



UPDATE:
COORDINATED RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING CRISIS
EXACERBATED BY COVID-19

Deputy Mayor Tincher, Director Cervantes, Deputy Chief Murphy

PRESENTATION TO THE SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

I-35E Encampment: Closed on Sept. 10, 2020

- As outlined in our August presentation, the encampment sites around the I-35E off ramp, along Cathedral Hill Pathway, and History Center steps had public safety risk factors that required closure of that site.
- The numbers had grown from about 5 tents in March to more than 50 tents and about 80 individuals sheltering in the area by late August.
- The City worked with outreach staff and partners, as well as **directly with encampment occupants** in the days before the clearing to identify indoor options for **everyone**.
- The number of occupants the day of the clearing was 30-35.

CITY OF SAINT PAUL COORDINATED RESPONSE



I-35E Encampment Closure: Combined new and proven strategies/approaches

- Notified occupants early and often about when the area would be cleared
- Visited multiple times before Sept. 10, assessed individuals' needs, and identified alternate housing options.
- Determined in advance the number of spaces needed, and confirmed through Ramsey County what shelter or housing options were available:

Facility	Provider	2019 Capacity	2020 Capacity	Beds Available as of 9/10/2020	
				Men's	Women's
Safe Space	Model Cities	0	64	12	9
Higher Ground	Catholic Charities	356	178	3	0
Union Gospel Mission	Union Gospel Mission	207	207	58	0
Alternative Hotel-Shelter	Ramsey County	0	115	0	11
Elders Hotel-Shelter	Ramsey County	0	113	0	0
Women's/Couples Hotel-Shelter	Ramsey County	0	80	0	20
	Total:	563	757	73	40
COVID Respite	Ramsey County	0	70	flexible	flexible
	Total with Respite:	563	827		

CITY OF SAINT PAUL COORDINATED RESPONSE



I-35E Encampment Closure: Combined new and proven strategies/approaches

All non-profit and public sector partners were coordinating resources to overcome barriers – transportation, storage for belongings, day space options for transition to indoor space.

- 6 – Higher Ground
- 2 – Union Gospel Mission
- 6 – Safe Space
- 3 – Hotels
- 1 – Hospital referral
- 1 – Minneapolis (housing voucher)
- 1 – Hotel/HAT voucher
- 4 – relocated to Lower Landing

I-35E Encampment Closure: Next steps and Challenges

- Requested MNDOT/State assistance to ensure this state-owned property remains clear.
- Independent volunteers transported individuals to various locations without coordination (not able to track/need to ensure case workers know where their client re-located)
- The Phalen location that individuals from I-35E were taken has specific challenges:
 - too far from downtown services; individuals do not have transportation to get to caseworker meetings, medical appointments, etc.
 - not already determined to be supported with sanitation services

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Unsheltered Homelessness Data Update

Week	Total Sites	Occupied Sites	Unoccupied Sites	Tents	Occupants
10.1.19		19		22	26
2.26.20		12		25	24
3.30.20	52	39	13	55	71
4.27.20	88	68	20	106	149
5.27.20	100	88	12	173	196
6.22.20	93	76	17	188	230
7.27.20	113	96	17	274	322
8.3.20	114	111	13	277	339
8.10.20	126	99	27	310	348
8.17.20	124	95	29	296	355
8.24.20	120	90	30	304	365
8.31.20	124	97	27	316	380
9.7.20	118	89	29	301	362

9.15.20 Counts

Total Tents: 243

Total People: 297

Largest Sites:	
Lower Landing West of HWY 52	24 tent - 24 people
RR Berm off Maryland	16 tent - 16 people
1298 Arlington Ave E	12 tent - 13 people
6th& 7th/Mounds	11 tent - 14 people
7th St E & Broadway	10 tent - 10 people
John/University	11 tent - 11 people
North of compost off Frank	9 tent - 12 people
Behind Tennis Courts	9 tent - 0 people
Kellogg Park	8 tent - 10 people
1564 Lafond Ave - Hamline Park	6 tent - 6 people
Lower Landing East of HWY 52	6 tent - 6 people
Snelling Ave between Carroll & Concordia	5 tent - 6 people
Ravoli Hill-2	3 tent - 5 people

ACTION PLAN 1 (Long-term Plan)

- **Issue to solve**
 - Significant increased need for shelter, housing supports, and affordable housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness as a result of COVID-19
- **Primary strategy**
 - Identify new housing and shelter spaces that meet specific needs of those experiencing homelessness
 - Provide more options for 24/7 with wrap-around services, as well as more “day-space” locations and services.
- **Progress**
 - Funding matrix in place
 - Four to five potential sites identified; need to be fully evaluated
 - Broker working with City to help assess readiness, feasibility

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ACTION PLAN 2 (Immediate Response)

Issue to solve: Significant increased need for supports for individuals experiencing homelessness as a result of COVID-19

Primary strategy: Mobilize and coordinate resources of all partners to get individuals indoors and on pathways to housing and supports they need

Secondary strategy: Directly support the current needs of occupants at temporary encampments:

- InvolveMN partnering now with City to provide up to 500 meals a day, delivered directly to sites
- Coordinated trash pick-up services and sanitary services
- Safety and security
 - SPPD added patrols
 - New Block by Block Ambassadors program (starts operations today)
- Continue site by site approach – Area Operational Plans

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QUESTIONS

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