any additional information or concerns they may have on this topic. If there is support to draft ordinance updates, staff would bring the proposed changes through the public safety committee and the human rights commission for review prior to final review by the city council.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff on whether or not to proceed with ordinance updates related to unsheltered individuals in the City of Shoreview.

ATTACHMENTS

[Memo.Unsheltered Rice Street.pdf](#)

[Do Criminalization Policies Impact Local Homelessness.pdf](#)