

TO: City Council Government Operations Committee
FROM: Jena Jones, Homelessness Response Manager
RE: Cleveland St. Encampment Closure Update
DATE: December 18, 2024

With the encampment closure date officially delayed until February 28, 2025 for those engaged with core partners, the work to prioritize housing and supportive services for encampment neighbors continues and we have begun the process of physically cleaning up and dismantling unoccupied areas of the space.

We continue to remain in contact with the developers regarding the status of the 41 units of permanent supportive housing, and are working to directly connect outreach and supportive service staff with units in the City's new housing unit repository. Over the last couple of weeks, the focus has been on ensuring the By Name List (BNL, a best practice accounting of all neighbors residing in the encampment) is comprehensive and reflective of the folks who are actually living in the encampment space. Now that the BNL has been locked in, we are working to prioritize housing for these individuals.

The physical clean-up of the encampment space is being coordinated with the City personnel. Thus far, walk-throughs have been conducted by City staff to identify which areas within the encampment are uninhabited to prioritize where clean-up efforts can begin. Staff have mapped and delineated the areas to be cleaned and posted them to ensure residents are aware of the process and to allow them time to gather any personal belongings from the designated areas.

This effort represents Phase One of the process of physically breaking the encampment down. The City's team has been careful to identify areas that are confirmed by residents to be unoccupied and have worked to message the clean-up process both verbally and in writing so neighbors are understanding of the changes that are happening within the encampment. As more neighbors work through the exit plans and depart the encampment, the clean-up phases that follow the first will involve additional clean-up efforts providing weather and snowfall allows. The vast majority of folks continue to engage with supportive services and identify steps that will facilitate their exits. There are still roughly ten individuals who have not engaged in the development of an exit plan and these folks are likely to have to be asked to leave the site.

Resource challenges are more prominent given staffing changes within the outreach teams. Neighbors frequently require rides to medical appointments, apartment viewings, etc. and the limited number of direct support staff has resulted in much time spent transporting folks as opposed to providing outreach services in the encampment. Accessing phones for encampment residents has also been a barrier to effective communication and forward progress as folks make their exits. The encampment closure's core partner group addressed this last week and a solution has been identified to overcome this challenge.

Next steps related to the closure will include outreach by City staff to those not engaging with services or not on the BNL. As we have created the expectation that those who are engaging and working toward their exit plans will have all supports and resources made available to aid them in their success as they move toward permanent housing, it is also imperative that expectations are set for those who are unwilling to participate. Folks who continue to choose to not engage may be asked to leave and will always have the option to self-solve through access to emergency shelters, warming centers, or diversion opportunities.

Below is the current status of individuals as well as changes since October 10th when the closure was announced:

- The remaining individuals within the encampment represent 45 households
- 23 individuals either have a voucher or will be housed as a partner on someone else's voucher
- 15 individuals have been housed
- 4 People have signed leases and are preparing to move into units
- 5 people have been moved into shelter
- 2 people have been reconnected with family
- 13 people have left the encampment under other circumstances