

Vancouver Homelessness Response EMERGENCY DECLARATION



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Overview

- Housing Outcomes & 2021 Homeless Response Plan Review
- Changing conditions in Vancouver
- Strategies for addressing changing conditions
- Role of Emergency Declaration
- Timeline
- Questions



Housing Outcomes Snapshot

Affordable Housing Fund (to date)	
New units	772
Preserved units	317
Households prevented eviction	1,860
Shelter beds supported	450
MFTE Program (to date)	
New units incentivized	5,521
CDBG/HOME Funding (From current Consolidated Plan —last four years)	
New units	108
Preserved units	57
Affordable homeownership	5
Homeless households rehoused	207
Households prevented eviction	42
Shelter beds supported	223

2021 Recommendations		2023 Updates
Strategy	About	Status
Mail Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move mail service from Nav. Center and make widely accessible 	
Talkin' Trash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Team Expand scope to include intentional outreach/engagement in camps 	
HART Buildout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with CRMH to build remainder of HART out with mobile health team Proactively engage with individuals in encampments for health needs 	
Additional Safe Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate other properties or partner with other entities for additional 24/7 Safe Park capacity Contract with nonprofit for operations 	
Safe Stay Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pallet shelter communities providing an alternative to outdoor habitation 	
Future Strategies		Status
Community Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate venue 	
Bridge Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congregate shelter to add capacity 	

Affordable Housing Crisis in Clark County

- Rents increased **19%** in 5 years
- **51%** of renters cost burdened
- Clark County growing twice as fast as Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties
- **2%** vacancy rate
- **4,886** units completed last 3 years
- Deficit estimated at **5,600** units



Changing Conditions in Vancouver

Population Changes
Feb. 2022 – Jan. 2023



Clark County Point in Time Count January 2023

1,300
total individuals

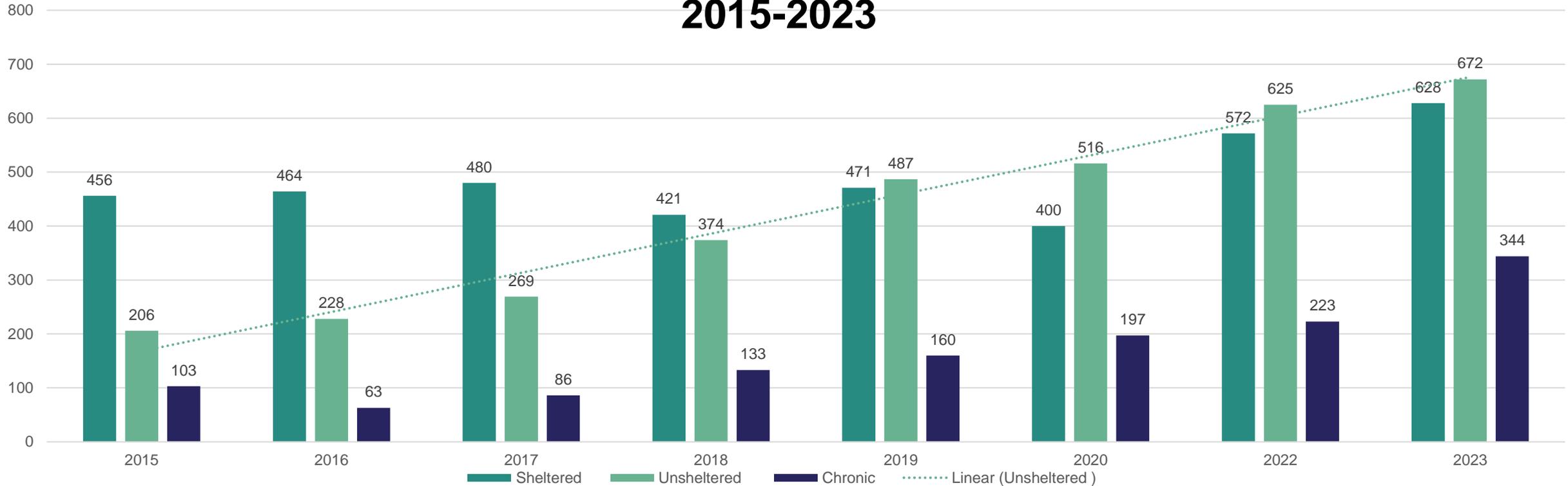
672
unsheltered

54% increase in chronic homelessness

78% increase in chronic unsheltered homelessness

46% of County homelessness begins in Vancouver

County-wide Sheltered and Unsheltered Homelessness 2015-2023



- **226%** increase in unsheltered homelessness

- **238%** increase in chronic unsheltered

- **234%** increase in chronic

Changing Conditions in Vancouver

Population Changes



HART Unsheltered Count June 2023

451

individuals

346

agreed to be surveyed

93%

meet HUD's definition of chronically homeless

48%

became homeless outside of Vancouver

78%

of Clark County's unsheltered population is in Vancouver.

Changing Conditions in Vancouver

Impacts of pandemic and legislation on homelessness

What we're seeing:

- Increased violence and threats
- Camps used as cover for criminal activity by people who aren't homeless
- Increased overdoses and deaths
- More visible and significant mental health symptoms
- Lack of interest in forward movement or well-being

Perfect Storm:

- Isolation
- Blake decision
- Fentanyl crisis

Snapshot of growing challenges

Public Safety

VFD responds to an average of **21 fires per month** in/around camps

- **6,257** VPD calls at just 5 camps since 2021
 - 15 shootings
 - 3,000 mental health calls
 - Sex crimes
 - Stolen vehicles

Calls to VPD related to homelessness **10% of total calls**

Health

60% Report **substance use** as a contributor to homelessness

30% of injury fatalities in Clark County due to overdose

97% increase in **fatal injury deaths** by overdose since 2019

Fentanyl most prevalent drug in camps



Strategies for addressing changing conditions

- Emergency Declaration
- Alignment of HART/Police Efforts
- Outdoor Habitation/Ordinance Amendments
- Targeted Outreach & Behavioral Health Response
- Bridge Shelter

Emergency Declaration

An emergency declaration allows us to swiftly respond to rapidly growing situation and treat it as a crisis.



What's included:

- Initial executive orders
 - Lift relevant procurement restrictions
 - RFP process
 - Purchasing
 - Authorize City Manager to close properties to outdoor habitation based on public health and safety assessment/risk

Alignment of Enforcement Efforts

Updated VPD Policy & Procedures regarding homelessness

- Patrol Response to Homelessness published
- Training at shift briefings
- Patrol assists with enforcing Camping Expectations
- Extend Community Court referral option to patrol

Increase Community Court capacity



Ordinance Change Options

- Codify Camping Expectations to ensure clarity and consistency for individuals experiencing homelessness and law enforcement.
- Evaluate options for adjusting camp sizes, locations, and limitations to ensure more balanced public access to public spaces, reduce impacts of camps, and mitigate sanitation challenges.
- Opportunity to partner with Washington State Department of Transportation by utilizing City Camping Expectations on WSDOT property.

Targeted Outreach and Behavioral Health Response

Corridor Community Response Teams:

Fourth Plain Corridor, Downtown/Uptown

Behavioral health response

- Crisis trained, but intended for pre-crisis response
- Mental health and Substance Use Disorder
- De-escalation/pre-escalation training and response for corridor businesses/stakeholders

Outreach and community engagement/activation

- Corridor ambassadors (like Vancouver Downtown Association Ambassador)
- Focused homeless outreach
- Community events to activate more problematic spaces

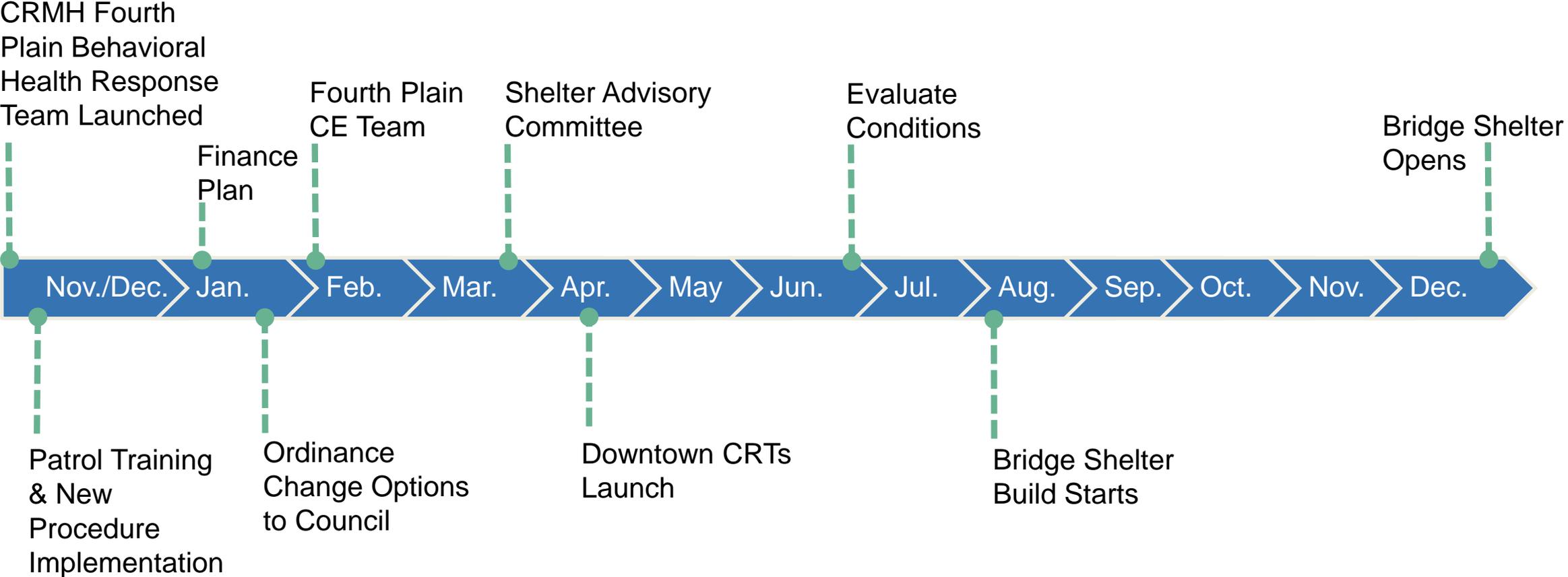
Bridge Shelter



- Sprung structure
- Congregate
- 150 beds
- Hygiene facilities
- Co-location of service providers

- Provide services relevant to critical current needs
 - Medical respite beds
 - On-site Substance Use Disorder services/Medication Assisted Treatment clinic
 - Peer/recovery community support/involvement

2023-2024 Timeline



Questions/Discussion

