



City of Seattle

Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor

Human Services Department

Jason Johnson, Director

Date: November 30, 2020

To: City Clerk and Seattle City Council

From: Jason Johnson, Human Services Department

Subject: HOM-15-C-1 Human Services Department (HSD) Navigation Team Q4 2020 Proviso Report

In accordance with HOM-15-C-1, this is the fourth report of the 2020 proviso reporting on the Navigation Team and reflects Quarter 3 (Q3) data, which spans July 1 - September 30, 2020.

In Q3, the Navigation Team continued its role as the City's frontline response during COVID-19 helping those experiencing homelessness during the crisis "shelter in place" or find safer spaces. In alignment with [CDC public health guidelines](#), since March 16, removals of unauthorized encampments have been limited to only the most critical public safety and public health risks to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. From the implementation of this directive in March through September, the Navigation Team conducted eight encampment removals and one removal in Q3.

With a shift away from encampment removals, the Navigation Team turned its operation focus to conducting outreach and garbage, waste, and debris mitigation at encampments. Since the beginning of the pandemic in early March, the Navigation Team has engaged over 2,300 individuals experiencing homelessness, made over 670 site visits for outreach, conducting over 1,650 encampment litter/debris pickups, and making over 610 referrals to shelter.

The encampment removal in Q3 addressed a [safety hazard on and around the former Marion Street pedestrian walkway](#) after the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) declared the bridge to be structurally unsound and a danger to those living in an encampment on and below the structure. The Navigation Team's System Navigators and Field Coordinators, in partnership with REACH, DESC and Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) worked with those living in the affected area to ensure continuity of services after relocation. This weeklong effort to address the needs of the individuals living in the area resulted in ten people voluntarily relocating before the removal, which took place in accordance with Multi-Departmental Administrative Rules.

In September, the Navigation Team continued its work during the wildfire smoke emergency referring those living unsheltered into an [emergency smoke shelter](#) and continuing encampment litter and debris removal routes across the City. Over five days of outreach during the smoke emergency, System Navigators, the Team's Human Service Department based outreach specialists, conducted 217 needs assessments, distributed 219 emergency shelter flyers, provided 178 basic needs items, made 32 referrals into the emergency smoke shelter and 30 referrals into other City-funded shelter programs.

After months of negotiations between the Mayor's Office and City Council, the City Council approved legislation on October 26 that funds a modified continuation of the City's response to encampments through 2020. This new approach is led by an eight-person Unsheltered Outreach and Response Team that does not include members of the Seattle Police Department and will be focused on coordinating City-contracted outreach and encampment engagement by City departments. The legislation increases current funding by \$2.07 million

to fund the new Team through 2020 and to provide additional funds to outreach providers with the goal of increasing access to behavioral health resources, flexible financial assistance, case management, housing navigation services and other technology and administrative needs.

Currently, the Mayor's Office, the Human Services Department, and outreach providers are focused on operationalizing the outreach plan Council adopted to ensure Seattle is healthy, clean, accessible and safe for all unhoused and housed communities. I am encouraged by the spirit of collaboration between stakeholders as we work together to address our City's greatest challenge in 2020 and beyond.

Now, more than ever, it will take a united effort to address homelessness in our city and this proposal provides the clearest path forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Johnson", written in a cursive style.

Jason Johnson
Acting Director, Human Services Department

Report Summary

This report satisfies 2020 Seattle City Council Budget Action HOM-15-C-1 “Impose a Proviso on Navigation Team Appropriations in HSD.” This report contains the following items:

1. Reporting Elements for Every Quarter:

- Performance Measures Reflected in the Updated Theory of Change. These metrics include: 1) connecting individuals living unsheltered to services, 2) connecting people to safer spaces, and 3) addressing hazardous and unsafe conditions stemming from, and found within, unmanaged encampments.
- Analysis of Emerging Trends
- Progress in Developing and Implementing a Racial Equity Toolkit
- Trainings and Workshops Attended by Navigation Team Members
- Upcoming Opportunities for Staff Development and Continual Improvement
- Qualitative Updates on New Shelter Resources and/or Notable Trends
- Navigation Team Meeting Summaries
- Table of Obstruction Removals and Associated Outreach

2. Additional Elements for this Report:

- Detail the steps taken to implement the recommendations identified in the report submitted by January 31, 2020 to increase the rate that individuals referred to a shelter arrive at that shelter within 48 hours.
- Discuss the City’s compliance with the Auditor recommendations on checkpoint 2.3, strategies to prevent trash accumulation.

1. Reporting Elements for Every Quarter

Note: All figures reflect the most accurate accounting of outreach and operations at the time of reporting.

Performance Measures: Q3 2020

Reporting Element	Response: Q3 2020	
Total Number of System Navigator Contacts Made Quarterly, Duplicated	1,057	
Total Number of Nav SPD Contacts Made Quarterly, Duplicated	327	
Total Number of System Navigator Contacts Made Quarterly, Unduplicated	870	
Total Number of Nav SPD Contacts Made Quarterly, Unduplicated ¹	Unknown	
Number of Referrals to Services by Service Category that Were Entered into the Nav App or Homelessness Management Information System (One Individual Could Have Requested Multiple Services) ²	Service	
	Basic Needs - Granola Bar, Water, Socks	530
	Benefits Activation	13
	Case Management Connection	40
	Substance Use Recovery Support	4
	Data Not Collected	4
	Direct Support - Vehicle Repair	4
	Direct Support – Education	0
	Direct Support – Employment	8
	Direct Support – Housing	7
	Direct Support – ID	8
	Family Reconnection/Relocation	5
	Information	99
Legal Support Connection	10	

¹ The Navigation Team stopped collecting unique individual client information from SPD Officers on April 1, 2020, so their engagements cannot be unduplicated.

² This data represents Services Requested

	Medical Support Connection	12	
	Direct Support - Mediation/Conflict Resolution	0	
	Declined Services	28	
	Direct Support - Mental Health	1	
	Motel Voucher	0	
	Welfare Check	4	
	Reentry Support Connection	0	
	Safe Lot for Vehicle	0	
	N/A	12	
	Storage	0	
	Diversion	9	
	Provided Contact Information	43	
	Referral - Vehicle Repair	4	
	Referral - Education Support	1	
	Referral - Employment Support	3	
	Referral - Housing Support	1	
	Referral - ID Support	1	
	Referral - Mediation/Conflict Resolution	0	
	Referral - Mental Health Support	0	
Breakdown, by Percentage, of Client Demographic Information Quarterly for System Navigator Engagements ³	Gender	Number	Percentage
	Male	579	67%
	Female	249	29%
	Trans Female	9	1%
	Trans Male	2	<1%
	Gender Non-Conforming	4	<1%
	Data Not Collected	27	3%
	Refused	0	0
	Race		
	American Indian or Alaska Native	67	8%
	Asian	15	2%
	Black/African American	255	29%
	White/Caucasian	292	34%
	Multiracial	130	15%

³ The Navigation Team stopped collecting unique individual client information from SPD Officers on April 1, 2020, so client demographic information pertains only to System Navigator engagements.

	Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	6	<1%
	Data Not Collected	105	12%
	Ethnicity		
	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	702	81%
	Hispanic/Latino	9	1%
	Data Not Collected	159	18%
Percentage of People Whose Needs Assessment Screening Was Completed ⁴		100%	
Total Number of Referrals to Shelter, Duplicated		152	
Total Number of Referrals to Shelter, Unduplicated		141	
Number of Arrivals to the Referred Shelter Within a 48-Hour Period Following Referral, Duplicated		51	
Number of Arrivals to the Referred Shelter Within a 48-Hour Period Following Referral, Unduplicated		50	
Number of Times in the Quarter a Field Coordinator Provided Assistance to or Responded to a Call for Support from a Community Police Team or Bike Patrol Officer ⁵		5	
Number of Times in the Quarter a System Navigator Provided Assistance to or Responded to a Call for Support from a Community Police Team or Bike Patrol Officer, Including Requests Relayed Through a Field Coordinator ⁶		5	
Number of Times the Navigation Team Provided Diversion Assistance ⁷		3	
Number of Individuals/Households that Moved into Permanent Housing		N/A	

⁴ Navigation Team System Navigators ask 100% of the individuals they engage about their self-identified needs.

⁵ This quarter's totals included requests for litter picks and storage.

⁶ This number reflects the number of engagements that System Navigators had with individuals in response to calls from Field Coordinators or SPD.

⁷ No Centralized Diversion Funds have been available since June 2019. Data in this cell reflects activities funded with Navigation Team Diversion funds.

Because of Diversion Fund Utilization ⁸			
Breakdown of Referrals to Specific Shelter-Types by Quarter, to-date		Q3 2020	YTD
	Basic Shelter	22	138
	Enhanced Shelter	49	348
	Tiny House Village	81	296
Average Daily Shelter Bed Availability, by Type	Overall	3.25	
	Basic Shelter	0	
	Enhanced Shelter	1.50	
	Tiny House Village	1.75	
Tonnage of Garbage, Waste, and Debris Removed from Unmanaged Encampments (Quarterly and YTD)	Q3 = 414.32 YTD = 993.22		
Total Number of Inspections Conducted	993		
Total Number of Unmanaged Encampments Removed, by 72-hr Cleanup, Obstruction, and Hazard	72-Hr Cleanup	0	
	Obstruction	1	
	Hazard	0	

Q3 Data Trends

- In alignment with CDC public health recommendations to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the Navigation Team made one encampment removal in Q3 due to a shift in operation focus towards primarily conducting outreach and garbage, waste, and debris mitigation to support those “sheltering in place” in encampments. This compares to 316 encampment removals in Q3 2019.
- The Average Daily Shelter Bed Availability for the quarter was lowest recorded by the Team, with just 3 beds available. This was a 50% decrease from Q2.
- The Navigation Team made 152 duplicated referrals into shelter in Q3 2020, a decrease from the recorded high of 408 achieved in Q2. Referrals in Q3 were affected by a reduction available beds due to impacts from COVID-19 on the shelter system and no additional shelter capacity being added in Q3.
- The Navigation Team identified 50 unduplicated enrollments to shelter in Q3 2020 at an enrollment rate of 35.46%. This was a decrease from the 149 unduplicated enrollments to shelter in Q2 2020, the most in a quarter since the Team started tracking enrollments, but an increase compared to Q1 2020 (44 enrollments) and Q4 2019 (45 enrollments)
- Field Coordinators conducted 993 Site Inspections in Q3 2020, a 6% decrease quarter-over-quarter, but a 96% increase over Q4 2019 – the last quarter not impacted by the Team’s COVID-19 response. Site Inspections are essential for the Navigation Team to effectively allocate outreach and encampment mitigation resources citywide.
- Tonnage of Garbage, Waste, and Debris Removed from Unmanaged Encampments increased 57% quarter-over-quarter to 414.32 tons as the Navigation Team continued to support those “sheltering in place” in encampments during the COVID-19 pandemic while mitigating impacts to surrounding neighborhoods
- System Navigator outreach to BIPOC based on perceived race increased to 54% compared to 40% in Q2 2020. Outreach to those perceived as White/Caucasian dropped to 34% from 46% in Q2. Engagement with those perceived as Multiracial increased 69% quarter-over-quarter.

⁸ Diversion funds are typically used to assist people in reconnecting to shared housing within their support network

- System Navigators made 1,057 duplicated and 870 unduplicated engagements in Q3 2020. This compares to 1,502 duplicated and 1,155 unduplicated engagements in Q2 2020 and 847 duplicated and 635 unduplicated engagements in Q1 2020.
- Of all referrals into shelter in Q3, 53% were into Tiny Homes, 32% were into Enhanced Shelter, and 9% were into Basic Shelter. This compares to last quarter when 49% of referrals were into Tiny Homes, 44% were into Enhanced Shelter, and 7% were into Basic Shelter. These numbers reflect the expansion of Enhanced Shelter options in response to COVID-19.

Progress in Developing a Racial Equity Toolkit

No additional Toolkit was done in Q3 given the ongoing Council deliberations and action to end the Navigation Team. Additionally, the initial Toolkit request from the Auditor was primarily focused on the appropriateness of having police officers assigned to encampment related work. Council's actions this fall to remove police officers from the team solved for this area of concern and the new structure proposed by the Mayor does not include law enforcement personnel.

Trainings and Workshops Attended by Navigation Team Members in Q3 2020

Name of Training	Attendees	Training Hours
Familiarity with MDARs and 17-01 Rules	2 Field Coordinators	24 hours
Field Processes Training for Field Coordinators	2 Field Coordinators	40 hours
Storage Processes for Field Coordinators	2 Field Coordinators	8 hours
Nav App Site Inspection and Removal Documentation Practices	2 Field Coordinators	8 hours
Role of Nav SPD for Non-Officers	2 Field Coordinators	6 hours
Diversion	1 System Navigator	12 hours
Animal Aggression/Safety	2 Field Coordinators 3 System Navigators 3 Supervisors	1 hour
Personal Protective Equipment Use	2 Field Coordinators	1 hour
Outreach Overview for Non-System Navigators	2 Field Coordinators	6 hours
Trauma Informed Care: SAMHSA Psychological First Aid for First Responders	3 System Navigators 2 Field Coordinators 2 Supervisors	1 hour
Trauma Informed Care: Core Guidelines in Responding to Mental Health Crises	2 Field Coordinators 3 System Navigators 2 Supervisors	1 hour
Trauma Informed Care: SAMHSA TIC Guidance	1 Field Coordinator 3 System Navigators 2 Supervisors	1 hour
Driving City Vehicles	1 Field Coordinator 1 System Navigator	30 min
Preventing Accidents	1 Field Coordinator 1 System Navigator	30 min
In Case of a Collision	1 Field Coordinator 1 System Navigator	30 min

Citywide RSJI Summit	2 Field Coordinators	8 hours
Encampment Mapping and Naming Conventions	3 System Navigators 2 Field Coordinators	8 hours

Upcoming Opportunities for Staff Development and Continuous Improvement

HSD staff in supervisory roles will be completing Mandatory Reporting of Harassment in Q4, and all staff will complete a series of ADA trainings.

Qualitative Updates on New Shelter Resources

There were no new shelter resources that came online in Q3.

Meeting Agendas, Attendees, and Minutes

The meetings in the table below meet the reporting requirement outlined in the Proviso in HOM 15-C-1.

Navigation Team Coordination Meetings	Purpose
Daily Dispatch	Review Operations Plan for the Day Prior to Arriving on Location
Weekly Outreach-Specific Dispatch	Create Operational Awareness for Outreach Providers in Advance of Operations and Case Consultation/Collaboration
Weekly Operations Planning	Operations Scheduling, and Resource Planning

Agendas and minutes captured for these meetings in Q3 2020 can be viewed via this City SharePoint link (note—these files are public record but for this report, only available via City digital platforms):

<https://seattlegov.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/HSD/NavTeam/EvuPOAxGgktBpipY6wRl1aABhCdfUrtz9kQc5mx5SavEHw?e=gSTe6V>

Description of Q3 Encampment Removal and Relocation Activity

See Appendix A for descriptions of Q3 encampment removal and relocation activity.

2. Reporting Elements for the Q3 Report

Reporting Element: Detail the steps taken to implement the recommendations identified in the report submitted by January 31, 2020, to increase the rate that individuals referred to a shelter arrive at that shelter within 48 hours.

Response:

The Navigation Team saw significant improvement of enrollment rates for Q2 (41.16% - the highest recorded by the Team) and Q3 (35.46% - the second highest recorded) in 2020. While a change in method to identify enrollments was used starting in Q2 to be more accurate and may account for part of these increases, the Navigation Team was benefited by the addition of a third System Navigator outreach specialist to the Navigation Team in mid-March and 95 new enhanced shelter and tiny home shelter units that came online in April. This additional HSD based System Navigator allowed the Team greater ability to capture, analyze, and report on outreach data while reducing the response times to request for outreach from community, businesses, providers, and City partners.

System Navigators were cleared to provide transportation directly from encampments to shelter in December 2019, after protocols were developed and approved. However, this particular strategy to improve enrollment rates was halted with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. During COVID-19, System Navigators utilized ridesharing to provide transportation to shelter in certain circumstances.

Reporting Element: Discuss the City’s compliance with the Auditor recommendations on checkpoint 2.3, strategies to prevent trash accumulation.

Response:

Auditor Recommendations on Checkpoint 2.3	Status
The City should conduct systematic geographic surveillance throughout Seattle to identify areas of encampment trash accumulation and track its progress with addressing trash accumulation over time. This should include green-spaces and areas in which residents may experience barriers to reporting.	The City has not moved forward on this recommendation.
The City should apply specific strategies to address persistent hot spots of encampment trash accumulation in Seattle that may include, but are not limited to: 1) expanding and increasing the frequency of the SPU encampment trash program, 2) designating more emphasis areas, and 3) requiring specific litter mitigation activities in a designated area around the facilities as part of Good Neighbor Agreements with City-funded agencies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) SPU expanded encampment trash collection services to 17 sites in 2020. 2) The City has not moved forward on this recommendation. 3) “Good Neighbor Agreements”, which are designed to facilitate an encampment’s functional co-existence within a neighborhood, would be coordinated by the Mayor’s proposed 2021 Unsheltered Outreach and Response Team.
The City should prohibit camping in Water Quality and Public Health Protection Areas, and systematically monitor these locations to ensure that unsanctioned camping is not occurring.	The City has not moved forward on this recommendation.
The City should engage outreach agencies in needle recovery and track its progress in reducing improperly discarded needle waste.	HSD is still developing the 2021 outreach contracts and is planning on including language requesting that outreach providers share needle recovery information with sites they work with.
The City should use proven strategies for deterring metal theft to reduce the accumulation of trash accumulation from metal scrapping around unsanctioned encampments.	The City has not moved forward on this recommendation.

Appendix A: Description of Q3 Encampment Removal Activity

There was one (1) obstruction removal during Q3 for a significant health and safety risk for those living in an encampment. Intensive outreach occurred, in collaboration with contracted outreach providers and PHSKC, the week before removal and included offers of shelter, services, and the facilitation of hepatitis A vaccinations. In advance of notice provided by the Navigation Team, SDOT posted notification of the pending construction four days prior to the removal. Navigation Team System Navigators and contracted outreach providers were on site the day of the removal with offers of shelter and services.

Obstruction Removals	Date	Reason	Advanced Notice Provided	Dates of System Navigator Outreach at Location 2-Weeks Prior to Removal	Number of Duplicated Engagements
Alaskan Way & Marion St. Vicinity	9-2-2020	Hazardous pedestrian bridge infrastructure	Yes 48 hours	August: 24, 28, 31 September: 1, 2	45