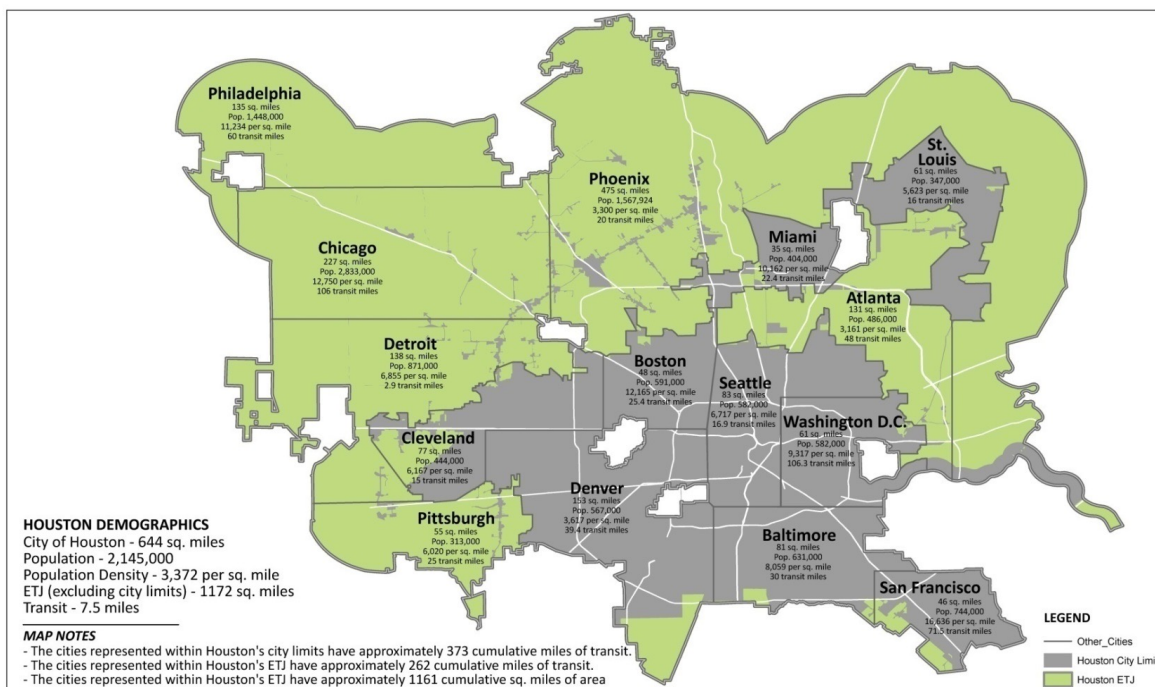


*The Way Home
Continuum of Care
Encampment Response Strategy*



My, how big you are!!

TX-700 CoC = 3,739 sq miles

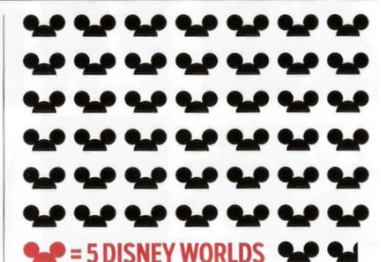


100 CENTRAL PARKS

MASSACHUSETTS

RHODE ISLANDS

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARKS

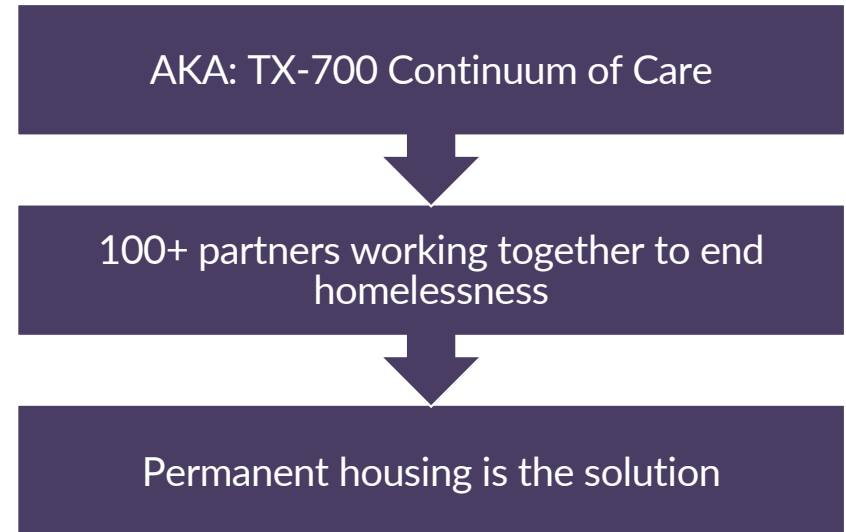
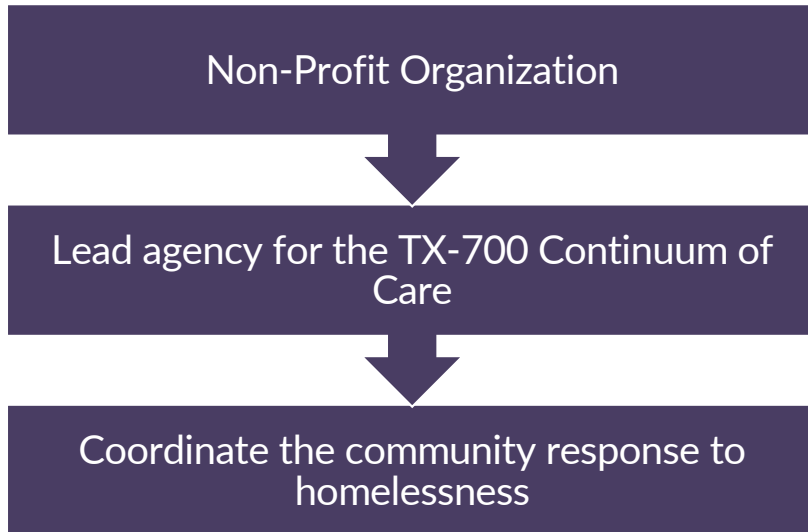


5 SAN FRANCISCOS

5 DISNEY WORLDS



The Way Home



Reality in 2011

- ✓ We had the 6th largest homeless population in the country
- ✓ Homeless service providers were spending millions but still leaving federal funds unused
- ✓ Homeless service providers were operating in silos, with no collaboration
- ✓ Recidivism was high
- ✓ Homelessness is expensive

The Shift

- Two important events in 2012
 - Technical Assistance
 - ✓ Houston was identified as a priority community by HUD
 - Community Charette
 - ✓ Brought everyone together
 - ✓ Identified common goals for the homeless response system



End Result



A diverse collection of independent providers employing lots of methods & seeing various results

An integrated network of providers coordinating efforts to achieve maximum impact

spotlight on...

HOUSTON MAYOR: WE HAVE EFFECTIVELY ENDED VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

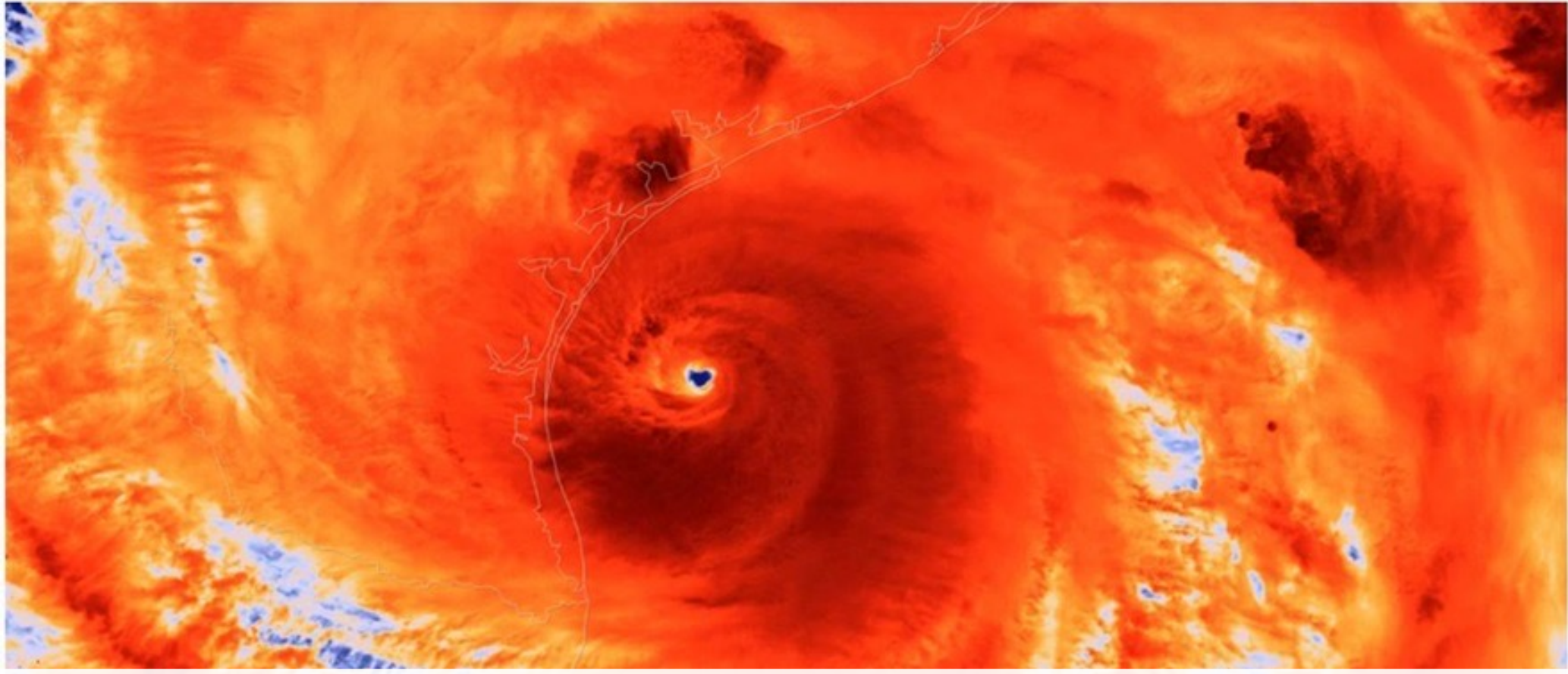


Congressman Al Green, Mayor Annise Parker, U.S. Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert F. McDonald, U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julián Castro, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Matthew Doherty. Photo courtesy of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Houston Effectively Ends Veteran Homelessness

Becomes Largest City in the Nation to Create System to House any Homeless Veteran

June 2015



Hurricane Harvey - August 2017

NOAA/NASA

Source: NOAA



**Tidwell St
Before**

**Tidwell St
After**



Source: Houston Chronicle

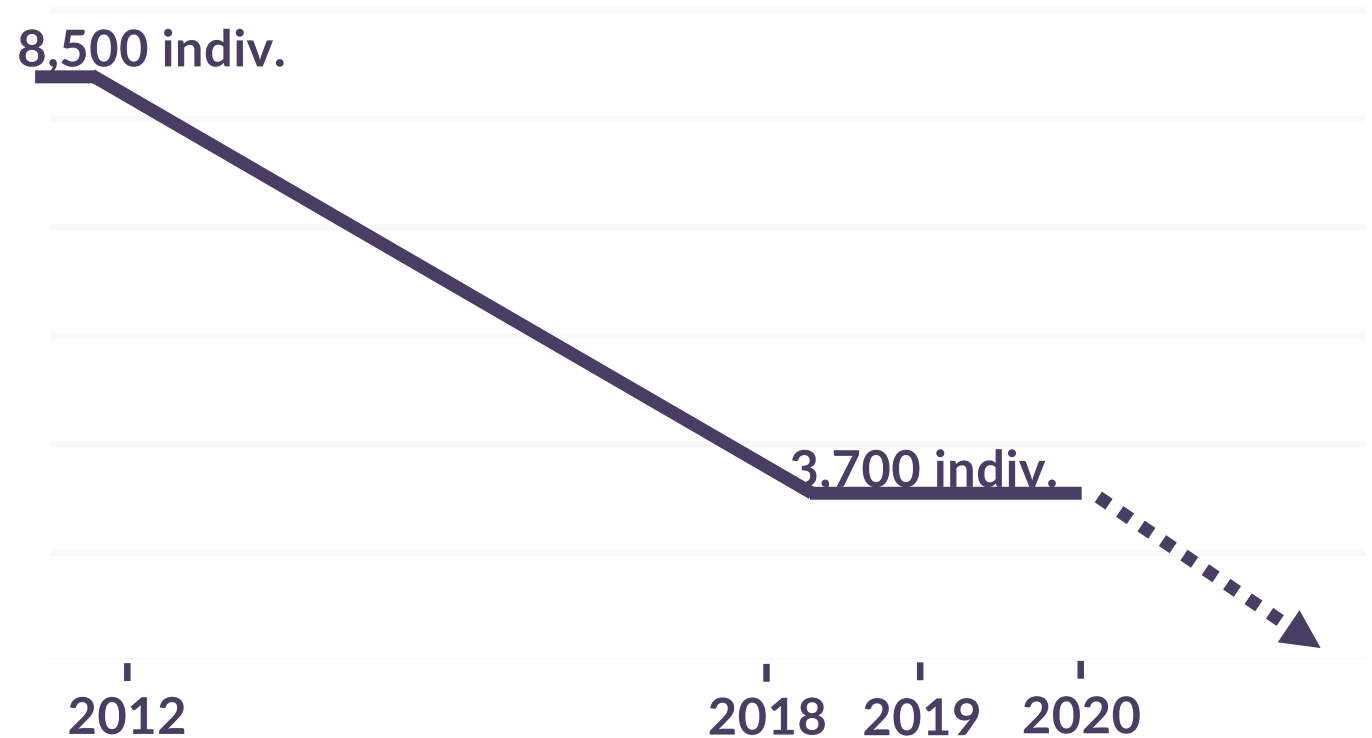


Source: Houston Chronicle

Homeless Population – Houston / Harris County

- Since 2012, more than 21,000+ individuals experiencing homelessness had been permanently housed.
- Nearly 90% remained housed two-years after placement.
- After reducing homelessness by 54%, we saw an 18% increase after Harvey.
- Much attention & resources were diverted to respond to the disaster.
- Our region's homeless population became stagnant, due to a lack of financial resources and tools.
- Continued support needed to "get over the hump"

8,500 indiv.

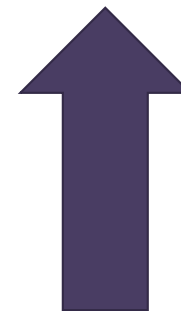


The Rise in “Street Issues”

54%
Homeless Population



Visibility





Let's close an encampment!

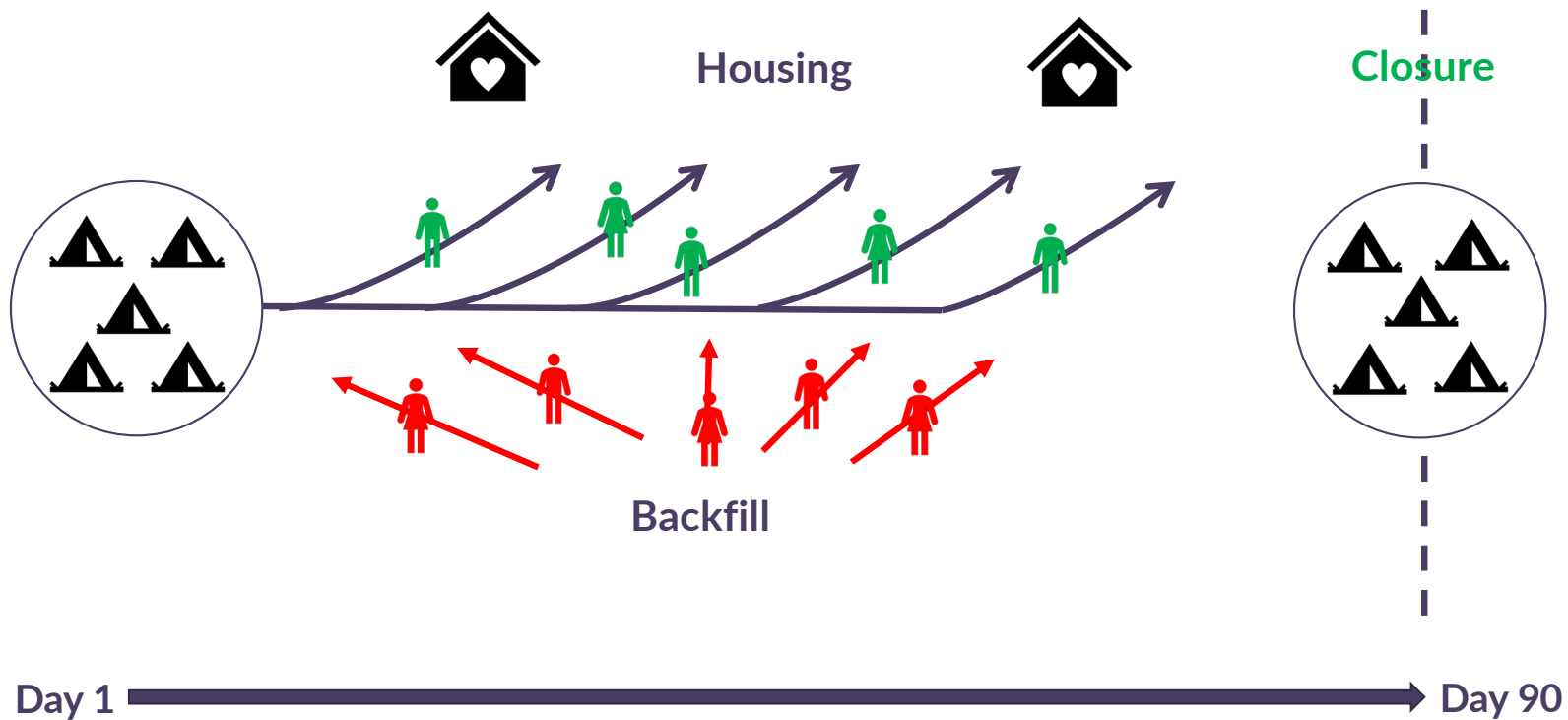
- Wheeler Encampment (Caroline & Alameda)
 - March 2018
 - 73 individuals
 - ✓ 73% housed
 - ✓ 5% refused
 - ✓ 22% left

Housing Harvey's Homeless – H3

- September 2019
- Chartres Encampment (near Minute Maid)
- Several areas in downtown
- \$2,500,000
 - Qatar Harvey Fund via Mayor Turner's Complete Communities Improvement Fund
- \$500,000
 - Downtown Management District
- 286 individuals
 - 70% housed
 - 8% refused
 - 22% left



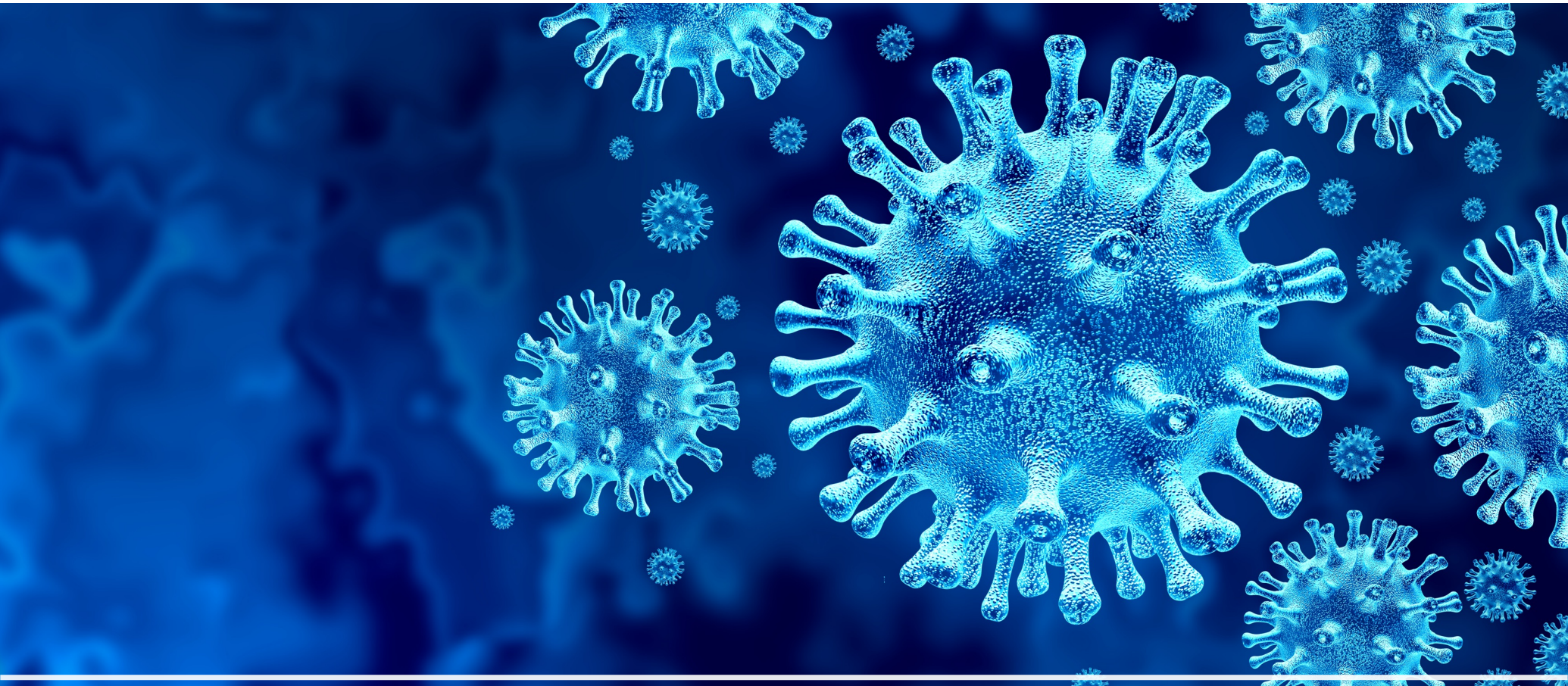
Initial Lessons Learned






2019 New Strategic Plan -Landscape Need


Program Types	Current System (Units)	Demand	Difference
RRH for Singles	459	2,075	-1616
RHH for Families	553	948	-395
PSH for Singles	5,078	7,377	-2,299
PSH for Families	117	86	+31



COVID-19



Coronavirus Aid, Relief, & Economic Security Act (CARES)

- 
- ❖ Individuals experiencing homelessness are more likely to contract the virus & more likely to require critical care if infected
 - ❖ Can't socially distance if you're living on the streets
 - ❖ City & County needed help in putting funds to best use
 - ❖ Opportunity for large-scale impact
 - ❖ Intended to be used as a public health tool to house the homeless




CCHP

- On July 1, Harris County, Houston, & the Coalition announced \$65M plan to serve 5,000 people by October 2022

Housing is healthcare

Encampment Response Strategy

- The CCHP allowed for the roll-out of an Encampment Decommissioning program that has demonstrated proven results in placing individuals living on the streets into housing.
 - Official [Encampment Response Strategy](#) available.
 - Currently being used by as a national best practice.
 - Houston Chronicle [cover story](#) featured our efforts.
- 

New Approach

“Surge” Strategy Plan

- Based on availability of housing
- Move encampment residents out in one week to prevent backfill
- Monitor location over time

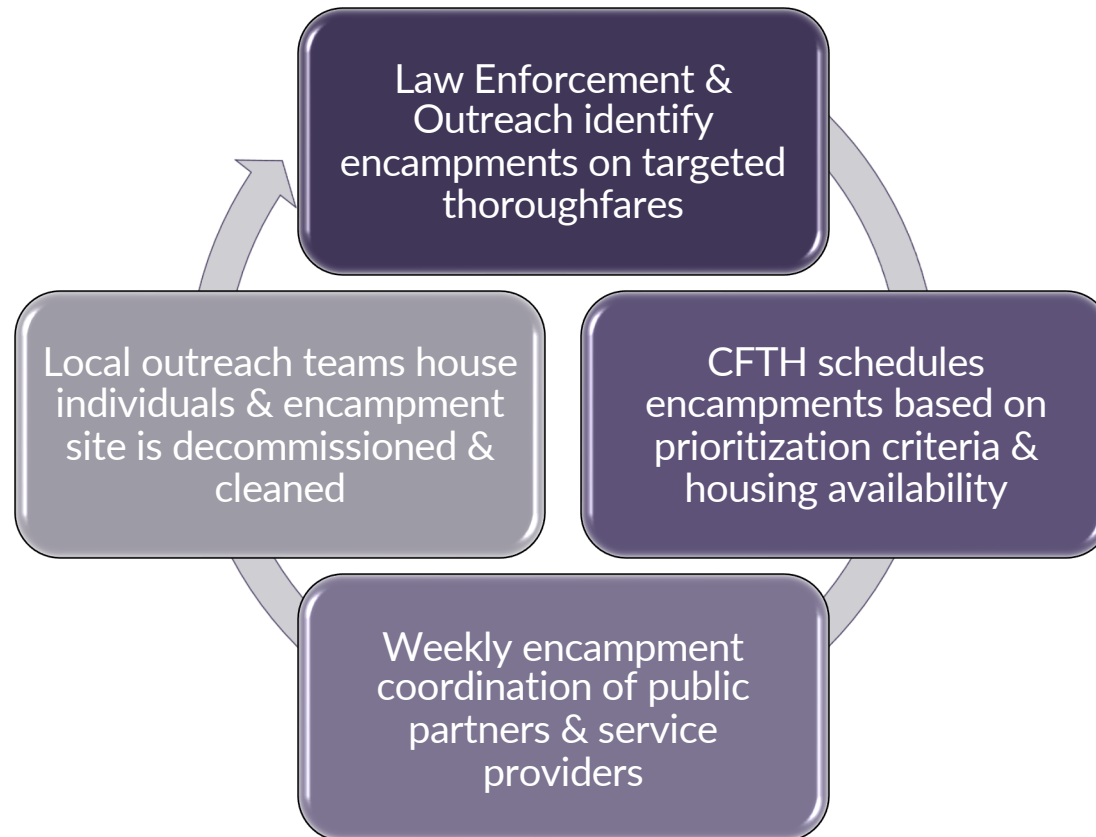
Dedicated Outreach Teams

- Large Encampment Teams
- Medium/Small Encampment Teams
- Hot Spots handled by pre-existing outreach

Dedicated Housing & Landlord Engagement Teams

- Ensure individuals have a housing referral
- Identify units, pay landlord incentives, get pre-approvals
- Align providers

Coordinated Encampment Response



Guiding Principles

- Houston/Harris County does not endorse sanctioned encampments as a response to unsheltered homelessness. Forcibly relocating individuals to designated camps is not an effective strategy.
- All people can be housed, with the right housing model and service supports.
- To the greatest extent practicable, individual choices about where and how to live should be honored.
- Addressing encampments requires collaboration from multiple sectors and systems; no single entity can or should have exclusive responsibility.
- Non-punitive, engagement-focused approaches are more preferable than enforcement, clearance, and criminalization. Enforcement approaches should be strategically combined with housing offers to address broader community health and safety interests.
- Intensive and persistent outreach and engagement is the key to building trust among persons living in encampments.
- Persons in encampments do best with clear, low-barrier pathways to permanent housing.
- Permanent housing placements must be followed by support services to ensure individuals are successful in maintaining their housing.

Defining Encampments

Large Encampments

- Concentration of 10 or more people,
- Use of structures for sustained habitation (cardboard boxes, tents, non-permanent structures),
- Evidence of sustained presence - trash piles, cooking fires, shopping carts.

Small Encampments

- Concentration of 3 – 9 people in a definable location,
- Use of structures for sustained habitation (cardboard boxes, tents, non-permanent structures),
- Evidence of sustained presence, although degree/visibility may be less than large encampments.

Hot Spots

- 1 - 3 people in a definable location,
- Evidence of bedding down but not sustained presence in the same location for sustained periods of time greater than one week.

Selecting Encampments for Remediation



Decommissioning Timeline

Site Identification & Reconnaissance

- Visual Inventory of site
- Identify community groups

4-6 wks

Comprehensive Engagement

- By-name list created
- First briefing w/partners

4 wks

Site Assessment

- Document location
- Vulnerability of population

3 wks

Encampment Response 1

- CE Assessments
- Confirm housing & needs
- Landlord engagement

2 wks

Encampment Response 2

- Office "closure" notice posted
- Confirm structures to be removed
- Confirm transportation & storage needs
- Units available, location, inspection, pre-approvals

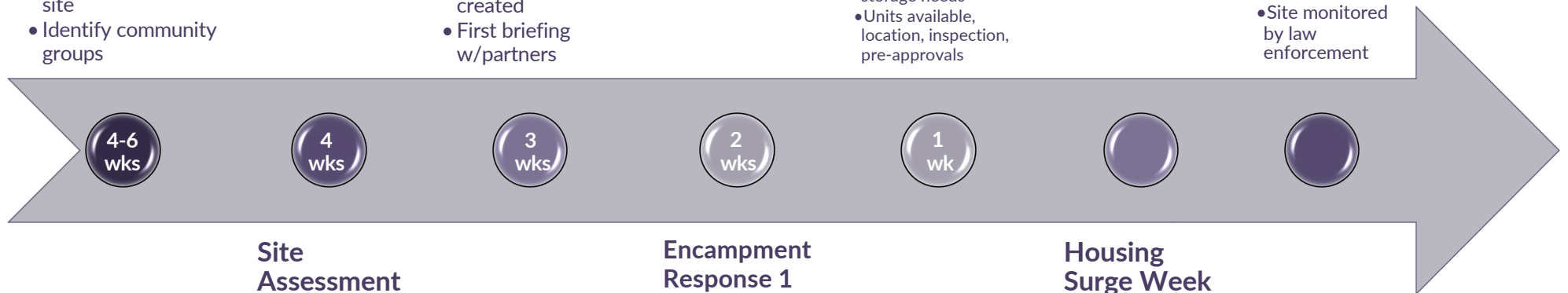
1 wk

Housing Surge Week

- Housing partners on-site HMIS enrollments
- Transport clients to units
- Law enforcement & solid waste

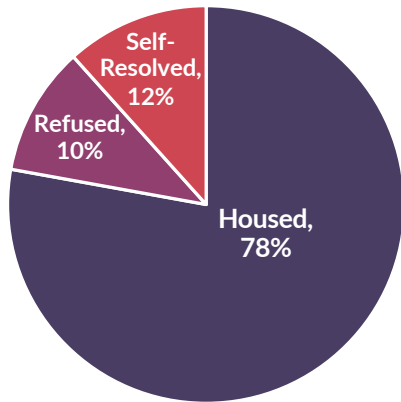
Aftercare

- Daily home visits w/housed clients
- Monitor site to maintain clearance
- Site monitored by law enforcement

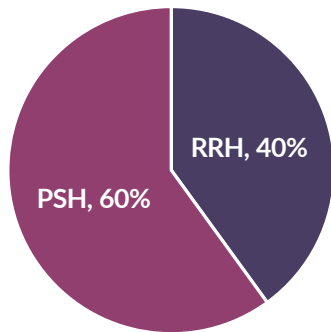


Encampments Decommissioned - 57

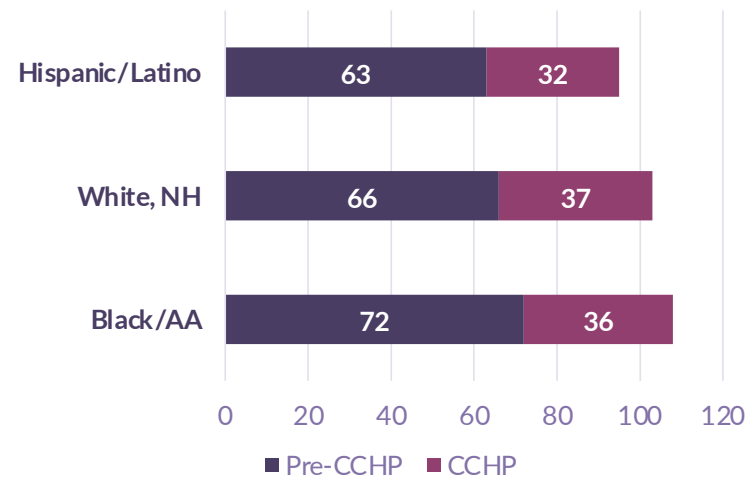
Individuals Engaged, n=343



Permanent Housing



Average Days from Referral to Lease-Up		
	Before CCHP	After CCHP
PSH	60	32
RRH	80	34



Lessons Learned

No Two Encampments are the Same

Start small

Integrated Care Teams

Referral Timing

Restoring Community Support in Housing First

COVID Waivers

Supportive Services are not optional

Remaining Challenges

01

Housing Availability

- Between October 1, 2020 – July 12, 2022, we have placed 5,315 people in permanent housing
- 73% of these are single adults or couples using 1-bedroom units

02

Funding Sustainability

- Federal pandemic related funding provided a unique, once-in-a-generation opportunity of increased funding that enabled Houston to substantially increase PH & decommission encampment
- Local stakeholders must figure out a way to continue funding efforts to maintain momentum once pandemic funding is exhausted

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022 • HOUSTONCHRONICLE.COM • VOL. 121, NO. 106 • \$2.00 ★★

City, Harris County invest \$100M in plan to cut homelessness in half

By R.A. Schuetz
STAFF WRITER

Houston and Harris County announced Wednesday afternoon a \$100 million increase in funds they are funneling into efforts to reduce homelessness in the area. They had previously committed \$65 million in federal COVID-related funding to the initiative.

"In Houston, we either go big or we go home," said Mayor Syl-

vester Turner in a press conference announcing the funds. "And today, we are going big so... Houstonians can go home." He said he hoped the funds would help cut the region's homeless population in half by helping people secure housing.

"Housing is a human right," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. "And in Harris County, housing is something we fight for together."

The announcement came

hours after city council voted, 13 to 4, to fund the transformation of a city-owned building in Fifth Ward into a place where people moved out of an encampment can live, along with pets and loved ones, while they await their permanent housing. The facility, known as a navigation center, is key to a plan by the city, Harris County, and their partners to reduce the number of people living in the streets.

Homeless continues on A8



Jon Shapley / Staff file photo

Police officers hand out blankets last year. A new program is moving people from encampments to permanent housing.

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"In Houston, we either go big or we go home. And today, we are going big so...Houstonians can go home!" -Houston Mayor, Sylvester Turner

Houston and Harris County announce increased investment in efforts to reduce homelessness by \$100 million.

Houston Chronicle
Thursday January 27, 2022



Encampment Closure - May 2022

Spur @ Milam & Alabama



- Monday

- Tuesday

- Wednesday

- Thursday





Today

Before



After





Before



After





**25,500+ Housed
Since 2011**

- BBVA Stadium
- Capacity: 22,039

Ana Rausch, MA

arausch@homelesshouston.org



Coalition for the Homeless
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Houston, TX 77022

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