



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

City of Bellingham

And

Local 1937

Guild of Pacific Northwest Employees

Use of Private Security Guards and Safety Patrols

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose is to memorialize the agreement regarding the City's use of private security guards and safety patrols at various City premises in order to better protect and preserve the safety of our employees, enhance public safety services and reduce vandalism and destruction of City property. The intent is to supplement and not supplant current security staff.
- II. **SCOPE:** This agreement covers security work throughout the various City departments and properties.
- III. **AGREEMENT:**

WHEREAS, in January 2022, the City contracted with a private security firm also referred to as "Downtown Safety Patrols" to conduct daytime and nighttime security patrols in the downtown core (see Attachment 1 – Map) which had increased need for services and nighttime patrols of open spaces and perimeter checks on City-owned facilities;

WHEREAS, in April 2022 the "Downtown Safety Ambassador Program" was established through the Downtown Bellingham Partnership (DBP) in order to provide needed support to downtown businesses by establishing enhanced foot and bike patrols within the public right-of-way, which focus on de-escalation, hospitality, and coordination with outreach teams to connect people to services and resources;

WHEREAS, the Ambassador program has been a success and DBP and community stakeholders have expressed interest in continuing the program;

WHEREAS, in 2023 Bellingham has seen a dramatic increase in the use of illegal drugs in City-owned facilities and open spaces;

WHEREAS, in 2023 our communities are struggling with the impacts of a regional and nation-wide fentanyl and meth use crisis manifesting locally, specifically resulting in more frequent unpredictable and unacceptable behavior from some residents in our City-owned facilities and open spaces;

WHEREAS, in 2024 the two programs referred to as “Downtown Safety Patrols” and “Downtown Safety Ambassador Program” will be melded and called “Downtown Safety Patrols”,

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree that:

Private Security Guard and Safety Patrol Contracts administered through Planning and Community Development

- The City may continue to provide financial support through the DBP or through direct contracts for Private Security Guards or Safety Patrols through 12/31/2024; and
- The City may continue to contract with private security guards or safety patrols for daytime and nighttime regular emphasis patrols within a limited area in the downtown core, patrolling the streets, alleys, sidewalks, City-owned parking garages, and the exterior of City facilities through 12/31/2024; (see Attachment 1 – Map); and
- The City may contract with private security guards or safety patrols to patrol specific emphasis areas, such as 22North, Basecamp, the alley between Railroad and Cornwall avenues, including adjacent to the Horseshoe Café, and Unity Circle. The City will endeavor to communicate to the Union President to the best of its ability when and where emphasis patrols are performed beyond those locations listed above.

Private Security Guard and Safety Patrol Contracts administered by the Parks & Recreation Department

- The City may contract with private security guards or safety patrols to patrol the following locations during nighttime hours through 12/31/2024:
 - Maritime Heritage Park, Waypoint Park and the Civic Complex
 - Emphasis patrols at other Park locations experiencing significant amounts of unwanted, unsafe, or destructive behavior. The City will endeavor to communicate to the Union President to the best of its ability when and where emphasis patrols are performed.
 - Additional security from 6-9 am will be added to support the winter shelter located in the Civic Stadium locker rooms from December 2023 - February 2024, and
- The City does not anticipate that private security guards or safety patrols are a permanent solution and will actively research alternatives which may include the introduction of Park Rangers (or something similar), schedule changes to conduct patrols in the evening hours, or other options not yet identified; and

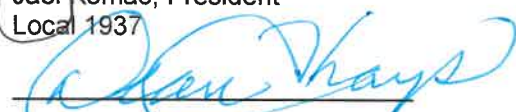
- Potential solutions will be evaluated and brought forward for consideration during the 2025-2026 biennium budget process.

Private Security Guard and Safety Patrol Contracts administered through Planning and Community Development and Parks & Recreation Department

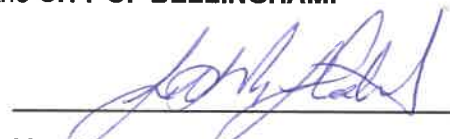
- The parties shall meet by June 30, 2024, to discuss potential solutions and next steps.
- The parties agree to preserve their respective positions regarding safety patrols in outside areas constituting Local 1937 bargaining unit work. This agreement shall not preclude Local 1937 from filing a Unit Clarification petition with PERC at any time and shall not be construed as the City conceding this scope of work is bargaining unit work nor preclude the City from continuing to use contracted services as agreed upon.
- The parties agree that no bargaining unit member or current bargaining unit work will be displaced by contractors performing work covered under this MOU.
- Any disputes pertaining to the terms of this agreement shall be resolved through the CBA grievance procedure.

EXECUTED, this 1st day of December, 2023 for **Local 1937**:


Jael Komac, President
Local 1937


Dean Tharp, Staff Representative
Guild of Pacific Northwest Employees

DATED this 15th day of December, 2023 for the **CITY OF BELLINGHAM**:


Mayor

ATTEST:


Finance Director


Human Resources Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Office of the City Attorney