



# **HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE PLAN**

**Housing and Community Vitality Department**

# WELCOME!



**Thank you for engaging today and over the last year.**

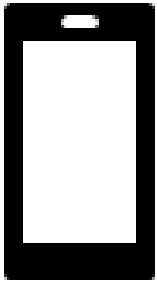
**The input of residents, first responders, service providers, other frontline workers, and businesses has shaped these initiatives!**

**You can keep up with the progress of this effort on the City's project page at:**  
**[www.coloradosprings.gov/2024HomelessnessResponse](http://www.coloradosprings.gov/2024HomelessnessResponse)**

# HOW TO PARTICIPATE



## Text polling



**You'll need your phone!**

**AFTER** the presentation, be ready to answer:

- 1. Which goal is the most important to you?***
- 2. Is there a tool or strategy you feel is missing from the plan?***

## Questions

- **End of meeting as time allows**
- **After meeting: email [housingandcommunityvitality@coloradosprings.gov](mailto:housingandcommunityvitality@coloradosprings.gov)**

# YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE



## **What's new from previous status quo?**

- **Expansion of CSPD's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)**
- **Explore feasibility for public restrooms**
- **Availability of federal funding to build non-congregate shelter and permanent rental housing for people experiencing homelessness**
- **Expansion of street and sidewalk cleaning in high-pedestrian business districts**
- **Advocacy for legislative change**
- **Regional collaboration**
- **Expansion of WorkCOS**

# AGENDA



## Engagement

**How the public shaped the plan's foundations and strategies**

## Roles

**What role does the City play?  
What role does the Pikes Peak Continuum of Care play?**

## Local Data

**Homelessness population trendline in Colorado Springs**

## Plan Contents

**Goals, objectives, and strategies**

## What do you think?

**Text poll + audience questions**

# BUILDING THE PLAN

## Strategic Priorities



Strategic priority objectives are interconnected, as solutions often require collaborative efforts across City departments and community partners.

9

## Public Safety



### OUR GOAL

*where we're headed*

*Through preparedness, prevention, response, innovation, and engagement, help make Colorado Springs one of the safest cities.*

### OBJECTIVES

*what we'll focus on to get there*

1. Develop and implement plans for appropriate public safety facilities, equipment, innovative technology, and staffing levels to meet current and evolving community needs.
2. Support coordinated efforts of community partners to implement evidence-based practices that address public safety concerns around homelessness and behavioral health.
3. Focus efforts on planning and coordination with the community and partners to expand resilience, reduce the impacts of hazards, and enhance response capabilities.
4. Implement effective strategies to reduce injury and damage caused by traffic crashes.
5. Prioritize preventative solutions including partnerships with community-led efforts that reduce crime and build safe neighborhoods.

# BUILDING THE PLAN



**Mayor's Listening Sessions**  
*(Aug – Sept 2023)*

**656**  
participants  
**7** convenings

**Mayor's Strategic Plan Development Group**  
*(Jan – May 2024)*

**46** participants  
**11** convenings

**Homeless Service Providers**  
*(July 2024)*

**38** attendees  
**1** convening

**Medical Acuity Work Group**  
*(Jan 2023 - present)*

**73** participants  
**13** convenings

**HCVD 2024 Annual Action Plan Consultations and Public Meetings**

**75**  
survey  
responses  
**1** convening

**Mayor's Public Safety Telephone Town Hall**

**3,388**  
participants  
**1** convening

**City Staff Involved In Homelessness Response**

**47** participants  
**7** convenings

**4,323**  
community  
voices

**41**  
convenings

# HOW THE CITY RESPONDS TO HOMELESSNESS



## FUND



### HOUSING & COMMUNITY VITALITY DEPARTMENT

Manage and allocate City General Fund and federal funds to support local nonprofits, construction, housing, facilities, or programs related to homelessness prevention and response.

## ENFORCE & PROTECT



### POLICE DEPARTMENT: HOMELESS OUTREACH TEAM (HOT)

Enforce City ordinances and State statutes with care and compassion while providing resources to those experiencing homelessness.



### MUNICIPAL COURT: HOMELESS OUTREACH COURT

An alternative justice program that focuses on sanctions related to the resolution of homeless status and, in collaboration with community navigators, offer resources to defendants who are unhoused.



### PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT: URBAN TRAILS PARK RANGERS

Patrol, maintain, and coordinate cleanups of City trails to increase safety and mitigate environmental concerns.



### FIRE DEPARTMENT: OPERATIONS DIVISION & DIVISION OF FIRE MARSHAL

Respond to fire and medical emergencies, conduct fire investigations, mitigate fire hazards, and provide community fire safety education.



### PIKES PEAK OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (PPROEM)

Coordinate with partners to help ensure community resources are effectively mobilized to support emergency warming shelter operations before and during extreme cold events.

## CLEAN



### NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DIVISION

Enforces City ordinances related to blight, working in collaboration with the Colorado Springs Police Department, and cleans campsites to reduce fire hazards and prevent waterway pollution.

## STREET OUTREACH



### FIRE DEPARTMENT: HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM (HOP)

Provide targeted, intensive outreach and navigation of services to very-high needs individuals experiencing homelessness.



### FIRE DEPARTMENT: TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

Provide intensive community navigation services for defendants and inmates who are at risk of being homeless or are experiencing homelessness.

## PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT



### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT: WORKCOS

Employ individuals residing at local shelters or in transitional housing programs, who are participating in case management, to maintain City medians.

## CONVENE & INFORM



### COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Provide transparent, proactive, and accessible communication to foster community engagement in addressing homelessness.



# DEFINING HOMELESSNESS



**McKinney-Vento Act**

**Sleeping in shelters and/or transitional housing**

**Sleeping outside or vehicles/empty buildings/places not meant for human habitation**

**Fleeing Domestic Violence (DV) and seeking services from a victim service provider**

**“Doubling up/couch surfing” or temporarily staying with family or friends due to financial issues**

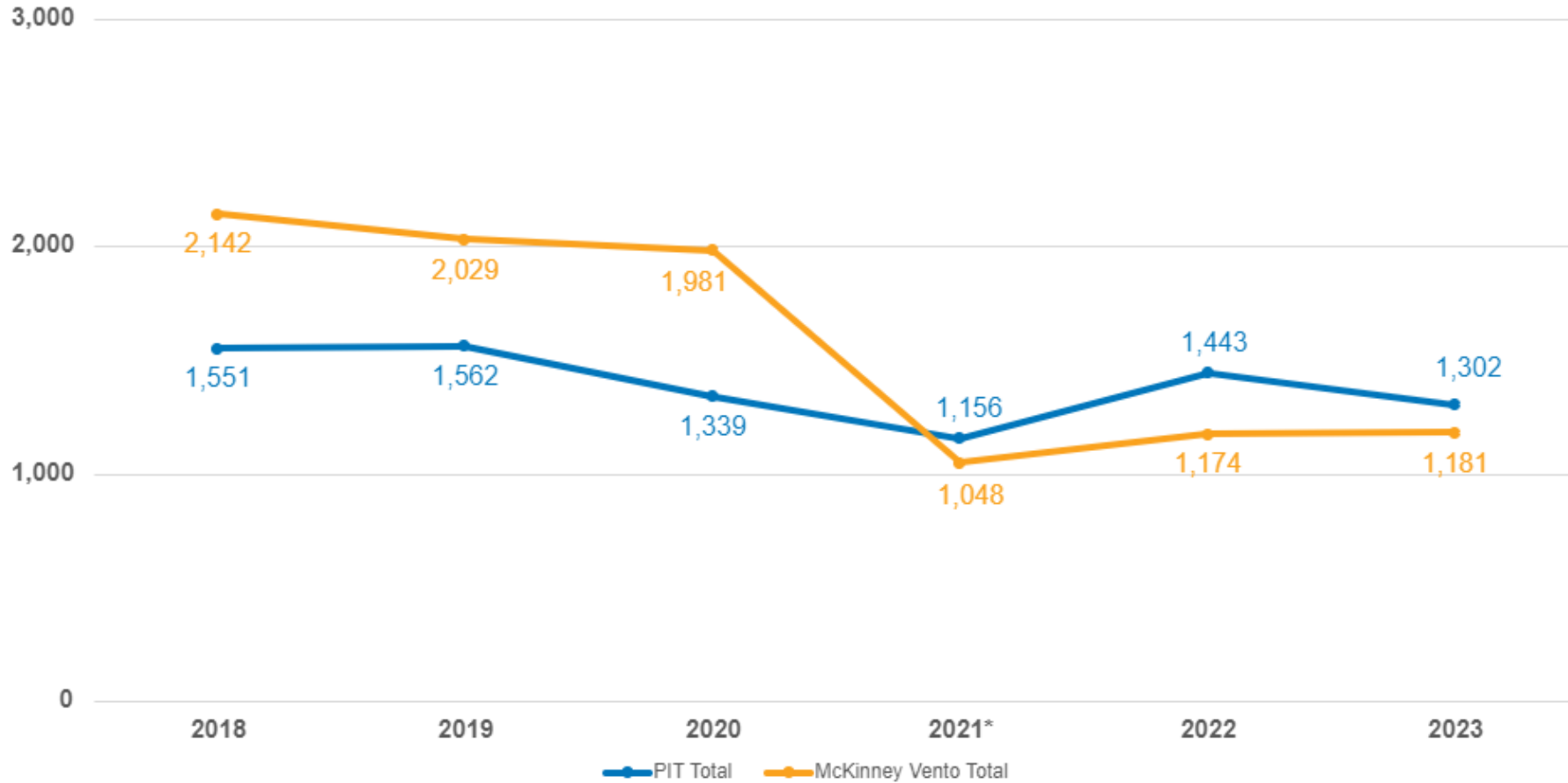
**Living in motels/hotels due to financial or other inability to lease or rent a home**

**HUD**

# BY THE NUMBERS



POINT IN TIME (PIT) and McKinney VENTO TOTAL COUNTS



# INTRODUCING...



## **Lieutenant Brian Steckler**

**Gold Hill Division, Peak Station/DART/HOT  
Colorado Springs Police Department**

## **Judge HayDen William Kane II**

Municipal Court Administrator  
City Municipal Court

## **Steve Johnson**

Community and Public Health Administrator/HOP  
Colorado Springs Fire Department

# HOW IS THE PLAN STRUCTURED?

## HOMELESSNESS CONTINUUM



AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

1

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION



UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

2

ENFORCEMENT & CLEAN UP



3

STREET OUTREACH & SHELTER



SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

4

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



HOUSED

5

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES



THROUGHOUT

6

REGIONAL COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION



# 1.1

**Expand capacity and leverage resources to help low- and extremely low-income households remain housed and increase housing stability.**

**Strengthen relationships and organizational capacity with agencies serving communities disproportionately impacted by housing instability to support their applications for CDBG funding.**

**Continue to provide letters of support to partner agencies seeking non-City funding to establish or extend housing stability, diversion, or mental/behavioral health support programs.**

**Develop displacement mitigation plan focusing on the involuntary relocation of low-income residents.**

# 1.1

**Expand capacity and leverage resources to help low- and extremely low-income households remain housed and increase housing stability.**

**Identify and apply for additional funding to help low- and extremely low-income households remain housed.**

**Identify and promote the growth and replication of programs that reduce barriers to housing and housing assistance.**

**Identify gaps in household needs that contribute to housing instability and reduce barriers to addressing those needs.**

# **1.2 Increase education and services specific to seniors to help them remain housed.**

**Collaborate with senior service providers to increase awareness of supports to keep seniors housed.**

**Encourage housing service providers create options that address the unique needs of seniors.**

**Continue to support rehabilitation of low-income senior households to assist residents who want to age in place.**



# **1.3 Increase collaboration between mental health practitioners and local housing providers to help people experiencing mental health crisis stay**

**Convene summit to assist homelessness and housing service providers increase awareness of mental health issues and assist mental health practitioners to understand gateways and services to housing.**

**Create channels of cross-sector communication between mental health and service providers to encourage formal collaborations and regular communications.**

**Encourage partner agencies to collaborate on the creation of a “response team” that can assist households when a crisis occurs that jeopardizes their housing.**

# **1.4 Increase landlord participation in rental assistance programs to help housing voucher holders find housing.**

**Identify primary reasons why landlords are hesitant to participate with rental assistance programs and investigate solutions to their concerns.**

**Collaborate with housing provider partner agencies to promote landlord engagement with local rental assistance programs.**

**Celebrate engaged landlords by formally recognizing new and returning participants of housing choice voucher and other rental assistance programs.**

HOMELESSNESS CONTINUUM

AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

1

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION



UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

2

ENFORCEMENT & CLEAN UP



3

STREET OUTREACH & SHELTER



SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

4

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



HOUSED

5

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES



THROUGHOUT

6

REGIONAL COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION



## **2.1 Enhance community safety through prevention, response and engagement**

**Increase the number of officers on CSPD's Homeless Outreach Team.**

**Implement fire prevention strategies within and around encampments, including solutions to the unintended consequences of fuel being handed out.**

**Review and adjust the sit/lie ordinance, its boundaries, enforcement capabilities, and consequences.**

**Continue Urban Park and Trail program to increase public safety on trails.**

## **2.1 Enhance community safety through prevention, response and engagement**

**Assess criminal activities perpetrated on and by the unhoused community and create strategies to address patterns.**

**Explore additional options to disrupt distribution of illegal substances to and within the unhoused population.**

**Continue to collaborate with business associations to evaluate additional opportunities to ensure districts continue to thrive.**

**Provide toolkit to business owners on how to access resources available for trespassing, vandalism, waste**

# 2.2

**Continue to refine efficient clean-up response and property retrieval processes and ensure the environment is inviting and safe for all.**

**Pilot a program to provide supplemental right of way cleaning funding for business districts to address concerns about cleanliness in high traffic pedestrian areas.**

**Proactively address accumulation of debris from encampments by exploring the ability to grant authority to the Urban Trails Park Rangers to post camps on park property and assist with cleanup.**

**Coordinate with local agencies to monitor trash receptacles the City provides near high traffic and service areas to ensure they are being used appropriately.**

# 2.2

**Continue to refine efficient clean-up response and property retrieval processes and ensure the environment is inviting and safe for all.**

**Study costs and savings effects of public bathroom installations on surrounding areas. If found effective and financially sustainable, create a strategy to increase the number of public restrooms.**

**Educate and create solutions to the unintended consequences of providing handouts that end up creating more waste and debris.**

**Create a process for unsheltered people to retrieve their property to reduce litter and prevent the loss of essential personal belongings, such as identification, medicines and medical equipment.**

# 2.3

## **Monitor, report and inform on State Legislative activities and how they impact how the City responds to homelessness.**

**Work with other municipalities in the State to engage the State Legislature and Governor's Office to improve enforcement.**

**Convene internal and external stakeholders to identify opportunities for legislative reform to increase enforcement abilities.**

**Coordinate multi-jurisdictional conversations with elected officials to convey the increasing safety concerns businesses are experiencing due to recent legislation.**



HOMELESSNESS CONTINUUM

AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

1

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION



UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

2

ENFORCEMENT & CLEAN UP



3

STREET OUTREACH & SHELTER



SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

4

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



HOUSED

5

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES



THROUGHOUT

6

REGIONAL COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION



# 3.1

## **Find partners to operate non-congregate shelter for underserved populations to reduce the number of people considered unsheltered or**

**Continue convening medical and homeless service providers to improve access to shelter and services for those who cannot consistently and independently complete activities of daily living.**

**Convene with the Family Services Collaborative and McKinney-Vento liaisons to assess and create solutions for family shelter and service needs.**

**Publish request for proposals for the creation of non-congregate shelter for populations eligible under the HOME-ARP program.**

# 3.1

**Find partners to operate non-congregate shelter for underserved populations to reduce the number of people considered unsheltered or**

**Commit up to \$1.1 million of HOME-ARP funds to acquisition or development of non-congregate shelter.**

**Commit HOME-ARP funds toward capacity building or supportive services in an amount not exceeding 50% of the organization's general operating expenses per year.**

**Commit up to 5 years of limited operational support using ESG emergency shelter funds.**

## **3.2 Continue regional collaboration to refine the emergency sheltering for extreme cold weather response.**

**Implement and refine the response plan for extreme cold-weather events which includes opening temporary extreme weather shelters.**

**Communicate the need for volunteers to staff the temporary extreme cold weather shelters.**

**Identify funding to expand temporary extreme cold weather shelter partner capabilities.**

**Educate public entities and service agencies on PPROEM's extreme cold weather protocols.**

**Monitor regional weather patterns to assess the need for additional extreme weather event coordination plans and**

HOMELESSNESS CONTINUUM

AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

1

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION



UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

2

ENFORCEMENT & CLEAN UP



3

STREET OUTREACH & SHELTER



SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

4

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



HOUSED

5

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES



THROUGHOUT

6

REGIONAL COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION



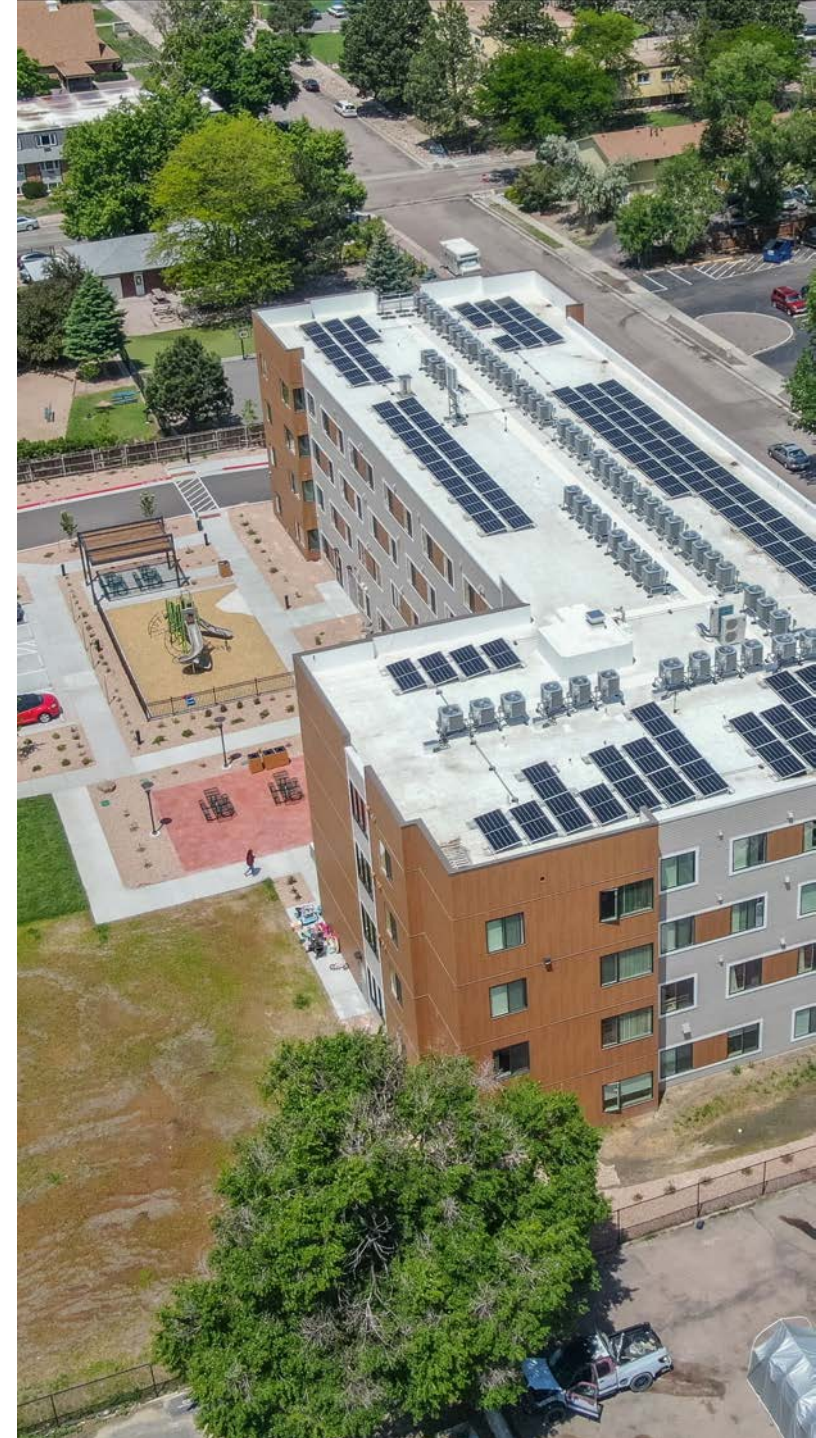
## **4.1 Explore opportunities to expand the WorkCOS program within the City and community**

**Collaborate with agencies providing work rehabilitation programs to expand WorkCOS.**

**Engage and formalize partnership with additional service providers to provide recommendations of people to enter the program.**

**Meet with local business leaders to promote the successes of the WorkCOS Program and explore community expansion.**

HOMELESSNESS CONTINUUM



# **5.1 Support permanent supportive housing and very low-income affordable housing development**

**Continue to incentivize permanent supportive housing and affordable housing developments through HCVD's Fee Rebate Program.**

**In partnership with the PPCoC, develop a semiannual report that provides details on the units best suited for households in the local coordinated entry system based on vulnerability, income, household size, and priority to share with developers for targeted unit type development and placement.**

**Continue to facilitate communication between developers, the PPCoC, human service providers, and HCVD to set aside units for homeless households.**



# 5.1

## **Support permanent supportive housing and very low-income affordable housing development**

**Create additional incentives, tools, and resources targeting very low-income households based on findings from the Housing Needs Assessment.**

**Work with developers creating affordable housing to offer bus passes to tenants in high traffic areas.**

**Continue to build local development capacity by connecting local non-profit and community partners interested in developing Affordable housing to financial and technical assistance resources.**

**Provide letters of support for low-income housing tax credit and Proposition 123 applications**

HOMELESSNESS CONTINUUM



# **6.1 Enhance communication strategies to foster community engagement and transparency in addressing homelessness**

**Publish an annual report to provide update on initiative progress.**

**Gather input from the community to evaluate the effectiveness of the City's policies and programs in addressing homelessness.**

**Create "Behind the Springs" podcast highlighting different areas of the City's homelessness response.**

**Increase accessibility to data related to homelessness initiatives by developing a dashboard hosted on the City's webpage.**

# **6.2 Promote creation of Regional Homelessness Response Team to include regional partners**

**Convene regional partners to identify and implement a Regional response to homelessness.**

# TEXT POLL INSTRUCTIONS



Text **cduarte410** to **22333**

**OR**

Scan the QR code below to go to the poll.

**\* Please be aware this poll is no longer active. If you would like to comment on this plan or share your feedback, click on this link:**

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/848fe670e02e422381dd3262691e755d>



- 1. Which goal is the most important to you?**
- 2. Is there a tool or strategy you feel is missing from the plan?**

# QUESTIONS?

**How does homelessness impact you?**

**Are there any strategies you'd like to learn more about?**



# NEXT STEPS



**August 2023 – August 2024**

Stakeholder engagement, research, and plan creation



**July- August 2024**

Stakeholder feedback on goals



**August 2024**

Incorporate feedback into Initiatives



**September 2024**

- **Final draft released**
- **State of the City**



# **Katie Sunderlin**

---

**Acting Chief Housing Officer**

# **Crystal Karr**

**Homelessness Prevention and Response Coordinator**

# **Catherine Duarte, AICP**

---

**HUD Programs Manager**