

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 16, 2024

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Enhanced “Street to Home” Encampment Response**

In my 100-Day Transition Playbook, I identified Homelessness as one of the six Primary Focus Areas. Today, I’m pleased to share with you an update on our collaborative work to address visible, chronic homelessness in public spaces.

During my first several days as Interim City Manager, I convened the leadership of Housing Forward and Downtown Dallas, Inc. (DDI), to determine how we could bolster our work to tackle chronic homelessness more effectively, with an initial focus on the Central Business District.

We have made historic progress reducing homelessness in Dallas, with a 24 percent reduction in unsheltered homelessness in Dallas and Collin Counties through our Continuum of Care since 2021. The Continuum of Care’s goal is to raise that figure to 50 percent by 2026.

With the concentration of homelessness in parks, on sidewalks, and on private property in Downtown and other areas of Dallas, we determined that it was necessary to immediately activate. The City of Dallas, in collaboration with the All Neighbors Coalition (led by Housing Forward), DDI, and nearly a dozen other partners, developed an enhanced “Street to Home” encampment response plan. We then identified focus areas with the highest concentration of homelessness. Beginning in July, outreach teams engaged with individuals living in those areas on the southern side of Downtown daily to offer a path to permanent housing, along with critical behavioral and physical health services.

Part of what makes this initiative different from past encampment closures is the strategic focus on ensuring public spaces remain clear after all residents have been housed. This first phase focused on the city center and will radiate from there. The City is leading a comprehensive Closure Maintenance Action Plan to ensure that once a targeted location is cleared of encampments, no one is allowed to sleep, loiter, or commit any other quality of life violations there. Kevin Oden, Director of the Office of Emergency Management and Crisis Response, is leading the implementation and refinement of that plan, through the City Action Strike Team (CAST).

Yesterday morning, August 15, we permanently closed the encampment in the area surrounding the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library. That means the people who had been living in that area have been placed in permanent housing with intensive support services. It also means we have activated the Closure Maintenance phase for the area surrounding

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the library and will be devoting substantial City and partner resources to ensuring the area remains clear of new homeless encampments and related quality of life challenges.

This is an ongoing operation, with at least two more designated zones in Downtown expected to close before the end of September. Once that happens, we will be prepared to deliver a more comprehensive briefing to the Housing and Homelessness Solutions Committee in mid-Fall. That briefing will include the total number of people housed through this initiative, Closure Maintenance performance metrics, and updates on potential future locations for similar initiatives across the city. **Until that time, it is important that further details of this operation remain confidential because of the sensitive nature of the work.**

Should you have additional questions or need more information, please contact me or Assistant City Manager Alina Ciocan, alina.ciocan@dallas.gov.

Service First, Now!



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