DOWNTOWN SERVICES UPDATE

Darby Galligan, Senior Planner
City Council - committee of the whole
April 11, 2022
**DOWNTOWN SAFETY IS AN ONGOING EFFORT**

*2014 Community Solutions Workgroup:*

Business, staff, and agency leaders identify possible solutions to downtown issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Priority Needs and Solutions:</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create a staffed 24-hour youth drop-in center</td>
<td>Day center opened</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide supportive housing citywide</td>
<td>Francis Place, 22 North opened</td>
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<td>Provide increased social services and outreach coordination between agencies as well as coordinated intensive case management</td>
<td>GRACE and LEAD started</td>
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<td>Create a Mental Health Court</td>
<td>Mental Health Court started</td>
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<td>Create a 24-hour mobile crisis response system</td>
<td>MCOT, HOT team - ART underway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide police training on mental health and substance abuse issues</td>
<td>Training ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase presence of police patrols during hours of need</td>
<td>Not completed, staffing challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implement Maritime Heritage Park development plan</td>
<td>CPTED completed, new playground, new restrooms; ongoing</td>
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<td>Adjust municipal codes and staffing to allow effective intervention and enforcement of the most common infractions</td>
<td>Not approved by City Council</td>
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<td>Market and support the BPD’s Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)</td>
<td>CPTED alley interventions, business connections</td>
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<td>Support initiatives to approve a Business Improvement District or Main Street program</td>
<td>Main Street Program approved. BID underway.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate a Downtown Ambassador Program</td>
<td>Underway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create an Alcohol Impact Area</td>
<td>Deemed ineffective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support the “Homeless in Bellingham” video education series</td>
<td>Video series completed</td>
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2021: WHAT WE HEARD

VANDALISM, GRAFFITI & CLEANLINESS
Increased graffiti and vandalism.
General messes and biohazards.

MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE
Mental health needs exceed resources.
More visible and aggressive responses.

HOMELESSNESS
More people experiencing homelessness.
Proliferation of street life and camps downtown.
Needs exceed resources or aren't supported.

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES
Who to call for non-emergencies?
Complexity of the social services system.

REDUCTION IN POLICE SERVICES & ABILITY TO RESPOND
Nationwide declining interest in police employment. State reforms led to limitations on some calls.
2021: SERVICES ASSESSMENT

- Mental and behavioral health outreach
- Landscaping/beautification
- Homeless outreach
- Cleaning/waste management
- Law enforcement
2021: SERVICES ASSESSMENT

- Enhanced communication / education
- Mental / behavioral health outreach
- Team meetings / coordinated dispatch
- Landscaping / beautification
- Homeless outreach
- Graffiti removal
- Cleaning/waste management
- Security / safety ambassadors
- Law enforcement
- Ambassadors

Enhanced communication / education

Mental / behavioral health outreach

Team meetings / coordinated dispatch

Landscaping / beautification

Homeless outreach

Graffiti removal

Cleaning/waste management

Law enforcement

Ambassadors
RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS

COMPLETED 2021-2022

• Expanded Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)
• Increased and consolidated cleaning contract
• Added Public Works street crew staff
• Continued Basecamp cleaning contract, added staff to neighborhood advisory team
• Clarification of State police reform legislation
• Launched private security patrols (RSU)

UNDERWAY 2022

• Safety ambassador pilot
• Graffiti abatement program
• Service provider coordination / communications
• City Block program (DBP)
SAFETY AMBASSADOR PILOT PROGRAM
COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION WITH OUTREACH PARTNERS
GRAFFITI ABATEMENT PROGRAM
NEXT STEPS

April 18: Ambassador program launch
April 21: Community meeting, 5:00-7:00 PM
          Boundary Bay brewery
May 1:    Private security to evening shifts
May 20:   Ryan Dowd training, Mt Baker Theatre
QUESTIONS?

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