Improved System for Management of Homeless Encampments Status Update

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May 11, 2022
Agenda

• Describe Current State
• Review recommendations
• Provide progress report
• Review key deliverables
• Timeline
• Invite feedback
Current State Indicators

- Regular participation of 10+ departments, principally:
  - Austin Resource Recovery
  - Public Works
  - Watershed Protection
  - Parks & Recreation
  - Austin Police Department

- Requests for service far exceed capacity

- Average Monthly Sites* Serviced/Refuse Removed
  (*includes abandoned sites, repeat visits, both enforcement/non-enforcement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Average Monthly Sites</th>
<th>Average Monthly Refuse (Tons)</th>
<th>Data From</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Austin Resource Recovery</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>10/21 - 3/22</td>
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<td>Public Works</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10/21 - 4/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austin Watershed</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5/21 - 4/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>68 Sites</td>
<td>138 Tons</td>
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</table>
Improvement Process

Participating Departments

- Austin Code
- Austin Energy
- Austin Fire
- Austin Police
- Austin Public Health, Homeless Strategy Division
- Austin Public Library
- Austin Resource Recovery
- Austin Transportation
- Austin Water
- Communications and Public Information Office
- Communications and Technology Management
- Downtown Austin Community Court
- Emergency Medical Services
- Financial Services - Performance
- Law
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works
- Watershed Protection
Pain Points

Process

• Lack of a unified response
• Each department manages own prioritization
• Difficult to track encampment work at citywide level
• Cyclical nature of work
• Accelerated burn down on contracts and diversion of resources

People

• Insufficient resources to meet need for PEH (Displacement versus shelter/rehousing)
• Staff burnout
• Opportunities for training

Technology

• Numerous data systems with various levels of maturity
• Staff are collecting different types of data
• Cannot get a citywide picture with current technology
Improvement Recommendations

**Process**
- Central Response Structure
- Coordinated Prioritization and Resource Deployment
- Communication Plan (COA to PEH, COA to Public, between Departments)
- Standardized Protocol (biohazard cleanup, property, etc.)

**People**
- Central Hub For Staff Resources
- Increased Staff Training

**Tech**
- System for Tracking Camps, Prioritization, Resources, and Response
**Currently Underway**

**Phase 1: Central Response Structure**
- Mission, Preliminary Goal & Objective, and Guiding Principles Established
- Organizational Structure Developed

**Phase 2: HEM Prioritization Tool**
- HEAL Prioritization Tool Modified
- CTM Supporting Development
- Testing beginning in May
Phase 1: Central Response Structure

• **Value:**
  - Applies citywide lens to encampment response, so action is prioritized and resources deployed to encampments that present the highest risk to health and safety
  - Supports consistency in encampment actions
  - Supports improved communication across departments

• **Progress:**
  - Mission, Preliminary Goal & Objective, and Guiding Principles Established
  - Organizational Structure and Governance Developed

• **Next Steps:**
  - Leadership team underway
  - Full team activation following prioritization tool implementation
Phase 1: Central Response Structure

**Mission:** Provide a coordinated, cross-departmental City response to encampments that prioritizes the health and safety of all Austinites and strives to preserve human dignity and respect.

**Guiding Principles:**
- Everyone experiencing unsheltered homelessness deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every effort will be made to connect individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness with available resources and housing, recognizing limited availability.
- When determining interventions, the homeless encampment response team prioritizes safety and health while also considering impacts to infrastructure, property, and environmental health.
- Inclusive and equitable public space management recognizes that the public space throughout our community is used for a variety of purposes and should be clean and accessible for all.
Mission: Provide a coordinated, cross-departmental City response to encampments that prioritizes the health and safety of all Austinites and strives to preserve human dignity and respect.

Preliminary Goal: Reduce the negative impact of encampments

Preliminary Objective: Reduce acuity of encampments scores
Will update how this is measured as we progress further in development of homeless encampment prioritization tool

- Additional goals and objectives will develop as the team matures
- The team will track other metrics, including 311 calls related to homelessness, 311 duplicate callers related to homelessness, costs of cleanups, number of fire events, etc. to understand trends and inform additional goal and objective development
Phase 1: Central Response Structure

**Planning Section**
- Maintains situational awareness of homeless encampments citywide and develops prioritization and response plans

**Operations & Logistics Section**
- Develops operational plans, including resource needs/commitments, and carries out plans; activated when a camp has been selected for closure

**Policy Section**
- Develops homeless encampment citywide policies and procedures (i.e., closure protocol, biohazard, property); activated as needed

**Leadership Team**
- Establishes goals and objectives and sets long term strategy; reviews and approves prioritization, response, and operational plans
Phase 2: HEM Prioritization Tool

• Value:
  • Applies citywide lens to encampment response, so action is prioritized and resources deployed to encampments that present the highest risk to health and safety
  • Supports consistent data capture across encampments citywide
  • Improves understanding of needs, risks, and trends across encampments citywide

• Progress:
  • Modeled using the HEAL Prioritization tool; have updated questions so a single tool can meet both prioritization for closure with and without HEAL
  • Scoring is being finalized for testing to begin in May

• Next Steps:
  • CTM creating beta version for testing; Team will test and work with CTM to refine
  • Estimated implementation in early July
Progress

- Central Response Structure: Complete
- Coordinated Prioritization and Resource Deployment: Underway by Partner Teams
- Communication Plan: Underway
- Standardized Protocol: Kickoff Mid-May

People
- Central Hub For Staff Resources: Not Started
- Increased Staff Training: Underway in Partner Departments

Tech
- System for Tracking Camps, Prioritization, Resources, and Response: Underway
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<th>END</th>
<th>MARCH</th>
<th>APRIL</th>
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Questions?