City Manager's Report

November 15, 2022

THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE



Presentation Overview

- Homelessness Initiatives
  - Homeless Strategy Division Updates
  - 2022-2023 Code Purple Plan
  - Unsheltered Homelessness Consultant - Needs Assessment and Recommendations Presentation Schedule

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Key Takeaways

- The City and partners across the community are collaborating to add capacity to respond to homelessness
- There is a stronger, more participatory Code Purple planning process this year, currently with 105 available shelter beds
    - There are 27 additional Code Purple shelter beds available this year
- Report from the National Alliance to End Homelessness in January will provide specific recommendations to help guide our collective efforts
    - January 25 City/County Work Session to discuss findings and recommendations

Homeless Strategy Division Updates

- Division formed July 2022
- Comprised of four team members:
  - Division Manager (hired July 2022)
  - Data and Compliance Specialist (hired September 2022)
  - Training and Development Specialist (interviewing)
  - Integrated Health and Housing Specialist (interviewing)
- Focus on building community capacity to strengthen response to homelessness
  - Fulfill City's responsibilities as Continuum of Care Lead Agency
  - Support the Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee (Continuum of Care Governance Board)

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Homeless Strategy Division Updates

Progress since July 2022:

- Managed community process to develop and submit applications for federal funding for homeless programs
  - US Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Program: $1,977,474 (pending)
  - NC Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Solutions Grant: $128,187 (awarded)
- Initiated and facilitated community workgroups: Code Purple, Healthcare and Homelessness, Outreach, System Leaders
- Supported National Alliance to End Homelessness in extensive data collection for comprehensive needs assessment of unsheltered homelessness

Code Purple

- Long standing community shelter initiative to expand capacity and flex requirements when the temperature is 32 or below
  - Started by shelter providers in 2009
  - Shelter participation is voluntary and varies year to year
  - Homeless Coalition leads communication and develops operations manual
  - No formal role established for City or County historically
- Operational complications during the pandemic led to increased City and County involvement and funding
- This fiscal year for the first time both the City and County have budgeted funding to support Code Purple

Code Purple

2022-2023 Winter Season Planning Process

- Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee (HIAC) formed a Code Purple Work Group, which developed the plan over 4 meetings
- Planning began earlier than last year with much stronger community participation
- Work Group presented plan to HIAC at their September 23, 2022 meeting
- Homeless Coalition Co-Chairs updating and publishing manual

Code Purple

Code Purple Work Group Participants	
Past Code Purple Shelter Providers	• ABCCM (Tim McElyea) • Salvation Army (Evelyne Ball) • Rescue Mission (Micheal Woods) • Trinity UMC (Melanie Robertson)
Homeless Coalition Co-Chairs	• Melanie Robertson and Kevin Mahoney
Key Referral and Infrastructure Partners	• BeLoved Asheville (Amy Cantrell) • Mission Hospital (Annie Carpenter, Kristy Bryant) • ART (LaShawn Abraham)
Emergency Responders/Law Enforcement	• APD (Captain Mike Lamb) • BCSO (Sergeant Bryan Freeborn) • Community Paramedics (Claire Hubbard)
City/County Staff	• Jennifer Teague (Buncombe County) • Emily Ball (City of Asheville)

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Code Purple: Plan Highlights

105(+) Available Beds	
50(+) beds for single men	ABCCM: Veterans Restoration Quarters
50 beds for single women and women with children	ABCCM: Transformation Village
5 hotel rooms for families	ABCCM

- 27(+) more beds than last year
- Last year there was only one night when all beds were filled

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Code Purple: Plan Highlights

- Operating Dates: October 15, 2022 - April 30, 2023
- Notification
  - Homeless Coalition calls Code Purple 48 hours in advance based on weather.gov forecast and sends email notification out to distribution list + post on social media
    - Well-established distribution list includes service providers and referral partners, community members, media partners
  - Buncombe County will send text alert based on Coalition notification
  - City of Asheville will publish on HCCA marquee based on Coalition notification
- Entry cutoff is 8 p.m.; law enforcement, emergency responders, Mission Hospital, and outreach teams able to facilitate late entry
- Transportation
  - ABCCM coordinating shuttle service
  - ART providing free transit

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Winter Shelter

Potential Beds Available	
30 beds for single men	ABCCM: Costello House
10 beds for families	Asheville Ecumenical Winter Shelter

- Two locations working to stand up nightly ‘winter shelter’
- Both would be referral-only, no walk-ins

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Code Purple Funding

- City of Asheville and Buncombe County each budgeted $50,000 this Fiscal Year
- Funding Process:
  - Published and distributed invitation to submit funding request
  - Requests reviewed by Finance Workgroup of HIAC
  - Finance Workgroup made funding recommendations to HIAC at their October 28, 2022 meeting, which were approved by majority vote
  - Staff will execute contracts based on HIAC approval
  - Funding requests were received and approved for both Code Purple and Winter Shelter
    - ABCCM: $83,851
    - Asheville Ecumenical Winter Shelter: $6,211
    - Salvation Army originally awarded funds to be reconsidered at 11/30 HIAC meeting

Unsheltered Homelessness Consultant Update

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Unsheltered Homelessness Consultant

- City of Asheville has partnered with Buncombe County and Dogwood Health Trust to contract with the National Alliance to End Homelessness to better understand and address unsheltered homelessness
- City is serving as administrative point of contact; project is fully funded by Dogwood
- Project began in June 2022, and entails:
    - Comprehensive needs assessment to understand the increase in unsheltered homelessness during the pandemic
    - Map and understand the homeless service system, including current City, County, and partner efforts
    - Identify service gaps and needs, with corresponding strategies and actionable recommendations to better respond to the crisis of homelessness, and specifically decrease unsheltered homelessness
- Project has had a high level of community engagement throughout including service providers, partner organizations, businesses, neighborhood associations, faith communities, and people with lived experience

Unsheltered Homelessness Consultant

- Results of needs assessment and strategies/recommendations will be combined into a comprehensive written report and public presentation delivered in person by the National Alliance to End Homelessness on **January 25, 2023, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.** at Harrah's Cherokee Center
    - Joint work session of Asheville City Council and Buncombe County Commission
    - Dogwood Health Trust and Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee (HIAC) representatives will be invited to attend
- HIAC will have a key role in strategy implementation, as governance board for the Asheville-Buncombe Continuum of Care
    - HIAC will hold a special-called meeting January 26, 2023 with the National Alliance to End Homelessness
- Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend both sessions

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