

Wilmington, Delaware
June 4, 2026

#0240

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Darby**

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmington and the State of Delaware have experienced a growing homelessness crisis driven by rising housing costs, lack of affordable housing, untreated mental health and substance use needs, economic instability, and gaps in supportive services; and

WHEREAS, the encampment at Christina Park originated after actions and policies under the administration of Mayor John Carney resulted in individuals being relocated and concentrated in the area without a long-term, sustainable housing strategy. While the current conditions at Christina Park are not appropriate, safe, or humane for long-term habitation, displacement without meaningful alternatives will only worsen instability, trauma, and vulnerability for unhoused residents; and

WHEREAS, homelessness is fundamentally a housing, healthcare, and public health issue that requires a sustained investment in affordable housing and supportive services. Individuals currently residing at Christina Park are members of our community and deserve to be treated with dignity, compassion, humanity, and respect regardless of their housing status; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmington currently lacks a dedicated, adequately funded office or senior-level position within the Mayor’s Office specifically tasked with coordinating homelessness response efforts, housing navigation strategies, outreach services, and interagency collaboration; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wilmington recognizes the important role of community-based organizations in providing outreach, housing navigation, case management, and supportive

services to individuals experiencing homelessness. Successful responses to homelessness require coordinated partnerships between government agencies, healthcare systems, service providers, housing organizations, and community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, adequate funding, operational readiness, and transition planning must be secured prior to any forced displacement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this Council urges the Mayor’s Administration to immediately halt any forced removal or closure of the Christina Park encampment scheduled for or around June 15, 2026, until a comprehensive, humane, and adequately funded transition plan is fully operational.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council urges the Administration to ensure that no individual residing at Christina Park is displaced unless the following conditions are met: appropriate shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or alternative safe placement options are available; case management and supportive services are coordinated prior to relocation; individuals are provided clear communication and reasonable timelines regarding any transition process; and outreach organizations and service providers are actively involved in all planning and implementation efforts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council supports the partnership efforts of Friendship House and other community-based providers working directly with unhoused residents and encourages the Administration to expand collaborative efforts with experienced service organizations. The Council further calls for the allocation of adequate and recurring funding to support direct service contracts with qualified nonprofit and community-based organizations that provide street outreach, emergency housing navigation, mental health and

substance use support services, case management, transitional and permanent supportive housing assistance, and employment and stabilization services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council recommends that the Administration ensure that the Springboard Project, or any replacement transitional housing initiative, is fully funded, staffed, operational, and capable of safely receiving residents prior to any closure or forced displacement at Christina Park.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council recommends the creation of a senior-level Homelessness Response Coordinator position within the Office of the Mayor responsible for:

- Coordinating citywide homelessness response efforts;
- Managing relationships with service providers, healthcare systems, and housing organizations;
- Overseeing outreach and housing navigation strategies;
- Tracking homelessness data and outcomes;
- Identifying and pursuing state, federal, and philanthropic funding opportunities;
- and
- Developing long-term plans to reduce chronic homelessness in the City of Wilmington.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council requests that the Administration provide City Council with a written transition timeline for Christina Park residents, a list of available housing and service placements, the operational status and funding plan for the Springboard Project, details regarding partnerships with nonprofit providers, and

recommendations for establishing a coordinated homelessness response structure within 30 days of passage of this Resolution.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution calls for a humane, coordinated transition plan for individuals residing at Christina Park prior to any encampment closure or displacement. It urges the Administration to ensure housing placements, supportive services, and operational readiness of transitional housing initiatives before relocation efforts proceed. The Resolution also supports expanded partnerships with community service providers and recommends the creation of a Homelessness Response Coordinator within the Office of the Mayor to oversee long-term homelessness strategy and coordination efforts.