Concerns Related to Unhoused Residents: A Collaborative Community Response

Policy, Finance and Infrastructure Worksession

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Presentation Outline

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Overview

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Reported Challenges

- Drug Paraphernalia
- Open Drug Use and Distribution
- Public Exposure
- Property Crimes
- Loitering
- Trespassing
- Loud and Aggressive Behavior
- Litter and Debris
- Assault

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Community Perception

- Lack of enforcement
- Apathy
- Unique and/or more severe in their area
- Services being provided in some areas are attracting unwanted behavior
- Additional attention/enforcement in one area shifts the problem to other areas
- Unsheltered people don’t want to be helped
- Unsheltered people are being sent to Asheville

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Current Landscape

- No single entity can solve this crisis alone
- Many of the unsheltered community are locals
  - At least 60% based on the 2026 PIT Count
- Most people are not in their situation by choice
- Not enough beds to accommodate all of the unsheltered population *(Estimated need for at least 90 additional beds)*
- Funding has always been a challenge but it is becoming increasingly more challenging
- Programs that have consistent Federal funding sources are more effective, not having access to consistent funding creates service gaps for many providers

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Strategies

Community Programs

- City Public Safety
  - Co-responder program (Launched 7/20/2026)
  - APD shift in Community Resource Officer focus
  - AFD REST focus in high-traffic areas
- Transit Services
  - New program for Crisis Counseling on buses and at the Transit Station
- Public Works Sanitation
  - Coordinating litter collection and debris removal
- Downtown Ambassadors Program
  - Litter cleanup, engagement, initiate services
- CoC Membership
  - 657 Members involved in all forms of service work including housing, medical, behavioral health, inclement weather sheltering, and long-term solution development

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Asheville-Buncombe Continuum of Care (COC)

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CoC Activities

- West Asheville Street Engagement
- Community Cleanup on Tunnel Rd.
- Establishing quarterly performance reporting to be publicly available
- Emergency Shelter planning - Issue RFP for planning work - tentatively in September
- Contracting for fund development expertise
- Building system capacity to solve the problem
  - E.g. Right at Home, HACA partnership

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Right at Home

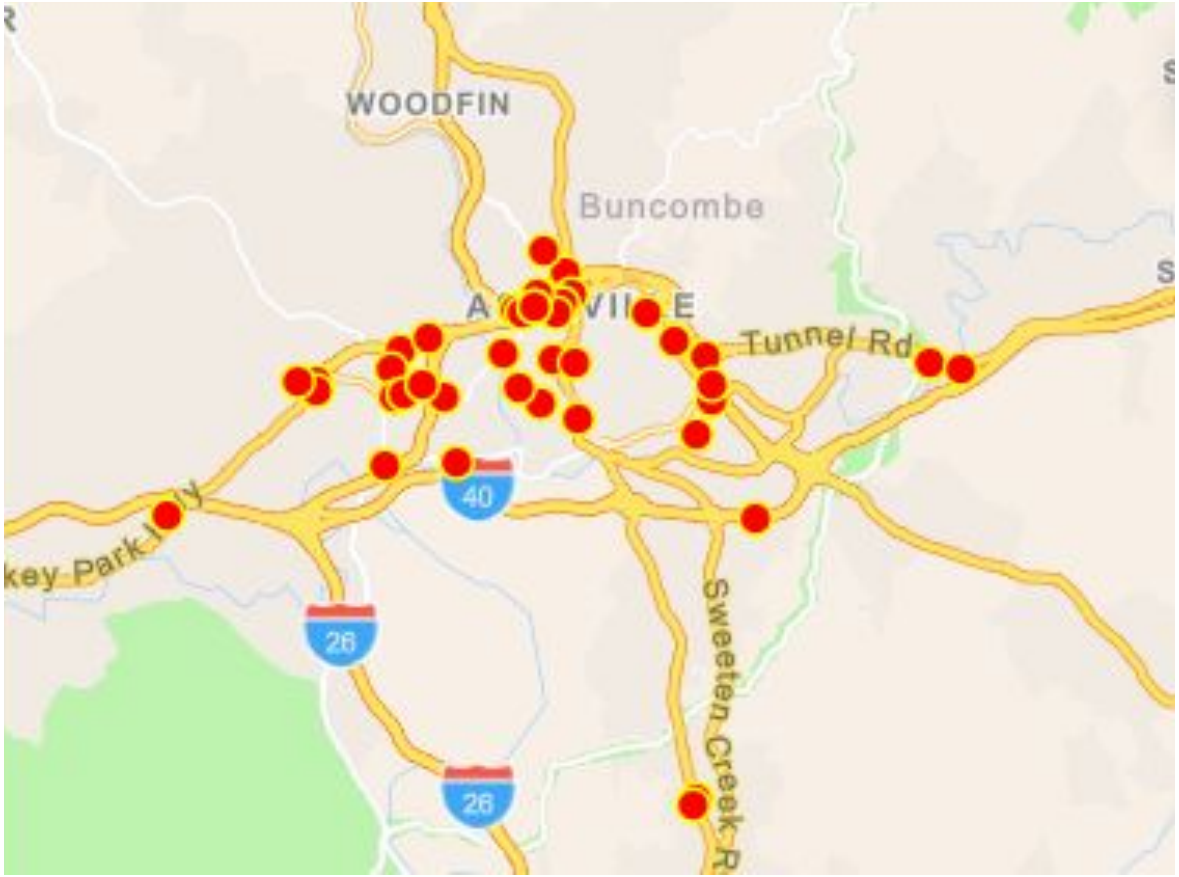
- Asheville selected as one of 10 communities nationwide to pilot homelessness prevention
- CoC will receive at least $6M to serve at least 1,000 households over 3 years to stop homelessness before it starts for people at risk
  - Activities include rental assistance, case management, and creative problem solving (e.g. car repairs if necessary for work, etc.)
- Request for Application open now. CoC Board will select providers in September with services to begin by December.

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Asheville Fire Department Resource Engagement Support Team (REST)

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REST Calls for Service - 2024

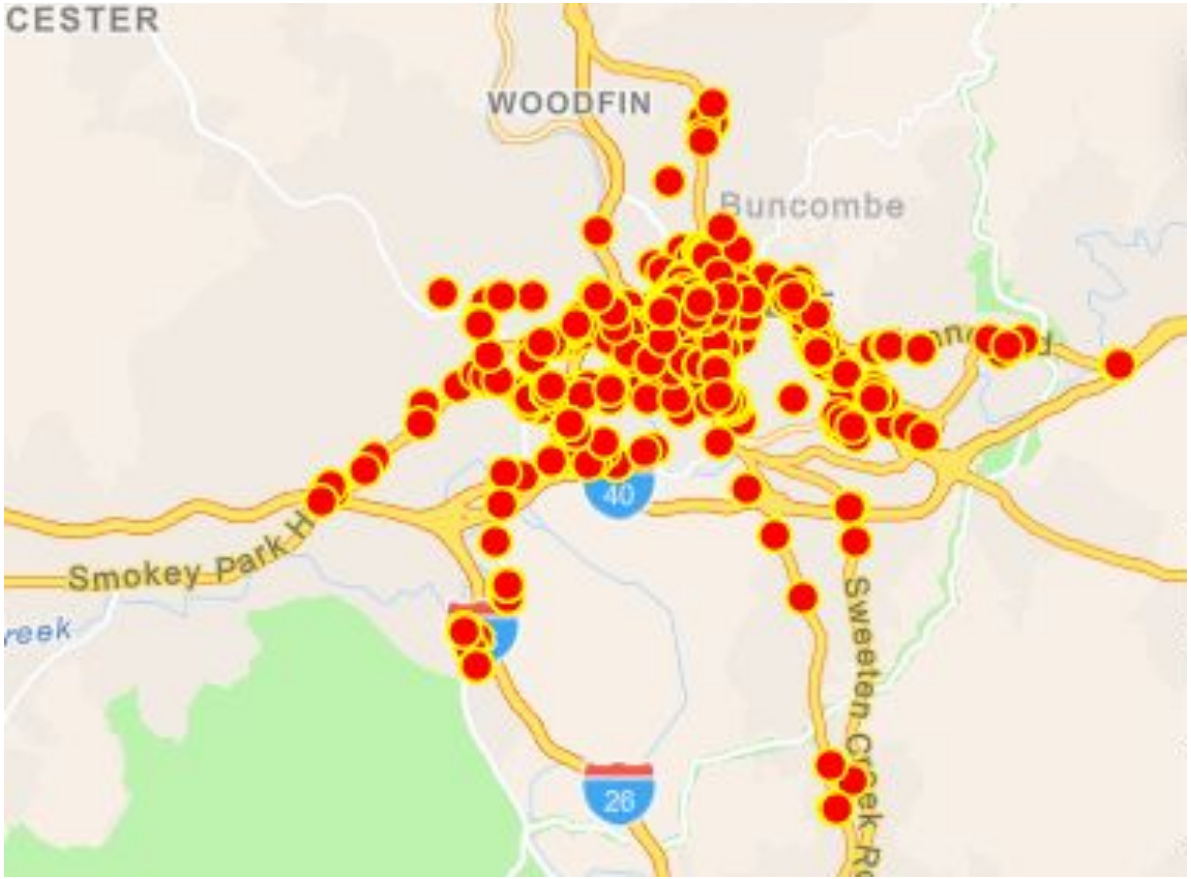


Total Events - 93

Shelter Referrals - 30

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REST Calls for Service -2025

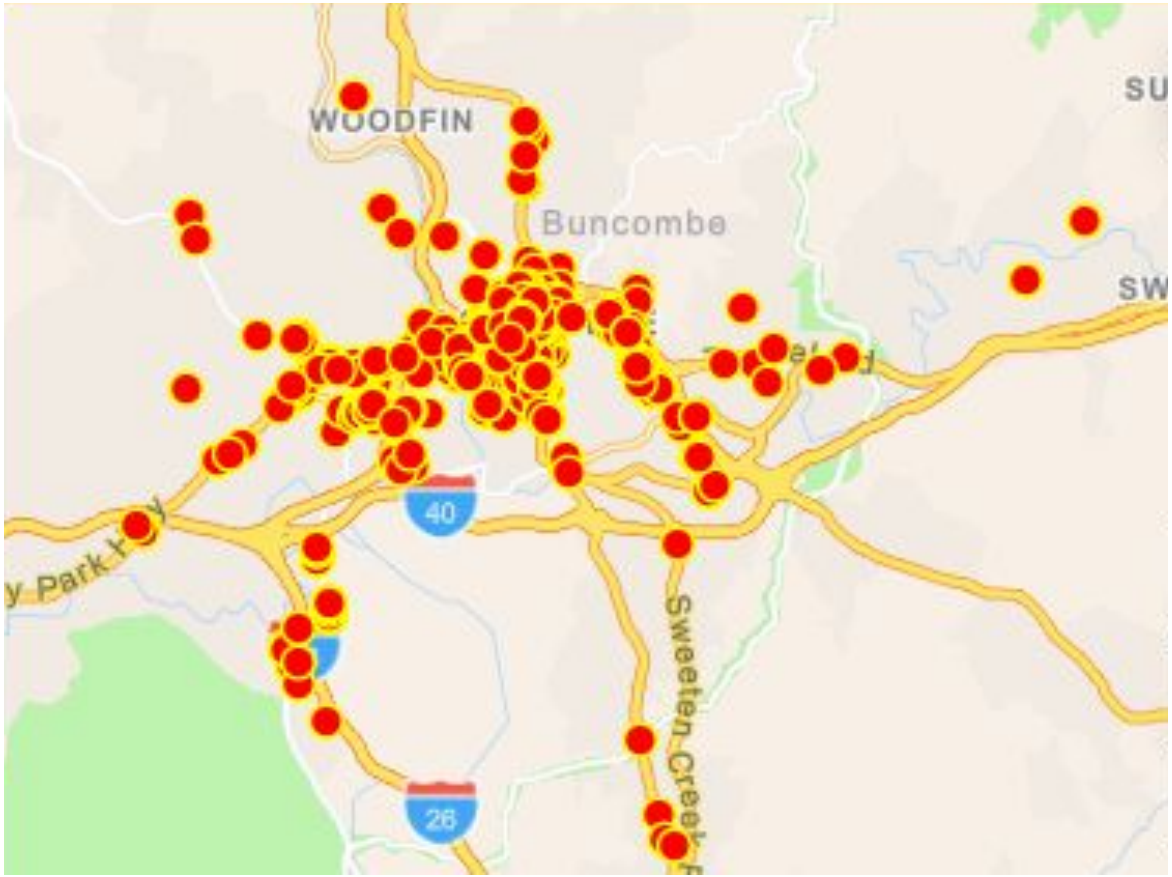


Total Events - 1,500

Shelter Referrals - 497

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REST Calls for Service -YTD 2026



Total Events - 1,200

Shelter Referrals - 442

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Community Connections

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Meetings Update

- State Street Walk - Postponed due to rain
- The Avery and The Patton Apartments
- Hatch Coworking Space
- ADID Board Meeting
- Various Other Neighborhood and Individual Meetings
- Tunnel Road Corridor Coalition

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Meeting Outcomes

- Better connection with community
- Understanding of the individual concerns and needs of the individual groups
- Community member involvement in the CoC
  - Open Board seat for Community Member Representative
- Operational changes at some service providers to mitigate inappropriate and illegal behavior near their establishments

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Next Steps

- Internal working group focused on coordinating response effort and using data to support decision making
- Continued support and coordination through CoC Board
- Planning work for the emergency shelter

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