

Safe and Healthy Communities Next Steps – Facilitator’s Guide UPDATED!

Thursday, September 29, 6-8pm at the Nordic Heritage Museum

**Thank you again for volunteering to help facilitate our small group conversations at this forum. We really appreciate your time and value the work that you do and perspective you bring to these conversations.

Event goals:

- **Have conversations with District 6 residents and community leaders to discuss positive solutions to public safety and public health issues**
- **Prioritize solutions as potential budget items for the 2017-2018 City budget**
- **Continue building relationships in District 6 and the community at large for current and future district-specific work**

Event Style: Short introduction speaker; larger breakout sessions; group report backs

Agenda:

5:40-6:05pm- doors open, participants navigate room to read solutions charts and mingle

5:45pm- Facilitators check in with Susie; CM O’Brien arrives

6:05pm- CM O’Brien announces for everyone to take their seats

6:10pm- Introduction from CM O’Brien

- CM O’Brien will provide brief introduction, highlight agenda, and present solutions proposals

6:25pm- Breakout sessions (two rounds) – There are three topics- 1) immediate harm reduction strategies, 2) access to services and shelter, 3) role of law enforcement, 4) systemic and large scale solutions

- **Round 1- 6:25-6:50**
- Audience will break into small groups by topic areas listed on table tents.
- Facilitators will instruct participants to answer questions listed in Logistics
- After 20 minutes, Mike (or staff) will provide 5 minute warning to wrap up round one conversations, followed by instructions to pick a new topic for round 2

Switch tables

- **Round 2- 6:55-7:15**
- Audience will break into small groups by topic areas listed on table tents.
- Facilitators will instruct participants to answer questions listed in Logistics
- Mike (or staff) will provide 5 minute warning to wrap up round two conversations

7:15pm- Report back

- Each small group will provide one minute report back

7:35pm- CM O'Brien provides final remarks

7:40pm- Forum adjourned

Logistics

1. Upon entrance, each participant will receive a packet that includes the solutions proposals including the 'Do No Harm / Do the Most Good Reflection Toolkit' and agenda. Sign-in table staffers will encourage people to not sit with people they already know for the opportunity to meet neighbors and explore different conversational points.
2. Participants will be encouraged to walk around the room to see the proposed solutions and place sticker/dots on them based on their perceived importance, or add post-its with commentary to the poster boards. There will also be an option to share additional solutions that are not already listed.
3. Following the introduction speech from CM O'Brien where he will present the solutions, focusing broadly on the 4 buckets (1) immediate harm reduction strategies, 2) access to services and shelter, 3) role of law enforcement, 4) systemic and large scale solutions) Mike will announce that we are now going to break out into the small group sessions, and that we will have two rounds, so people will have the option to discuss 2 of the four issue areas they are most interested in. Councilmember O'Brien will also explain the 'Do No Harm / Do the Most Good Reflection Toolkit' and how it should be applied to the small group conversations.
4. Everyone will be encouraged to pick a table based on one of the four buckets of solutions discussed in the presentation: 1) immediate harm reduction strategies, 2) access to services and shelter, 3) role of law enforcement, 4) systemic and large scale solutions. Tables will be labeled by table tents for different topics. We plan to have two tables for each of the 4 buckets of solutions. We will ask facilitators two stat at their table for both rounds.
5. The goal is for each table to have 10 people. The small group sessions is where we can all engage with one another to discuss the solutions proposals using the information and toolkit provided and allow conversation for any new ideas. The sessions will include a facilitator and Councilmember O'Brien's staff will also be moving around the space listening to everyone.
6. Facilitator Roll: the primary role of facilitators is to manage small group conversations during breakout sessions following Councilmember O'Brien. We have reached out to you all because of your experience and expertise in group facilitations or around the issues of

homelessness, housing, or public safety and encourage you to share your knowledge and thoughts with your small groups as you facilitate. We will have two 20/25 minutes sessions for these conversations.

7. We hope these conversations will be interesting and productive, but imagine there will be dissenting opinions and we encourage you to share your experiences with these issues and bring people back to the big picture goal (that we have safer communities for all, and not at the expense of some, regardless of housing status). If you are having any trouble, please signal for Susie, Jesse, or Jasmine and we can come join your table and talk with individuals as needed.

8. We value your expertise facilitating groups! These are ideas you can express in your own words, or you can summarize them from the page. Once the small group sessions begin, the facilitator should first introduce themselves and explain that they will be helping the group have a productive conversation. And to do that, you will ask everyone to:
 - Please remember that some of the issues we will be discussing might have direct impact on some that are inside the group. So please share your thoughts in a way that will bring people into the conversation rather than isolate them.
 - We ask that you speak from your own perspective; personal **"I" statements** are useful ways for keeping your viewpoints personalized, and avoid generalizations about what others think or feel.
 - We ask that you respect the viewpoints of others--that you **listen respectfully** and attentively, and that you withhold judgment about other's views. Our goal here is not to persuade each other of our ideas, but to get ideas for solutions out on the table.
 - We ask that you **don't interrupt** each other.
 - We ask that you maintain **confidentiality** about what is said in the room during this discussion and that you don't talk about what others say here to others who are not part of this discussion.
 - To show your respect for others in the room, we ask that you stay focused on the discussion together and **avoid side conversations**.
 - We ask that you be willing to voice dissenting ideas for solutions and not criticize others' ideas. We are generating possible solutions rather than analyzing the ideas offered.
 - With sensitive issues, people make take things personally. Please try to be sensitive to each other's needs and concerns. Avoiding derogatory or sarcastic comments at the expense of others will help us all work together.
 - **All questions are good ones.** We encourage you to ask questions of each other no matter how simplistic you might think they are. Chances are there are others who have the same question. The goal of the discussion is to learn, explore, and engage.

- We ask that you **don't make assumptions** about what others think or mean. Remember that others will not always attach the same meanings to words that you do or perceive the world the same way you do. Asking for clarification or more information when needed can be helpful.
 - Find out if some **people are leaving early or coming late** and decide how you want to deal with that.
9. Following the ground rules, you can ask the group to do introductions. Encourage everyone to take 30 seconds or less to share their name, do they live or work in the district, and why did they want to be part of the work tonight?
 10. Thank everyone for the introductions. Then reiterate that the point of this working group is to have further conversation about the solutions proposals that were identified at the last community meeting in July. There is also an opportunity for new ideas to be shared, but remind folks of the opportunity to use the 'toolkit' to identify solutions that are not at the expense of others. In these conversations, notes will be taken and report backs will occur to allow CM O'Brien and his staff the ability to identify potential budget items to address public safety and health.
 11. Identify again that you will be helping to keep the conversation on track and unless there are extra facilitators, ask for one person from your group to volunteer to be a note taker. Note pads will be available on each table. Ask the note taker to write legibly. Because there is a numerous amount of solutions that can be discussed, it would be helpful for you to propose to the group if everyone wishes to select a top 3 or 4 solutions to discuss or any other polling options for prioritizing the discussion. Once that process has been selected, proceed to asking the small group questions:

Small group questions:

1. Please share your thoughts and reactions to the solutions that have been proposed.
2. What solution proposals stand out to you as priorities for D6 in the next year?
3. What, if any, solutions do you think are missing?
4. How are these solutions proposals effective in the context of the 'Do No Harm / Do the Most Good Reflection Toolkit'?

*If the conversation immediately goes towards arresting people or criminalizing homeless people, simply acknowledge the answer, say okay, and reframe "If we were to apply the 'reflection toolkit' to that solution, what would those results actually look like?" An additional follow up could be, "Let's try and think about solutions that would increase safety and health for both people in District 6 with homes and people without homes?"

***If people in your small group continue to vocalize their solution proposal was not captured in the July 27 event, invite them to state their solution, encourage the use of the 'reflection toolkit', and that it will be recorded for CM O'Brien's follow-up work.**

***If the proposed encampment removal process dominates the conversation, remember to refer to the information included in the Homeless Encampments Legislation, and attempt to reframe and ask if there are other solutions or ideas people wish to discuss.**

*As a facilitator, please use your own experience and analysis to help manage the conversation.

*If there is an individual or multiple people who are problematically dominating the conversation, please grab Jesse's attention and he will help address the situation by offering to speak to the person outside.

9. We don't want to use the time to debate "individual responsibility vs. community responsibility", just saying thank you and, "Next?" Is usually the best response to challenging world views. However, you may want to read over these ways to think about difficult questions or ideas (from WLIHA) and discussion of the proposed encampment legislation in advance to refresh your understanding of the kinds of assumptions or misconceptions many people have on these topics:

Homeless Myths:

- IDEA: People choose to be homeless.
- REFRAME: Homelessness is dangerous, stressful, and humiliating. Some people who are homeless choose to sleep on the streets rather than in shelters because they live in family units that can't shelter together, have pets, have health issues, or are unsettled by shelter conditions and noise. Very few choose the streets over a residence they could call home. Certainly, children do not choose homelessness, nor do victims of domestic violence, which is the leading cause of homelessness among women.
- IDEA: People who are homeless are violent, dangerous, and/or are lawbreakers.
- REFRAME: Though there is a significant number of people experiencing homelessness who have substance abuse disorders, a person who is homeless is no more likely to be a criminal than a housed person, with one legal exception: camping ordinances. But of course people who are homeless break that law merely by actually being homeless. A person who is homeless is less likely to perpetuate a violent crime than a housed person, and is in fact more likely to be the victim of a violent crime, especially if they are a homeless woman, teen, or child.
- IDEA: Most homeless people have moved to this area from somewhere else because of the great amount of services that we offer.
- REFRAME: Actually our own communities create and sustain homelessness. Client records from All Home (which coordinates homeless services among King County) show that 85–90% of people accessing services in King County became homeless in King County. While some people experiencing homelessness move around to find jobs and housing, many are unable to move because of physical or behavioral health disabilities, because of financial

hardships like foreclosure or job loss that may have led to homelessness, or because they simply do not want to leave a community where they have established meaningful roots. We all deserve to stay in our own communities.

- IDEA: There are already plenty of shelters and services. People become homeless and remain homeless because they refuse to work.
- REFRAME: For the number of people experiencing homelessness in Seattle, there is actually not enough shelter space to meet the need. Also, wages of low-income households continue to decline as rents rise. In Seattle, worker must now earn at least 2 times the minimum wage to afford a 2-bedroom apartment. Even when rent is affordable, another barrier is high move-in costs, which prevents people from actually exiting homelessness. According to the Housing Development Consortium here in Seattle, 21% of Seattle renter households pay more than 50% of their income in housing costs and are at significant risk of becoming homeless.
- IDEA: It is a waste of public resources to provide homeless services to certain people who don't "deserve" them, such as addicts, or people who don't want services.
- REFRAME: The idea of the deserving versus underserving poor is harmful, and often results in homelessness, and addiction being seen as crimes rather than as conditions in need of treatment. People labeled "undeserving" are usually the most vulnerable among those experiencing homelessness, and most in need of housing and services. When people have access to housing, treatment services, healthcare, and other support services, they are able to progress to more stability. It is also less expensive to house a person who is homeless than the taxpayer costs associated with criminalization and emergency service use while living on the street, as well as more effective. A Seattle study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that the yearly cost to house 95 tenants in a local permanent supportive housing program was 53% less than the yearly cost of services when that same group was homeless. In addition, the group's emergency costs declined by 73% in the two years after the program's launch.
- IDEA: Government policies to end homelessness are a waste of time.
- REFRAME: Homelessness is a systemic failure. It is caused by larger issues like lack of affordable housing, high cost of living, low-wage jobs, lack of access to health care, and mental health treatment & chemical dependency treatment services. Public policy is the leading cause of homelessness and it can be solved with public policy: Building more affordable housing, raising the minimum wage, and providing access to health services are just a few of the remedies that require effective public policy and adequate funding.
- IDEA: Homelessness is too big and too complex to solve.

- **FACT:** That is easy to believe because the problem is complex but homelessness is solvable. We simply must advocate and hold our policy makers accountable to invest fully in real solutions. For example, Housing First is a proven approach to ending chronic homelessness. It prioritizes stable housing as a person's primary need, while also providing services to address behavioral health, addiction, or other issues people may be struggling with. In this model, housing is not a reward for good behavior, it is a necessity to accessing treatment and getting better.

Homeless Encampments Legislation Description

The Seattle City Council is currently in the legislative process for an ordinance that would adapt how the City will perform unsanctioned encampment protocols. This issue has been somewhat complex and Councilmember O'Brien's Office along with other Council offices have heard from constituents that want the legislation to be successful and also constituents that do not support the legislation.

There is a potential that some of the small group conversations can include this legislation and our office wants to ensure that you have the correct information. The language included here is an opportunity for you to learn more about the legislation and to better informed for those potential conversations.

Councilmember O'Brien, along with Councilmember Rob Johnson, Lisa Herbold, and Kshama Sawant have co-sponsored this legislation because they collectively support changing the ways in which the City responds to unsanctioned encampments. It might be important to note other Council support to dismay the idea that Councilmember O'Brien is a unique supporter for resolving this issue.

Current issue: Councilmember O'Brien agrees that no one should be living in outdoor public spaces, but the reality is over 3,000 people are living outdoors because of inaccessible and unaffordable shelter and housing. Since these 3,000 people do not have access to their own spaces, their options are limited to residing in public spaces. Because of living in outdoor public spaces, residents do not have access to bathroom or garbage services, which has negative impacts in certain spaces.

Current protocol: City provides 72 hours' notice and outreach to people living in unsanctioned encampments that are located in outdoor public spaces to connect them with services and shelter and then removal of the encampment. By many accounts of this process, known as "sweeps", it is shown to be ineffective:

- The 72 hour timeline is not uniformly followed and encampment residents do not receive sufficient notice.
- Physical belongings are confiscated and disposed of by the City, which have significant impacts on people's abilities to work traditional jobs and even survive.

- City data shows 95% of the encampments that have been removed since January are repopulated because safe outdoor living spaces that will not be swept are limited.
- Ballard service provider saw 30% increase in foot traffic for their services after a concentrated effort at sweeping unsanctioned encampments in the U-District during November 2015.
- Trash accumulation and unsanitary issues have not been reduced in neighborhoods by sweeps.
- Because of the inaccessibility of shelters for people in family units, with pets, or with health issues and limited affordable housing, much shelter offers are for nighttime spaces only and therefore encampment residents choose to stay in encampments for stability and their own right to return.
- People who are unsheltered are further destabilized.

Legislative process: There has been some question regarding the need to prioritize the work of the Mayors Unsanctioned Encampments Cleanup Protocols task force. This work is appreciated by Councilmember O'Brien and other Council offices. It's important to note that the point of the legislative body is to pass public policy through civic debate and public testimony and also pass the City's budget. For the issue of encampments, the Council is doing its job – the legislative process to produce public policy. The task force can happen in parallel and each body of work will contribute to the other.

Current legislation: The current legislation was informed by service providers, legal advocates, and people who have or are experiencing homelessness. The main goal of the legislation was to discontinue the “sweeps” of moving unhoused people from place to place. It's extremely important to note that much of the concern for housed neighbors is regarding trash and human waste accumulation. The legislation addresses that. The current protocols do not. And actually current encampment protocols exacerbate that issue creating even more challenges in neighborhoods.

The legislation instructs encampment removals after adequate and accessible housing has been offered in a 30 day window. The legislation does mandate removals for encampments that are:

- Unsafe- encampment spaces that are in physically unsafe areas, example includes downward embankment to a highway.
- Unsuitable- encampment spaces that are impeding the use of the space, example includes blocking the entrance to a walking trail.
- Hazardous- encampment spaces with vast garbage, human waste, and/or used substance materials accumulation
 - For this type of space, the City is required to provide materials to remedy the hazardous and 72 hours to correct that situation before removal.

The legislation also: provides a committee for implementation work; specific language for the City to not be restricted to respond to any emergency issues; and does not prohibit the police from enforcing any criminal laws.

This legislation is not a complete solution to the homelessness crisis, as we have long-term needs we must continue to tackle in the face of declining state and federal funding. We need housing that is affordable and accessible, better mental health and substance use services, and an economic system that allows everyone to thrive. But we must continue this long-term work while responding these immediate needs effectively.

9/27 Updates: There is current consensus conversation amongst Council, stakeholders, and public input to use new language to amend and update the legislation to fine-tune some challenges.

Some of those specific topics include:

- Park spaces- There is direction for the legislation to categorically specify improved areas of parks, including restored natural areas or natural areas actively undergoing restoration, which would prohibit any outdoor residency in spaces of parks that are in traditional, frequent use. In essence, no camping in these types of park spaces.
- Schools- There is current consensus for the legislation to only be directed towards City property and additionally schools and private property would be prohibited from any outdoor residency. This means the legislation would specify no outdoor residency on any school properties.
- Other public property- See above.
- Sidewalks- There is current consensus to reaffirm the City's own 'sit and lie' ordinance that would prohibit sitting and lying on sidewalks and additionally to prohibit outdoor residence on public sidewalks in front of houses and dwelling units.
- Emergency situations- There is consensus to include language that would reaffirm the City's ability to respond to emergency situations as currently done.

This consensus legislative language will be discussed in the Public Health and Human Services Committee on 9/28.

Councilmember O'Brien has also written two blog posts on this legislation and it might be helpful for you to review:

<http://obrien.seattle.gov/2016/09/06/addressing-effective-strategies-towards-encampments/>
<http://obrien.seattle.gov/2016/09/23/sustainable-solutions-for-unsheltered-residents/>

9. Key Issues/Topics Defined for your information

- Housing First: homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing people experiencing homelessness with permanent housing as quickly as possible – and then providing supportive services as needed; the key is the housing is prioritized
- Encampment Clean Ups- current city policy through Multidisciplinary Outreach Teams that provides outreach services, cleaning of outdoor spaces, and physical removal of homeless people and their belongings

- One Night Count- Point-in-time counts of homeless people inside King County.
- Safe Consumption Spaces- Facility or space where individuals could safely inject or consume substances while being provided medical attention if necessary and voluntary social services. (Safe Injection Site, Incite, in Vancouver, Canada, has not had anyone die of an overdose while onsite and saw more than half of its clients participating in an adjoined detox program)
- Chronic Homelessness- An unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.
- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)- Program developed with the community to address low-level drug and prostitution crimes which connects people to social services instead of booking through the criminal justice system
- Community Policing- three prong public safety approach that brings community engagement, crime data and police services together to get direct feedback on perceptions of crime and public safety
- Outdoor Living Space (Encampment)- outdoor public space that one or more homeless individual(s) use to live or sleep in

For questions, please email Jesse at jesse.perrin@seattle.gov or at the office phone line, 206-684-8800.