

R F2020.14

A Resolution Advocating for Collaboration between Local Government and Administration to Establish Emergency Shelters on Campus by Expressing Support for Ann Arbor City Council Resolution R-20-373

A bill for the consideration of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government

December 2, 2020

Sponsored by: Zackariah Farah, Erik Williams, Selena Bazzi, Anna Colvin, Gabriela Torres, Caroline Theuerkauf, Magda Wojtara, Kayla Rothstein, Jacob Cohen, Claudia McLean, Mary McKillop, Danny Hwang, Riley List, Sarah Salino

Whereas, the mission of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government (hereafter LSA SG) is to “actively seek the voices of LSA students and advocate their interests to improve academic and non-academic life”;¹ and,

Whereas, LSA SG Elected Representative Zackariah Farah was contacted by Ann Arbor City Council Member Elizabeth Nelson regarding the suggestions made in City Council Resolution R-20-373,² *Resolution to Partner with The University of Michigan to Provide Emergency Shelter in Ann Arbor*; and,

Whereas, City Council Resolution R-20-373 calls for a meeting “... between representatives from the University of Michigan, the Washtenaw County Health Department, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development and any other local entities that would provide services for and coordinate the use of University housing units for emergency shelter this winter season 2020-2021,”; and,

Whereas, in May, 2020, Ann Arbor City Council unanimously approved appropriating \$250,000 to cover costs incurred by the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County in March and April,

¹The Constitution of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government. Article II
²<http://a2gov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4641011&GUID=052B71ED-44BB-4A32-8BB9-942665492B39&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=shelter&FullText=1>

when shelters reached capacity, which necessitated the reservation of 106 rooms at the Red Roof Inn;³ and,

Whereas, the City Council has a limited budget to pay for hotel rooms to house the Ann Arbor homeless population; and,

Whereas, the homeless shelters in Ann Arbor are classified as congregate shelters⁴; these congregate shelters, when at high capacity, unnecessarily increase the risk of COVID-19 infection in an already vulnerable population; and,

Whereas, since the week of October 11th, there has been a troubling growth in the number of reported COVID-19 cases both on campus and off campus, with an increase in weekly cases of 78.9% and 105.6% respectively⁵; and,

Whereas, the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County (SAWC) is actively searching for housing space to use as shelters⁶; and,

Whereas, the average temperature during Michigan winters ranges between 9 and 24 degrees Fahrenheit, leaving homeless people in Ann Arbor at risk of sickness or even death without adequate lodging; and,

Whereas, during the nationwide polar vortex in 2019, there were at least 21 weather-related deaths in the United States, with hospitals also documenting the treatment of even more patients with frostbite several of whom were homeless; and,

Whereas, U-M housing has announced plans to reduce density in residential halls for the Winter 2021 semester by requesting that all students who don't need to live in residence halls remain at their permanent residences for the semester⁷, which will leave a significant portion of the residential halls vacant; and,

Whereas, several other universities including Suffolk University⁸ and Sonoma State University⁹ have already worked with local shelter associations and government officials to house homeless

³<https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2020/10/dozens-of-homeless-people-staying-at-ann-arbor-hotel-to-be-relocated-to-shelters.html>

⁴<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/shared-congregate-house/guidance-shared-congregate-housing.html>

⁵<https://campusblueprint.umich.edu/dashboard/>

⁶<https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2020/10/shelter-association-of-washtenaw-county-seeking-help-to-provide-safe-winter-sheltering.html>

⁷<https://record.umich.edu/articles/plans-announced-for-winter-semester-academics-housing-testing/>

⁸<https://www.wcvb.com/article/boston-mayor-walsh-coronavirus-update-march-29-2020/31968871>

⁹<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/first-homeless-residents-move-into-sonoma-state-university-amid-coronavirus/>

city residents and have created long term emergency housing plans in the event that the shelters reach their safe capacity; and,

Whereas, Central Student Government (CSG) unanimously passed a similar resolution on December 1st, 2020, advocating for collaboration between U of M administration and local government officials to address this issue.¹⁰

Be it therefore resolved, that LSA SG urges the administration to meet with representatives from Washtenaw County Health Department, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, and the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County to discuss City Council Resolution R-20-373; and,

Be it further resolved, that LSA SG encourages administration to consider the use of residence halls and other appropriate university facilities and areas for use as emergency housing; and,

Be it further resolved, that LSA SG supports the University in implementing common-sense measures as part of this contingency plan necessary to maintain safety of the campus community and respect of University property at all times; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG supports the consideration of the use of residence halls that are entirely closed to students for emergency housing; and,

Be it further resolved, that this resolution be sent to Susan Collins, the University Provost, Rick Gibson, the University Director of Housing, Jasmine Clay, Director of Residence Education, and Jennifer Erb-Downward, Senior Research Area Specialist at U-M's Poverty Solutions Initiative; and,

Be it finally resolved, that Appendix A contains a copy of R-20-373 passed by Ann Arbor City Council.

¹⁰<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15kolrUQJYOWr7TTRqGwatb89x61PhJFRZjROLFP3AQ/edit>

Appendix A



City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Legislation Text

File #: 20-1417, **Version:** 2

Resolution to Partner with The University of Michigan to Provide Emergency Shelter in Ann Arbor
Whereas, Local governmental and nonprofit organizations provide additional emergency shelter during the winter season in Ann Arbor;

Whereas, If there is a resurgence of COVID 19 (similar to the experience we had at the start of the pandemic) , past strategies for providing additional congregant emergency shelter would not be preferred

Whereas, Ann Arbor anticipates an increased need for safe, noncongregant emergency shelter during the winter season of 2020-2021 if there is a resurgence of COVID-19 cases;

Whereas, Emergency shelter can be (and has been) negotiated from local businesses that traditionally only provide housing for a fee and for a profit. E.g. The Ann Arbor community (through the Washtenaw County and its partners) currently provides emergency shelter at a local hotel

Whereas, The University of Michigan and the city of Ann Arbor are partners in promoting the health and safety of our shared community;

Whereas, The University of Michigan has previously allowed City use of University-owned property in arrangements (e.g. anticipated temporary use of the University Art Museum by the Ann Arbor City Clerk's office);

RESOLVED, The City of Ann Arbor will immediately take steps to discuss with the University of Michigan the possibility of using available housing units at their Ann Arbor campus in anticipation of a possible resurgence of the COVID-19 virus and the winter season 2020-2021, to meet the increased need for safe, emergency housing in our local community;

RESOLVED, The City Administrator is directed to seek to schedule a meeting between the City Council of Ann Arbor and the Regents of the University of Michigan to occur before November 1, 2020, to discuss Ann Arbor temporary emergency shelter needs;

RESOLVED, The City Administrator is directed to coordinate a meeting to occur before November 1, 2020, among appropriate representatives from the University of Michigan, the Washtenaw County Health Department, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development and any other local entities that would provide services for and coordinate the use of University housing units for emergency shelter this winter season 2020-2021.

Sponsored by: Council Members Nelson and Hayner

As Amended and Approved by Ann Arbor City Council on September 21, 2020