

Highlights of A New Approach to Tent Encampments on Sidewalks and Other Transportation Rights-of-Way—January 24, 2022 V1

Based on our review of current systems and discussions with key City employees, we are developing a plan that includes the following acknowledgments and action steps.

- 1. Continue close coordination with the KC Regional Homelessness Authority.** The City has a good working relationship with RHA; it's essential that this continues. This means supporting the RHA Neighborhood Zero plan for downtown, a pilot that can be replicated in other neighborhoods as it proves successful. (This downtown plan will likely be announced in mid-February with a broad group of key stakeholders, including Mayor Harrell, Executive Constantine, Gov Gregoire, Marc Dones, and others.)
- 2. Create a Unified Care Team.** The City does not currently have a strategic and fully integrated system to respond to the presence of tent encampments on sidewalks and other transportation rights-of-way, parks, and other public spaces. The UCT will include representatives of City departments, have decision making authority, and direct operations. Those assigned to the UCT will report directly to the mayor or his designee.
- 3. End tent encampments on sidewalks and transportation rights-of-ways.** Announce that tents will no longer be allowed on these rights-of-way or any portion of them, a step that is essential to the economic recovery of the downtown and our neighborhood business areas.¹ Campers that remain will be given two hours' notice to leave.² Hope Team and RHA outreach teams will offer services as appropriate, but these services will not be a prerequisite before asking campers to clear the public space.

Tent locations will be prioritized for clearing based on these specific criteria: (1) public health and safety risks, (2) blockage of medical centers, retail, office, and hospitality locations, (3) more than minimal obstruction, and (4) all other sidewalks and transportation rights-of-way.
- 4. Create a databank and public dashboard.** The City currently has multiple data sets related to homelessness; they are not integrated. The Innovation and Performance Team is creating this new databank now; City department are very cooperative with this process.
- 5. Close the loop with people who complain about tents, RVs, and related homelessness issues.** The City has multiple ways people can report/complain about encampments, but there is not a coordinated response mechanism to close the loop. The IP Team is working on

¹ Downtown needs a specific recovery plan. OPCD, OED, OH, HSD, RHA, and SPD all need to coordinate with key downtown stakeholders to develop and execute this plan.

² City staff, including specially trained police officers, will be present when campers are notified that they must relocate. This is a harm-reduction approach, meaning campers will be asked to leave/relocate so the space remains clear and accessible by all.

Commented [MD1]: This makes a lot of sense to me. Does this include representation from health one / outreach? Do you imagine this as a mobile response unit or a planning table more like the Unified Command Model of the NZ work?

Commented [MD2]: This seems like something that would be more successful if implemented completely after NZ drawdown phase is complete. Because then it's about *keeping* sidewalks and right of ways clear.

Commented [MD3]: This feels difficult to enforce. How will people be made aware of the shift in rules? I would also extend the initial timeline so that when it's announced people have X amount of time but then in the future they have Y amount of time. This might also comport with aligning this to fully come into effect after NZ drawdown is complete.

Commented [MD4]: I think you want to distinguish here between offering services and offering a shelter bed. If we acknowledge that we don't always have the right shelter resources in place that doesn't absolve us of offering support. My offering here would be that we do always have to offer support via connection to outreach or a peer navigator—which is different from offering a shelter bed. I'm also curious if you're asking people to clear the right of way specifically or 'public space' which is different (to my mind) in terms of what's possible.

recommendations for a system to report back, another essential element in our plan to assure people that they are being heard and cared for.

6. **Create 2,000 units of emergency housing units in 2022.** These units will be enhanced shelter spaces, tiny-houses, hotel-motel rooms, and other forms of temporary housing. While RHA now has responsibility for emergency housing, the City has a vital continuing role to play here, including the use of mayoral powers to accelerate development and siting.

Commented [MD5]: Yay. We also need to discuss budget here. I expect that the Authority will be able to offer up several hundred new spaces in 2022 but without the state investment thousands will not be possible. Also worried about staffing spaces as they open as we continue to struggle with burnout and resignations