

Homelessness Initiative Annual Report

Andrew Phelps



Goal 1

Inform The Public On Homelessness Related Issues



– Hand Outs Don't Help

- signage now supports the Work Engagement Program at the Springs Rescue Mission. The Work Engagement program incentivizes guests at the Rescue Mission to engage in regular work in exchange for job coaching, the development of a positive work history, and referrals to full-time work.

– www.helpcos.org

- provides a clearinghouse of information where the public can learn about available resources for people experiencing homelessness as well as direct them in how they can get involved.

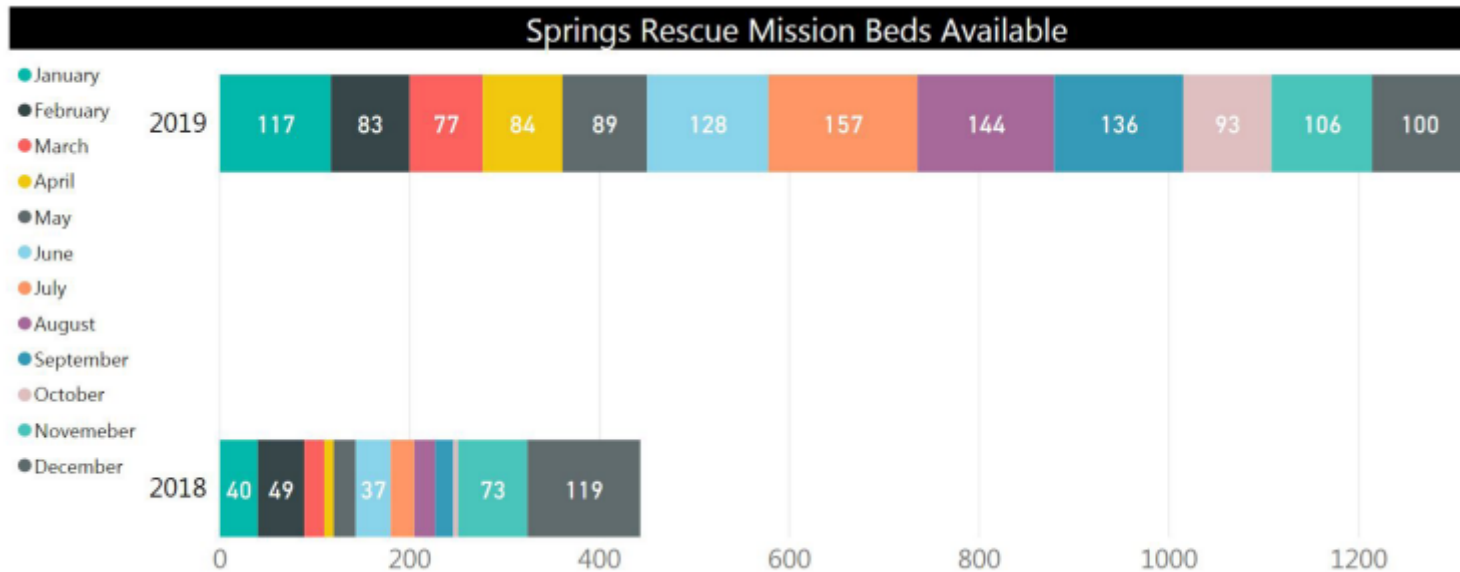
Goal 2

Increase Access to Shelter and Services



- Low barrier shelter beds added
 - This helps to ensure that no one is forced to sleep outside and also enables law enforcement to enforce the city's no camping ordinances
- Options Increased for families experiencing homelessness
 - Family Promise opened the first low barrier family shelter in Colorado Springs
- Street Outreach Increased
 - CSFD Homeless Outreach Program launched in Downtown area

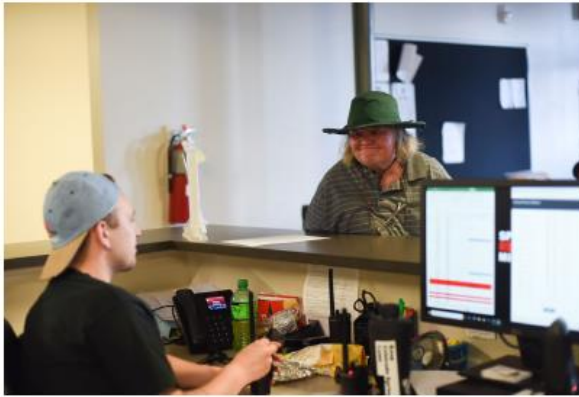
Bed Availability



2018: 37 Beds available on average

2019: 110 beds available on average

Lives Impacted



Goal 3

Decrease Barriers For People Ready To Exit Homelessness



- HelpCOS “My City Project”
 - The City launched the HelpCOS My City Project in collaboration with the Springs Rescue Mission.
 - This is a monthly cleanup in the Mill St. Neighborhood performed by guests staying at the Springs Rescue Mission. As a part of Springs Rescue Mission’s existing Work Engagement Program, the My City project aims to support individuals in achieving greater self-sufficiency by providing access to quality employability training, valuable work experience, and job search support, all while helping to keep the Mill St. Neighborhood clean.
 - The City has directed all donations from the HelpCOS Campaign (text “HelpCOS” to 667-873) towards supporting the Work Engagement Program at the Springs Rescue Mission.
- WorkCOS Program
 - The City launched the WorkCOS program.
 - This program provides temporary City employment for people experiencing homelessness to do median maintenance projects in our community.

Goal 3

Decrease Barriers For People Ready To Exit Homelessness



- Outreach Court
 - In cooperation with the Colorado Springs Municipal Court, The City has launched an Outreach Court program
 - The goal of the program is to increase access to mental health services, addiction treatment, and case management. To date, 32 defendants have been referred to this program (totaling 62 cases).
 - The Outreach Court Program also aims to reduce the number of arrest warrants for municipal level citations due to failure to appear by offering quarterly “Amnesty Days” at the Springs Rescue Mission, where warrants can be quashed, attorneys can be appointed where appropriate, and new court dates are given. To date, two Amnesty Days have occurred helping 37 individuals (totaling 58 cases) to get their cases back on track, while removing warrants as a barrier to housing and employment.

Goal 4

Increase Access to Housing



- HomeCOS, Housing Our Future

- Addressing the region’s housing affordability challenges is a priority of Mayor John Suthers. In his 2018 State of the City address, Mayor Suthers established “...a community goal to build, preserve and create opportunities for an average of 1,000 affordable units per year over the next five years.”
- HomeCOS, Housing Our Future, is the blueprint for reaching the goal. HomeCOS is a comprehensive affordable and attainable housing plan that combines current analysis of the local housing and job markets with insights gathered from our community.

- OBJECTIVE 1: HOUSING INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
- OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE RENTALS
- OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASE HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
- OBJECTIVE 4: HOUSING FOR THE AGING & DISABLED POPULATION
- OBJECTIVE 5: INNOVATIVE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS
- OBJECTIVE 6: ALTERNATIVE FINANCE TOOLS

Goal 4

Increase Access to Housing



- **Pikes Peak Veteran Housing Fund**
 - Fund established to help house veterans in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Human Services Homes for All Veterans and Home Front Military Network, that will aim to incentivize landlords in housing military veterans experiencing homelessness in our community.
 - Over \$75,000 in private donations raised to date

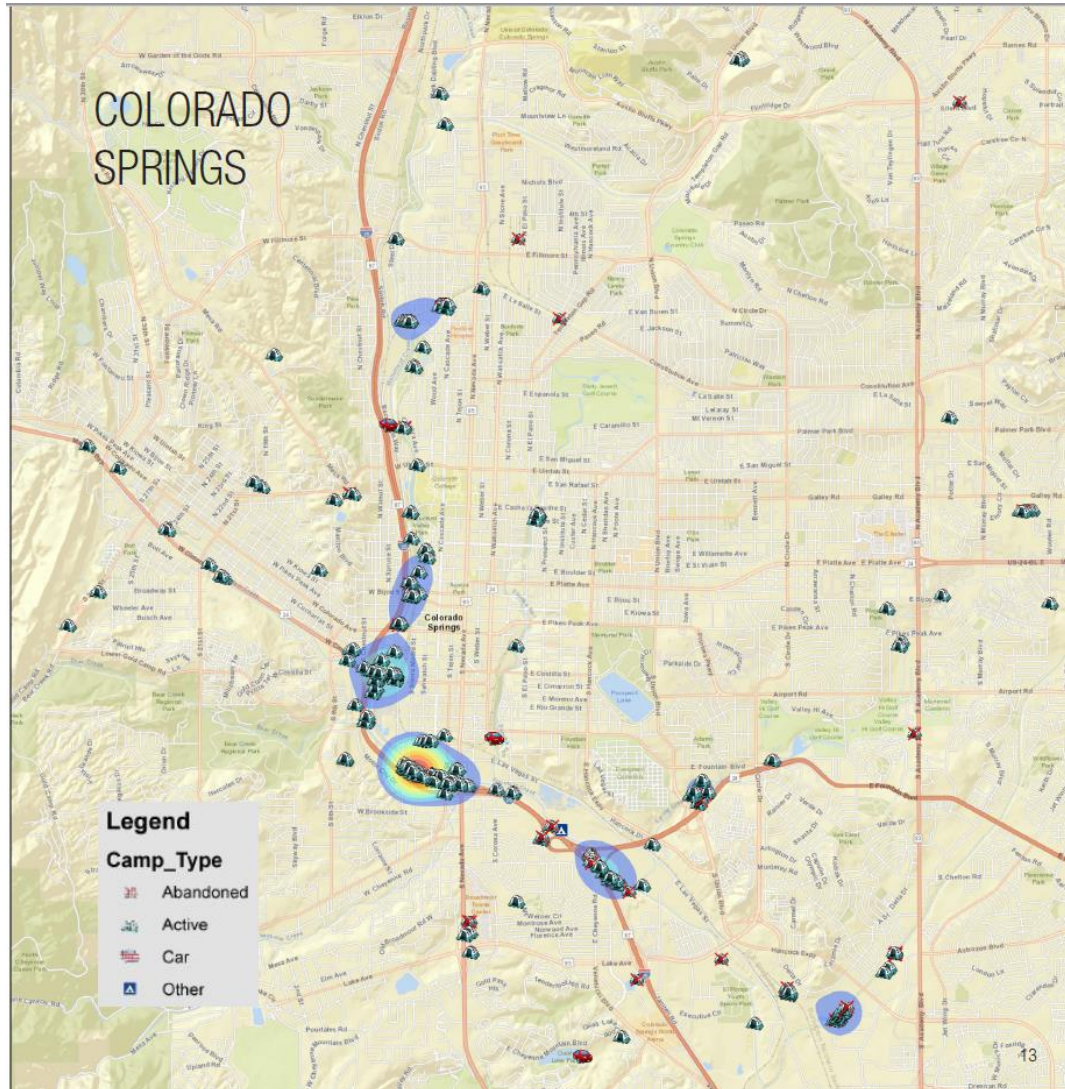
Goal 5

Clean up Illegal Camps and Protect the Environment



- CSPD enhances homelessness response capabilities
 - CSPD has increased the size of the Homeless Outreach Team from four officers to six officers. CSPD has also developed a subject matter expert (SME) program in each of the four CSPD subdivisions that trains additional officers to respond to illegal camping. This has resulted in an increase in illegal camps being identified and a quicker response time to citizen complaints about these camps.
 - CSPD has also added two officers (seven days a week) on walking patrol in the downtown area in order to help ensure that all residents can enjoy the Downtown area.

Locations of Camps



Increased Enforcement



| Camping Restriction Tickets | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019* | Grand Total |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Camping on Public Property | 0 | 29 | 38 | 41 | 108 |
| CAMPING RESTRICTIONS IN PARKS | 135 | 174 | 198 | 542 | 1049 |
| CAMPING WITHIN PUBLIC STREAM | 0 | 0 | 61 | 221 | 282 |
| Grand Total | 135 | 203 | 297 | 804 | 1439 |

Goal 5

Clean up Illegal Camps and Protect the Environment

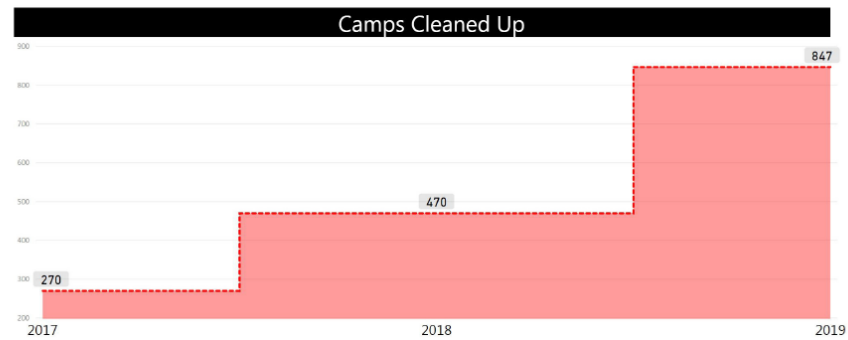


- Neighborhood Services adds staff to address illegal camps
 - The City added three full time employees dedicated solely to illegal camp remediation. This led to a substantial decrease in response time and a marked increase in the quantity of illegal camps being cleaned up within 24 hours of being reported.

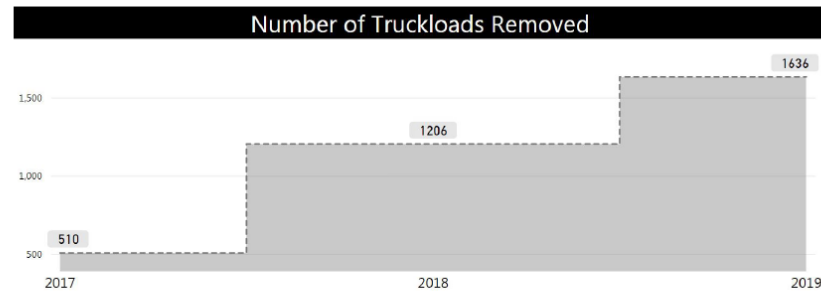
Increased Response



IN THE NUMBERS



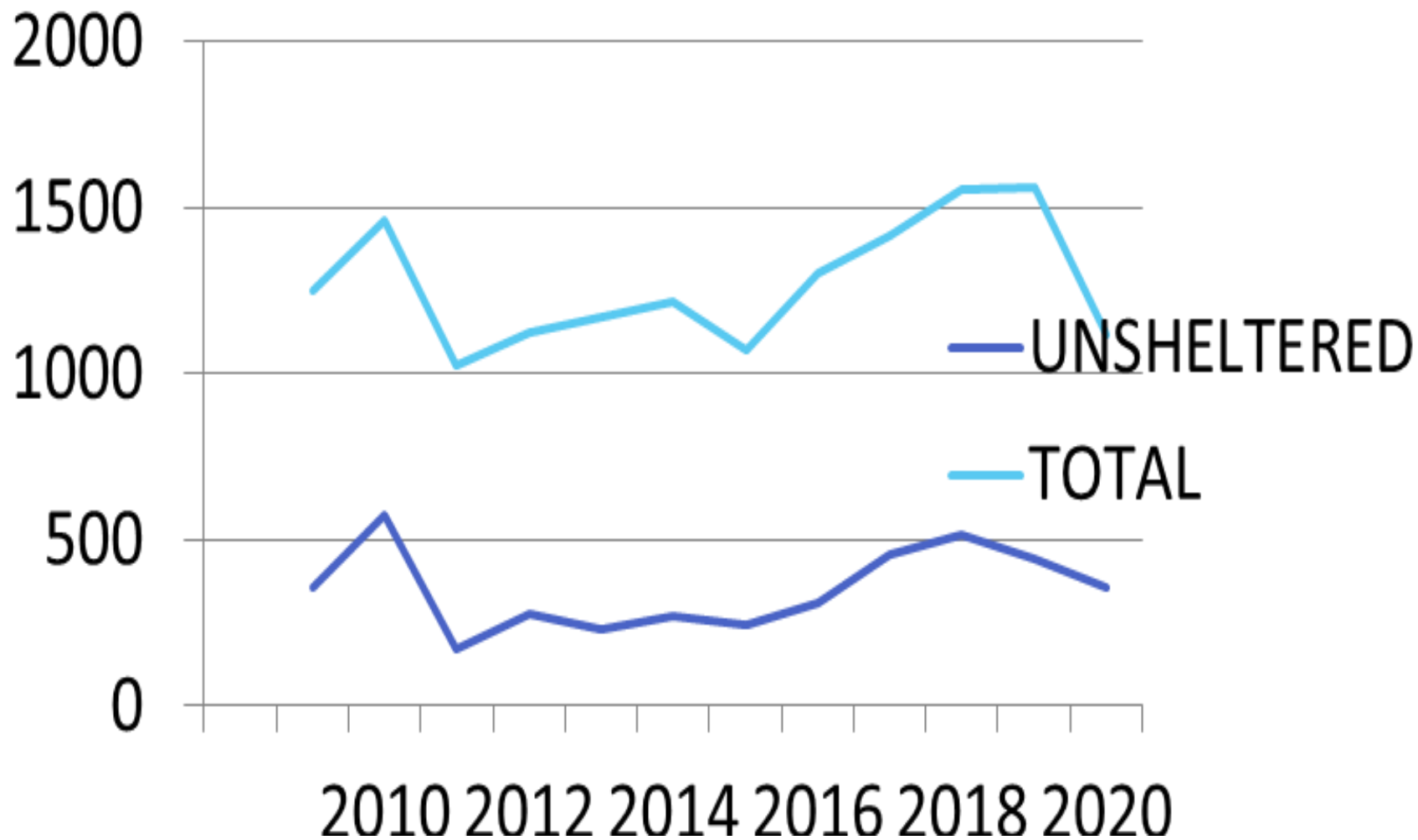
Illegal urban camping is a problem for the City, and the Neighborhood Services Quality of Life Team works year round removing trash and debris, an increase in resources in 2018-2019 provided for an increase in areas served.



The Number of Truckloads of trash and debris removed from illegal urban camps by Neighborhood Services Quality of Life Team, an increase in resources in 2018-2019 allowed for broader services.

Point in Time Count El Paso County

| | <u>UNSHELTERED</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| • 2015: | 243 | 1073 |
| • 2016: | 311 | 1302 |
| • 2017: | 457 | 1415 |
| • 2018: | 513 | 1551 |
| • 2019: | 444 | 1562 |
| • 2020: | 358 | 1116 |



Conclusion



- The progress made through the development and implementation of the Colorado Springs Homelessness Initiative has exemplified how setting short term and attainable goals creates positive change in our community and assists in improving the health and safety of all Colorado Springs residents.

