



**COLUMBIA TASK FORCE TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS MEETING
AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022**

The Columbia Task Force to Prevent and End Homelessness will conduct a meeting on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at the Busby Street Community Center, 1735 Busby Street, Columbia, SC 29203. Members of the public are encouraged to participate remotely by viewing the meeting online at www.columbiasc.gov. For questions regarding the meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (803)545-3045 or cityclerk@columbiasc.gov.

The Honorable Aditi Bussells, Chair
The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. and The Honorable William Brennan

Prior to entering the meeting please turn all electronic communication devices to the silent, vibrate or off position. All presenters are asked to speak directly into the microphone for recording purposes.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENTATIONS

1. Welcome and Introductions - The Honorable Aditi Bussells
2. Overview and History of the Taskforce - The Honorable Aditi Bussells
3. Overview of Current Policy Efforts - Ms. Teresa Knox, Esq., City Attorney
4. Public Safety and Homelessness Initiatives - Mr. William "Skip" Holbrook, Columbia Police Chief
5. Current City of Columbia Funding for Homelessness Services - Ms. Missy Caughman, Budget, Program Management and Grants Director
6. Strategies from Other Local Governments - The Honorable Aditi Bussells

GROUP DISCUSSION

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

7. Reflections - The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. and The Honorable Will Brennan
8. Closing Remarks - The Honorable Aditi Bussells

ADJOURNMENT



We Are Columbia

MEETING DATE: May 18, 2022

DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: Welcome and Introductions - The Honorable Aditi Bussells

**FUNDING SOURCE &
ORIGINAL BUDGET:**



We Are Columbia

MEETING DATE: May 18, 2022

DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: **Overview and History of the Taskforce - The Honorable Aditi Bussells**

FUNDING SOURCE & ORIGINAL BUDGET:

ATTACHMENTS:

- Task Force to Prevent and End Homelessness Presentation 051822 (PDF)

City of Columbia

Task Force to Prevent and End Homelessness

May 18, 2022



Appointed Members



Councilwoman
Dr. Aditi Bussells
Chair



Councilman
Edward H. McDowell
Member



Councilman
William Brennan
Member

Overview and History of the Task Force

- Established February 15, 2022
 - In 2006 there was a Commission of Homelessness, but there is no historical information available pertaining to it.
 - This taskforce was established in reponse to the growing number of concerns from neighborhood and business leaders



Statistics on Homelessness in Columbia

- According to the 2020 South Carolina State of Homelessness Report, Richland County has the *second highest rate* of homelessness in South Carolina.
- There has also been an increase in criminal activity and drug related offenses associated with people that are experiencing homelessness, especially within our downtown neighborhoods, entertainment districts and areas of high traffic (e.g. Harbison and Garner Ferry).

Homelessness Service Providers

Initial reports suggest that City of Columbia has at least 14 providers assisting populations facing homelessness in Richland and Lexington County.

- Columbia providers often serve the greater Midlands area
- **Regardless of this, many individuals do not seek to use the assistance these organizations provide for a variety of reasons – this is the focus of our taskforce**
- **We have commissioned a study to understand the state of our providers and to catalogue services**



An Overview of City of Columbia Homelessness Policy Efforts



Current City of Columbia Homelessness Services and Public Safety Initiatives



City of Columbia Homeless Services Overview

- Majority of services offered or provided are centered in or within close proximity to the Downtown corridor. This causes distress with area businesses, who contact CPD frequently about homeless when it is not necessarily a traditional police issue.
- A large number of independent feeding locations/programs are resistant to consolidation.
- Very limited affordable and supportive housing options or programs; they tend to fill up extremely fast.
- Conversely, many homeless individuals are resistant to assistance.

CPD Homelessness Initiatives

- IWC Transports – There were 172 Trips with 535 individuals transported for this IWC season. This becomes a resource drain on police due to them not being able to self-report or walk up to the IWC center. CPD has taken measures to consolidate out transport times; however, it still causes a police officer to focus on transporting and not on police functions.
- Zone Watch Locations - Officers are tasked with completing Zone Watch requests each shift. These include businesses, cemeteries, parks, and parking garages that have complaints and/or patterns of disruptive behavior perpetrated by homeless. Zone Watches are reviewed and adjusted
- Outside agencies drop off individuals at the IWC, which causes them to now stay in Columbia. This causes an influx of new individuals that now frequently interact with CPD.



CPD Homelessness Initiatives

- Most outreach by service providers happens Monday through Friday during daytime hours.
- CPD also developed the *Best Practices for Interactions with Transient Citizens* manual. This publication is provide to citizens and businesses to explain our focus and response. It also has resources section that can be used by anyone in the City to request assistance for a transient citizen in need. The publication is available at ColumbiaPD.net/Publications.



CPD Homelessness Initiatives

- Frequent Offender Taskforce Meetings: CPD, 5th Solicitors Office, United Way, Dept. of Mental Health and various community stakeholders participate in these meetings.
 - The focus of the meetings is to identify individuals that are coming into frequent contact with law enforcement and try to determine why. CPD is acutely aware that jail is not always the best answer for someone in mental health crisis who are often times homeless.
 - The group triages the cases and determines the best avenue to provide lasting care of the individual in crisis. This gets the individual to a stable place so that they can begin healing and taking advantage of programs available. The primary focus of the group is to assist in breaking the cycle of homelessness.



CPD Homelessness and Mental Health Initiative

- The Pathways Unit (TPU) provides an opportunity to reach individuals that may have mental illness perpetuating their homeless status. While on patrol, Pathways team members will respond to active Calls for Service involving citizens in mental crisis to assist with de-escalation, provide resources, conduct follow-up appointments with previous clients that need additional care coordination, and proactively seek out locations of frequent community friction to provide care/resource options to ease tensions.
 - TPU also reaches out to community stakeholders and groups to coordinate and strengthen the focus of actions when addressing a common cause; attending community meetings, building relationships of support with non-profit organizations, and initiating involvement in existing outreach initiatives.
 - TPU focuses on facilitating opportunities to build and strengthen relationships with citizens that are more vulnerable through problem solving partnerships.



CPD Homelessness and Mental Health Initiative

The Pathways Team

- Mental Health Clinician, Angela Anderson has over 17 years of experience in Human Services with various organizations.
 - Program Coordinator for the Columbia Housing Authority
 - School Guidance Counselor intern at W. A. Perry Middle School
 - Human Services Coordinator for the SC Dept. of Mental Health
 - Human Services Coordinator Group Facilitator for the KIVA Day program at the SC Dept. of Mental Health
 - Embedded Mental Health Clinician for the joint DMH/CPD collaboration

CPD Homelessness and Mental Health Initiative

- MPO Christopher Bolling has served the Columbia Police Department for 10 years. He is certified in Crisis Intervention Training, a Field Training Officer, and an IPMBA Police Bike Instructor. MPO Bolling joined The Pathways Team in September 2021.
- To date, The Pathways Unit provided coordinated care and support for 162 citizens that have or are experiencing some form of mental health crisis that brought them into contact with CPD.



Public Safety and Homelessness

- Transient Citizen Criminal Activity Focus - CPD is currently conducting this operation to address criminal and quality of life activity and complaints associated with citizens that choose to violate the law within the identified locations of emphasis.
 - The operation will be data driven based on crime intelligence, community input from interactions, and calls for service. Officers will address these criminal concerns in a highly visible proactive manner utilizing patrols and community contacts, with an emphasis on foot patrols within the areas of focus when not on calls for service.
 - Regions will coordinate resources to address adjacent locations of focus or to
 - address larger scale events, such as urban camping sites, to support efforts. Code Enforcement will also play an integral role in addressing these sites.
 - As standard practice, CPD will make contact and post locations to give occupants time to move themselves. Notices will be posted in conspicuous locations at the camp to alert those that were not initially contacted in person.



Public Safety and Homelessness

- The Pathways Unit will also assist to coordinate any needed resources for those living at the illegal sites. The purpose is to stabilize their housing environment to prevent another urban camping site from developing at another location. The CPD K9 Investigator Sulser and MPO Bowen will utilize their partners once a month to address drug and weapon concerns at Transitions.
- The locations of emphasis are Finlay Park, Memorial Park, Main Street Corridor, Elmwood Avenue Corridor, Harden Street Corridor, Gervais Street Corridor, Assembly Street Corridor, Calhoun Street Corridor, Harbison Area, Forest Drive Corridor, Garners Ferry Rd Corridor, and the Entertainment/Business Zones.
 - Arrests: **62**
 - Field Interviews: **31**
 - Resources offered: **41**
 - Placements/Resources Initiated: **24**
 - Case Numbers Generated: **134**



Current City of Columbia Funding for Homelessness Services



Homeless Services Contracts – General Fund

Vendor	Program	Description	FY 17/18	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	FY 18/19	FY 19/20	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 20/21	FY 21/22
			BUD	ACT	BUD	ACT	BUD	ACT	BUD W/CF	ACT	BUD
United Way	IWC/Winter Shelter	Operation of the City's IWC - UW is the prime with subcontractors providing services. IWC is operational Nov 1 through March 31 when specific weather conditions are forecasted. Contract also includes year around outreach coordinator.	322,761	312,272	333,250	317,995	325,352	310,328	367,884	373,565	449,543
USC Supportive Housing	Housing First	National model program providing supportive housing services for chronic and hard to place people experiencing homelessness.	228,839	228,442	234,000	234,000	229,500	229,500	229,500	206,593	229,500
Midlands Housing Alliance	Transitions	Agreement covers security services at Transitions based on agreement with surrounding neighborhoods.	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000	325,000
United Way	Homeless Coordinator	Partial funding of UW homeless coordinator - covers meal share coordination, "repeat offenders" services, outreach coordination, HMIS reporting. Services to be provided are determine each year. Beginning FY 21/22 Homeless Coordinator position staffed by Transitions. Initial RFP for services issued in 2014.	123,400	118,039	128,761	122,908	120,148	118,980	121,316	89,432	75,711
			1,000,000	983,753	1,021,011	999,903	1,000,000	983,808	1,043,700	994,590	1,079,754

Homeless Services – HUD/CDBG Funding

- FY2021/2022
 - Homeless No More--\$40,000
 - Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc.--\$40,000



Homeless Services Contracts – CDBG

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)				
5-YEARS HOMELESS SERVICES FUNDING				
Year	Activity	Project	Program	Unit Funding
2017-2018	Homeless No More- St. Lawrence Place After School Programs and Camps	Public Services	CDBG	\$48,224.49
2018-2019	Trinity Housing- St. Lawrence Place	Public Services	CDBG	\$50,000.00
2019-2020	Mental Illness Recovery Center (MIRCI)-Supportive Housing for Youth	Public Services	CDBG	\$29,478.07
	Homeless No More	Public Services	CDBG	\$50,000.00
2020-2021	Homeless No More- Services for Homeless Families	Public Services	CDBG	\$38,341.00
	Mental Illness Recovery Center (MIRCI)-Supportive Housing for Youth	Public Services	CDBG	\$49,484.51
2021-2022	Homeless No More- Services for Homeless Families	Public Services	CDBG	\$40,000.00
	Mental Illness Recovery Center (MIRCI)-Supportive Housing for Youth	Public Services	CDBG	\$40,000.00
				\$345,528.07

Strategies from Other Municipalities



Strategies from other Municipal Governments

Boston

- *Landlord Incentive Program*
 - Boston launched a program to support landlords who rent to households moving out of homelessness. They provide signing bonuses, holding fees, and a dedicated customer service provider.

- *House America*
 - The City of Boston is committing to rehouse 1,100 households that have experienced or will experience homelessness between now and December 31, 2022. During this same period, Boston has committed to fund the creation of 650 units of housing for people facing housing insecurity.



Strategies from other Municipal Governments

Raleigh

- *King's Ridge*
 - King's Ridge will provide permanent housing for up to 100 households, serving both individuals and families. The property's main floor will include community space, offices, and access to wrap around supports like case management, integrated primary and mental healthcare, employment, and childcare support. The site is well located minutes from downtown Raleigh with a public bus stop across the street.

Strategies from other Municipal Governments

Charlotte

- *Moore Place*

Moore Place is a 120-unit permanent supportive housing apartment complex. In 2012, CSS Homeless Services partnered with [Moore Place](#) to provide wraparound services to 85 chronically homeless adults.

Group Discussion



Group Reflection and Report Out





We Are Columbia

MEETING DATE: May 18, 2022

DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: Overview of Current Policy Efforts - Ms. Teresa Knox, Esq.,
City Attorney

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ORIGINAL BUDGET:**



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DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: Public Safety and Homelessness Initiatives - Mr. William "Skip" Holbrook, Columbia Police Chief

FUNDING SOURCE & ORIGINAL BUDGET:



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FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: **Current City of Columbia Funding for Homelessness Services - Ms. Missy Caughman, Budget, Program Management and Grants Director**

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FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: Closing Remarks - The Honorable Aditi Bussells

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