



Racial, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Held in the Fletcher Meeting Room, Fletcher Free Library

OR

via Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96324562039>

Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039

Or Use Phone number: 305-224-1968

Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039

1. Call to Order

2. Approve Agenda & Minutes

Subject	2.1. August 18, 2026
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	2. Approve Agenda & Minutes
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	
Recommended Action	

3. Public Forum

4. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework for Safe Public Spaces and a Stronger Community

Subject	4.1. Burlington Forward Resolution
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	4. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework for Safe Public Spaces and a Stronger Community

Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	
Subject	4.2. Burlington Forward Resolution Feedback
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	4. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework for Safe Public Spaces and a Stronger Community
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	
Subject	4.3. Burlington Forward Revised
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	4. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework for Safe Public Spaces and a Stronger Community
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	

5. National and Local Landscape: Alcohol & Substance Use

Subject	5.1. Burlington Emergency Medical Services - Report Focused on Alcohol and Substance Use
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	5. National and Local Landscape: Alcohol & Substance Use
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	
Subject	5.2. National Trends & Evidence -Based Approaches (Brandon Marshall PhD, Royce Family Professor of Teaching Excellence in Epidemiology and Professor of Epidemiology at Brown University in Rhode Island)
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	5. National and Local Landscape: Alcohol & Substance Use
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	
Subject	5.3. Understanding Substance Use and Drug Policy (Kellen Russoniello, JD, MPH, Director of Public Health, Drug Policy Alliance and Drug Policy Action
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	5. National and Local Landscape: Alcohol & Substance Use
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	

6. Adjournment

Subject	6.1. Motion to adjourn
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	6. Adjournment
Department	Council and Board
Type	
Recommended Action	

7. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Subject	7.1. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. For more information on access, call Lori Olberg, Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator (802-865-7136)(TTY 802-865-7142). Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate are encouraged to contact 802-865-7000 (voice) or 802-865-7142 (TTY) at least 72 hours in advance so that proper arrangements can be made. This meeting will also air on Town Meeting TV the Wednesday after the meeting, starting at 8:00 pm and repeating at 1:00 am and 7:00 am the following day. The City of Burlington will not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliation, race, color, national origin, place of birth, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, disability, HIV positive status, crime victim status or genetic information.
Meeting	August 25, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	7. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements
Department	Council and Board
Type	



Racial, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Held in the Sharon Bushor Conference Room, Ground Floor, City Hall

OR

via Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96324562039>

Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039

Or Use Phone number: 305-224-1968

Meeting ID: 963 2456 2039

1. Call to Order

2. Approve Agenda & Minutes

Subject	2.1. July 2026
Meeting	August 18, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)
Category	2. Approve Agenda & Minutes
Department	Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)
Type	
Recommended Action	

3. Public Forum

4. Office of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Updates

5. Draft Resolution: Recognizing the Contributions of Burlington's Latin American Community and Supporting Cultural Festivals - Draft Resolution

Subject	5.1. Cultural Festivals Resolution
Meeting	August 18, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 5. Draft Resolution: Recognizing the Contributions of Burlington's Latin American Community and Supporting Cultural Festivals - Draft Resolution

Department Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)

Type

6. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community

Subject **6.1. State of Vermont Impact Assessment Tool**

Meeting August 18, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 6. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community

Department Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)

Type

Recommended Action

Subject **6.2. Burlington Forward Resolution**

Meeting August 18, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 6. Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community

Department Racial Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging (REIB)

Type

Recommended Action

7. Adjournment

Subject **7.1. Motion to adjourn**

Meeting August 18, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 7. Adjournment

Department Council and Board

Type

Recommended Action

8. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Subject **8.1. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. For more information on access, call Lori Olberg, Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator (802-865-7136)(TTY 802-865-7142). Persons with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate are encouraged to contact 802-865-7000 (voice) or 802-865-7142 (TTY) at least 72 hours in advance so that proper arrangements can be made. This meeting will also air**

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Meeting August 18, 2026 - REIB City Council Committee Meeting - Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 5:30 PM, Racial, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (REIB)

Category 8. Informational and Non-Discrimination Statements

Department Council and Board

Type

Minutes Taken By Vicky Luciano

Attendees:

Councilor Laura Sanchez-Parkinson (in person)

Councilor Melo Grant (in person)

Christian Berry, Communications and Community Engagement Manager REIB (in person)

Vicky Luciano, Administrative and Financial Coordinator REIB (in person)

Chris McGrath (in person)

Brian Clifford (in person)

Jorge Castillo (in person)

Reverend Mark Hughes (in person)

Dylan Pilcher (in person)

Councilor Sarah Carpenter (online)

Kelli Perkins, Director (online)

Hemant Ghising (online)

Loan Nguyen (online)

Sarah Russell (online)

Taylor Thibault (online)

Christine Hughes (online)

Dave Rapaport (online)

Allie Schacter (online)

Roy (online)

Mona Tolba (online)

Maryan Maalin (online)

Andre Clark (online)

- **Call to Order**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm on August 18th.
- **Agenda and Meeting Minutes**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson motioned to adopt the agenda and minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Public Forum**
 - Brian Cliffords spoke in opposition to police-related measures included in the Burlington Forward resolution. He offered his technical and data analysis experience to assist the City in reviewing policing data and understanding racial disparities. Refer to the video.
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson thanked him for bringing the information forward and noted that the committee is considering a dedicated meeting focused on use-of-force and enforcement.
 - Dave Rappaport expressed his concerns regarding the policing data and the need for a sustained effort rather than a single meeting to address racial disparities in policing. He offered his time and expertise to assist with future work. He also offered to connect the committee with members of White Men for Racial Justice who might be interested in participating. Refer to the video.
 - Sarah Russell spoke about the housing and homelessness components of the Burlington Forward resolution. She raised concerns that the resolution may imply that alternatives to unsheltered homelessness are readily available when there is currently a significant shortage of shelter and housing resources. She expressed concern that policies involving more forceful enforcement approaches could disproportionately affect BIPOC residents experiencing homelessness. Refer to the video.
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson thanked Sarah Russell for providing this context and noted the importance of using current data and community information when developing solutions.
- **Office of REIB Updates**
 - Director Kelli Perkins shared updates regarding the REIB's ongoing work. REIB will bring recommendations for Aging Council appointees to the upcoming City Council meeting. She noted that recruiting volunteers for city committees and initiatives has been challenging and that some community members have expressed hesitancy about participating because of their feelings about the current administration and the City's work. REIB plans to conduct focus groups with Burlington residents who are older adults to gather feedback on where the City should begin implementing priority measures identified in the 2024 Age Strong Burlington report. Christian Berry continues to work on updating the City's Language Access Plan. REIB is identifying vital City documents that should be translated materials themselves. Staff are working toward a broader implementation plan for language access and plan to bring department leaders together for training and coordination. Director Perkins reported that the City employee culture survey received approximately a 30% response rate. REIB is completing department-level analysis and expects to provide the committee with a report-out at a future meeting. Director Perkins noted that the survey results can help REIB advise departments on creating a more equitable workplace where employees feel a sense of belonging and see opportunities for professional growth. REIB also reported that 168 backpacks had been collected for a school supply drive serving Burlington School District students. Refer to the video.
- **Draft Resolution: Recognizing the Contributions of Burlington's Latin American Community and Supporting Cultural Festivals- Draft Resolution**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson introduced a draft resolution recognizing the contributions of Burlington's Latin American community and supporting cultural festivals. The resolution recognizes the importance of cultural celebrations and calls for development of a longer-term, sustainable strategy for cultural festivals in partnership with REIB, Burlington City Arts, and community organizations.
 - Councilor Grant expressed strong support of the Latin American Festival after attending the previous year. She emphasized that cultural events create positive activity in downtown

Burlington, bring families into public spaces, and help residents recognize and celebrate the contributions of different communities.

- Director Perkins explained that REIB provided approximately \$5,000 to the Latin American Festival during each of the previous two fiscal years. She noted that REIB's Community Celebrations funding line has significant demand and that the office is using a rubric to evaluate requests as it works to distribute limited resources.
 - Councilor Grant encouraged funding requests be forwarded to City Councilors as additional funding may be available through the City Council initiative funds to support requests.
- Christine Hughes of the Richard Kemp Center described the organization's work as a cultural empowerment center focused on the experiences, history, and contributions of Black Americans. She discussed the Center's block parties, cultural empowerment summit, urban garden programming, and annual community trip to Washington, D.C. Christine Hughes shared that the Center experienced negative pushback regarding its block party this year and characterized the response as racist.
 - Councilor Grant noted that the Department of Public Works has generally been supportive of block parties and requested additional advance notice for future events to allow for appropriate planning and traffic management. She discussed facilitating a meeting between the relevant parties to address concerns directly and avoid miscommunication between community organizations and City departments.
- Rev. Mark Hughes discussed African Landing Day as a cultural empowerment activity and flagship initiative of the Vermont Racial Justice Alliance. He expressed interest in developing a more institutionalized relationship between the City and recurring cultural celebrations. He encouraged the committee to devote future meetings to the REIB Department's internal citywide work, including training and education, data collection, policy, HR functions, and strategic oversight
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson agreed that institutionalizing support for cultural celebrations could help make the work sustainable rather than relying on individual organizations or one-time funding. She also noted that the City's employee culture survey could provide an opportunity to begin a broader conversation about REIB's internal and citywide work.
- Committee members discussed the need for organizations to submit funding requests as early as possible because of limited City resources and the multiple steps required for Council initiative funding.
 - Requests may require review by Councilors, preparation of supporting materials, Board of Finance consideration, and City Council approval. The committee encouraged organizations to seek multiple funding sources and to communicate funding needs early.
- **Equity Impact Assessment: Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework For Safe Public Spaces And A Stronger Community**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson introduced the committee's discussion of the Burlington Forward resolution concerning public safety in public spaces. The resolution was introduced on August 3rd and referred to four City Council committees, including REIB. The committee is expected to provide recommendations to City Council, with September 14th identified as the anticipated date for returning recommendations.
 - Two additional special REIB meetings were scheduled for August 25th and September 1st to continue the discussion.
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson introduced Vermont's Equity Impact Assessment as a potential framework for evaluating the resolution. She noted that Burlington doesn't currently have a formal equity assessment tool for policies and resolutions.
 - Dylan Pilcher asked about the legal authority of City Council resolutions and whether the Mayor would be legally required to implement the recommendations contained in Burlington Forward.
 - Councilor Grant explained that City Council resolutions can sometimes express priorities without creating legally binding requirements.

- Councilor Carpenter explained that Burlington operates under a strong mayoral system and that resolutions generally function as recommendations rather than binding directives to the Mayor. She characterized Burlington Forward as a starting point for a larger conversation rather than a finished product. She emphasized the importance of obtaining additional input from departments, community members service providers, and other stakeholders before finalizing recommendations.
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson noted that the City Attorney has already reviewed the resolution and identified areas that would need to be addressed. She stated that legal review would continue as the committee develops recommendations.
 - Sarah Russell raised concerns that the resolution did not appear to be receiving discussion from other committees in the way she expected and emphasized the importance of transparent public engagement. She supported the use of an Equity Impact Assessment and emphasized the need to consider the combined impacts of policing disparities and the disproportionate representation of BIPOC residents among people experiencing homelessness.
 - The committee discussed the need for a more equitable process for developing future resolutions and policies.
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson identified several potential elements for a future City policy-development framework:
 - Legal review and feasibility
 - Use of current and appropriate language
 - Inclusion of people directly affected by proposed policies.
 - Engagement with service providers and other people working directly in the affected areas
 - Consideration of research and evidence
 - Evaluation of health and social impacts
 - Director Perkins emphasized that policy development should begin by clearly identifying and defining the problem. Refer to the video
 - Christian Berry emphasized the importance of centering people who are most affected by the policies being developed. She also emphasized the importance of centering people who are most affected by the policies being developed.
 - Councilor Grant reiterated that homelessness itself is not a crime and that police cannot solve the housing crisis. Refer to the video.
 - Andre Clark encouraged the committee to consider the impacts of Burlington Forward based on income and housing status. He shared observations regarding enforcement activity involving people experiencing homelessness and expressed concern about arrests and enforcement being used in situations where alternative approaches may be possible. He encouraged committee members to hear directly from people who use drugs, people experiencing homelessness, people in recovery, and mutual aid organizations. Refer to the video.
 - Councilor Grant provided additional context regarding low-level offenses, the State’s criminal justice framework, and the Accountability Court.
- **Adjournment**
 - Councilor Sanchez-Parkinson adjourned the meeting at 7:13 pm



OFFICE OF THE CLERK/TREASURER

City of Burlington

City Hall, Room 20, 149 Church Street, Burlington, VT 05401

Voice (802) 865-7000

Fax (802) 865-7014

TTY (802) 865-7142

MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety, REIB, CDNR and PAC Committees

FROM: Lori Olberg, Council and Licensing Coordinator

DATE: August 6, 2026

SUBJECT: 08/03/26 City Council Resolution

Enclosed please find a copy of the resolution that was referred to your Committees with a request for a report back to the full Council on any recommended amendments on items within each committee's jurisdiction by September 14, 2026, **and further specifically request that the Mayor's Office collaborate with Council leadership on any proposed amendments to the Resolution's State Partnership provisions contained in Article V, with any recommended revisions also presented to the Council on or by September 14, 2026.**

. Please keep this as part of your records.

Thank you.

Resolution Relating to

**BURLINGTON FORWARD: A COMPREHENSIVE
FRAMEWORK FOR SAFE PUBLIC SPACES AND A
STRONGER COMMUNITY**

RESOLUTION 6.5

Sponsor(s): Councilors Traverse,
Barlow, Carpenter, Litwin, McKnight,
Schachter, Singh

Introduced: 08/03/26

Referred to: *

Action: _____

Date: _____

Signed by Mayor: _____

CITY OF BURLINGTON

In the year Two Thousand Twenty-Six.....

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Burlington, as follows:

1 That WHEREAS, Burlington's downtown, parks, sidewalks, streets, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, and
2 other public spaces are among the City's greatest civic assets. They are the places where neighbors gather,
3 children play, businesses and tourism thrives, visitors form lasting impressions, and community life unfolds
4 every day. Preserving these shared public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained
5 for everyone is among the City's most fundamental responsibilities; and

6 WHEREAS, over the past several years, the Burlington City Council has adopted multiple resolutions
7 and initiatives intended to strengthen public safety, improve community well-being, expand access to housing
8 and behavioral health services, and respond compassionately to the challenges of homelessness, substance use,
9 and mental illness; and

10 WHEREAS, the City of Burlington, together with healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations,
11 businesses, faith communities, neighborhood organizations, educational institutions, and countless volunteers,
12 has committed substantial public and private resources toward emergency shelter, affordable housing,
13 outreach, behavioral health services, recovery programs, harm reduction initiatives, and other efforts intended
14 to assist vulnerable members of our community; and

15 WHEREAS, notwithstanding these efforts and the extraordinary commitment of those serving our
16 community, many individuals, including those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental illness,
17 continue to be negatively affected by persistent public disorder, criminal activity, violence, repeated
18 overdoses, open drug dealing and use, prohibited camping, vandalism, aggressive or threatening behavior, and
19 other conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of Burlington's shared public spaces;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, these conditions have diminished public confidence, strained municipal resources,
22 adversely affected neighborhoods and businesses, discouraged investment and tourism, harmed morale and
23 recruitment of police and other city staff, and undermined Burlington's reputation while also failing many

individuals who continue to experience homelessness, addiction, or untreated mental illness without achieving lasting stability, recovery, or improved health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Burlington is and will remain a compassionate community where residents consistently demonstrate kindness and generosity toward neighbors experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and other crises. This resolution builds upon those values; and

WHEREAS, the City Council also finds that allowing individuals to remain in circumstances that jeopardize their health, safety, or dignity without meaningful intervention is neither compassionate nor humane. Lasting compassion requires connecting people to treatment, recovery, housing, supportive services, and, where appropriate, enforcement and accountability for unlawful conduct that harms others or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, the City Council rejects the false choice between compassion and public safety and affirms that accountability, treatment, housing, recovery, public safety, and public order are complementary, interdependent responsibilities that must be pursued together to advance the public interest and the dignity of every person; and

WHEREAS, the City further recognizes that Burlington cannot reasonably or sustainably serve as the exclusive or primary provider of shelter, behavioral health services, and substance use treatment for individuals from throughout Vermont and outside our state, and that these challenges require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare institutions, nonprofit organizations, and regional service providers to ensure that responsibility is shared equitably throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces requires clearly articulated values, public policy, measurable implementation, meaningful accountability, prioritized enforcement of our existing laws and ordinances, sustained regional partnership, and a continuing commitment by every level of government and every community partner;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Burlington City Council hereby adopts the following policy framework to restore and preserve safe, welcoming, orderly, and accessible public spaces; expand meaningful pathways to housing, treatment, and recovery; strengthen accountability for unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of our shared public spaces; and promote shared regional responsibility for addressing the complex challenges of homelessness, substance use, and behavioral health:

ARTICLE I**General Policy****Section 1.01. Purpose.**

The purpose of this Resolution is to establish a comprehensive policy framework for restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places for all residents and visitors, while continuing Burlington's longstanding commitment to compassion, dignity, and meaningful support for individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, behavioral health challenges, and other circumstances requiring public assistance. To achieve these objectives, Burlington must realign its values and related efforts. An honest assessment indicates that neither the current nor previous policy frameworks have achieved their intended results, making a revised strategy necessary moving forward.

Section 1.02. General Policy.

It shall be the policy of the City Council that:

A. Burlington's public spaces belong to everyone. Every resident and visitor should be able to use and enjoy the City's parks, streets, sidewalks, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, public buildings, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other public spaces safely and without unreasonable interference or exposure to unlawful activity and disruptive behavior.

B. Compassion without accountability is not compassion. The City Council rejects the notion that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. No individual has the right to engage in unlawful conduct or conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of shared public spaces. Effective public policy requires both meaningful opportunities for prevention, outreach, treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services and consistent enforcement of criminal laws and municipal ordinances that protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. The City shall pursue both objectives simultaneously to ensure that Burlington's public spaces remain safe, welcoming, and accessible to all.

C. Individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, or behavioral health challenges deserve meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and long-term stability. Burlington shall continue advocating for coordinated regional and statewide responses to homelessness, behavioral health challenges, and substance use disorder, recognizing that these

challenges extend beyond Burlington's borders and require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, and other community partners.

D. Decisions affecting public spaces, public health services, municipal resources, and zoning policy shall be guided by objective evidence, public transparency, measurable outcomes, and accountability to the public. Public accountability requires admitting when systems and policies have fallen short, and when existing social services lack the capacity to deliver the interventions needed for consistent improved outcomes.

ARTICLE II

Protecting Burlington's Public Spaces

Section 2.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to restore and preserve Burlington and its public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places that may be comfortably enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages while respecting the dignity of every person and ensuring that public spaces remain available for their intended public use.

Section 2.02. Public Space Policy.

The City shall prioritize the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces for the benefit of all residents and visitors. Public spaces shall be managed to encourage lawful activity, positive community use, economic vitality, recreation, civic engagement, and public enjoyment.

Public spaces should not merely be accessible; they should be places where residents and visitors choose to gather and should reasonably expect to feel safe doing so.

The City shall make it a top priority to ensure public spaces remain reasonably free from unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of those spaces, and that such spaces are well maintained, clean, and reasonably free of graffiti, litter, unattended personal belongings, and other conditions that detract from their safety, accessibility, and public enjoyment.

Section 2.03. Activation of Public Spaces.

The City finds that well-programmed, well-maintained, and actively used public spaces are among the most effective long-term strategies for promoting public safety, strengthening community life, and discouraging unlawful and disruptive activity.

The City shall expand the activation of Burlington's public spaces through community programming, arts and cultural events, recreational opportunities, family-oriented activities, and partnerships that increase positive public use of parks, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other civic spaces. Consistent with the FY27 budget resolution, the City Council requests that the Administration continue coordinating with the City Council's Parks, Arts & Culture Committee to develop and implement these efforts.

Section 2.04. City Hall Park and Organized Activities.

The City Council reaffirms its prior policies regarding the restoration and stewardship of City Hall Park as outlined in the Council's August 2025 resolution concerning the management, activation, and preservation of the Park. The City Council declares again that City Hall Park shall remain one of Burlington's principal civic gathering spaces—welcoming, accessible, well-maintained, and available for the broad enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the City Attorney's Office prepare and submit to the Council any ordinance amendments necessary to clarify where organized activities may occur within City-owned public spaces, establish when permits are required for such activities, and ensure that such activities do not materially interfere with the intended public use of City Hall Park or other public spaces.

The City Council requests that the Administration renew stalled efforts to assist with navigating how to secure any available and necessary permits for, or if permits are unavailable, offer alternative locations to unpermitted social service activities where participants could be better served while preserving the Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space. If necessary to identify alternative locations, the City Council asks that the Administration evaluate appropriate indoor and outdoor municipal facilities, including Contois Auditorium where practicable and consistent with operational needs.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront issue a request for proposals seeking one or more vendors, nonprofit organizations, or other qualified operators to activate the patio area located in the northeast corner of City Hall Park through food and beverage concessions, retail kiosks, recreational uses, cultural programming, public amenities, or other uses that increase positive public activity and enhance the visitor experience. Any

request for proposals shall encourage creative, seasonal, and year-round activation strategies that promote regular public use of the space and are consistent with City Hall Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space. Alternatively, the Administration may evaluate repurposing the patio area as a centralized operational hub for public safety personnel, in alignment with the intent of the City Council's September 2024 resolution on establishing a downtown public safety hub, to provide a visible, accessible, and continuous public safety presence within City Hall Park.

Section 2.05. Expansion of Public Safety Personnel and Public Space Response Capacity.

The City's sworn police officers, Community Service Officers, Urban Park Rangers, and other civilian public safety personnel continue to perform their duties with exceptional dedication and professionalism in protecting and preserving our public spaces. A number of these roles, particularly sworn police officers, unfortunately continue to face significant challenges to staffing, with available police officers consistently remaining at or below current levels since 2023. As the City continues with long-term efforts to rebuild its public safety infrastructure, there is an immediate need to strengthen the City's visible presence within its public spaces. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of the Resolution to present recommendations to the Council on which public safety roles can be most immediately and substantially increased, if even on a temporary basis, to ensure more personnel are assigned to visible public safety and public space response functions. Moreover, the City Council asks that the Chief of Police continue to regularly update the Council's Public Safety Committee on recruitment efforts at the Burlington Police Department.

Immediately following enactment of this Resolution and prior to delivering the above-requested recommendations, the City Council requests that the Mayor take the steps necessary to expand the visible presence of public safety personnel in areas experiencing persistent public safety and public order concerns, which the Mayor's Administration has previously attempted to address through its working group on "hot spots," where ongoing conditions threaten public safety, diminish the public's use and enjoyment of these spaces, and risk undermining the success of generational projects like that at Burlington Square. For this purpose, the Mayor may use, as necessary, the monies allocated by the City Council in the FY27 budget to contract with third-party public safety personnel, including certified police officers. Additionally, to the extent permitted by existing agreements with contracted public safety personnel, such as those currently assigned to patrol municipal garages, the Mayor is authorized to repurpose these personnel to higher priority areas.

Moreover, to the extent practicable, the City Council requests that the Administration recruit and organize one or more Public Space Response Teams comprised of City employees and employees of other local organizations committed to the vitality of Burlington who voluntarily elect to participate and successfully complete appropriate training. Public Space Response Teams shall supplement, but not replace, traditional public safety resources by increasing the City's visible presence within public spaces, promoting lawful and welcoming public use, and assisting in the preservation of City property. If the City's unionized staff are interested in this volunteer opportunity, the Council acknowledges the potential need to submit proposals to municipal unions as necessary to accommodate this.

To the fullest extent permitted by law and consistent with appropriate training and supervision, members of Public Space Response Teams may be authorized to:

- A. Address and intercede conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces, including, but not limited to, the open use of drugs and alcohol, public intoxication, smoking where prohibited, disorderly behavior, and the encumbrance of sidewalks and walking paths;
- B. Issue municipal ordinance citations within the scope of their legal authority;
- C. Issue notices against trespass and take other lawful actions necessary to protect City property and public spaces;
- D. Promote cleanliness and sanitation, identify maintenance concerns, and coordinate the prompt removal of graffiti and other public nuisances; and
- E. Connect individuals experiencing crisis, homelessness, substance use disorder, or other behavioral health needs with appropriate treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services.

The City Attorney and Chief Administrative Officer shall prepare and submit for Council consideration any ordinance amendments, budget proposals, administrative policies, or other measures necessary to implement this Section.

Section 2.06. Public Safety Cameras and Public Notification.

The City Council finds that visible public safety cameras, when lawfully deployed and appropriately identified, deter unlawful conduct, assist in criminal investigations, and promote public confidence in the safety of Burlington's public spaces.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the Chief Information Officer prepare and submit to the Council a report identifying all City-owned or City-operated public safety cameras currently operating within Burlington's downtown and other public spaces. The report shall identify each camera's general location, operational status, and any significant gaps in camera coverage requiring future consideration, provided that nothing in this Section shall require disclosure of information that would compromise public safety or law enforcement operations and the report will be provided confidentially to the extent permitted by Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Moreover, in carrying out this Section and any future expansion of public safety camera systems, the City shall remain mindful of the importance of protecting individual privacy and civil liberties and shall ensure that the deployment, operation, and management of such systems are conducted in accordance with applicable law and appropriate safeguards governing the collection, retention, access to, and use of recorded data, including but not limited to the City's Fair and Impartial Policing Policy.

The City Council requests that the Administration install and maintain clear, visible signage at appropriate locations notifying the public that public safety cameras are in operation. Such signage shall be designed to deter unlawful conduct while promoting public awareness that public spaces are actively monitored for the protection of residents, visitors, businesses, and City property.

Section 2.07. Public Space Stewardship and Graffiti Removal.

Recognizing that clean, well-maintained public spaces contribute to public safety, civic pride, and neighborhood vitality, the City Council requests that the Mayor coordinate with the Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee to establish a public space stewardship program to encourage and support volunteer participation in the prompt removal of graffiti from public spaces and other beautification initiatives consistent with the purposes of this Resolution. In establishing this public space stewardship program, the Administration and CDNR Committee may collaborate with organizations and individuals already volunteering to perform the expanded work called for in this Section.

Any program shall provide participating residents with appropriate training, safety guidance, equipment, supplies, and other resources necessary to assist the City in removing graffiti from publicly owned property in a safe, lawful, and coordinated manner.

The City Council reaffirms that the prompt removal of graffiti from privately owned property remains the primary responsibility of the property owner. Any public space stewardship program should also provide a

mechanism through which private property owners may authorize trained City employees or approved volunteers participating in the program to enter their property for the purpose of removing graffiti, subject to such reasonable conditions and limitations as the property owner may establish.

Section 2.08. Expanded Partnerships with Nonprofit Organizations and Private Property Owners.

The City Council recognizes that restoring Burlington's public spaces requires meaningful collaboration with businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and other private property owners whose properties directly influence the experience of surrounding neighborhoods.

Accordingly, the City Council asks the Mayor to develop and make publicly available for private property owners educational materials on:

- A. Procedures for issuing notices against trespass as authorized by law;
- B. Crime prevention and environmental design strategies;
- C. Details on the extent to which private property owners can be held criminally or civilly liable for unlawful or other wrongful conduct permitted to continue on their premises;
- D. Other available tools to assist property owners in responding to unlawful activity while promoting safe, welcoming, and well-maintained properties.

The City Council further asks the Mayor to engage with nonprofit organizations that provide services to individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, mental health challenges, or other vulnerabilities, and to relay the City's request that such organizations adopt reasonable expectations for respectful and lawful behavior on the organization's property and within adjacent public rights-of-way and public spaces immediately surrounding the organization's facilities, including expectations designed to discourage conduct that creates public safety risks, interferes with the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties and public spaces, or otherwise adversely affects the surrounding community. The City encourages nonprofit organizations to communicate these expectations in a manner that preserves the dignity of those receiving services while reinforcing shared responsibility for maintaining safe, welcoming, and accessible neighborhoods.

Section 2.09. Public Space Performance Standards.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor collaborate with the City Council's Public Safety and Parks, Arts & Culture Committees to adopt measurable

performance standards for evaluating the condition of Burlington's public spaces, which shall be publicly posted on the City's Data Hub.

The standards shall include objective performance measures relating to, as appropriate:

A. Public safety conditions, including but not limited to the number of incidents, offenses, and arrests in public spaces;

B. Quality-of-life complaints, including but not limited to SeeClickFix reports on cleanliness and sanitation, and graffiti response;

C. Public space activation and programming;

D. Visitor and resident use of public spaces; and

E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines appropriate to enable the City Council and the public to evaluate progress over time.

ARTICLE III

Sustainable Intervention and Regional Responsibility

Section 3.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish a sustainable framework for responding to homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges. The City Council reaffirms Burlington's longstanding commitment to ensuring that individuals experiencing crisis are afforded meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and permanent housing while recognizing that emergency interventions must ultimately lead to greater stability, independence, and improved health outcomes.

The City Council further recognizes that compassion requires meaningful intervention, measurable results, and shared regional responsibility. Emergency measures are intended to stabilize individuals and connect them to long-term solutions and should not become permanent substitutes for housing, treatment, recovery, or personal stability.

Section 3.02. Establishing Service Capacity.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor convene representatives of organizations providing emergency shelter, affordable housing, behavioral health services, substance use treatment, healthcare, emergency response, outreach, and other appropriate public and

private partners to evaluate Burlington's sustainable capacity to responsibly provide emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. To the extent the City is already convening a group that includes the above-referenced stakeholders, the Administration may expand the scope of that group's work to include developing the assessment called for in this Section.

The assessment shall evaluate available staffing, financial resources, healthcare capacity, emergency response capability, housing availability, case management, sanitation, public safety impacts, fiscal sustainability, and such other operational considerations as may be appropriate.

Based upon that assessment, the City Council requests that the Mayor recommend the maximum number of individuals that Burlington can sustainably and humanely serve at any given time through the coordinated provision of emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. The recommendation shall identify the methodology and assumptions used to establish that number and shall include objective indicators by which the City may determine when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity.

The Mayor may periodically review the recommended sustainable service capacity and recommend revisions to the City Council as conditions, available resources, or regional participation materially change.

Section 3.03. Regional Responsibility.

The City Council affirms that homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges are regional and statewide challenges requiring regional and statewide solutions.

The City Council further finds that current conditions strongly indicate that Burlington is providing services beyond what can be sustainably supported by its existing housing, shelter, behavioral health, public safety, and municipal resources. While the assessment required by Section 3.02 will establish a recommended sustainable service capacity, the City Council finds that immediate action to promote greater regional responsibility should not await completion of that assessment.

Burlington will continue to lead with compassion. Leadership, however, does not require Burlington to serve as the exclusive or primary provider of services for individuals from throughout Vermont.

The City Council requests that the Administration implement equitable policies and procedures to ensure that, when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity, individuals seeking services are connected with available housing, shelter, treatment, recovery, behavioral health, and other supportive services in other communities, including through transportation assistance where appropriate. The City shall

actively work with the State of Vermont, neighboring municipalities, healthcare providers, housing organizations, and regional service providers to expand service capacity throughout the region so that responsibility for serving vulnerable individuals is shared more equitably.

Section 3.04. Expanded Temporary Emergency Shelter Space and Sanctioned Camping.

Within ninety (90) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Administration designate one or more locations for expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping to be utilized only when necessary to supplement available capacity at established emergency shelters.

Any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping location shall be subject to approval by the City Council and generally situated outside Burlington's downtown core, waterfront, shared-use path network, and heavily utilized public parks and shall be selected with due consideration for surrounding neighborhoods, public infrastructure, environmental impacts, and the availability of supportive services. To best serve individuals able to utilize this location or locations, efforts will be made to designate locations with access to drinking water, toilets, shower facilities and handwashing stations, laundry, electricity, and dumpsters. To that end, the City Council acknowledges that while temporary emergency shelter space is preferable to sanctioned camping, neither should be considered a permanent housing solution and should be utilized only for the duration necessary to transition individuals to more appropriate placements.

Prior to approving any designated locations under this Section, the City Council will expect that the location will adopt and enforce operational standards governing admission, sanitation, security, storage of belongings, code of conduct, outreach, behavioral health services, treatment referrals, housing navigation, transportation, case management, and ongoing program evaluation.

The City Council asks that the Administration establish measurable performance standards for any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping and shall publish the resulting performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of individuals served during the reporting period and cumulatively;
- B. The average daily occupancy and utilization rate;

- C. The number and percentage of participants successfully transitioned to emergency shelter, treatment, recovery programs, permanent supportive housing, permanent housing, or other stable housing placements;
- D. The average length of stay for participants;
- E. The number of emergency service responses to a location; and
- F. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate whether a location is functioning as a temporary intervention that promotes health, safety, and successful transitions to more appropriate placements.

Section 3.05. Unauthorized Encampments.

The City Council finds that unauthorized encampments located in areas where camping is specifically prohibited are inconsistent with the policies established by this Resolution.

Consistent with applicable legal requirements, the City Council requests that the Administration act more promptly upon discovery of a prohibited encampment, generally within twenty-four (24) hours, to provide notice of a specified date on which the encampment will face ticketing, no trespass orders, other legal action, and removal of any remaining items. This date should be as soon as reasonably practicable following the provision of notice, allowing sufficient time for affected individuals to make alternative arrangements while protecting public health, public safety, environmental resources, and the public's continued use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces.

In accordance with City policy regarding sheltering on public lands, encampments noticed for removal will be provided contact information from local social service organizations serving unsheltered residents, the State of Vermont's Coordinated Entry Screening Form with instructions, information on other available community resources, information on the officials responsible for an encampment that is not removed, and details on where any collected personal property will be stored.

For the purposes of this Article, the City Council notes that Section 22-7 of the Burlington Code of Ordinances provides that "[i]t shall be unlawful for any person to camp in any public park in the city." Section 22-1 enumerates the City's parks and Section 22-23 further provides that "the land known as Urban Reserve ... shall be considered a city park subject to this chapter."

To the extent the City does not have sufficient staffing capacity to comply with this Section, the City Council asks that the Mayor's Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of this

Resolution to present recommendations to the Council detailing how it will promptly increase the number of personnel authorized and trained to provide notices of removal and conduct associated outreach. The recommendations shall identify the staffing, organizational changes, funding, and implementation timeline necessary to ensure that notices of removal are issued consistently throughout the City.

The City Council requests that the Administration establish measurable performance standards governing the City's response to prohibited encampments and shall publish the resulting performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of prohibited encampments identified during the reporting period;
- B. The average time between identification of a prohibited encampment and issuance of a notice of removal;
- C. The average time between issuance of notice and removal of the encampment;
- D. The number and percentage of individuals contacted who accepted referrals or were successfully connected to shelter, a sanctioned camping location, coordinated entry, behavioral health services, treatment, recovery services, or other supportive services prior to or following removal of the encampment; and
- E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the City's outreach and enforcement efforts.

Section 3.06. Accountability and Enforcement.

The City Council reaffirms that every individual is entitled to dignity, due process, and meaningful opportunities to obtain treatment, recovery services, shelter, and supportive services. The City further reaffirms its commitment to prevention, treatment, recovery, and other evidence-based public health interventions.

The City Council rejects the notion that enforcing our laws and ordinances in response to unlawful conduct is an uncaring or unempathetic act, or that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. Effective public policy requires meaningful opportunities for treatment and recovery together with consistent enforcement of criminal laws that protect the public and preserve Burlington's shared public spaces.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that Burlington will not tolerate drug trafficking, the unlawful open use of controlled substances, retail theft and other property crimes that frequently support substance use disorder, or other criminal conduct that threatens public safety or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces.

The City Council further declares that enforcement of these laws shall remain a priority of the City. The Council supports proactive investigation, lawful detention where appropriate, arrest when supported by the facts and authorized by law, and referral for prosecution of individuals engaged in such criminal activity. Nothing in this Resolution shall be construed to discourage law enforcement officers from taking appropriate enforcement action authorized by law in response to these offenses.

The City shall continue pursuing treatment and recovery for those willing to accept assistance while supporting the investigation, arrest where authorized by law, prosecution, and appropriate punishment of individuals whose criminal conduct perpetuates addiction, victimizes residents and businesses, or undermines the safety and vitality of Burlington's public spaces.

Furthermore, the City Council notes that both the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives were implemented to improve outcomes for individuals at elevated risk of involvement with the criminal justice system, behavioral health crises, substance use, and homelessness, including by reducing emergency department utilization, overdoses, and other preventable harms, while also providing a more immediate and consistent system of accountability for individuals who repeatedly violate municipal ordinances.

The City Council is particularly concerned that the City Circle initiative, which was previously identified by the Mayor's Administration as a key component of Burlington's strategy to improve public safety and accountability, appears to have been substantially curtailed or discontinued. The Council further understands that this change may have been attributable, in whole or in part, to reductions in available funding, and seeks clarification regarding the status of the initiative, the reasons for any changes in its implementation, and whether alternative funding sources or program models have been considered. The Council is also concerned that, to its knowledge, the accountability mechanisms contemplated by the City Circle model, including prosecution or other consequences for participants who failed to comply with restorative justice requirements, have not been meaningfully utilized, and requests information sufficient to evaluate whether the program has operated as originally intended.

Within thirty (30) days of the adoption of this Resolution, the City Council's Public Safety Committee shall prepare and deliver a list of questions to the Mayor's Administration, the City Attorney's Office, and the

Community Justice Center, the responses to which shall provide the Council with a comprehensive update regarding the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives, including, at a minimum: (i) the current operational status of each initiative; (ii) participation levels and measurable outcomes for individuals served; (iii) data concerning compliance with restorative justice requirements and any enforcement or prosecutorial actions taken in response to noncompliance, to the extent permitted by law; (iv) the funding sources supporting each initiative, including any reductions or anticipated funding gaps; and (v) recommendations for the continuation, modification, expansion, or replacement of these initiatives based on their first year of implementation.

Section 3.07. Request for Ongoing Assistance from State Public Safety Personnel

Recognizing Burlington's ongoing public safety resource challenges, the City Council calls upon the Vermont State Police to continue partnering with the Burlington Police Department by providing supplemental law enforcement resources in and around the City's downtown and other locations where additional law enforcement presence is necessary to protect public safety, address criminal activity, and restore public confidence in Burlington's public spaces.

Separately, the City Council calls upon the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles Enforcement Division to expand traffic enforcement efforts within the City of Burlington's principal transportation corridors, including the new Champlain Parkway, where speeding, reckless driving, excessive engine noise, and other traffic violations have become persistent public safety and quality-of-life concerns.

The City Council affirms that, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, it welcomes and consents to the enforcement of both the laws of the State of Vermont and the ordinances of the City of Burlington by duly authorized State law enforcement officers operating within the City, consistent with their statutory authority and any applicable intergovernmental agreements governing such enforcement.

ARTICLE IV

Public Health Policy and Permitted Uses

Section 4.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish the City's policy regarding the implementation of significant public health initiatives, to reaffirm the City Council's legislative role in establishing zoning policy, and to strengthen

collaboration between the City of Burlington and the State of Vermont in addressing public safety, behavioral health, and substance use challenges.

Section 4.02. Public Health Policy and Zoning.

The City Council continues to support evidence-based public health initiatives that improve individual and community health while recognizing that the location, operation, and long-term impacts of significant public health services should be considered through transparent public processes consistent with the City's Comprehensive Development Ordinance and adopted zoning policy.

The City Council finds that significant public health services with substantial neighborhood impacts should not be established through administrative interpretation where doing so effectively creates a new principal use not expressly identified within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Section 4.03. Overdose Prevention Centers.

The City Council finds that overdose prevention centers are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize overdose prevention centers within the City of Burlington should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance following public notice, public hearing, and legislative action by the City Council.

The City Council further declares that, should such an amendment be proposed, overdose prevention centers should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District, as defined by the City's Charter.

Section 4.04. Syringe Service Programs.

The City Council finds that syringe service programs are a valuable public health strategy but are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance and should not be deemed to constitute any currently permitted principal use absent express legislative authorization.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize syringe service programs as a principal use should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance through the City's legislative zoning amendment process.

The City Council further declares that while syringe service programs should continue to be supported in Burlington, they should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District. The City Council opposes the continued operation or establishment of syringe service programs within Burlington's downtown core and calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to work collaboratively with the City and local operating partners to identify an alternative location that better advances public health objectives while supporting the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces.

The City Council further calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to consult and collaborate with the City before establishing, relocating, or materially expanding significant public health services within Burlington so that public health objectives, zoning policy, neighborhood compatibility, and impacts upon public spaces may all be appropriately considered. The Mayor's Administration shall promptly notify the City Council upon learning of State-sanctioned efforts to expand public health services within Burlington.

Additionally, within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution, the City Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee shall begin meeting to develop a resolution that reaffirms, revises, or develops new recommendations from its previously developed report on syringe litter that will further the goals of this Section.

The City Council affirms that the positions taken in this Article regarding an Overdose Prevention Center or Syringe Service Programs are in alignment with Burlington's current comprehensive municipal plan, which acknowledges the difficulties associated with the proximity of drug trafficking and use to those in recovery, and provides in pertinent part that:

[H]igh concentration of social service providers can become easily unmanageable if all stakeholders are not working together, keeping an eye on some of the larger interactions and their implications. For example, the downtown is arguably not the best environment for people recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. The presence of active drug dealing and the highest concentration of drinking establishments in the state create serious challenges for those in recovery.

ARTICLE V

Implementation, Accountability, State Partnership, and Continuing Oversight

Section 5.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that the policies established by this Resolution are translated into coordinated action through measurable implementation, public accountability, regular reporting, and continuing oversight by the City Council.

Section 5.02. Partnership with the State of Vermont.

The City Council appreciates the Governor's most recent efforts to support Burlington with additional public safety resources and calls upon the Governor to establish a sustained partnership with the City of Burlington to continue addressing the unique public safety, behavioral health, homelessness, and substance use challenges confronting Vermont's largest municipality.

The City Council requests that the Mayor invite representatives of the Governor's Office and appropriate State agencies to meet annually with the Administration, City Council, State legislators, and other regional leaders to evaluate regional progress, identify barriers to collaboration, and recommend additional actions to strengthen the partnership between the City of Burlington, surrounding communities, and the State of Vermont.

The City Council specifically refers back to the requests included in its August 2025 resolution on City Hall Park and its asks for the following specific actions by the State of Vermont and Governor to support Burlington in addressing chronic safety and health challenges: (1) Convene a county-wide committee of local, county and state law enforcement agencies to develop a coordinated response to drug trafficking and related crimes; (2) Convene youth service providers, schools, and staff from the Agency of Human Services to specifically examine trends among juveniles engaged in violence, drugs, and gun possession to identify strategies to interrupt these trends for at-risk juveniles; and (3) Convene a public health strategy discussion between members of the Department of Health and Department of Mental Health to examine how to remove barriers to treatment and address limited capacity to existing drug treatment centers to support people living with substance use disorder finding easier pathways to treatment and recovery.

The City Council further recognizes the substantial progress achieved through the Chittenden County Accountability Docket, which demonstrated that dedicated judicial resources could promote more timely case resolution, meaningful accountability, improved access to treatment and services, and greater confidence in the administration of justice for harm done to our communities. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Governor, in coordination with the Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court and other appropriate State officials, continue and, as appropriate, institutionalize this model in Chittenden County by supporting the

continued assignment of a dedicated judge, prosecutor, public defender, and necessary court personnel and resources to ensure the prompt adjudication of cases involving repeat offenders and individuals with multiple pending criminal matters.

Section 5.03. Legislative Partnership with the Vermont General Assembly.

The City Council calls upon the members of the Chittenden County Senate and House delegations, together with members of the Vermont General Assembly representing communities throughout the State, to support the enactment and strengthening of laws that advance the purposes of this Resolution.

The City Council further calls upon the General Assembly to work collaboratively with municipalities, public safety agencies, healthcare providers, service organizations, and other stakeholders to enact legislation that:

- A. Strengthens public safety while protecting individual rights;
- B. Expands access to and investment in behavioral health, substance use treatment, recovery services, and permanent supportive housing throughout Vermont;
- C. Promotes equitable regional responsibility for addressing homelessness and behavioral health challenges;
- D. Provides municipalities with appropriate legal authority and resources to restore and preserve public spaces;
- E. Supports timely intervention for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises or substance use disorder;
- F. Improves coordination among State agencies and municipalities; and
- G. Otherwise advances the purposes of this Resolution.

The City Council further directs the Mayor and the City's legislative representatives to advocate for legislation consistent with these principles and to report to the City Council regarding significant legislative developments affecting implementation of this Resolution.

Section 5.04. Continuing Commitment.

The City Council adopts this Resolution not merely as a response to current conditions, but as a continuing statement of municipal policy intended to guide future legislative decisions, strengthen public confidence in local government, and restore and preserve Burlington's public spaces for future generations.

586 The City Council believes that the strength of a community is measured not only by how it responds to those
587 in crisis, but also by how faithfully it preserves the public spaces that belong to everyone. Through this
588 Resolution, Burlington recommits itself to both responsibilities and affirms that they are inseparable from one
589 another.

590

591

592 BT/Resolutions 2026/*Burlington Forward: A Comprehensive Framework for Safe Public Spaces and a Stronger Community*
593 7/30/26



Refer the resolution to the Committees on Public Safety, REIB, CDNR, and PAC and request a report back to the full Council on any recommended amendments on items within each committee's jurisdiction by September 14, 2026, **and further specifically request that the Mayor's Office collaborate with Council leadership on any proposed amendments to the Resolution's State Partnership provisions contained in Article V, with any recommended revisions also presented to the Council on or by September 14, 2026.**

Resolution Related to

BURLINGTON FORWARD: A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR SAFE PUBLIC SPACES AND A STRONGER COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Burlington's downtown, parks, sidewalks, streets, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, and other public spaces are among the City's greatest civic assets. They are the places where neighbors gather, children play, businesses and tourism thrives, visitors form lasting impressions, and community life unfolds every day. Preserving these shared public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained for everyone is among the City's most fundamental responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, over the past several years, the Burlington City Council has adopted multiple resolutions and initiatives intended to strengthen public safety, improve community well-being, expand access to housing and behavioral health services, and respond compassionately to the challenges of homelessness, substance use, and mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burlington, together with healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, faith communities, neighborhood organizations, educational institutions, and countless volunteers, has committed substantial public and private resources toward emergency shelter, affordable housing, outreach, behavioral health services, recovery programs, harm reduction initiatives, and other efforts intended to assist vulnerable members of our community; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding these efforts and the extraordinary commitment of those serving our community, many individuals, including those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental illness, continue to be negatively affected by persistent public disorder, criminal activity, violence, repeated overdoses, open drug dealing and use, prohibited camping, vandalism, aggressive or threatening behavior, and other conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of Burlington's shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, these conditions have diminished public confidence, strained municipal resources, adversely affected neighborhoods and businesses, discouraged investment and tourism, harmed morale and recruitment of police and other city staff, and undermined Burlington's reputation while also failing many individuals who continue to experience homelessness, addiction, or untreated mental illness without achieving lasting stability, recovery, or improved health outcomes; and

Commented [KP1]: Christian's feedback: Highest-Priority Changes

If the goal is to make the resolution substantially stronger through a **racial equity, inclusion, belonging, and social responsibility lens**, I would prioritize these **10 changes**:

Commented [KP2]: Christian's feedback: I recommend adding a **overarching equity statement** near the beginning of the resolution, perhaps after the "NOW, THEREFORE" clause: **Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and**

Commented [KP3]: Add a WHEREAS statement that speaks to and sets an equity framework for the resolution, so that it is clear that producing equitable outcomes is not an afterthought. Suggested language: **WHEREAS, the City recognizes that systemic inequities—**

Commented [KP4]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The language establishes that public spaces belong to everyone, which is an important equity principle. However, it does not acknowledge that different communities may

Commented [KP5]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The resolution recognizes significant investments but does not ask whether resources have been equitably distributed or whether they reach communities with the

Commented [KP6]: Consider revising this so that homelessness is not repeatedly framed alongside criminal activity. The resolution should distinguish housing status from unlawful conduct. Separate the reference to people experiencing homelessness from the subsequent list of

Commented [KP7]: Christian's feedback: This is one of the most important areas for revision.

Equity:

The clause combines homelessness, addiction, mental illness, criminal activity,

Commented [KP8]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The clause should recognize that public disorder and enforcement policies can also have unequal impacts on marginalized communities.

WHEREAS, Burlington is and will remain a compassionate community where residents consistently demonstrate kindness and generosity toward neighbors experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and other crises. This resolution builds upon those values; and

WHEREAS, the City Council also finds that allowing individuals to remain in circumstances that jeopardize their health, safety, or dignity without meaningful intervention is neither compassionate nor humane. Lasting compassion requires connecting people to treatment, recovery, housing, supportive services, and, where appropriate, enforcement and accountability for unlawful conduct that harms others or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, the City Council rejects the false choice between compassion and public safety and affirms that accountability, treatment, housing, recovery, public safety, and public order are complementary, interdependent responsibilities that must be pursued together to advance the public interest and the dignity of every person; and

WHEREAS, the City further recognizes that Burlington cannot reasonably or sustainably serve as the exclusive or primary provider of shelter, behavioral health services, and substance use treatment for individuals from throughout Vermont and outside our state, and that these challenges require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare institutions, nonprofit organizations, and regional service providers to ensure that responsibility is shared equitably throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces requires clearly articulated values, public policy, measurable implementation, meaningful accountability, prioritized enforcement of our existing laws and ordinances, sustained regional partnership, and a continuing commitment by every level of government and every community partner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Burlington City Council hereby adopts the following policy framework to restore and preserve safe, welcoming, orderly, and accessible public spaces; expand meaningful pathways to housing, treatment, and recovery; strengthen accountability for unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of our shared public spaces; and promote shared regional responsibility for addressing the complex challenges of homelessness, substance use, and behavioral health.

ARTICLE I

General Policy

Commented [KP9]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong values statement, but could be more explicit about dignity and equity.

Inclusion/Belonging:

Strong foundation.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested improvement: Define "compassion" as both individual and

Commented [KP10]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

The phrase "meaningful intervention" is positive, but "where appropriate, enforcement" should include safeguards against disproportionate enforcement.

Inclusion:

Consider voluntary, accessible, culturally responsive services.

Belonging:

Commented [KP11]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

The false-choice framing is useful, but the resolution should also reject a false choice between **public safety and social justice/equity**.

Suggested improvement:

"The City rejects the false choice between compassion, public safety, and equity and affirms that effective public safety must

Commented [KP12]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong opportunity to discuss regional inequities in service availability.

Inclusion:

Could include affected communities in regional planning.

Belonging:

Avoid language suggesting that vulnerable people are "from outside" and therefore less

Commented [KP13]: I would add another whereas clause here to drill down on the need for the contents of this resolution to be executed with equity at the center. Suggested language:

WHEREAS, The City recognizes that public trust requires fair, impartial, and equitable treatment across all communities and commits to implementing this Resolution in ways that strengthen trust among populations historically experiencing disparate treatment

Section 1.01. Purpose.

The purpose of this Resolution is to establish a comprehensive policy framework for restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places for all residents and visitors, while continuing Burlington's longstanding commitment to compassion, dignity, and meaningful support for individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, behavioral health challenges, and other circumstances requiring public assistance. To achieve these objectives, Burlington must realign its values and related efforts. An honest assessment indicates that neither the current nor previous policy frameworks have achieved their intended results, making a revised strategy necessary moving forward.

Section 1.02. General Policy.

It shall be the policy of the City Council that:

A. Burlington's public spaces belong to everyone. Every resident and visitor should be able to use and enjoy the City's parks, streets, sidewalks, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, public buildings, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other public spaces safely and without unreasonable interference or exposure to unlawful activity and disruptive behavior.

B. Compassion without accountability is not compassion. The City Council rejects the notion that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. No individual has the right to engage in unlawful conduct or conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of shared public spaces. Effective public policy requires both meaningful opportunities for prevention, outreach, treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services and consistent enforcement of criminal laws and municipal ordinances that protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. The City shall pursue both objectives simultaneously to ensure that Burlington's public spaces remain safe, welcoming, and accessible to all.

C. Individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, or behavioral health challenges deserve meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and long-term stability. Burlington shall continue advocating for coordinated regional and statewide responses to homelessness, behavioral health challenges, and substance use disorder, recognizing that these challenges extend beyond Burlington's borders and require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, and other community partners.

D. Decisions affecting public spaces, public health services, municipal resources, and zoning policy shall be guided by objective evidence, public transparency, measurable outcomes, and

Commented [KP14]: Add equity as an explicit purpose of the resolution. Suggested language: *'...while continuing Burlington's longstanding commitment to advancing racial equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, compassion, dignity, and meaningful support...'* Also acknowledge that structural

Commented [KP15]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
The phrase "realign our values" is vague and may suggest a shift away from compassion without defining what equity principles will guide the new strategy.

Commented [KP16]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
Strong foundational language. Add explicit recognition of equitable access.
Inclusion:
Consider accessibility for people with

Commented [KP17]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
This is one of the most consequential sections. The statement "Compassion without accountability is not compassion" creates a strong rhetorical frame but may

Commented [KP18]: The repeated framing of compassion primarily as enforcement/accountability risks creates a false equivalence between homelessness, substance use, and unlawful conduct. The opening sentence should be replaced with

Commented [KP19]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
Strong but should include culturally responsive services and equitable access.
Inclusion:
Add language access and disability access.

Commented [KP20]: Add an explicit racial equity impact requirement. Suggested language: ***Decisions shall be guided by objective evidence, public transparency, measurable outcomes, equity impact analysis, and accountability to the public.***

Commented [KP21]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
This is a strong foundation. Add disaggregated data.
Inclusion:
Public transparency should include accessible

accountability to the public. Public accountability requires admitting when systems and policies have fallen short, and when existing social services lack the capacity to deliver the interventions needed for consistent improved outcomes.

ARTICLE II

Protecting Burlington's Public Spaces

Section 2.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to restore and preserve Burlington and its public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places that may be comfortably enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages while respecting the dignity of every person and ensuring that public spaces remain available for their intended public use.

Section 2.02. Public Space Policy.

The City shall prioritize the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces for the benefit of all residents and visitors. Public spaces shall be managed to encourage lawful activity, positive community use, economic vitality, recreation, civic engagement, and public enjoyment.

Public spaces should not merely be accessible; they should be places where residents and visitors choose to gather and should reasonably expect to feel safe doing so.

The City shall make it a top priority to ensure public spaces remain reasonably free from unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of those spaces, and that such spaces are well maintained, clean, and reasonably free of graffiti, litter, unattended personal belongings, and other conditions that detract from their safety, accessibility, and public enjoyment.

Section 2.03. Activation of Public Spaces.

The City finds that well-programmed, well-maintained, and actively used public spaces are among the most effective long-term strategies for promoting public safety, strengthening community life, and discouraging unlawful and disruptive activity.

The City shall expand the activation of Burlington's public spaces through community programming, arts and cultural events, recreational opportunities, family-oriented activities, and partnerships that increase positive public use of parks, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other civic spaces. Consistent with the FY27 budget resolution, the City Council

Commented [KP22]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Good emphasis on dignity, but "comfortable enjoyment" should be balanced with equitable access.

Inclusion:

Add accessibility and reasonable accommodation.

Belonging:

Strong potential.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition:

"...while respecting the dignity, civil rights, accessibility needs, and diverse experiences of every person."

Commented [KP23]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The focus on cleanliness and "unattended personal belongings" could disproportionately affect people experiencing homelessness.

Inclusion:

The policy should distinguish abandoned property from personal belongings and establish procedures to protect property rights.

Belonging:

People experiencing homelessness should not be implicitly excluded from "public enjoyment."

Social Responsibility:

Add a responsibility to avoid displacement

Commented [KP24]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Strong, but programming should be accessible and representative of diverse communities.

Inclusion:

Add free/low-cost programming and accessibility.

Belonging:

Strong opportunity to build belonging.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition:

"Programming should reflect the diversity of Burlington's communities and be designed with input from residents who have

requests that the Administration continue coordinating with the City Council's Parks, Arts & Culture Committee to develop and implement these efforts.

Section 2.04. City Hall Park and Organized Activities.

The City Council reaffirms its prior policies regarding the restoration and stewardship of City Hall Park as outlined in the Council's August 2025 resolution concerning the management, activation, and preservation of the Park. The City Council declares again that City Hall Park shall remain one of Burlington's principal civic gathering spaces—welcoming, accessible, well-maintained, and available for the broad enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the City Attorney's Office prepare and submit to the Council any ordinance amendments necessary to clarify where organized activities may occur within City-owned public spaces, establish when permits are required for such activities, and ensure that such activities do not materially interfere with the intended public use of City Hall Park or other public spaces.

The City Council requests that the Administration renew stalled efforts to assist with navigating how to secure any available and necessary permits for, or if permits are unavailable, offer alternative locations to unpermitted social service activities where participants could be better served while preserving the Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space. If necessary to identify alternative locations, the City Council asks that the Administration evaluate appropriate indoor and outdoor municipal facilities, including Contois Auditorium where practicable and consistent with operational needs.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront issue a request for proposals seeking one or more vendors, nonprofit organizations, or other qualified operators to activate the patio area located in the northeast corner of City Hall Park through food and beverage concessions, retail kiosks, recreational uses, cultural programming, public amenities, or other uses that increase positive public activity and enhance the visitor experience. Any request for proposals shall encourage creative, seasonal, and year-round activation strategies that promote regular public use of the space and are consistent with City Hall Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space. Alternatively, the Administration may evaluate repurposing the patio area as a centralized operational hub for public safety personnel, in alignment with the intent of the City Council's September 2024 resolution on establishing a downtown public safety hub, to provide a visible, accessible, and continuous public safety presence within City Hall Park.

Commented [KP25]: Christian's feedback: **Equity:**

The relocation of social services raises significant equity concerns. Moving services away from downtown may create transportation and access barriers.

Inclusion:

Alternative locations must be evaluated with service users, not solely by government officials.

Belonging:

A public space should be welcoming to all, including people who use social services.

Social Responsibility:

The City should not simply relocate vulnerable populations without ensuring continuity of care.

Suggested improvement:

"Any relocation or alternative site for social service activities shall be developed in consultation with affected service users and providers and shall ensure comparable or improved access, transportation, accessibility, safety, and continuity of services."

The "public safety hub" alternative should also undergo an equity and community impact assessment.

Section 2.05. Expansion of Public Safety Personnel and Public Space Response Capacity.

The City's sworn police officers, Community Service Officers, Urban Park Rangers, and other civilian public safety personnel continue to perform their duties with exceptional dedication and professionalism in protecting and preserving our public spaces. A number of these roles, particularly sworn police officers, unfortunately continue to face significant challenges to staffing, with available police officers consistently remaining at or below current levels since 2023. As the City continues with long-term efforts to rebuild its public safety infrastructure, there is an immediate need to strengthen the City's visible presence within its public spaces. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of the Resolution to present recommendations to the Council on which public safety roles can be most immediately and substantially increased, if even on a temporary basis, to ensure more personnel are assigned to visible public safety and public space response functions. Moreover, the City Council asks that the Chief of Police continue to regularly update the Council's Public Safety Committee on recruitment efforts at the Burlington Police Department.

Immediately following enactment of this Resolution and prior to delivering the above-requested recommendations, the City Council requests that the Mayor take the steps necessary to expand the visible presence of public safety personnel in areas experiencing persistent public safety and public order concerns, which the Mayor's Administration has previously attempted to address through its working group on "hot spots," where ongoing conditions threaten public safety, diminish the public's use and enjoyment of these spaces, and risk undermining the success of generational projects like that at Burlington Square. For this purpose, the Mayor may use, as necessary, the monies allocated by the City Council in the FY27 budget to contract with third-party public safety personnel, including certified police officers. Additionally, to the extent permitted by existing agreements with contracted public safety personnel, such as those currently assigned to patrol municipal garages, the Mayor is authorized to repurpose these personnel to higher priority areas.

Moreover, to the extent practicable, the City Council requests that the Administration recruit and organize one or more Public Space Response Teams comprised of City employees and employees of other local organizations committed to the vitality of Burlington who voluntarily elect to participate and successfully complete appropriate training. Public Space Response Teams shall supplement, but not replace, traditional public safety resources by increasing the City's visible presence within public spaces, promoting lawful and welcoming public use, and assisting in the preservation of City property. If the City's unionized staff are interested in this

Commented [KP26]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

This section needs a clear racial equity analysis. Expanding enforcement personnel can disproportionately affect BIPOC residents, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness.

Inclusion:

Public Space Response Teams should include community representatives and people with lived experience.

Belonging:

A highly enforcement-centered presence may increase feelings of surveillance among some communities.

Social Responsibility:

Strong need for training, oversight, and accountability.

Recommended addition:

"All public safety personnel and Public Space Response Teams shall receive training in racial equity, implicit bias, de-escalation, disability awareness, trauma-informed practices, cultural responsiveness, and constitutional and civil rights protections."

Strong recommendation:

Add requirements for:

- complaint mechanisms;
- data collection;
- demographic analysis of citations, trespass orders, and other enforcement;
- regular public reporting;
- independent review of disparate impacts.

The powers in subsection A–C should also be carefully limited to prevent inconsistent or discretionary enforcement.

Commented [KP27]: City employees as volunteers in this venture will exacerbate the burnout currently running rampant among the City government staff. I wonder if this is an opportunity to activate our NPAs, especially because we know there are varying levels of engagement depending on the ward—this could be a way to more actively involve residents as solving the issues in the City will take all of us.

volunteer opportunity, the Council acknowledges the potential need to submit proposals to municipal unions as necessary to accommodate this.

To the fullest extent permitted by law and consistent with appropriate training and supervision, members of **Public Space Response Teams** may be authorized to:

A. Address and intercede conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces, including, but not limited to, the open use of drugs and alcohol, public intoxication, smoking where prohibited, disorderly behavior, and the encumbrance of sidewalks and walking paths;

B. Issue municipal ordinance citations within the scope of their legal authority;

C. Issue notices against trespass and take other lawful actions necessary to protect City property and public spaces;

D. Promote cleanliness and sanitation, identify maintenance concerns, and coordinate the prompt removal of graffiti and other public nuisances; and

E. Connect individuals experiencing crisis, homelessness, substance use disorder, or other behavioral health needs with appropriate treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services.

The City Attorney and Chief Administrative Officer shall prepare and submit for Council consideration any ordinance amendments, budget proposals, administrative policies, or other measures necessary to implement this Section.

Section 2.06. Public Safety Cameras and Public Notification.

The City Council finds that visible public safety cameras, when lawfully deployed and appropriately identified, deter unlawful conduct, assist in criminal investigations, and promote public confidence in the safety of Burlington's public spaces.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the Chief Information Officer prepare and submit to the Council a report identifying all City-owned or City-operated public safety cameras currently operating within Burlington's downtown and other public spaces. The report shall identify each camera's general location, operational status, and any significant gaps in camera coverage requiring future consideration, provided that nothing in this Section shall require disclosure of information that would compromise public safety or law enforcement operations and the report will be provided confidentially to the extent permitted by Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Moreover, in carrying out this Section and

Commented [KP28]: Because these teams may intervene, issue citations, and issue trespass notices, require mandatory training in racial equity, implicit bias, de-escalation, trauma-informed practice, disability awareness, cultural responsiveness, and constitutional/legal protections. Also require demographic monitoring of contacts and enforcement actions to identify disparate impacts. The CJC and REIB should be involved in this this training effort.

Commented [KP29]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
Surveillance technologies can have disparate impacts and should be evaluated for racial and civil liberties implications.
Inclusion:
Public notification is good, but community participation in camera expansion should be required.
Belonging:
Over-surveillance can undermine trust.
Social Responsibility:
Strong privacy language, but stronger accountability is needed.
Suggested addition:
"Prior to significant expansion of public safety camera systems, the City shall conduct and publicly report a privacy, civil liberties, and racial equity impact assessment."

Commented [KP30]: Strengthen the civil-rights safeguards. In addition to privacy and data-management requirements, consider explicit limits on facial recognition or other biometric uses, retention periods, access controls, periodic equity/bias audits, and public reporting on camera use and outcomes.

any future expansion of public safety camera systems, the City shall remain mindful of the importance of protecting individual privacy and civil liberties and shall ensure that the deployment, operation, and management of such systems are conducted in accordance with applicable law and appropriate safeguards governing the collection, retention, access to, and use of recorded data, including but not limited to the City's Fair and Impartial Policing Policy.

The City Council requests that the Administration install and maintain clear, visible signage at appropriate locations notifying the public that public safety cameras are in operation. Such signage shall be designed to deter unlawful conduct while promoting public awareness that public spaces are actively monitored for the protection of residents, visitors, businesses, and City property.

Section 2.07. Public Space Stewardship and Graffiti Removal.

Recognizing that clean, well-maintained public spaces contribute to public safety, civic pride, and neighborhood vitality, the City Council requests that the Mayor coordinate with the Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee to establish a public space stewardship program to encourage and support volunteer participation in the prompt removal of graffiti from public spaces and other beautification initiatives consistent with the purposes of this Resolution. In establishing this public space stewardship program, the Administration and CDNR Committee may collaborate with organizations and individuals already volunteering to perform the expanded work called for in this Section.

Any program shall provide participating residents with appropriate training, safety guidance, equipment, supplies, and other resources necessary to assist the City in removing graffiti from publicly owned property in a safe, lawful, and coordinated manner.

The City Council reaffirms that the prompt removal of graffiti from privately owned property remains the primary responsibility of the property owner. Any public space stewardship program should also provide a mechanism through which private property owners may authorize trained City employees or approved volunteers participating in the program to enter their property for the purpose of removing graffiti, subject to such reasonable conditions and limitations as the property owner may establish.

Section 2.08. Expanded Partnerships with Nonprofit Organizations and Private Property Owners.

The City Council recognizes that restoring Burlington's public spaces requires meaningful collaboration with businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and other private

Commented [KP31]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Neutral overall.

Inclusion:

Volunteer opportunities are positive, but participation should be accessible.

Belonging:

Strong civic engagement potential.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition: Include neighborhood residents in deciding beautification priorities, especially communities historically underinvested in.

Commented [KP32]: I know CDNR was working on contracting with an organization that would supply recycled paint to help with the cost of removing graffiti and other similar beautification efforts—is that work that has been completed and if so has the process been shared publicly?

Commented [KP33]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

The provision directing nonprofit organizations to establish behavioral expectations should be paired with expectations for the City and property owners.

Inclusion:

People receiving services should have a voice in establishing expectations.

Belonging:

Good language about dignity.

Social Responsibility:

Strong shared-responsibility concept.

Suggested addition:

"Such expectations should be developed, where practicable, with input from individuals who use or are directly affected by the services and should be applied consistently, fairly, and without discrimination."

property owners whose properties directly influence the experience of surrounding neighborhoods.

Accordingly, the City Council asks the Mayor to develop and make publicly available for private property owners educational materials on:

- A. Procedures for issuing notices against trespass as authorized by law;
- B. Crime prevention and environmental design strategies;
- C. Details on the extent to which private property owners can be held criminally or civilly liable for unlawful or other wrongful conduct permitted to continue on their premises;
- D. Other available tools to assist property owners in responding to unlawful activity while promoting safe, welcoming, and well-maintained properties.

The City Council further asks the Mayor to engage with nonprofit organizations that provide services to individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, mental health challenges, or other vulnerabilities, and to relay the City's request that such organizations adopt reasonable expectations for respectful and lawful behavior on the organization's property and within adjacent public rights-of-way and public spaces immediately surrounding the organization's facilities, including expectations designed to discourage conduct that creates public safety risks, interferes with the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties and public spaces, or otherwise adversely affects the surrounding community. The City encourages nonprofit organizations to communicate these expectations in a manner that preserves the dignity of those receiving services while reinforcing shared responsibility for maintaining safe, welcoming, and accessible neighborhoods.

Section 2.09. Public Space Performance Standards.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor collaborate with the City Council's Public Safety and Parks, Arts & Culture Committees to adopt measurable performance standards for evaluating the condition of Burlington's public spaces, which shall be publicly posted on the City's Data Hub.

The standards shall include objective performance measures relating to, as appropriate:

- A. Public safety conditions, including but not limited to the number of incidents, offenses, and arrests in public spaces;

Commented [KP34]: Add equity measures to the performance framework. Current measures focus on incidents, complaints, activation, and use. Add demographic analysis of citations, arrests, police contacts, complaints, and other enforcement activity, where legally permissible, and assess whether improvements in public-space conditions are being achieved equitably across communities.

Commented [KP35]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:

This section is an important opportunity to embed equity.

Inclusion:

Add community perception and participation measures.

Belonging:

Measure whether residents feel welcomed and safe, not only whether incidents decline.

Social Responsibility:

Strong transparency.

Add measures for:

- racial disparities in enforcement;
- citations and arrests by race and ethnicity;
- use of force;
- trespass orders;
- access to services;
- community perceptions of safety;
- resident sense of belonging;
- accessibility;
- complaints regarding discriminatory treatment.

B. Quality-of-life complaints, including but not limited to SeeClickFix reports on cleanliness and sanitation, and graffiti response;

C. Public space activation and programming;

D. Visitor and resident use of public spaces; and

E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines appropriate to enable the City Council and the public to evaluate progress over time.

ARTICLE III

Sustainable Intervention and Regional Responsibility

Section 3.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish a sustainable framework for responding to homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges. The City Council reaffirms Burlington's longstanding commitment to ensuring that individuals experiencing crisis are afforded meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and permanent housing while recognizing that emergency interventions must ultimately lead to greater stability, independence, and improved health outcomes.

The City Council further recognizes that compassion requires meaningful intervention, measurable results, and shared regional responsibility. Emergency measures are intended to stabilize individuals and connect them to long-term solutions and should not become permanent substitutes for housing, treatment, recovery, or personal stability.

Section 3.02. Establishing Service Capacity.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor convene representatives of organizations providing emergency shelter, affordable housing, behavioral health services, substance use treatment, healthcare, emergency response, outreach, and other appropriate public and private partners to evaluate Burlington's sustainable capacity to responsibly provide emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. To the extent the City is already convening a group that includes the above-referenced stakeholders, the Administration may expand the scope of that group's work to include developing the assessment called for in this Section.

Commented [KP36]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Strong commitment to long-term stability, but "independence" should not be treated as the only successful outcome. Some people will need ongoing supportive services.

Suggested change:

Replace "independence" with "**long-term stability, health, autonomy, and well-being.**"

Commented [KP37]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The concept of a "maximum number" of people Burlington can serve risks turning people into a capacity calculation.

Inclusion:

Affected individuals and service providers should participate in defining capacity.

Belonging:

The framing should avoid suggesting that some people are "too many" for the community.

Social Responsibility:

The City should recognize a continuing obligation to meet urgent humanitarian needs.

Recommended addition:

"Capacity assessments shall be informed by the lived experiences of people accessing services and shall evaluate not only the number of individuals served but also whether services are accessible, culturally responsive, disability-inclusive, trauma-informed, and effective."

The assessment shall evaluate available staffing, financial resources, healthcare capacity, emergency response capability, housing availability, case management, sanitation, public safety impacts, fiscal sustainability, and such other operational considerations as may be appropriate.

Based upon that assessment, the City Council requests that the Mayor recommend the maximum number of individuals that Burlington can sustainably and humanely serve at any given time through the coordinated provision of emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. The recommendation shall identify the methodology and assumptions used to establish that number and shall include objective indicators by which the City may determine when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity.

The Mayor may periodically review the recommended sustainable service capacity and recommend revisions to the City Council as conditions, available resources, or regional participation materially change.

Section 3.03. Regional Responsibility.

The City Council affirms that homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges are regional and statewide challenges requiring regional and statewide solutions.

The City Council further finds that current conditions strongly indicate that Burlington is providing services beyond what can be sustainably supported by its existing housing, shelter, behavioral health, public safety, and municipal resources. While the assessment required by Section 3.02 will establish a recommended sustainable service capacity, the City Council finds that immediate action to promote greater regional responsibility should not await completion of that assessment.

Burlington will continue to lead with compassion. Leadership, however, does not require Burlington to serve as the exclusive or primary provider of services for individuals from throughout Vermont.

The City Council requests that the Administration implement equitable policies and procedures to ensure that, when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity, individuals seeking services are connected with available housing, shelter, treatment, recovery, behavioral health, and other supportive services in other communities, including through transportation assistance where appropriate. The City shall actively work with the State of Vermont, neighboring municipalities, healthcare providers, housing organizations, and regional service providers to expand service capacity throughout the region so that responsibility for serving vulnerable individuals is shared more equitably.

Commented [KP38]: Establishing a 'maximum number' of people Burlington can serve raises equity and access concerns. The methodology should not create a ceiling that results in denial of basic services. Require the assessment to identify unmet need, legal obligations, disparate impacts, and a plan for expanding statewide/regional capacity. Include people with lived experience in developing the methodology.

Commented [KP39]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
The principle is strong, but "individuals from throughout Vermont" may encourage geographic exclusion.
Inclusion:
Regional responsibility should mean expanding services everywhere, not redirecting people elsewhere.
Belonging:
People should not lose access to services because of where they originated.
Social Responsibility:
Strongest opportunity for regional equity.
Suggested change:
"Regional responsibility shall be pursued through shared investment and expanded service capacity across municipalities, rather than through exclusion or displacement of individuals based on their place of origin or current residence."

Section 3.04. Expanded Temporary Emergency Shelter Space and Sanctioned Camping.

Within ninety (90) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Administration designate one or more locations for expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping to be utilized only when necessary to supplement available capacity at established emergency shelters.

Any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping location shall be subject to approval by the City Council and generally situated outside Burlington's downtown core, waterfront, shared-use path network, and heavily utilized public parks and shall be selected with due consideration for surrounding neighborhoods, public infrastructure, environmental impacts, and the availability of supportive services. To best serve individuals able to utilize this location or locations, efforts will be made to designate locations with access to drinking water, toilets, shower facilities and handwashing stations, laundry, electricity, and dumpsters. To that end, the City Council acknowledges that while temporary emergency shelter space is preferable to sanctioned camping, neither should be considered a permanent housing solution and should be utilized only for the duration necessary to transition individuals to more appropriate placements.

Prior to approving any designated locations under this Section, the City Council will expect that the location will adopt and enforce operational standards governing admission, sanitation, security, storage of belongings, code of conduct, outreach, behavioral health services, treatment referrals, housing navigation, transportation, case management, and ongoing program evaluation.

The City Council asks that the Administration establish measurable performance standards for any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping and shall publish the resulting performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of individuals served during the reporting period and cumulatively;
- B. The average daily occupancy and utilization rate;
- C. The number and percentage of participants successfully transitioned to emergency shelter, treatment, recovery programs, permanent supportive housing, permanent housing, or other stable housing placements;
- D. The average length of stay for participants;
- E. The number of emergency service responses to a location; and

Commented [KP40]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Locating shelters outside downtown can disproportionately burden people with limited transportation and disabilities.

Inclusion:

Accessibility and transportation need stronger requirements.

Belonging:

The language could unintentionally frame shelter residents as incompatible with public spaces.

Social Responsibility:

Strong operational standards, but equity should be explicit.

Add requirements for:

- accessible transportation;
- ADA compliance;
- language access;
- culturally responsive services;
- community engagement;
- resident participation in site selection;
- racial equity impact assessment.

Commented [KP41]: Add explicit equity and accessibility criteria for site selection. Consider proximity to transit, healthcare, food, employment, disability access, culturally responsive services, and environmental impacts. Avoid concentrating temporary shelter or sanctioned camping in communities that already experience disproportionate burdens or figure out what mechanisms can be put in place to better support these communities if site selection is limited due to the aforementioned concerns around proximity to transit, health care, food, employment, and other services.

Commented [KP42]: Add equity outcomes to the required monthly reporting. In addition to utilization and transitions, report outcomes by race/ethnicity and other legally appropriate demographic categories, including referrals accepted, successful housing transitions, length of stay, and emergency responses. The goal should be both effectiveness and equitable access/outcomes.

F. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate whether a location is functioning as a temporary intervention that promotes health, safety, and successful transitions to more appropriate placements.

Section 3.05. Unauthorized Encampments.

The City Council finds that unauthorized encampments located in areas where camping is specifically prohibited are inconsistent with the policies established by this Resolution.

Consistent with applicable legal requirements, the City Council requests that the Administration act more promptly upon discovery of a prohibited encampment, generally within twenty-four (24) hours, to provide notice of a specified date on which the encampment will face ticketing, no trespass orders, other legal action, and removal of any remaining items. This date should be as soon as reasonably practicable following the provision of notice, allowing sufficient time for affected individuals to make alternative arrangements while protecting public health, public safety, environmental resources, and the public's continued use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces.

In accordance with City policy regarding sheltering on public lands, encampments noticed for removal will be provided contact information from local social service organizations serving unsheltered residents, the State of Vermont's Coordinated Entry Screening Form with instructions, information on other available community resources, information on the officials responsible for an encampment that is not removed, and details on where any collected personal property will be stored.

For the purposes of this Article, the City Council notes that Section 22-7 of the Burlington Code of Ordinances provides that "[i]t shall be unlawful for any person to camp in any public park in the city." Section 22-1 enumerates the City's parks and Section 22-23 further provides that "the land known as Urban Reserve ... shall be considered a city park subject to this chapter."

To the extent the City does not have sufficient staffing capacity to comply with this Section, the City Council asks that the Mayor's Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution to present recommendations to the Council detailing how it will promptly increase the number of personnel authorized and trained to provide notices of removal and conduct associated outreach. The recommendations shall identify the staffing, organizational changes, funding, and implementation timeline necessary to ensure that notices of removal are issued consistently throughout the City.

The City Council requests that the Administration establish measurable performance standards governing the City's response to prohibited encampments and shall publish the resulting

Commented [KP43]: Add trauma-informed and disability-responsive safeguards before removal. Require documented outreach, meaningful notice, efforts to connect people to appropriate alternatives, and procedures protecting medications, identification, assistive devices, and essential personal property. Consider requiring an equity review of encampment enforcement patterns to identify disparate impacts.

Commented [KP44]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Encampment enforcement can disproportionately affect people with the fewest housing options and may have disparate racial impacts.

Inclusion:

The proposed 24-hour response should be balanced with meaningful notice and accessible alternatives.

Belonging:

Removal without adequate alternatives may increase exclusion and displacement.

Social Responsibility:

The City has a responsibility to protect public spaces while also protecting people from avoidable displacement and loss of essential property.

Recommended additions:

"Prior to removal, the City shall make reasonable efforts to identify and offer accessible alternatives, provide adequate notice consistent with applicable law, protect and store personal property, and connect individuals with housing and services."

Performance data should include:

- race and ethnicity;
- disability status where voluntarily provided;
- number of people displaced;
- number offered shelter;
- number accepting shelter;
- number for whom no alternative was available.

performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of prohibited encampments identified during the reporting period;
- B. The average time between identification of a prohibited encampment and issuance of a notice of removal;
- C. The average time between issuance of notice and removal of the encampment;
- D. The number and percentage of individuals contacted who accepted referrals or were successfully connected to shelter, a sanctioned camping location, coordinated entry, behavioral health services, treatment, recovery services, or other supportive services prior to or following removal of the encampment; and
- E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the City's outreach and enforcement efforts.

Section 3.06. Accountability and Enforcement.

The City Council reaffirms that every individual is entitled to dignity, due process, and meaningful opportunities to obtain treatment, recovery services, shelter, and supportive services. The City further reaffirms its commitment to prevention, treatment, recovery, and other evidence-based public health interventions.

The City Council rejects the notion that enforcing our laws and ordinances in response to unlawful conduct is an uncaring or unempathetic act, or that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. Effective public policy requires meaningful opportunities for treatment and recovery together with consistent enforcement of criminal laws that protect the public and preserve Burlington's shared public spaces.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that Burlington will not tolerate drug trafficking, the unlawful open use of controlled substances, retail theft and other property crimes that frequently support substance use disorder, or other criminal conduct that threatens public safety or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces.

The City Council further declares that enforcement of these laws shall remain a priority of the City. The Council supports proactive investigation, lawful detention where appropriate, arrest when supported by the facts and authorized by law, and referral for prosecution of individuals engaged in such criminal activity. Nothing in this Resolution shall be construed to discourage

Commented [KP45]: Expand the performance measures beyond speed of removal. Include the percentage of people offered appropriate alternatives, accepted referrals, maintained continuity of care, retained essential belongings, and obtained stable housing after intervention. Report outcomes by race/ethnicity and other appropriate demographic categories to assess disparate impacts.

Commented [KP46]: Balance the strong emphasis on individual enforcement with institutional accountability. Add a requirement that the City evaluate whether enforcement strategies produce disparate racial, disability, or other demographic impacts and modify practices when inequities are identified. Consider explicitly distinguishing drug trafficking and other criminal conduct from substance use disorder or homelessness itself.

Commented [KP47]: Christian's feedback: This is perhaps the section requiring the **most substantial racial equity revision.**

Equity:
The language strongly emphasizes arrest, prosecution, and punishment. Without explicit safeguards, enforcement can contribute to racial disparities in policing and criminal justice.

Inclusion:
People should have meaningful access to diversion and treatment before or alongside prosecution.

Belonging:
The language may reinforce an "insiders versus offenders" framework.

Social Responsibility:
Accountability is appropriate, but the City should also be accountable for ensuring equitable enforcement.

Recommended addition:
"Enforcement priorities shall be implemented in a manner consistent with racial equity and civil rights principles. The City shall regularly evaluate enforcement activity for disparate impacts and shall take corrective action where disparities cannot be

law enforcement officers from taking appropriate enforcement action authorized by law in response to these offenses.

The City shall continue pursuing treatment and recovery for those willing to accept assistance while supporting the investigation, arrest where authorized by law, prosecution, and appropriate punishment of individuals whose criminal conduct perpetuates addiction, victimizes residents and businesses, or undermines the safety and vitality of Burlington's public spaces.

Furthermore, the City Council notes that both the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives were implemented to improve outcomes for individuals at elevated risk of involvement with the criminal justice system, behavioral health crises, substance use, and homelessness, including by reducing emergency department utilization, overdoses, and other preventable harms, while also providing a more immediate and consistent system of accountability for individuals who repeatedly violate municipal ordinances.

The City Council is particularly concerned that the City Circle initiative, which was previously identified by the Mayor's Administration as a key component of Burlington's strategy to improve public safety and accountability, appears to have been substantially curtailed or discontinued. The Council further understands that this change may have been attributable, in whole or in part, to reductions in available funding, and seeks clarification regarding the status of the initiative, the reasons for any changes in its implementation, and whether alternative funding sources or program models have been considered. The Council is also concerned that, to its knowledge, the accountability mechanisms contemplated by the City Circle model, including prosecution or other consequences for participants who failed to comply with restorative justice requirements, have not been meaningfully utilized, and requests information sufficient to evaluate whether the program has operated as originally intended.

Within thirty (30) days of the adoption of this Resolution, the City Council's Public Safety Committee shall prepare and deliver a list of questions to the Mayor's Administration, the City Attorney's Office, and the Community Justice Center, the responses to which shall provide the Council with a comprehensive update regarding the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives, including, at a minimum: (i) the current operational status of each initiative; (ii) participation levels and measurable outcomes for individuals served; (iii) data concerning compliance with restorative justice requirements and any enforcement or prosecutorial actions taken in response to noncompliance, to the extent permitted by law; (iv) the funding sources supporting each initiative, including any reductions or anticipated funding gaps; and (v) recommendations for the continuation, modification, expansion, or replacement of these initiatives based on their first year of implementation.

Section 3.07. Request for Ongoing Assistance From State Public Safety Personnel

Recognizing Burlington's ongoing public safety resource challenges, the City Council calls upon the Vermont State Police to continue partnering with the Burlington Police Department by providing supplemental law enforcement resources in and around the City's downtown and other locations where additional law enforcement presence is necessary to protect public safety, address criminal activity, and restore public confidence in Burlington's public spaces.

Separately, the City Council calls upon the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles Enforcement Division to expand traffic enforcement efforts within the City of Burlington's principal transportation corridors, including the new Champlain Parkway, where speeding, reckless driving, excessive engine noise, and other traffic violations have become persistent public safety and quality-of-life concerns.

The City Council affirms that, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, it welcomes and consents to the enforcement of both the laws of the State of Vermont and the ordinances of the City of Burlington by duly authorized State law enforcement officers operating within the City, consistent with their statutory authority and any applicable intergovernmental agreements governing such enforcement.

ARTICLE IV

Public Health Policy and Permitted Uses

Section 4.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish the City's policy regarding the implementation of significant public health initiatives, to reaffirm the City Council's legislative role in establishing zoning policy, and to strengthen collaboration between the City of Burlington and the State of Vermont in addressing public safety, behavioral health, and substance use challenges.

Section 4.02. Public Health Policy and Zoning.

The City Council continues to support evidence-based public health initiatives that improve individual and community health while recognizing that the location, operation, and long-term impacts of significant public health services should be considered through transparent public processes consistent with the City's Comprehensive Development Ordinance and adopted zoning policy.

Commented [KP48]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Additional law enforcement presence should be accompanied by safeguards against disparate enforcement.

Inclusion:

Community members should be informed about roles and responsibilities of state personnel.

Belonging:

Increased enforcement may affect community trust.

Social Responsibility:

Strong intergovernmental coordination.

Suggested addition:

"State and local law enforcement agencies should coordinate to ensure consistent standards, accountability, community engagement, and compliance with racial equity and civil rights protections."

Commented [KP49]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Good emphasis on evidence-based public health.

Inclusion:

Public participation should explicitly include people directly affected by substance use and harm reduction services.

Belonging:

Public health services should be framed as part of community health rather than as incompatible with public spaces.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Commented [KP50]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Neutral on its face, but zoning decisions can produce racial and socioeconomic disparities.

Inclusion:

Public processes should include affected service users.

Belonging:

Potential tension between neighborhood compatibility and inclusion.

Suggested addition:

"Zoning decisions shall consider potential disparate impacts on historically marginalized communities and individuals who rely on public health services."

The City Council finds that significant public health services with substantial neighborhood impacts should not be established through administrative interpretation where doing so effectively creates a new principal use not expressly identified within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Section 4.03. Overdose Prevention Centers.

The City Council finds that overdose prevention centers are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize overdose prevention centers within the City of Burlington should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance following public notice, public hearing, and legislative action by the City Council.

The City Council further declares that, should such an amendment be proposed, overdose prevention centers should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District, as defined by the City's Charter.

Section 4.04. Syringe Service Programs.

The City Council finds that syringe service programs are a valuable public health strategy but are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance and should not be deemed to constitute any currently permitted principal use absent express legislative authorization.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize syringe service programs as a principal use should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance through the City's legislative zoning amendment process.

The City Council further declares that while syringe service programs should continue to be supported in Burlington, they should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District. The City Council opposes the continued operation or establishment of syringe service programs within Burlington's downtown core and calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to work collaboratively with the City and local operating partners to identify an alternative location that better advances public health objectives while supporting the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces.

The City Council further calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to consult and collaborate with the City before establishing, relocating, or materially expanding significant

Commented [KP51]: If the Council is evaluating the location of overdose prevention centers, the equity analysis should be explicit. Consider requiring evidence regarding overdose prevention, health outcomes, racial/ethnic disparities in overdose mortality, access to treatment, and impacts on people in recovery alongside neighborhood and zoning considerations.

Commented [KP52]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The section should acknowledge that overdose prevention centers may serve populations experiencing significant health disparities.

Inclusion:

A public hearing is important, but meaningful participation should include people with lived experience.

Belonging:

The prohibition in the Downtown Improvement District raises concerns about equitable access.

Social Responsibility:

The City should rely on evidence and health

Commented [KP53]: The resolution recognizes syringe service programs as valuable public health interventions but proposes excluding them from the Downtown Improvement District. Add a health-equity analysis to the location decision, including access for people who use drugs, overdose prevention, racial disparities in substance-use harms, transit access, and continuity with other health services. Avoid relocating services solely to areas that make access more difficult for the populations they serve in

Commented [KP54]: Christian's feedback: equity concerns.

Equity:

Restricting harm reduction services from the downtown core may disproportionately affect people who rely on walking, public transit, or proximity to services.

Inclusion:

Relocation may reduce access.

Belonging:

The language risks treating people who use

public health services within Burlington so that public health objectives, zoning policy, neighborhood compatibility, and impacts upon public spaces may all be appropriately considered. The Mayor's Administration shall promptly notify the City Council upon learning of State-sanctioned efforts to expand public health services within Burlington.

Additionally, within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution, the City Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee shall begin meeting to develop a resolution that reaffirms, revises, or develops new recommendations from its previously developed report on syringe litter that will further the goals of this Section.

The City Council affirms that the positions taken in this Article regarding an Overdose Prevention Center or Syringe Service Programs are in alignment with Burlington's current comprehensive municipal plan, which acknowledges the difficulties associated with the proximity of drug trafficking and use to those in recovery, and provides in pertinent part that:

[H]igh concentration of social service providers can become easily unmanageable if all stakeholders are not working together, keeping an eye on some of the larger interactions and their implications. For example, the downtown is arguably not the best environment for people recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. The presence of active drug dealing and the highest concentration of drinking establishments in the state create serious challenges for those in recovery.

ARTICLE V

Implementation, Accountability, State Partnership, and Continuing Oversight

Section 5.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that the policies established by this Resolution are translated into coordinated action through measurable implementation, public accountability, regular reporting, and continuing oversight by the City Council.

Section 5.02. Partnership with the State of Vermont.

The City Council appreciates the Governor's most recent efforts to support Burlington with additional public safety resources and calls upon the Governor to establish a sustained partnership with the City of Burlington to continue addressing the unique public safety,

Commented [KP55]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong opportunity to make equity an implementation requirement.

Suggested addition:

"Implementation shall include ongoing racial equity, inclusion, belonging, and social impact assessment."

Commented [KP56]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong focus on regional coordination. Add equitable access to treatment and services.

Inclusion:

State partnership should include community voices.

Belonging:

Regional strategies should avoid displacement.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition:

"State and regional strategies shall prioritize equitable access to services regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, income, housing status, or place of origin."

behavioral health, homelessness, and substance use challenges confronting Vermont's largest municipality.

The City Council requests that the Mayor invite representatives of the Governor's Office and appropriate State agencies to meet annually with the Administration, City Council, State legislators, and other regional leaders to evaluate regional progress, identify barriers to collaboration, and recommend additional actions to strengthen the partnership between the City of Burlington, surrounding communities, and the State of Vermont.

The City Council specifically refers back to the requests included in its August 2025 resolution on City Hall Park and its asks for the following specific actions by the State of Vermont and Governor to support Burlington in addressing chronic safety and health challenges: (1) Convene a county-wide committee of local, county and state law enforcement agencies to develop a coordinated response to drug trafficking and related crimes; (2) Convene youth service providers, schools, and staff from the Agency of Human Services to specifically examine trends among juveniles engaged in violence, drugs, and gun possession to identify strategies to interrupt these trends for at-risk juveniles; and (3) Convene a public health strategy discussion between members of the Department of Health and Department of Mental Health to examine how to remove barriers to treatment and address limited capacity to existing drug treatment centers to support people living with substance use disorder finding easier pathways to treatment and recovery.

The City Council further recognizes the substantial progress achieved through the Chittenden County Accountability Docket, which demonstrated that dedicated judicial resources could promote more timely case resolution, meaningful accountability, improved access to treatment and services, and greater confidence in the administration of justice for harm done to our communities. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Governor, in coordination with the Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court and other appropriate State officials, continue and, as appropriate, institutionalize this model in Chittenden County by supporting the continued assignment of a dedicated judge, prosecutor, public defender, and necessary court personnel and resources to ensure the prompt adjudication of cases involving repeat offenders and individuals with multiple pending criminal matters.

Section 5.03. Legislative Partnership with the Vermont General Assembly.

The City Council calls upon the members of the Chittenden County Senate and House delegations, together with members of the Vermont General Assembly representing communities throughout the State, to support the enactment and strengthening of laws that advance the purposes of this Resolution.

Commented [KP57]: Christian's feedback:
This section already contains a strong equity provision in subsection C.

Section 5.03(C)
"Promotes equitable regional responsibility..."

This should be expanded to:
"Promotes equitable regional responsibility for addressing homelessness and behavioral health challenges while ensuring that individuals are not denied access to essential services based on race, ethnicity, disability, income, housing status, or place of origin."

Section 5.03(A)
"Strengthens public safety while protecting individual rights" could be strengthened:
"Strengthens public safety while protecting civil rights, advancing racial equity, and ensuring due process and equal protection under the law."

The City Council further calls upon the General Assembly to work collaboratively with municipalities, public safety agencies, healthcare providers, service organizations, and other stakeholders to enact legislation that:

- A. Strengthens public safety while protecting individual rights;
- B. Expands access to and investment in behavioral health, substance use treatment, recovery services, and permanent supportive housing throughout Vermont;
- C. Promotes equitable regional responsibility for addressing homelessness and behavioral health challenges;
- D. Provides municipalities with appropriate legal authority and resources to restore and preserve public spaces;
- E. Supports timely intervention for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises or substance use disorder;
- F. Improves coordination among State agencies and municipalities; and
- G. Otherwise advances the purposes of this Resolution.

The City Council further directs the Mayor and the City's legislative representatives to advocate for legislation consistent with these principles and to report to the City Council regarding significant legislative developments affecting implementation of this Resolution.

Section 5.04. Continuing Commitment.

The City Council adopts this Resolution not merely as a response to current conditions, but as a continuing statement of municipal policy intended to guide future legislative decisions, strengthen public confidence in local government, and restore and preserve Burlington's public spaces for future generations.

The City Council believes that the strength of a community is measured not only by how it responds to those in crisis, but also by how faithfully it preserves the public spaces that belong to everyone. Through this Resolution, Burlington recommits itself to both responsibilities and affirms that they are inseparable from one another.

Commented [KP58]: Add an explicit statement that the success of the resolution will be judged not only by public-space conditions and public confidence, but also by whether implementation reduces disparities and strengthens belonging and trust among communities historically experiencing disparate treatment by public systems.

Commented [KP59]: Christian's feedback: Section 5.04 — Continuing Commitment

Equity:

Strong values-based conclusion, but equity is not explicitly named.

Inclusion:

Strong potential.

Belonging:

The phrase "public spaces that belong to everyone" is powerful.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Recommended addition:

"Burlington further recognizes that public safety, racial equity, inclusion, belonging, and social responsibility are mutually reinforcing responsibilities. A community is strongest when every person can participate in public life with dignity, safety, and a meaningful sense of belonging."

Commented [KP60]: Christian's feedback:

The resolution has a potentially strong foundation for **social responsibility** because it recognizes that public safety, public health, housing, behavioral health, and regional cooperation are interconnected. It also contains important commitments to dignity, due process, transparency, measurable outcomes, and public accountability.

However, **racial equity, inclusion, and belonging are largely implicit rather than explicit**. The greatest concern is that some provisions—particularly those involving **increased enforcement, public space response teams, surveillance, encampment removal, relocation of social services, and restrictions on harm reduction services**—could produce

Resolution Related to

BURLINGTON FORWARD: A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR SAFE PUBLIC SPACES AND A STRONGER COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Burlington's downtown, parks, sidewalks, streets, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, and other public spaces are among the City's greatest civic assets. They are the places where neighbors gather, children play, businesses and tourism thrives, visitors form lasting impressions, and community life unfolds every day. Preserving these shared public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained for everyone is among the City's most fundamental responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that equitable access to public spaces requires attention to the differing experiences, needs, and barriers faced by community members and visitors, including people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, children and youth, older adults, New Americans, and historically marginalized racial and ethnic communities; and

WHEREAS, over the past several years, the Burlington City Council has adopted multiple resolutions and initiatives intended to strengthen public safety, improve community well-being, expand access to housing and behavioral health services, and respond compassionately to the challenges of homelessness, substance use, and mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burlington, together with healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, faith communities, neighborhood organizations, educational institutions, and countless volunteers, has committed substantial public and private resources toward emergency shelter, affordable housing, outreach, behavioral health services, recovery programs, harm reduction initiatives, and other efforts intended to assist vulnerable members of our community; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding these efforts and the extraordinary commitment of those serving our community, persistent public safety concerns, including violence, drug and sex trafficking, property crime, retail theft, and other unlawful conduct, continue to affect many individuals, including those experiencing homelessness, addiction~~substance use disorder~~, and mental illness, ~~continue to be negatively affected by persistent public disorder, criminal activity, violence, repeated overdoses, open drug dealing and use, prohibited camping, vandalism, aggressive or threatening behavior, and other conduct that and unreasonably interfere~~ unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of Burlington's shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, Burlington is and will remain a compassionate community where residents consistently demonstrate kindness and generosity toward neighbors experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and other crises. This Resolution builds upon those values; and

WHEREAS, the City Council also finds that allowing individuals to remain in circumstances that jeopardize their health, safety, or dignity without meaningful intervention is neither compassionate nor humane. Lasting compassion requires connecting people to treatment, recovery, housing, supportive services, and, where appropriate, enforcement and accountability for unlawful conduct that harms others or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, the City Council rejects the false choice between compassion and public safety and affirms that accountability, treatment, housing, recovery, public health, public safety, and public order are complementary, interdependent responsibilities that must be pursued together to advance the public interest and the dignity of every person; and

WHEREAS, the City further recognizes that Burlington cannot reasonably or sustainably serve as the exclusive or primary provider of shelter, behavioral health services, and substance use treatment for individuals from throughout Vermont and outside our state, and that these challenges require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare institutions, nonprofit organizations, and regional service providers to ensure that responsibility is shared equitably throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that systemic inequities—including racism, poverty, ableism, discrimination, and unequal access to housing, healthcare, behavioral health services, and economic opportunity—have contributed to the conditions addressed in this Resolution, and that effective public policy should include a focus on reducing disparities while improving safety and well-being for all residents; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that children and vulnerable adults who regularly witness open-air drug use, drug transactions, and unmanaged mental health crises in public spaces may experience significant psychological, developmental, and safety harms, including normalization of substance use, exposure to trauma, disruption of a sense of safety and stability, and increased risk of accidental contact with drug paraphernalia or hazardous materials; and

WHEREAS, sustained exposure to visible drug dealing and open-air drug markets in areas frequented by families, including parks, schools, playgrounds, and public transit corridors, can contribute to children's fear, anxiety, and diminished use of public spaces intended for their recreation and education; and

WHEREAS, the presence of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness or acute mental health crisis in public spaces reflects broader gaps in the City's housing, behavioral health, and crisis response systems, and the City recognizes that effective, compassionate, and adequately resourced responses to these conditions are essential both to protecting the dignity and safety of the individuals experiencing them and to reducing the secondary impacts on public spaces used by children and families; and

WHEREAS, in implementing this Resolution, the City shall ensure its Office of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging is involved in identifying and addressing disparate impacts on historically marginalized and underserved communities; protecting the dignity and civil rights of all people; and ensuring reasonable opportunities for affected communities to participate in decisions that impact them. The City shall seek to ensure that public safety, public health, housing, behavioral health, enforcement, and policies governing our public spaces are implemented consistently and in ways that do not disproportionately burden any racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, disability, or other historically marginalized community; and

WHEREAS, restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces requires clearly articulated values, public policy, measurable implementation, meaningful accountability, prioritized enforcement of our existing laws and ordinances, sustained regional partnership, and a continuing commitment by every level of government and every community partner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Burlington City Council hereby adopts the following policy framework to restore and preserve safe, welcoming, ~~orderly,~~ and accessible public spaces; expand meaningful pathways to housing, treatment, and recovery; strengthen accountability for unlawful conduct ~~and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of our shared public spaces;~~ and promote shared regional responsibility for and investment in addressing the complex challenges of homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges.

ARTICLE I

General Policy

Section 1.01. Purpose.

The purpose of this Resolution is to establish a comprehensive policy framework for restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces as safe, welcoming, ~~orderly,~~ accessible, and well-maintained places for all residents and visitors, while continuing Burlington's longstanding commitment to compassion, dignity, and meaningful support for individuals experiencing

homelessness, substance use disorder, behavioral health challenges, and other circumstances requiring public assistance. To achieve these objectives, Burlington must realign its ~~values and related efforts~~ using evidence, community input, and measurable outcomes to assess existing approaches and develop revised strategies that advance safety, dignity, inclusion, belonging, and equitable access to services. An honest assessment indicates that neither the current nor previous policy frameworks have achieved their intended results, making ~~a revised strategy~~ necessary moving forward.

Section 1.02. General Policy.

It shall be the policy of the City Council that:

A. Burlington's public spaces belong to everyone. Every resident and visitor should be able to use and enjoy the City's parks, streets, sidewalks, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, public buildings, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other public spaces safely ~~and without unreasonable interference or exposure to unlawful activity and disruptive behavior.~~

B. ~~Compassion without accountability is not compassion.~~ The City Council rejects the notion that public safety requires choosing between compassion and accountability ~~tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion.~~ No individual has the right to engage in unlawful conduct or conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of shared public spaces. Effective public policy requires both meaningful opportunities for prevention, outreach, treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services ~~and while~~ consistent enforcement of criminal laws and municipal ordinances consistently, fairly, and in accordance with due process. Enforcement shall focus on unlawful conduct and actual harm, not on a person's housing status, disability, health condition, or other protected characteristic, that protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. The City shall pursue both ~~objectives~~ compassion and accountability simultaneously to ensure that Burlington's public spaces remain safe, welcoming, and accessible to all.

C. Individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, or behavioral health challenges deserve meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and long-term stability. Burlington shall continue advocating for coordinated regional and statewide responses to homelessness, behavioral health challenges, and substance use disorder, recognizing that these challenges extend beyond Burlington's borders and require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, and other community partners.

D. Decisions affecting public spaces, public health services, municipal resources, and zoning policy shall be guided by objective evidence, public transparency, measurable outcomes, and

accountability to the public. Public accountability requires admitting when systems and policies have fallen short, and when existing ~~social~~ services lack the capacity to deliver the interventions needed for consistent improved outcomes.

ARTICLE II

Protecting Burlington's Public Spaces

Section 2.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to restore and preserve Burlington and its public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places that may be comfortably enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages while respecting the dignity of every person and ensuring that public spaces remain available for their intended public use.

Section 2.02. Public Space Policy.

The City shall prioritize the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces for the benefit of all residents and visitors. Public spaces shall be managed to encourage lawful activity, positive community use, economic vitality, recreation, civic engagement, and public enjoyment.

Public spaces should not merely be accessible; they should be places where residents and visitors choose to gather and should reasonably expect to feel safe doing so.

The City shall make it a top priority to ensure public spaces remain reasonably free from unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of those spaces, and that such spaces are well maintained, clean, and reasonably free of graffiti, litter, unattended personal belongings, and other conditions that detract from their safety, accessibility, and public enjoyment. Implementation shall include reasonable procedures to protect and store unattended personal belongings.

Section 2.03. Activation of Public Spaces.

The City finds that well-programmed, well-maintained, and actively used public spaces are among the most effective long-term strategies for promoting public safety, strengthening community life, and discouraging unlawful and disruptive activity.

The City shall expand the activation of Burlington's public spaces through community programming, arts and cultural events, recreational opportunities, family-oriented activities, and partnerships that increase positive public use of parks, downtown, neighborhood business

districts, and other civic spaces. Consistent with the FY27 budget resolution, the City Council requests that the Administration continue coordinating with the City Council's Parks, Arts & Culture Committee to develop and implement these efforts.

Section 2.04. City Hall Park and Organized Activities.

The City Council reaffirms its prior policies regarding the restoration and stewardship of City Hall Park as outlined in the Council's August 2025 resolution concerning the management, activation, and preservation of the Park. The City Council declares again that City Hall Park shall remain one of Burlington's principal civic gathering spaces—welcoming, accessible, well-maintained, and available for the broad enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the City Attorney's Office prepare and submit to the Council any ordinance amendments necessary to clarify where organized activities may occur within City-owned public spaces, establish when permits are required for such activities, and ensure that such activities do not materially interfere with the intended public use of City Hall Park or other public spaces.

The City Council requests that the Administration renew stalled efforts, in accordance with applicable law and constitutional protections, to assist with navigating how to better coordinate social service activities in City Hall Park with other events, programming, and public uses of the Park. ~~secure any available and necessary permits for, or if permits are unavailable, offer alternative locations to unpermitted social service activities where participants could be better served while preserving the Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space.~~ If necessary to identify alternative locations, the City Council asks that the Administration evaluate appropriate indoor and outdoor municipal facilities, including Contois Auditorium where practicable and consistent with operational needs. Any relocation or alternative site for social service activities shall be developed in consultation with affected service users and providers, and reasonable efforts should be made to offer comparable or improved access, accessibility, safety, and continuity of services.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront issue a request for proposals seeking one or more vendors, nonprofit organizations, or other qualified operators to activate the patio area located in the northeast corner of City Hall Park through food and beverage concessions, retail kiosks, recreational uses, cultural programming, public amenities, or other uses that increase positive public activity and enhance the visitor experience. Any request for proposals shall encourage creative, seasonal, and year-round activation strategies that promote regular public use of the space and are consistent with City Hall Park's role as Burlington's principal civic

gathering space. Alternatively, the Administration may evaluate repurposing the patio area as a centralized operational hub for public safety personnel, in alignment with similar proven strategies like those implemented at the Fletcher Free Library and the intent of the City Council's September 2024 resolution on establishing a downtown public safety hub, to provide a visible, accessible, and continuous public safety presence within City Hall Park alongside connections to community resources and services.

Section 2.05. Expansion of Public Safety Personnel and Public Space Response Capacity.

The City's sworn police officers, Community Service Officers, Urban Park Rangers, and other civilian public safety personnel continue to perform their duties with exceptional dedication and professionalism in protecting and preserving our public spaces. A number of these roles, particularly sworn police officers, unfortunately continue to face significant challenges to staffing, with available police officers consistently remaining at or below current levels since 2023. As the City continues with long-term efforts to rebuild its public safety infrastructure, there is an immediate need to strengthen the City's visible presence within its public spaces. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of the Resolution to present recommendations to the Council on which public safety roles can be most immediately and substantially increased, if even on a temporary basis, to ensure more personnel are assigned to visible public safety and public space response functions. Moreover, the City Council asks that the Chief of Police continue to regularly update the Council's Public Safety Committee on recruitment efforts at the Burlington Police Department.

Immediately following enactment of this Resolution and prior to delivering the above-requested recommendations, the City Council requests that the Mayor take the steps necessary to expand the visible presence of public safety personnel in areas experiencing persistent public safety and public order concerns, which the Mayor's Administration has previously attempted to address through its working group on "hot spots," where ongoing conditions threaten public safety, diminish the public's use and enjoyment of these spaces, and risk undermining the success of generational projects like that at Burlington Square. For this purpose, the Mayor may use, as necessary, the monies allocated by the City Council in the FY27 budget to contract with third-party public safety personnel, including certified police officers. Additionally, to the extent permitted by existing agreements with contracted public safety personnel, such as those currently assigned to patrol municipal garages, the Mayor is authorized to repurpose these personnel to higher priority areas.

Moreover, to the extent practicable and permitted by applicable collective bargaining agreements, the City Council requests that the Administration recruit and organize one or more Public Space Response Teams comprised of City employees and employees of other local organizations committed to the vitality of Burlington who voluntarily elect to participate and successfully complete appropriate training. Public Space Response Teams shall supplement, but not replace, traditional public safety resources by increasing the City's visible presence within public spaces, promoting lawful and welcoming public use, and assisting in the preservation of City property. If the City's unionized staff are interested in this volunteer opportunity, the Council acknowledges the potential need to submit proposals to municipal unions as necessary to accommodate this. While participation would be voluntary rather than mandated, it is the intent of this Resolution that City employees participate on paid time. All public safety personnel and Public Space Response Teams shall receive training in racial equity, implicit bias, de-escalation, disability awareness, trauma-informed practices, cultural responsiveness, and constitutional and civil rights protections.

To the fullest extent permitted by law and consistent with appropriate training and supervision, members of Public Space Response Teams may be authorized to:

- A. Address and intercede conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces, including, but not limited to, the open use of drugs and alcohol, public intoxication, smoking where prohibited, disorderly behavior, and the encumbrance of sidewalks and walking paths;
- B. Issue municipal ordinance citations within the scope of their legal authority;
- C. Issue notices against trespass and take other lawful actions necessary to protect City property and public spaces;
- D. Promote cleanliness and sanitation, identify maintenance concerns, and coordinate the prompt removal of graffiti and other public nuisances; and
- E. Connect individuals experiencing crisis, homelessness, substance use disorder, or other behavioral health needs with appropriate treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services.

The City Attorney and Chief Administrative Officer shall prepare and submit for Council consideration any ordinance amendments, budget proposals, administrative policies, or other measures necessary to implement this Section.

Section 2.06. Public Safety Cameras and Public Notification.

The City Council finds that visible public safety cameras, when lawfully deployed and appropriately identified, deter unlawful conduct, assist in criminal investigations, and promote public confidence in the safety of Burlington's public spaces.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the Chief Information Officer prepare and submit to the Council a report identifying all City-owned or City-operated public safety cameras currently operating within Burlington's downtown and other public spaces. The report shall identify each camera's general location, operational status, and any significant gaps in camera coverage requiring future consideration, provided that nothing in this Section shall require disclosure of information that would compromise public safety or law enforcement operations and the report will be provided confidentially to the extent permitted by Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Moreover, in carrying out this Section and any future expansion of public safety camera systems, the City shall remain mindful of the importance of protecting individual privacy and civil liberties and shall ensure that the deployment, operation, and management of such systems are conducted in accordance with applicable law and appropriate safeguards governing the collection, retention, access to, and use of recorded data, including but not limited to the City's Fair and Impartial Policing Policy.

The City Council requests that the Administration install and maintain clear, visible signage at appropriate locations notifying the public that public safety cameras are in operation. ~~Such signage shall be designed to deter unlawful conduct while promoting public awareness that public spaces are actively monitored for the protection of residents, visitors, businesses, and City property.~~

Section 2.07. Public Space Stewardship and Graffiti Removal.

Recognizing that clean, well-maintained public spaces contribute to public safety, civic pride, and neighborhood vitality, the City Council requests that the Mayor coordinate with the Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee to establish a public space stewardship program to encourage and support volunteer participation in the prompt removal of graffiti from public spaces and other beautification initiatives consistent with the purposes of this Resolution. In establishing this public space stewardship program, the Administration and CDNR Committee may collaborate with organizations and individuals already volunteering to perform the expanded work called for in this Section. The Council also encourages the Administration and CDNR Committee to work in partnership with Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs) and neighborhood residents in deciding beautification priorities, especially communities that have historically been underinvested in.

Any program shall provide participating residents with appropriate training, safety guidance, equipment, supplies, and other resources necessary to assist the City in removing graffiti from publicly owned property in a safe, lawful, and coordinated manner.

The City Council reaffirms that the prompt removal of graffiti from privately owned property remains the primary responsibility of the property owner. Any public space stewardship program should also provide a mechanism through which private property owners may authorize trained City employees or approved volunteers participating in the program to enter their property for the purpose of removing graffiti, subject to such reasonable conditions and limitations as the property owner may establish.

Section 2.08. Expanded Partnerships with Nonprofit Organizations and Private Property Owners.

The City Council recognizes that restoring Burlington's public spaces requires meaningful collaboration with businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and other private property owners whose properties directly influence the experience of surrounding neighborhoods.

Accordingly, the City Council asks the Mayor to develop and make publicly available for private property owners educational materials on:

- A.** Procedures for issuing notices against trespass as authorized by law;
- B.** Crime prevention and environmental design strategies;
- C.** Details on the extent to which private property owners can be held criminally or civilly liable for unlawful or other wrongful conduct permitted to continue on their premises;
- D.** Other available tools to assist property owners in responding to unlawful activity while promoting safe, welcoming, and well-maintained properties.

The City Council further asks the Mayor to engage with nonprofit organizations that provide services to individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, mental health challenges, or other vulnerabilities, and to relay the City's request that such organizations adopt reasonable expectations for respectful and lawful behavior on the organization's property and within adjacent public rights-of-way and public spaces immediately surrounding the organization's facilities, including expectations designed to discourage conduct that creates public safety risks, interferes with the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties and public spaces, or otherwise adversely affects the surrounding community. The City encourages nonprofit organizations to communicate these expectations in a manner that preserves the

dignity of those receiving services while reinforcing shared responsibility for maintaining safe, welcoming, and accessible neighborhoods.

Section 2.09. Public Space Performance Standards.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor collaborate with the City Council's Public Safety and Parks, Arts & Culture Committees to adopt measurable performance standards for evaluating the condition of Burlington's public spaces, which shall be publicly posted on the City's Data Hub.

The standards shall include objective performance measures relating to, as appropriate:

- A.** Public safety conditions, including but not limited to the number of incidents, offenses, and arrests in public spaces. Where possible and legally permissible, performance data should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, disability, gender, housing status, and other relevant demographic factors to identify and address disparate impacts;
- B.** Quality-of-life complaints, including but not limited to SeeClickFix reports on cleanliness and sanitation, and graffiti response;
- C.** Public space activation and programming;
- D.** Visitor and resident use of public spaces; and
- E.** Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines appropriate to enable the City Council and the public to evaluate progress over time.

ARTICLE III

Sustainable Intervention and Regional Responsibility

Section 3.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish a sustainable framework for responding to homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges. The City Council reaffirms Burlington's longstanding commitment to ensuring that individuals experiencing crisis are afforded meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and permanent housing while recognizing that emergency interventions must ultimately lead to greater long-term stability, independence autonomy, and well-being, and improved health outcomes.

The City Council further recognizes that compassion requires meaningful intervention, measurable results, and shared regional responsibility. Emergency measures are intended to stabilize individuals and connect them to long-term solutions and should not become permanent substitutes for housing, treatment, recovery, or personal stability. The Council acknowledges that meaningful long-term strategies require time and resources to be implemented, and that they should be trauma-informed, culturally responsive, accessible to people with disabilities, and implemented consistently and fairly.

Section 3.02. Establishing Service Capacity.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor convene representatives of organizations providing emergency shelter, affordable housing, behavioral health services, substance use treatment, healthcare, emergency response, outreach, and other appropriate public and private partners to evaluate Burlington's sustainable capacity to responsibly provide emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. To the extent the City is already convening a group that includes the above-referenced stakeholders, the Administration may expand the scope of that group's work to include developing the assessment called for in this Section.

The assessment shall evaluate available staffing, financial resources, healthcare capacity, emergency response capability, housing availability, case management, sanitation, public safety impacts, fiscal sustainability, and such other operational considerations as may be appropriate.

Based upon that assessment, the City Council requests that the Mayor recommend the maximum number of individuals that Burlington can sustainably and humanely serve at any given time through the coordinated provision of emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. The term "humanely," for the purposes of this Section, shall include but not be limited to consideration of the lived experiences of people accessing services and whether services are accessible, culturally responsive, disability-inclusive, trauma-informed, and effective. The recommendation shall identify the methodology and assumptions used to establish that number and shall include objective indicators by which the City may determine when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity.

The Mayor may periodically review the recommended sustainable service capacity and recommend revisions to the City Council as conditions, available resources, or regional participation materially change.

Section 3.03. Regional Responsibility.

The City Council affirms that homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges are regional and statewide challenges requiring regional and statewide solutions.

The City Council further finds that current conditions strongly indicate that Burlington is providing services beyond what can be sustainably supported by its existing housing, shelter, behavioral health, public safety, and municipal resources. While the assessment required by Section 3.02 will establish a recommended sustainable service capacity, the City Council finds that immediate action to promote greater regional responsibility should not await completion of that assessment.

Burlington will continue to lead with compassion. Leadership, however, does not require Burlington to serve as the exclusive or primary provider of services for individuals from throughout Vermont.

The City Council requests that the Administration implement equitable policies and procedures to ensure that, when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity, individuals seeking services are connected with available housing, shelter, treatment, recovery, behavioral health, and other supportive services in other communities, including through transportation assistance where appropriate. The City shall actively work with the State of Vermont, neighboring municipalities, healthcare providers, housing organizations, and regional service providers to expand service capacity throughout the region so that responsibility for serving vulnerable individuals is shared more equitably. Regional responsibility shall be pursued through shared investment and expanded service capacity across municipalities, rather than through exclusion or displacement of individuals based on their place of origin or current residence.

Section 3.04. Expanded Temporary Emergency Shelter Space and Sanctioned Camping.

Within ninety (90) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Administration designate one or more locations for expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping to be utilized only when necessary to supplement available capacity at established emergency shelters.

Any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping location shall be subject to approval by the City Council ~~and generally situated outside Burlington's downtown core, waterfront, shared use path network, and heavily utilized public parks~~ and shall be selected with due consideration for surrounding neighborhoods, public infrastructure, environmental impacts, and the availability of supportive services. To best serve individuals able to utilize this location or locations, efforts will be made to designate locations with access to drinking water, toilets, shower facilities and handwashing stations, laundry, electricity, and

dumpsters. To that end, the City Council acknowledges that while temporary emergency shelter space is preferable to sanctioned camping, neither should be considered a permanent housing solution and should be utilized only for the duration necessary to transition individuals to more appropriate ~~placements~~housing options.

Prior to approving any designated locations under this Section, the City Council will expect that the location will adopt and enforce operational standards governing admission, sanitation, security, storage of belongings, code of conduct, outreach, behavioral health services, treatment referrals, housing navigation, transportation, case management, and ongoing program evaluation.

The City Council asks that the Administration establish measurable performance standards for any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping and shall publish the resulting performance data in an anonymized, publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of individuals served during the reporting period and cumulatively;
- B. The average daily occupancy and utilization rate;
- C. The number and percentage of participants successfully transitioned to emergency shelter, treatment, recovery programs, permanent supportive housing, permanent housing, or other stable housing placements;
- D. The average length of stay for participants;
- E. The number of emergency service responses to a location; and
- F. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate whether a location is functioning as a temporary intervention that promotes health, safety, and successful transitions to more appropriate placements.

Section 3.05. Unauthorized Encampments.

The City Council finds that unauthorized encampments located in areas where camping is specifically prohibited are inconsistent with the policies established by this Resolution.

Consistent with applicable legal requirements and in accordance with the City's Sheltering on Public Lands Policy, the City Council requests that the Administration act more promptly upon discovery of a prohibited encampment, generally within twenty-four (24) hours, to provide notice of a specified date on which the encampment will face ticketing, no trespass orders,

~~other legal action,~~ and removal of any remaining items. This date should be as soon as reasonably practicable following the provision of notice, allowing sufficient time for affected individuals to make alternative arrangements while protecting public health, public safety, environmental resources, and the public's continued use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces.

Prior to removal, the City shall make reasonable efforts to identify and offer accessible alternatives, provide adequate notice consistent with applicable law, protect and store personal property, and connect individuals with housing and services. In accordance with the City's policy regarding Ssheltering on Ppublic Llands Policy, encampments noticed for removal will be provided contact information from local social service organizations serving unsheltered residents, the State of Vermont's Coordinated Entry Screening Form with instructions, information on other available community resources, information on the officials responsible for an encampment that is not removed, and details on where any collected personal property will be stored.

For the purposes of this Article, the City Council notes that Section 22-7 of the Burlington Code of Ordinances provides that "[i]t shall be unlawful for any person to camp in any public park in the city." Section 22-1 enumerates the City's parks and Section 22-23 further provides that "the land known as Urban Reserve ... shall be considered a city park subject to this chapter."

To the extent the City does not have sufficient staffing capacity to comply with this Section, the City Council asks that the Mayor's Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution to present recommendations to the Council detailing how it will promptly increase the number of personnel authorized and trained to provide notices of removal and conduct associated outreach. The recommendations shall identify the staffing, organizational changes, funding, and implementation timeline necessary to ensure that notices of removal are issued consistently throughout the City.

~~The City Council requests that the Administration establish measurable performance standards governing the City's response to prohibited encampments and shall publish the resulting performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:~~

~~A. The number of prohibited encampments identified during the reporting period;~~

~~B. The average time between identification of a prohibited encampment and issuance of a notice of removal;~~

~~C. The average time between issuance of notice and removal of the encampment;~~

~~D. The number and percentage of individuals contacted who accepted referrals or were successfully connected to shelter, a sanctioned camping location, coordinated entry, behavioral health services, treatment, recovery services, or other supportive services prior to or following removal of the encampment; and~~

~~E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the City's outreach and enforcement efforts.~~

Section 3.06. Accountability and Enforcement.

The City Council reaffirms that every individual is entitled to dignity, due process, and meaningful opportunities to obtain treatment, recovery services, shelter, and supportive services. The City further reaffirms its commitment to prevention, treatment, recovery, and other evidence-based public health interventions.

The City Council rejects the notion that enforcing our laws and ordinances in response to unlawful conduct is an uncaring or unempathetic act, or that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. Effective public policy requires meaningful opportunities for treatment and recovery together with consistent enforcement of criminal laws that protect the public and preserve Burlington's shared public spaces.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that Burlington will not tolerate drug trafficking, violent crime, or illegal activity that impacts ~~the unlawful open use of controlled substances, retail theft and other property crimes that frequently support substance use disorder, or other criminal conduct that threatens~~ public safety or ~~unreasonably interferes with~~ the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces.

The City Council further declares that enforcement of local and state~~these~~ laws shall remain a priority of the City. The Council supports proactive investigation, lawful detention where appropriate, arrest when supported by the facts and authorized by law, and referral for prosecution of individuals engaged in such criminal activity. Nothing in this Resolution shall be construed to discourage law enforcement officers from taking appropriate enforcement action authorized by law in response to these offenses.

The City shall continue pursuing treatment and recovery for those willing to accept assistance while supporting the investigation, arrest where authorized by law, prosecution, and appropriate proportionate and lawful consequences~~punishment for~~ individuals whose criminal conduct perpetuates addiction, victimizes residents and businesses, or undermines the safety and vitality of Burlington's public spaces, including treatment, diversion, restorative

justice, or other alternatives where appropriate. Refusal or failure to participate in options offered shall not result in the City ceasing efforts to address criminal conduct.

Furthermore, the City Council notes that both the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives were implemented to improve outcomes for individuals at elevated risk of involvement with the criminal justice system, behavioral health crises, substance use, and homelessness, including by reducing emergency department utilization, overdoses, and other preventable harms, while also providing a more immediate and consistent system of accountability for individuals who repeatedly violate municipal ordinances.

The City Council is particularly concerned that the City Circle initiative, which was previously identified by the Mayor's Administration as a key component of Burlington's strategy to improve public safety and accountability, appears to have been substantially curtailed or discontinued. The Council further understands that this change may have been attributable, in whole or in part, to reductions in available funding, and seeks clarification regarding the status of the initiative, the reasons for any changes in its implementation, and whether alternative funding sources or program models have been considered. The Council is also concerned that, to its knowledge, the accountability mechanisms contemplated by the City Circle model, including prosecution or other consequences for participants who failed to comply with restorative justice requirements, have not been meaningfully utilized, and requests information sufficient to evaluate whether the program has operated as originally intended.

Within thirty (30) days of the adoption of this Resolution, the City Council's Public Safety Committee shall prepare and deliver a list of questions to the Mayor's Administration, the City Attorney's Office, and the Community Justice Center, the responses to which shall provide the Council with a comprehensive update regarding the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives, including, at a minimum: (i) the current operational status of each initiative; (ii) participation levels and measurable outcomes for individuals served; (iii) data concerning compliance with restorative justice requirements and any enforcement or prosecutorial actions taken in response to noncompliance, to the extent permitted by law; (iv) the funding sources supporting each initiative, including any reductions or anticipated funding gaps; and (v) recommendations for the continuation, modification, expansion, or replacement of these initiatives based on their first year of implementation.

Section 3.07. Request for Ongoing Assistance From State Public Safety Personnel

Recognizing Burlington's ongoing public safety resource challenges, the City Council calls upon the Vermont State Police to continue partnering with the Burlington Police Department by providing supplemental law enforcement resources in and around the City's downtown and

other locations where additional law enforcement presence is necessary to protect public safety, address criminal activity, and restore public confidence in Burlington's public spaces.

Separately, the City Council calls upon the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles Enforcement Division to expand traffic enforcement efforts within the City of Burlington's principal transportation corridors, including the new Champlain Parkway, where speeding, reckless driving, excessive engine noise, and other traffic violations have become persistent public safety and quality-of-life concerns.

The City Council affirms that, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, it welcomes and consents to the enforcement of both the laws of the State of Vermont and the ordinances of the City of Burlington by duly authorized State law enforcement officers operating within the City, consistent with their statutory authority and any applicable intergovernmental agreements governing such enforcement. In addition, state and local law enforcement agencies should coordinate to ensure consistent standards, accountability, community engagement, and compliance with racial equity and civil rights protections.

ARTICLE IV

Public Health Policy and Permitted Uses

Section 4.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish the City's policy regarding the implementation of significant public health initiatives, to reaffirm the City Council's legislative role in establishing zoning policy, and to strengthen collaboration between the City of Burlington and the State of Vermont in addressing public safety, behavioral health, and substance use challenges.

Section 4.02. Public Health Policy and Zoning.

The City Council continues to support accessible, evidence-based public health initiatives that improve individual and community health while recognizing that the location, operation, and long-term impacts of significant public health services should be considered through transparent public processes consistent with the City's Comprehensive Development Ordinance and adopted zoning policy. Zoning decisions shall also consider potential disparate impacts on historically marginalized communities.

The City Council finds that significant public health services ~~with~~ that may have substantial neighborhood impacts should not be established through administrative interpretation where

doing so effectively creates a new principal use not expressly identified within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Section 4.03. Overdose Prevention Centers.

The City Council finds that overdose prevention centers are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize overdose prevention centers within the City of Burlington should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance following public notice, public hearing, and legislative action by the City Council.

The City Council further declares that, should such an amendment be proposed, overdose prevention centers should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District, as defined by the City's Charter.

The Council stands by its previous acknowledgments that overdose prevention centers may serve populations experiencing significant health disparities. They may also help reduce the amount of public drug use occurring in our shared public spaces. Any consideration of a potential overdose prevention center location shall include an evidence-based assessment of public health outcomes, anticipated community impacts, equity, accessibility, and the potential benefits and risks to people who use drugs and the broader community.

Section 4.04. Syringe Service Programs.

The City Council finds that syringe service programs are a valuable public health strategy but are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance and should not be deemed to constitute any currently permitted principal use absent express legislative authorization.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize syringe service programs as a principal use should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance through the City's legislative zoning amendment process.

The City Council further declares that while syringe service programs should continue to be supported in Burlington, they should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District. The City Council ~~opposes the continued operation or establishment of syringe service programs within Burlington's downtown core and~~ calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to work collaboratively with the City and local operating partners to

identify an accessible alternative location that better advances public health objectives while supporting the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces.

The City Council further calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to consult and collaborate with the City before establishing, relocating, or materially expanding significant public health services within Burlington so that public health objectives, zoning policy, neighborhood compatibility, and impacts upon public spaces may all be appropriately considered. The Mayor's Administration shall promptly notify the City Council upon learning of State-sanctioned efforts to expand public health services within Burlington.

Additionally, within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution, the City Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee shall begin meeting to develop a resolution that reaffirms, revises, or develops new recommendations from its previously developed report on syringe litter that will further the goals of this Section.

The City Council affirms that the positions taken in this Article regarding an Overdose Prevention Center or Syringe Service Programs are in alignment with Burlington's current comprehensive municipal plan, which acknowledges the difficulties associated with the proximity of drug trafficking and use to those in recovery, and provides in pertinent part that:

[H]igh concentration of social service providers can become easily unmanageable if all stakeholders are not working together, keeping an eye on some of the larger interactions and their implications. For example, the downtown is arguably not the best environment for people recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. The presence of active drug dealing and the highest concentration of drinking establishments in the state create serious challenges for those in recovery.

ARTICLE V

Implementation, Accountability, State Partnership, and Continuing Oversight

Section 5.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that the policies established by this Resolution are translated into coordinated action through measurable implementation, public accountability, regular reporting, and continuing oversight by the City Council.

Section 5.02. Partnership with the State of Vermont.

The City Council appreciates the Governor's most recent efforts to support Burlington with additional public safety resources and calls upon the Governor to establish a sustained partnership with the City of Burlington to continue addressing the unique public safety, behavioral health, homelessness, and substance use challenges confronting Vermont's largest municipality.

The City Council requests that the Mayor invite representatives of the Governor's Office and appropriate State agencies to meet annually with the Administration, City Council, State legislators, and other regional leaders to evaluate regional progress, identify barriers to collaboration, and recommend additional actions to strengthen the partnership between the City of Burlington, surrounding communities, and the State of Vermont.

The City Council specifically refers back to the requests included in its August 2025 resolution on City Hall Park and its asks for the following specific actions by the State of Vermont and Governor to support Burlington in addressing chronic safety and health challenges: (1) Convene a county-wide committee of local, county and state law enforcement agencies to develop a coordinated response to drug trafficking and related crimes; (2) Convene youth service providers, schools, and staff from the Agency of Human Services to specifically examine trends among juveniles engaged in violence, drugs, and gun possession to identify strategies to interrupt these trends for at-risk juveniles; and (3) Convene a public health strategy discussion between members of the Department of Health and Department of Mental Health to examine how to remove barriers to treatment and address limited capacity to existing drug treatment centers to support people living with substance use disorder finding easier pathways to treatment and recovery.

The City Council further recognizes the substantial progress achieved through the Chittenden County Accountability Docket, which demonstrated that dedicated judicial resources could promote more timely case resolution, meaningful accountability, improved access to treatment and services, and greater confidence in the administration of justice for harm done to our communities. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Governor, in coordination with the Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court and other appropriate State officials, continue and, as appropriate, institutionalize this model in Chittenden County by supporting the continued assignment of a dedicated judge, prosecutor, public defender, and necessary court personnel and resources to ensure the prompt adjudication of cases involving repeat offenders and individuals with multiple pending criminal matters.

Section 5.03. Legislative Partnership with the Vermont General Assembly.

The City Council calls upon the members of the Chittenden County Senate and House delegations, together with members of the Vermont General Assembly representing communities throughout the State, to support the enactment and strengthening of laws that advance the purposes of this Resolution.

The City Council further calls upon the General Assembly to work collaboratively with municipalities, public safety agencies, healthcare providers, service organizations, and other stakeholders to enact legislation that:

- A. Strengthens public safety while protecting ~~individual civil~~ rights, advancing equity, and ensuring due process and equal protection under the law;
- B. Expands access to and investment in behavioral health, substance use treatment, recovery services, and permanent supportive housing throughout Vermont;
- C. Promotes equitable regional responsibility for addressing homelessness and behavioral health challenges while ensuring that individuals are not denied access to essential services based on race, ethnicity, disability, income, housing status, or place of origin;
- D. Provides municipalities with appropriate ~~legal authority and~~ resources to restore and preserve public spaces;
- E. ~~Encourages~~Supports timely access to appropriate support intervention for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises or substance use disorder;
- F. Improves coordination among State agencies and municipalities; and
- G. Otherwise advances the purposes of this Resolution.

The City Council further directs the Mayor and the City's legislative representatives to advocate for legislation consistent with these principles and to report to the City Council regarding significant legislative developments affecting implementation of this Resolution.

Section 5.04. Continuing Commitment.

The City Council adopts this Resolution not merely as a response to current conditions, but as a continuing statement of municipal policy intended to guide future legislative decisions, strengthen public confidence in local government, and ~~restore and~~ preserve Burlington's public spaces for future generations.

The City Council believes that the strength of a community is measured not only by how it responds to those in crisis, but also by how faithfully it preserves the public spaces that belong

to everyone. Through this Resolution, Burlington recommits itself to both responsibilities and affirms that they are inseparable from one another. A community is strongest when every person can participate in public life with dignity, safety, and a meaningful sense of belonging.

Resolution Related to

BURLINGTON FORWARD: A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR SAFE PUBLIC SPACES AND A STRONGER COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Burlington's downtown, parks, sidewalks, streets, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, and other public spaces are among the City's greatest civic assets. They are the places where neighbors gather, children play, businesses and tourism thrives, visitors form lasting impressions, and community life unfolds every day. Preserving these shared public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained for everyone is among the City's most fundamental responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, over the past several years, the Burlington City Council has adopted multiple resolutions and initiatives intended to strengthen public safety, improve community well-being, expand access to housing and behavioral health services, and respond compassionately to the challenges of homelessness, substance use, and mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burlington, together with healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, faith communities, neighborhood organizations, educational institutions, and countless volunteers, has committed substantial public and private resources toward emergency shelter, affordable housing, outreach, behavioral health services, recovery programs, harm reduction initiatives, and other efforts intended to assist vulnerable members of our community; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding these efforts and the extraordinary commitment of those serving our community, many individuals, including those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental illness, continue to be negatively affected by persistent public disorder, criminal activity, violence, repeated overdoses, open drug dealing and use, prohibited camping, vandalism, aggressive or threatening behavior, and other conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of Burlington's shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, these conditions have diminished public confidence, strained municipal resources, adversely affected neighborhoods and businesses, discouraged investment and tourism, harmed morale and recruitment of police and other city staff, and undermined Burlington's reputation while also failing many individuals who continue to experience homelessness, addiction, or untreated mental illness without achieving lasting stability, recovery, or improved health outcomes; and

Commented [KP1]: Christian's feedback: Highest-Priority Changes

If the goal is to make the resolution substantially stronger through a **racial equity, inclusion, belonging, and social responsibility lens**, I would prioritize these **10 changes**:

Commented [KP2]: Christian's feedback: I recommend adding a **overarching equity statement** near the beginning of the resolution, perhaps after the "NOW, THEREFORE" clause: **Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and**

Commented [KP3]: Add a WHEREAS statement that speaks to and sets an equity framework for the resolution, so that it is clear that producing equitable outcomes is not an afterthought. Suggested language: **WHEREAS, the City recognizes that systemic inequities—**

Commented [KP4]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The language establishes that public spaces belong to everyone, which is an important equity principle. However, it does not acknowledge that different communities may

Commented [KP5]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The resolution recognizes significant investments but does not ask whether resources have been equitably distributed or whether they reach communities with the

Commented [KP6]: Consider revising this so that homelessness is not repeatedly framed alongside criminal activity. The resolution should distinguish housing status from unlawful conduct. Separate the reference to people experiencing homelessness from the subsequent list of

Commented [KP7]: Christian's feedback: This is one of the most important areas for revision.

Equity:

The clause combines homelessness, addiction, mental illness, criminal activity,

Commented [KP8]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The clause should recognize that public disorder and enforcement policies can also have unequal impacts on marginalized communities.

WHEREAS, Burlington is and will remain a compassionate community where residents consistently demonstrate kindness and generosity toward neighbors experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and other crises. This resolution builds upon those values; and

WHEREAS, the City Council also finds that allowing individuals to remain in circumstances that jeopardize their health, safety, or dignity without meaningful intervention is neither compassionate nor humane. Lasting compassion requires connecting people to treatment, recovery, housing, supportive services, and, where appropriate, enforcement and accountability for unlawful conduct that harms others or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces; and

WHEREAS, the City Council rejects the false choice between compassion and public safety and affirms that accountability, treatment, housing, recovery, public safety, and public order are complementary, interdependent responsibilities that must be pursued together to advance the public interest and the dignity of every person; and

WHEREAS, the City further recognizes that Burlington cannot reasonably or sustainably serve as the exclusive or primary provider of shelter, behavioral health services, and substance use treatment for individuals from throughout Vermont and outside our state, and that these challenges require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare institutions, nonprofit organizations, and regional service providers to ensure that responsibility is shared equitably throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces requires clearly articulated values, public policy, measurable implementation, meaningful accountability, prioritized enforcement of our existing laws and ordinances, sustained regional partnership, and a continuing commitment by every level of government and every community partner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Burlington City Council hereby adopts the following policy framework to restore and preserve safe, welcoming, orderly, and accessible public spaces; expand meaningful pathways to housing, treatment, and recovery; strengthen accountability for unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of our shared public spaces; and promote shared regional responsibility for addressing the complex challenges of homelessness, substance use, and behavioral health.

ARTICLE I

General Policy

Commented [KP9]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong values statement, but could be more explicit about dignity and equity.

Inclusion/Belonging:

Strong foundation.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested improvement: Define "compassion" as both individual and

Commented [KP10]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

The phrase "meaningful intervention" is positive, but "where appropriate, enforcement" should include safeguards against disproportionate enforcement.

Inclusion:

Consider voluntary, accessible, culturally responsive services.

Belonging:

Commented [KP11]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

The false-choice framing is useful, but the resolution should also reject a false choice between **public safety and social justice/equity**.

Suggested improvement:

"The City rejects the false choice between compassion, public safety, and equity and affirms that effective public safety must

Commented [KP12]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong opportunity to discuss regional inequities in service availability.

Inclusion:

Could include affected communities in regional planning.

Belonging:

Avoid language suggesting that vulnerable people are "from outside" and therefore less

Commented [KP13]: I would add another whereas clause here to drill down on the need for the contents of this resolution to be executed with equity at the center. Suggested language:

WHEREAS, The City recognizes that public trust requires fair, impartial, and equitable treatment across all communities and commits to implementing this Resolution in ways that strengthen trust among populations historically experiencing disparate treatment

Section 1.01. Purpose.

The purpose of this Resolution is to establish a comprehensive policy framework for restoring and preserving Burlington's public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places for all residents and visitors, while continuing Burlington's longstanding commitment to compassion, dignity, and meaningful support for individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, behavioral health challenges, and other circumstances requiring public assistance. To achieve these objectives, Burlington must realign its values and related efforts. An honest assessment indicates that neither the current nor previous policy frameworks have achieved their intended results, making a revised strategy necessary moving forward.

Section 1.02. General Policy.

It shall be the policy of the City Council that:

A. Burlington's public spaces belong to everyone. Every resident and visitor should be able to use and enjoy the City's parks, streets, sidewalks, libraries, waterfront, bike paths, public buildings, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other public spaces safely and without unreasonable interference or exposure to unlawful activity and disruptive behavior.

B. Compassion without accountability is not compassion. The City Council rejects the notion that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. No individual has the right to engage in unlawful conduct or conduct that unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of shared public spaces. Effective public policy requires both meaningful opportunities for prevention, outreach, treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services and consistent enforcement of criminal laws and municipal ordinances that protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. The City shall pursue both objectives simultaneously to ensure that Burlington's public spaces remain safe, welcoming, and accessible to all.

C. Individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, or behavioral health challenges deserve meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and long-term stability. Burlington shall continue advocating for coordinated regional and statewide responses to homelessness, behavioral health challenges, and substance use disorder, recognizing that these challenges extend beyond Burlington's borders and require sustained partnership among municipalities, the State of Vermont, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, and other community partners.

D. Decisions affecting public spaces, public health services, municipal resources, and zoning policy shall be guided by objective evidence, public transparency, measurable outcomes, and

Commented [KP14]: Add equity as an explicit purpose of the resolution. Suggested language: *'...while continuing Burlington's longstanding commitment to advancing racial equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, compassion, dignity, and meaningful support...'* Also acknowledge that structural

Commented [KP15]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
The phrase "realign our values" is vague and may suggest a shift away from compassion without defining what equity principles will guide the new strategy.

Commented [KP16]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
Strong foundational language. Add explicit recognition of equitable access.
Inclusion:
Consider accessibility for people with

Commented [KP17]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
This is one of the most consequential sections. The statement "Compassion without accountability is not compassion" creates a strong rhetorical frame but may

Commented [KP18]: The repeated framing of compassion primarily as enforcement/accountability risks creates a false equivalence between homelessness, substance use, and unlawful conduct. The opening sentence should be replaced with

Commented [KP19]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
Strong but should include culturally responsive services and equitable access.
Inclusion:
Add language access and disability access.

Commented [KP20]: Add an explicit racial equity impact requirement. Suggested language: ***Decisions shall be guided by objective evidence, public transparency, measurable outcomes, equity impact analysis, and accountability to the public.***

Commented [KP21]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
This is a strong foundation. Add disaggregated data.
Inclusion:
Public transparency should include accessible

accountability to the public. Public accountability requires admitting when systems and policies have fallen short, and when existing social services lack the capacity to deliver the interventions needed for consistent improved outcomes.

ARTICLE II

Protecting Burlington's Public Spaces

Section 2.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to restore and preserve Burlington and its public spaces as safe, welcoming, orderly, accessible, and well-maintained places that may be comfortably enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages while respecting the dignity of every person and ensuring that public spaces remain available for their intended public use.

Section 2.02. Public Space Policy.

The City shall prioritize the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces for the benefit of all residents and visitors. Public spaces shall be managed to encourage lawful activity, positive community use, economic vitality, recreation, civic engagement, and public enjoyment.

Public spaces should not merely be accessible; they should be places where residents and visitors choose to gather and should reasonably expect to feel safe doing so.

The City shall make it a top priority to ensure public spaces remain reasonably free from unlawful conduct and conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of those spaces, and that such spaces are well maintained, clean, and reasonably free of graffiti, litter, unattended personal belongings, and other conditions that detract from their safety, accessibility, and public enjoyment.

Section 2.03. Activation of Public Spaces.

The City finds that well-programmed, well-maintained, and actively used public spaces are among the most effective long-term strategies for promoting public safety, strengthening community life, and discouraging unlawful and disruptive activity.

The City shall expand the activation of Burlington's public spaces through community programming, arts and cultural events, recreational opportunities, family-oriented activities, and partnerships that increase positive public use of parks, downtown, neighborhood business districts, and other civic spaces. Consistent with the FY27 budget resolution, the City Council

Commented [KP22]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Good emphasis on dignity, but "comfortable enjoyment" should be balanced with equitable access.

Inclusion:

Add accessibility and reasonable accommodation.

Belonging:

Strong potential.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition:

"...while respecting the dignity, civil rights, accessibility needs, and diverse experiences of every person."

Commented [KP23]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The focus on cleanliness and "unattended personal belongings" could disproportionately affect people experiencing homelessness.

Inclusion:

The policy should distinguish abandoned property from personal belongings and establish procedures to protect property rights.

Belonging:

People experiencing homelessness should not be implicitly excluded from "public enjoyment."

Social Responsibility:

Add a responsibility to avoid displacement

Commented [KP24]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Strong, but programming should be accessible and representative of diverse communities.

Inclusion:

Add free/low-cost programming and accessibility.

Belonging:

Strong opportunity to build belonging.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition:

"Programming should reflect the diversity of Burlington's communities and be designed with input from residents who have

requests that the Administration continue coordinating with the City Council's Parks, Arts & Culture Committee to develop and implement these efforts.

Section 2.04. City Hall Park and Organized Activities.

The City Council reaffirms its prior policies regarding the restoration and stewardship of City Hall Park as outlined in the Council's August 2025 resolution concerning the management, activation, and preservation of the Park. The City Council declares again that City Hall Park shall remain one of Burlington's principal civic gathering spaces—welcoming, accessible, well-maintained, and available for the broad enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the City Attorney's Office prepare and submit to the Council any ordinance amendments necessary to clarify where organized activities may occur within City-owned public spaces, establish when permits are required for such activities, and ensure that such activities do not materially interfere with the intended public use of City Hall Park or other public spaces.

The City Council requests that the Administration renew stalled efforts to assist with navigating how to secure any available and necessary permits for, or if permits are unavailable, offer alternative locations to unpermitted social service activities where participants could be better served while preserving the Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space. If necessary to identify alternative locations, the City Council asks that the Administration evaluate appropriate indoor and outdoor municipal facilities, including Contois Auditorium where practicable and consistent with operational needs.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront issue a request for proposals seeking one or more vendors, nonprofit organizations, or other qualified operators to activate the patio area located in the northeast corner of City Hall Park through food and beverage concessions, retail kiosks, recreational uses, cultural programming, public amenities, or other uses that increase positive public activity and enhance the visitor experience. Any request for proposals shall encourage creative, seasonal, and year-round activation strategies that promote regular public use of the space and are consistent with City Hall Park's role as Burlington's principal civic gathering space. Alternatively, the Administration may evaluate repurposing the patio area as a centralized operational hub for public safety personnel, in alignment with the intent of the City Council's September 2024 resolution on establishing a downtown public safety hub, to provide a visible, accessible, and continuous public safety presence within City Hall Park.

Commented [KP25]: Christian's feedback: **Equity:**

The relocation of social services raises significant equity concerns. Moving services away from downtown may create transportation and access barriers.

Inclusion:

Alternative locations must be evaluated with service users, not solely by government officials.

Belonging:

A public space should be welcoming to all, including people who use social services.

Social Responsibility:

The City should not simply relocate vulnerable populations without ensuring continuity of care.

Suggested improvement:

"Any relocation or alternative site for social service activities shall be developed in consultation with affected service users and providers and shall ensure comparable or improved access, transportation, accessibility, safety, and continuity of services."

The "public safety hub" alternative should also undergo an equity and community impact assessment.

Section 2.05. Expansion of Public Safety Personnel and Public Space Response Capacity.

The City's sworn police officers, Community Service Officers, Urban Park Rangers, and other civilian public safety personnel continue to perform their duties with exceptional dedication and professionalism in protecting and preserving our public spaces. A number of these roles, particularly sworn police officers, unfortunately continue to face significant challenges to staffing, with available police officers consistently remaining at or below current levels since 2023. As the City continues with long-term efforts to rebuild its public safety infrastructure, there is an immediate need to strengthen the City's visible presence within its public spaces. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of the Resolution to present recommendations to the Council on which public safety roles can be most immediately and substantially increased, if even on a temporary basis, to ensure more personnel are assigned to visible public safety and public space response functions. Moreover, the City Council asks that the Chief of Police continue to regularly update the Council's Public Safety Committee on recruitment efforts at the Burlington Police Department.

Immediately following enactment of this Resolution and prior to delivering the above-requested recommendations, the City Council requests that the Mayor take the steps necessary to expand the visible presence of public safety personnel in areas experiencing persistent public safety and public order concerns, which the Mayor's Administration has previously attempted to address through its working group on "hot spots," where ongoing conditions threaten public safety, diminish the public's use and enjoyment of these spaces, and risk undermining the success of generational projects like that at Burlington Square. For this purpose, the Mayor may use, as necessary, the monies allocated by the City Council in the FY27 budget to contract with third-party public safety personnel, including certified police officers. Additionally, to the extent permitted by existing agreements with contracted public safety personnel, such as those currently assigned to patrol municipal garages, the Mayor is authorized to repurpose these personnel to higher priority areas.

Moreover, to the extent practicable, the City Council requests that the Administration recruit and organize one or more Public Space Response Teams comprised of City employees and employees of other local organizations committed to the vitality of Burlington who voluntarily elect to participate and successfully complete appropriate training. Public Space Response Teams shall supplement, but not replace, traditional public safety resources by increasing the City's visible presence within public spaces, promoting lawful and welcoming public use, and assisting in the preservation of City property. If the City's unionized staff are interested in this

Commented [KP26]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

This section needs a clear racial equity analysis. Expanding enforcement personnel can disproportionately affect BIPOC residents, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness.

Inclusion:

Public Space Response Teams should include community representatives and people with lived experience.

Belonging:

A highly enforcement-centered presence may increase feelings of surveillance among some communities.

Social Responsibility:

Strong need for training, oversight, and accountability.

Recommended addition:

"All public safety personnel and Public Space Response Teams shall receive training in racial equity, implicit bias, de-escalation, disability awareness, trauma-informed practices, cultural responsiveness, and constitutional and civil rights protections."

Strong recommendation:

Add requirements for:

- complaint mechanisms;
- data collection;
- demographic analysis of citations, trespass orders, and other enforcement;
- regular public reporting;
- independent review of disparate impacts.

The powers in subsection A–C should also be carefully limited to prevent inconsistent or discretionary enforcement.

Commented [KP27]: City employees as volunteers in this venture will exacerbate the burnout currently running rampant among the City government staff. I wonder if this is an opportunity to activate our NPAs, especially because we know there are varying levels of engagement depending on the ward—this could be a way to more actively involve residents as solving the issues in the City will take all of us.

volunteer opportunity, the Council acknowledges the potential need to submit proposals to municipal unions as necessary to accommodate this.

To the fullest extent permitted by law and consistent with appropriate training and supervision, members of **Public Space Response Teams** may be authorized to:

A. Address and intercede conduct that unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces, including, but not limited to, the open use of drugs and alcohol, public intoxication, smoking where prohibited, disorderly behavior, and the encumbrance of sidewalks and walking paths;

B. Issue municipal ordinance citations within the scope of their legal authority;

C. Issue notices against trespass and take other lawful actions necessary to protect City property and public spaces;

D. Promote cleanliness and sanitation, identify maintenance concerns, and coordinate the prompt removal of graffiti and other public nuisances; and

E. Connect individuals experiencing crisis, homelessness, substance use disorder, or other behavioral health needs with appropriate treatment, recovery, housing, and supportive services.

The City Attorney and Chief Administrative Officer shall prepare and submit for Council consideration any ordinance amendments, budget proposals, administrative policies, or other measures necessary to implement this Section.

Section 2.06. Public Safety Cameras and Public Notification.

The City Council finds that visible public safety cameras, when lawfully deployed and appropriately identified, deter unlawful conduct, assist in criminal investigations, and promote public confidence in the safety of Burlington's public spaces.

Within thirty (30) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council asks that the Chief Information Officer prepare and submit to the Council a report identifying all City-owned or City-operated public safety cameras currently operating within Burlington's downtown and other public spaces. The report shall identify each camera's general location, operational status, and any significant gaps in camera coverage requiring future consideration, provided that nothing in this Section shall require disclosure of information that would compromise public safety or law enforcement operations and the report will be provided confidentially to the extent permitted by Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Moreover, in carrying out this Section and

Commented [KP28]: Because these teams may intervene, issue citations, and issue trespass notices, require mandatory training in racial equity, implicit bias, de-escalation, trauma-informed practice, disability awareness, cultural responsiveness, and constitutional/legal protections. Also require demographic monitoring of contacts and enforcement actions to identify disparate impacts. The CJC and REIB should be involved in this this training effort.

Commented [KP29]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:

Surveillance technologies can have disparate impacts and should be evaluated for racial and civil liberties implications.

Inclusion:

Public notification is good, but community participation in camera expansion should be required.

Belonging:

Over-surveillance can undermine trust.

Social Responsibility:

Strong privacy language, but stronger accountability is needed.

Suggested addition:

"Prior to significant expansion of public safety camera systems, the City shall conduct and publicly report a privacy, civil liberties, and racial equity impact assessment."

Commented [KP30]: Strengthen the civil-rights safeguards. In addition to privacy and data-management requirements, consider explicit limits on facial recognition or other biometric uses, retention periods, access controls, periodic equity/bias audits, and public reporting on camera use and outcomes.

any future expansion of public safety camera systems, the City shall remain mindful of the importance of protecting individual privacy and civil liberties and shall ensure that the deployment, operation, and management of such systems are conducted in accordance with applicable law and appropriate safeguards governing the collection, retention, access to, and use of recorded data, including but not limited to the City's Fair and Impartial Policing Policy.

The City Council requests that the Administration install and maintain clear, visible signage at appropriate locations notifying the public that public safety cameras are in operation. Such signage shall be designed to deter unlawful conduct while promoting public awareness that public spaces are actively monitored for the protection of residents, visitors, businesses, and City property.

Section 2.07. Public Space Stewardship and Graffiti Removal.

Recognizing that clean, well-maintained public spaces contribute to public safety, civic pride, and neighborhood vitality, the City Council requests that the Mayor coordinate with the Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee to establish a public space stewardship program to encourage and support volunteer participation in the prompt removal of graffiti from public spaces and other beautification initiatives consistent with the purposes of this Resolution. In establishing this public space stewardship program, the Administration and CDNR Committee may collaborate with organizations and individuals already volunteering to perform the expanded work called for in this Section.

Any program shall provide participating residents with appropriate training, safety guidance, equipment, supplies, and other resources necessary to assist the City in removing graffiti from publicly owned property in a safe, lawful, and coordinated manner.

The City Council reaffirms that the prompt removal of graffiti from privately owned property remains the primary responsibility of the property owner. Any public space stewardship program should also provide a mechanism through which private property owners may authorize trained City employees or approved volunteers participating in the program to enter their property for the purpose of removing graffiti, subject to such reasonable conditions and limitations as the property owner may establish.

Section 2.08. Expanded Partnerships with Nonprofit Organizations and Private Property Owners.

The City Council recognizes that restoring Burlington's public spaces requires meaningful collaboration with businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and other private

Commented [KP31]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Neutral overall.

Inclusion:

Volunteer opportunities are positive, but participation should be accessible.

Belonging:

Strong civic engagement potential.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition: Include neighborhood residents in deciding beautification priorities, especially communities historically underinvested in.

Commented [KP32]: I know CDNR was working on contracting with an organization that would supply recycled paint to help with the cost of removing graffiti and other similar beautification efforts—is that work that has been completed and if so has the process been shared publicly?

Commented [KP33]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

The provision directing nonprofit organizations to establish behavioral expectations should be paired with expectations for the City and property owners.

Inclusion:

People receiving services should have a voice in establishing expectations.

Belonging:

Good language about dignity.

Social Responsibility:

Strong shared-responsibility concept.

Suggested addition:

"Such expectations should be developed, where practicable, with input from individuals who use or are directly affected by the services and should be applied consistently, fairly, and without discrimination."

property owners whose properties directly influence the experience of surrounding neighborhoods.

Accordingly, the City Council asks the Mayor to develop and make publicly available for private property owners educational materials on:

- A. Procedures for issuing notices against trespass as authorized by law;
- B. Crime prevention and environmental design strategies;
- C. Details on the extent to which private property owners can be held criminally or civilly liable for unlawful or other wrongful conduct permitted to continue on their premises;
- D. Other available tools to assist property owners in responding to unlawful activity while promoting safe, welcoming, and well-maintained properties.

The City Council further asks the Mayor to engage with nonprofit organizations that provide services to individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, mental health challenges, or other vulnerabilities, and to relay the City's request that such organizations adopt reasonable expectations for respectful and lawful behavior on the organization's property and within adjacent public rights-of-way and public spaces immediately surrounding the organization's facilities, including expectations designed to discourage conduct that creates public safety risks, interferes with the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties and public spaces, or otherwise adversely affects the surrounding community. The City encourages nonprofit organizations to communicate these expectations in a manner that preserves the dignity of those receiving services while reinforcing shared responsibility for maintaining safe, welcoming, and accessible neighborhoods.

Section 2.09. Public Space Performance Standards.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor collaborate with the City Council's Public Safety and Parks, Arts & Culture Committees to adopt measurable performance standards for evaluating the condition of Burlington's public spaces, which shall be publicly posted on the City's Data Hub.

The standards shall include objective performance measures relating to, as appropriate:

- A. Public safety conditions, including but not limited to the number of incidents, offenses, and arrests in public spaces;

Commented [KP34]: Add equity measures to the performance framework. Current measures focus on incidents, complaints, activation, and use. Add demographic analysis of citations, arrests, police contacts, complaints, and other enforcement activity, where legally permissible, and assess whether improvements in public-space conditions are being achieved equitably across communities.

Commented [KP35]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:

This section is an important opportunity to embed equity.

Inclusion:

Add community perception and participation measures.

Belonging:

Measure whether residents feel welcomed and safe, not only whether incidents decline.

Social Responsibility:

Strong transparency.

Add measures for:

- racial disparities in enforcement;
- citations and arrests by race and ethnicity;
- use of force;
- trespass orders;
- access to services;
- community perceptions of safety;
- resident sense of belonging;
- accessibility;
- complaints regarding discriminatory treatment.

B. Quality-of-life complaints, including but not limited to SeeClickFix reports on cleanliness and sanitation, and graffiti response;

C. Public space activation and programming;

D. Visitor and resident use of public spaces; and

E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines appropriate to enable the City Council and the public to evaluate progress over time.

ARTICLE III

Sustainable Intervention and Regional Responsibility

Section 3.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish a sustainable framework for responding to homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges. The City Council reaffirms Burlington's longstanding commitment to ensuring that individuals experiencing crisis are afforded meaningful opportunities to obtain shelter, treatment, recovery services, and permanent housing while recognizing that emergency interventions must ultimately lead to greater stability, independence, and improved health outcomes.

The City Council further recognizes that compassion requires meaningful intervention, measurable results, and shared regional responsibility. Emergency measures are intended to stabilize individuals and connect them to long-term solutions and should not become permanent substitutes for housing, treatment, recovery, or personal stability.

Section 3.02. Establishing Service Capacity.

Within sixty (60) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Mayor convene representatives of organizations providing emergency shelter, affordable housing, behavioral health services, substance use treatment, healthcare, emergency response, outreach, and other appropriate public and private partners to evaluate Burlington's sustainable capacity to responsibly provide emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. To the extent the City is already convening a group that includes the above-referenced stakeholders, the Administration may expand the scope of that group's work to include developing the assessment called for in this Section.

Commented [KP36]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Strong commitment to long-term stability, but "independence" should not be treated as the only successful outcome. Some people will need ongoing supportive services.

Suggested change:

Replace "independence" with "**long-term stability, health, autonomy, and well-being.**"

Commented [KP37]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The concept of a "maximum number" of people Burlington can serve risks turning people into a capacity calculation.

Inclusion:

Affected individuals and service providers should participate in defining capacity.

Belonging:

The framing should avoid suggesting that some people are "too many" for the community.

Social Responsibility:

The City should recognize a continuing obligation to meet urgent humanitarian needs.

Recommended addition:

"Capacity assessments shall be informed by the lived experiences of people accessing services and shall evaluate not only the number of individuals served but also whether services are accessible, culturally responsive, disability-inclusive, trauma-informed, and effective."

The assessment shall evaluate available staffing, financial resources, healthcare capacity, emergency response capability, housing availability, case management, sanitation, public safety impacts, fiscal sustainability, and such other operational considerations as may be appropriate.

Based upon that assessment, the City Council requests that the Mayor recommend the maximum number of individuals that Burlington can sustainably and humanely serve at any given time through the coordinated provision of emergency shelter, sanctioned camping, outreach, treatment, recovery services, and related supports. The recommendation shall identify the methodology and assumptions used to establish that number and shall include objective indicators by which the City may determine when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity.

The Mayor may periodically review the recommended sustainable service capacity and recommend revisions to the City Council as conditions, available resources, or regional participation materially change.

Section 3.03. Regional Responsibility.

The City Council affirms that homelessness, substance use disorder, and behavioral health challenges are regional and statewide challenges requiring regional and statewide solutions.

The City Council further finds that current conditions strongly indicate that Burlington is providing services beyond what can be sustainably supported by its existing housing, shelter, behavioral health, public safety, and municipal resources. While the assessment required by Section 3.02 will establish a recommended sustainable service capacity, the City Council finds that immediate action to promote greater regional responsibility should not await completion of that assessment.

Burlington will continue to lead with compassion. Leadership, however, does not require Burlington to serve as the exclusive or primary provider of services for individuals from throughout Vermont.

The City Council requests that the Administration implement equitable policies and procedures to ensure that, when Burlington has reached or exceeded its sustainable service capacity, individuals seeking services are connected with available housing, shelter, treatment, recovery, behavioral health, and other supportive services in other communities, including through transportation assistance where appropriate. The City shall actively work with the State of Vermont, neighboring municipalities, healthcare providers, housing organizations, and regional service providers to expand service capacity throughout the region so that responsibility for serving vulnerable individuals is shared more equitably.

Commented [KP38]: Establishing a 'maximum number' of people Burlington can serve raises equity and access concerns. The methodology should not create a ceiling that results in denial of basic services. Require the assessment to identify unmet need, legal obligations, disparate impacts, and a plan for expanding statewide/regional capacity. Include people with lived experience in developing the methodology.

Commented [KP39]: Christian's feedback:
Equity:
The principle is strong, but "individuals from throughout Vermont" may encourage geographic exclusion.
Inclusion:
Regional responsibility should mean expanding services everywhere, not redirecting people elsewhere.
Belonging:
People should not lose access to services because of where they originated.
Social Responsibility:
Strongest opportunity for regional equity.
Suggested change:
"Regional responsibility shall be pursued through shared investment and expanded service capacity across municipalities, rather than through exclusion or displacement of individuals based on their place of origin or current residence."

Section 3.04. Expanded Temporary Emergency Shelter Space and Sanctioned Camping.

Within ninety (90) days following adoption of this Resolution, the City Council requests that the Administration designate one or more locations for expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping to be utilized only when necessary to supplement available capacity at established emergency shelters.

Any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping location shall be subject to approval by the City Council and generally situated outside Burlington's downtown core, waterfront, shared-use path network, and heavily utilized public parks and shall be selected with due consideration for surrounding neighborhoods, public infrastructure, environmental impacts, and the availability of supportive services. To best serve individuals able to utilize this location or locations, efforts will be made to designate locations with access to drinking water, toilets, shower facilities and handwashing stations, laundry, electricity, and dumpsters. To that end, the City Council acknowledges that while temporary emergency shelter space is preferable to sanctioned camping, neither should be considered a permanent housing solution and should be utilized only for the duration necessary to transition individuals to more appropriate placements.

Prior to approving any designated locations under this Section, the City Council will expect that the location will adopt and enforce operational standards governing admission, sanitation, security, storage of belongings, code of conduct, outreach, behavioral health services, treatment referrals, housing navigation, transportation, case management, and ongoing program evaluation.

The City Council asks that the Administration establish measurable performance standards for any expanded temporary emergency shelter space or sanctioned camping and shall publish the resulting performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of individuals served during the reporting period and cumulatively;
- B. The average daily occupancy and utilization rate;
- C. The number and percentage of participants successfully transitioned to emergency shelter, treatment, recovery programs, permanent supportive housing, permanent housing, or other stable housing placements;
- D. The average length of stay for participants;
- E. The number of emergency service responses to a location; and

Commented [KP40]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Locating shelters outside downtown can disproportionately burden people with limited transportation and disabilities.

Inclusion:

Accessibility and transportation need stronger requirements.

Belonging:

The language could unintentionally frame shelter residents as incompatible with public spaces.

Social Responsibility:

Strong operational standards, but equity should be explicit.

Add requirements for:

- accessible transportation;
- ADA compliance;
- language access;
- culturally responsive services;
- community engagement;
- resident participation in site selection;
- racial equity impact assessment.

Commented [KP41]: Add explicit equity and accessibility criteria for site selection. Consider proximity to transit, healthcare, food, employment, disability access, culturally responsive services, and environmental impacts. Avoid concentrating temporary shelter or sanctioned camping in communities that already experience disproportionate burdens or figure out what mechanisms can be put in place to better support these communities if site selection is limited due to the aforementioned concerns around proximity to transit, health care, food, employment, and other services.

Commented [KP42]: Add equity outcomes to the required monthly reporting. In addition to utilization and transitions, report outcomes by race/ethnicity and other legally appropriate demographic categories, including referrals accepted, successful housing transitions, length of stay, and emergency responses. The goal should be both effectiveness and equitable access/outcomes.

F. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate whether a location is functioning as a temporary intervention that promotes health, safety, and successful transitions to more appropriate placements.

Section 3.05. Unauthorized Encampments.

The City Council finds that unauthorized encampments located in areas where camping is specifically prohibited are inconsistent with the policies established by this Resolution.

Consistent with applicable legal requirements, the City Council requests that the Administration act more promptly upon discovery of a prohibited encampment, generally within twenty-four (24) hours, to provide notice of a specified date on which the encampment will face ticketing, no trespass orders, other legal action, and removal of any remaining items. This date should be as soon as reasonably practicable following the provision of notice, allowing sufficient time for affected individuals to make alternative arrangements while protecting public health, public safety, environmental resources, and the public's continued use and enjoyment of Burlington's public spaces.

In accordance with City policy regarding sheltering on public lands, encampments noticed for removal will be provided contact information from local social service organizations serving unsheltered residents, the State of Vermont's Coordinated Entry Screening Form with instructions, information on other available community resources, information on the officials responsible for an encampment that is not removed, and details on where any collected personal property will be stored.

For the purposes of this Article, the City Council notes that Section 22-7 of the Burlington Code of Ordinances provides that "[i]t shall be unlawful for any person to camp in any public park in the city." Section 22-1 enumerates the City's parks and Section 22-23 further provides that "the land known as Urban Reserve ... shall be considered a city park subject to this chapter."

To the extent the City does not have sufficient staffing capacity to comply with this Section, the City Council asks that the Mayor's Administration act within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution to present recommendations to the Council detailing how it will promptly increase the number of personnel authorized and trained to provide notices of removal and conduct associated outreach. The recommendations shall identify the staffing, organizational changes, funding, and implementation timeline necessary to ensure that notices of removal are issued consistently throughout the City.

The City Council requests that the Administration establish measurable performance standards governing the City's response to prohibited encampments and shall publish the resulting

Commented [KP43]: Add trauma-informed and disability-responsive safeguards before removal. Require documented outreach, meaningful notice, efforts to connect people to appropriate alternatives, and procedures protecting medications, identification, assistive devices, and essential personal property. Consider requiring an equity review of encampment enforcement patterns to identify disparate impacts.

Commented [KP44]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

Encampment enforcement can disproportionately affect people with the fewest housing options and may have disparate racial impacts.

Inclusion:

The proposed 24-hour response should be balanced with meaningful notice and accessible alternatives.

Belonging:

Removal without adequate alternatives may increase exclusion and displacement.

Social Responsibility:

The City has a responsibility to protect public spaces while also protecting people from avoidable displacement and loss of essential property.

Recommended additions:

"Prior to removal, the City shall make reasonable efforts to identify and offer accessible alternatives, provide adequate notice consistent with applicable law, protect and store personal property, and connect individuals with housing and services."

Performance data should include:

- race and ethnicity;
- disability status where voluntarily provided;
- number of people displaced;
- number offered shelter;
- number accepting shelter;
- number for whom no alternative was available.

performance data in a publicly accessible format on the City's website no less frequently than monthly. At a minimum, the publicly reported data shall include:

- A. The number of prohibited encampments identified during the reporting period;
- B. The average time between identification of a prohibited encampment and issuance of a notice of removal;
- C. The average time between issuance of notice and removal of the encampment;
- D. The number and percentage of individuals contacted who accepted referrals or were successfully connected to shelter, a sanctioned camping location, coordinated entry, behavioral health services, treatment, recovery services, or other supportive services prior to or following removal of the encampment; and
- E. Such additional performance measures as the Administration determines are appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the City's outreach and enforcement efforts.

Section 3.06. Accountability and Enforcement.

The City Council reaffirms that every individual is entitled to dignity, due process, and meaningful opportunities to obtain treatment, recovery services, shelter, and supportive services. The City further reaffirms its commitment to prevention, treatment, recovery, and other evidence-based public health interventions.

The City Council rejects the notion that enforcing our laws and ordinances in response to unlawful conduct is an uncaring or unempathetic act, or that tolerance of unlawful conduct is itself an act of compassion. Effective public policy requires meaningful opportunities for treatment and recovery together with consistent enforcement of criminal laws that protect the public and preserve Burlington's shared public spaces.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that Burlington will not tolerate drug trafficking, the unlawful open use of controlled substances, retail theft and other property crimes that frequently support substance use disorder, or other criminal conduct that threatens public safety or unreasonably interferes with the public's use and enjoyment of shared public spaces.

The City Council further declares that enforcement of these laws shall remain a priority of the City. The Council supports proactive investigation, lawful detention where appropriate, arrest when supported by the facts and authorized by law, and referral for prosecution of individuals engaged in such criminal activity. Nothing in this Resolution shall be construed to discourage

Commented [KP45]: Expand the performance measures beyond speed of removal. Include the percentage of people offered appropriate alternatives, accepted referrals, maintained continuity of care, retained essential belongings, and obtained stable housing after intervention. Report outcomes by race/ethnicity and other appropriate demographic categories to assess disparate impacts.

Commented [KP46]: Balance the strong emphasis on individual enforcement with institutional accountability. Add a requirement that the City evaluate whether enforcement strategies produce disparate racial, disability, or other demographic impacts and modify practices when inequities are identified. Consider explicitly distinguishing drug trafficking and other criminal conduct from substance use disorder or homelessness itself.

Commented [KP47]: Christian's feedback: This is perhaps the section requiring the **most substantial racial equity revision.**

Equity:
The language strongly emphasizes arrest, prosecution, and punishment. Without explicit safeguards, enforcement can contribute to racial disparities in policing and criminal justice.

Inclusion:
People should have meaningful access to diversion and treatment before or alongside prosecution.

Belonging:
The language may reinforce an "insiders versus offenders" framework.

Social Responsibility:
Accountability is appropriate, but the City should also be accountable for ensuring equitable enforcement.

Recommended addition:
"Enforcement priorities shall be implemented in a manner consistent with racial equity and civil rights principles. The City shall regularly evaluate enforcement activity for disparate impacts and shall take corrective action where disparities cannot be

law enforcement officers from taking appropriate enforcement action authorized by law in response to these offenses.

The City shall continue pursuing treatment and recovery for those willing to accept assistance while supporting the investigation, arrest where authorized by law, prosecution, and appropriate punishment of individuals whose criminal conduct perpetuates addiction, victimizes residents and businesses, or undermines the safety and vitality of Burlington's public spaces.

Furthermore, the City Council notes that both the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives were implemented to improve outcomes for individuals at elevated risk of involvement with the criminal justice system, behavioral health crises, substance use, and homelessness, including by reducing emergency department utilization, overdoses, and other preventable harms, while also providing a more immediate and consistent system of accountability for individuals who repeatedly violate municipal ordinances.

The City Council is particularly concerned that the City Circle initiative, which was previously identified by the Mayor's Administration as a key component of Burlington's strategy to improve public safety and accountability, appears to have been substantially curtailed or discontinued. The Council further understands that this change may have been attributable, in whole or in part, to reductions in available funding, and seeks clarification regarding the status of the initiative, the reasons for any changes in its implementation, and whether alternative funding sources or program models have been considered. The Council is also concerned that, to its knowledge, the accountability mechanisms contemplated by the City Circle model, including prosecution or other consequences for participants who failed to comply with restorative justice requirements, have not been meaningfully utilized, and requests information sufficient to evaluate whether the program has operated as originally intended.

Within thirty (30) days of the adoption of this Resolution, the City Council's Public Safety Committee shall prepare and deliver a list of questions to the Mayor's Administration, the City Attorney's Office, and the Community Justice Center, the responses to which shall provide the Council with a comprehensive update regarding the Situation Table and City Circle initiatives, including, at a minimum: (i) the current operational status of each initiative; (ii) participation levels and measurable outcomes for individuals served; (iii) data concerning compliance with restorative justice requirements and any enforcement or prosecutorial actions taken in response to noncompliance, to the extent permitted by law; (iv) the funding sources supporting each initiative, including any reductions or anticipated funding gaps; and (v) recommendations for the continuation, modification, expansion, or replacement of these initiatives based on their first year of implementation.

Section 3.07. Request for Ongoing Assistance From State Public Safety Personnel

Recognizing Burlington's ongoing public safety resource challenges, the City Council calls upon the Vermont State Police to continue partnering with the Burlington Police Department by providing supplemental law enforcement resources in and around the City's downtown and other locations where additional law enforcement presence is necessary to protect public safety, address criminal activity, and restore public confidence in Burlington's public spaces.

Separately, the City Council calls upon the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles Enforcement Division to expand traffic enforcement efforts within the City of Burlington's principal transportation corridors, including the new Champlain Parkway, where speeding, reckless driving, excessive engine noise, and other traffic violations have become persistent public safety and quality-of-life concerns.

The City Council affirms that, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, it welcomes and consents to the enforcement of both the laws of the State of Vermont and the ordinances of the City of Burlington by duly authorized State law enforcement officers operating within the City, consistent with their statutory authority and any applicable intergovernmental agreements governing such enforcement.

ARTICLE IV

Public Health Policy and Permitted Uses

Section 4.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to establish the City's policy regarding the implementation of significant public health initiatives, to reaffirm the City Council's legislative role in establishing zoning policy, and to strengthen collaboration between the City of Burlington and the State of Vermont in addressing public safety, behavioral health, and substance use challenges.

Section 4.02. Public Health Policy and Zoning.

The City Council continues to support evidence-based public health initiatives that improve individual and community health while recognizing that the location, operation, and long-term impacts of significant public health services should be considered through transparent public processes consistent with the City's Comprehensive Development Ordinance and adopted zoning policy.

Commented [KP48]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Additional law enforcement presence should be accompanied by safeguards against disparate enforcement.

Inclusion:

Community members should be informed about roles and responsibilities of state personnel.

Belonging:

Increased enforcement may affect community trust.

Social Responsibility:

Strong intergovernmental coordination.

Suggested addition:

"State and local law enforcement agencies should coordinate to ensure consistent standards, accountability, community engagement, and compliance with racial equity and civil rights protections."

Commented [KP49]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Good emphasis on evidence-based public health.

Inclusion:

Public participation should explicitly include people directly affected by substance use and harm reduction services.

Belonging:

Public health services should be framed as part of community health rather than as incompatible with public spaces.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Commented [KP50]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Neutral on its face, but zoning decisions can produce racial and socioeconomic disparities.

Inclusion:

Public processes should include affected service users.

Belonging:

Potential tension between neighborhood compatibility and inclusion.

Suggested addition:

"Zoning decisions shall consider potential disparate impacts on historically marginalized communities and individuals who rely on public health services."

The City Council finds that significant public health services with substantial neighborhood impacts should not be established through administrative interpretation where doing so effectively creates a new principal use not expressly identified within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Section 4.03. Overdose Prevention Centers.

The City Council finds that overdose prevention centers are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize overdose prevention centers within the City of Burlington should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance following public notice, public hearing, and legislative action by the City Council.

The City Council further declares that, should such an amendment be proposed, overdose prevention centers should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District, as defined by the City's Charter.

Section 4.04. Syringe Service Programs.

The City Council finds that syringe service programs are a valuable public health strategy but are not presently identified as expressly permitted principal uses within the Comprehensive Development Ordinance and should not be deemed to constitute any currently permitted principal use absent express legislative authorization.

Accordingly, the City Council declares that any proposal to authorize syringe service programs as a principal use should proceed only through amendment of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance through the City's legislative zoning amendment process.

The City Council further declares that while syringe service programs should continue to be supported in Burlington, they should not be permitted within Burlington's Downtown Improvement District. The City Council opposes the continued operation or establishment of syringe service programs within Burlington's downtown core and calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to work collaboratively with the City and local operating partners to identify an alternative location that better advances public health objectives while supporting the restoration and preservation of Burlington's public spaces.

The City Council further calls upon the Vermont Department of Health to consult and collaborate with the City before establishing, relocating, or materially expanding significant

Commented [KP51]: If the Council is evaluating the location of overdose prevention centers, the equity analysis should be explicit. Consider requiring evidence regarding overdose prevention, health outcomes, racial/ethnic disparities in overdose mortality, access to treatment, and impacts on people in recovery alongside neighborhood and zoning considerations.

Commented [KP52]: Christian's feedback: Equity:

The section should acknowledge that overdose prevention centers may serve populations experiencing significant health disparities.

Inclusion:

A public hearing is important, but meaningful participation should include people with lived experience.

Belonging:

The prohibition in the Downtown Improvement District raises concerns about equitable access.

Social Responsibility:

The City should rely on evidence and health

Commented [KP53]: The resolution recognizes syringe service programs as valuable public health interventions but proposes excluding them from the Downtown Improvement District. Add a health-equity analysis to the location decision, including access for people who use drugs, overdose prevention, racial disparities in substance-use harms, transit access, and continuity with other health services. Avoid relocating services solely to areas that make access more difficult for the populations they serve in

Commented [KP54]: Christian's feedback: equity concerns.

Equity:

Restricting harm reduction services from the downtown core may disproportionately affect people who rely on walking, public transit, or proximity to services.

Inclusion:

Relocation may reduce access.

Belonging:

The language risks treating people who use

public health services within Burlington so that public health objectives, zoning policy, neighborhood compatibility, and impacts upon public spaces may all be appropriately considered. The Mayor's Administration shall promptly notify the City Council upon learning of State-sanctioned efforts to expand public health services within Burlington.

Additionally, within sixty (60) days following enactment of this Resolution, the City Council's Community Development & Neighbor Revitalization Committee shall begin meeting to develop a resolution that reaffirms, revises, or develops new recommendations from its previously developed report on syringe litter that will further the goals of this Section.

The City Council affirms that the positions taken in this Article regarding an Overdose Prevention Center or Syringe Service Programs are in alignment with Burlington's current comprehensive municipal plan, which acknowledges the difficulties associated with the proximity of drug trafficking and use to those in recovery, and provides in pertinent part that:

[H]igh concentration of social service providers can become easily unmanageable if all stakeholders are not working together, keeping an eye on some of the larger interactions and their implications. For example, the downtown is arguably not the best environment for people recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. The presence of active drug dealing and the highest concentration of drinking establishments in the state create serious challenges for those in recovery.

ARTICLE V

Implementation, Accountability, State Partnership, and Continuing Oversight

Section 5.01. Statement of Intent.

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that the policies established by this Resolution are translated into coordinated action through measurable implementation, public accountability, regular reporting, and continuing oversight by the City Council.

Section 5.02. Partnership with the State of Vermont.

The City Council appreciates the Governor's most recent efforts to support Burlington with additional public safety resources and calls upon the Governor to establish a sustained partnership with the City of Burlington to continue addressing the unique public safety,

Commented [KP55]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong opportunity to make equity an implementation requirement.

Suggested addition:

"Implementation shall include ongoing racial equity, inclusion, belonging, and social impact assessment."

Commented [KP56]: Christian's feedback:

Equity:

Strong focus on regional coordination. Add equitable access to treatment and services.

Inclusion:

State partnership should include community voices.

Belonging:

Regional strategies should avoid displacement.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Suggested addition:

"State and regional strategies shall prioritize equitable access to services regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, income, housing status, or place of origin."

behavioral health, homelessness, and substance use challenges confronting Vermont's largest municipality.

The City Council requests that the Mayor invite representatives of the Governor's Office and appropriate State agencies to meet annually with the Administration, City Council, State legislators, and other regional leaders to evaluate regional progress, identify barriers to collaboration, and recommend additional actions to strengthen the partnership between the City of Burlington, surrounding communities, and the State of Vermont.

The City Council specifically refers back to the requests included in its August 2025 resolution on City Hall Park and its asks for the following specific actions by the State of Vermont and Governor to support Burlington in addressing chronic safety and health challenges: (1) Convene a county-wide committee of local, county and state law enforcement agencies to develop a coordinated response to drug trafficking and related crimes; (2) Convene youth service providers, schools, and staff from the Agency of Human Services to specifically examine trends among juveniles engaged in violence, drugs, and gun possession to identify strategies to interrupt these trends for at-risk juveniles; and (3) Convene a public health strategy discussion between members of the Department of Health and Department of Mental Health to examine how to remove barriers to treatment and address limited capacity to existing drug treatment centers to support people living with substance use disorder finding easier pathways to treatment and recovery.

The City Council further recognizes the substantial progress achieved through the Chittenden County Accountability Docket, which demonstrated that dedicated judicial resources could promote more timely case resolution, meaningful accountability, improved access to treatment and services, and greater confidence in the administration of justice for harm done to our communities. Accordingly, the City Council requests that the Governor, in coordination with the Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court and other appropriate State officials, continue and, as appropriate, institutionalize this model in Chittenden County by supporting the continued assignment of a dedicated judge, prosecutor, public defender, and necessary court personnel and resources to ensure the prompt adjudication of cases involving repeat offenders and individuals with multiple pending criminal matters.

Section 5.03. Legislative Partnership with the Vermont General Assembly.

The City Council calls upon the members of the Chittenden County Senate and House delegations, together with members of the Vermont General Assembly representing communities throughout the State, to support the enactment and strengthening of laws that advance the purposes of this Resolution.

Commented [KP57]: Christian's feedback:
This section already contains a strong equity provision in subsection C.

Section 5.03(C)
"Promotes equitable regional responsibility..."

This should be expanded to:
"Promotes equitable regional responsibility for addressing homelessness and behavioral health challenges while ensuring that individuals are not denied access to essential services based on race, ethnicity, disability, income, housing status, or place of origin."

Section 5.03(A)
"Strengthens public safety while protecting individual rights" could be strengthened:
"Strengthens public safety while protecting civil rights, advancing racial equity, and ensuring due process and equal protection under the law."

The City Council further calls upon the General Assembly to work collaboratively with municipalities, public safety agencies, healthcare providers, service organizations, and other stakeholders to enact legislation that:

- A. Strengthens public safety while protecting individual rights;
- B. Expands access to and investment in behavioral health, substance use treatment, recovery services, and permanent supportive housing throughout Vermont;
- C. Promotes equitable regional responsibility for addressing homelessness and behavioral health challenges;
- D. Provides municipalities with appropriate legal authority and resources to restore and preserve public spaces;
- E. Supports timely intervention for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises or substance use disorder;
- F. Improves coordination among State agencies and municipalities; and
- G. Otherwise advances the purposes of this Resolution.

The City Council further directs the Mayor and the City's legislative representatives to advocate for legislation consistent with these principles and to report to the City Council regarding significant legislative developments affecting implementation of this Resolution.

Section 5.04. Continuing Commitment.

The City Council adopts this Resolution not merely as a response to current conditions, but as a continuing statement of municipal policy intended to guide future legislative decisions, strengthen public confidence in local government, and restore and preserve Burlington's public spaces for future generations.

The City Council believes that the strength of a community is measured not only by how it responds to those in crisis, but also by how faithfully it preserves the public spaces that belong to everyone. Through this Resolution, Burlington recommits itself to both responsibilities and affirms that they are inseparable from one another.

Commented [KP58]: Add an explicit statement that the success of the resolution will be judged not only by public-space conditions and public confidence, but also by whether implementation reduces disparities and strengthens belonging and trust among communities historically experiencing disparate treatment by public systems.

Commented [KP59]: Christian's feedback: Section 5.04 — Continuing Commitment

Equity:

Strong values-based conclusion, but equity is not explicitly named.

Inclusion:

Strong potential.

Belonging:

The phrase "public spaces that belong to everyone" is powerful.

Social Responsibility:

Strong.

Recommended addition:

"Burlington further recognizes that public safety, racial equity, inclusion, belonging, and social responsibility are mutually reinforcing responsibilities. A community is strongest when every person can participate in public life with dignity, safety, and a meaningful sense of belonging."

Commented [KP60]: Christian's feedback:

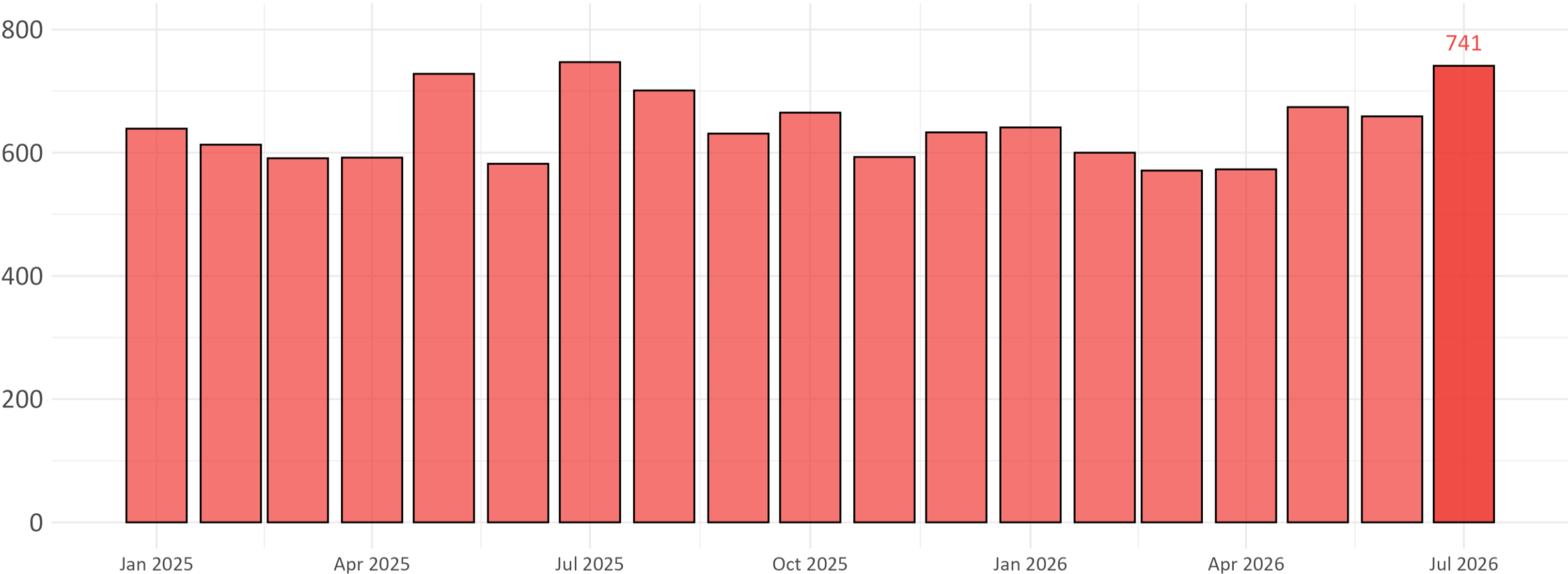
The resolution has a potentially strong foundation for **social responsibility** because it recognizes that public safety, public health, housing, behavioral health, and regional cooperation are interconnected. It also contains important commitments to dignity, due process, transparency, measurable outcomes, and public accountability.

However, **racial equity, inclusion, and belonging are largely implicit rather than explicit**. The greatest concern is that some provisions—particularly those involving **increased enforcement, public space response teams, surveillance, encampment removal, relocation of social services, and restrictions on harm reduction services**—could produce

August EMS Report

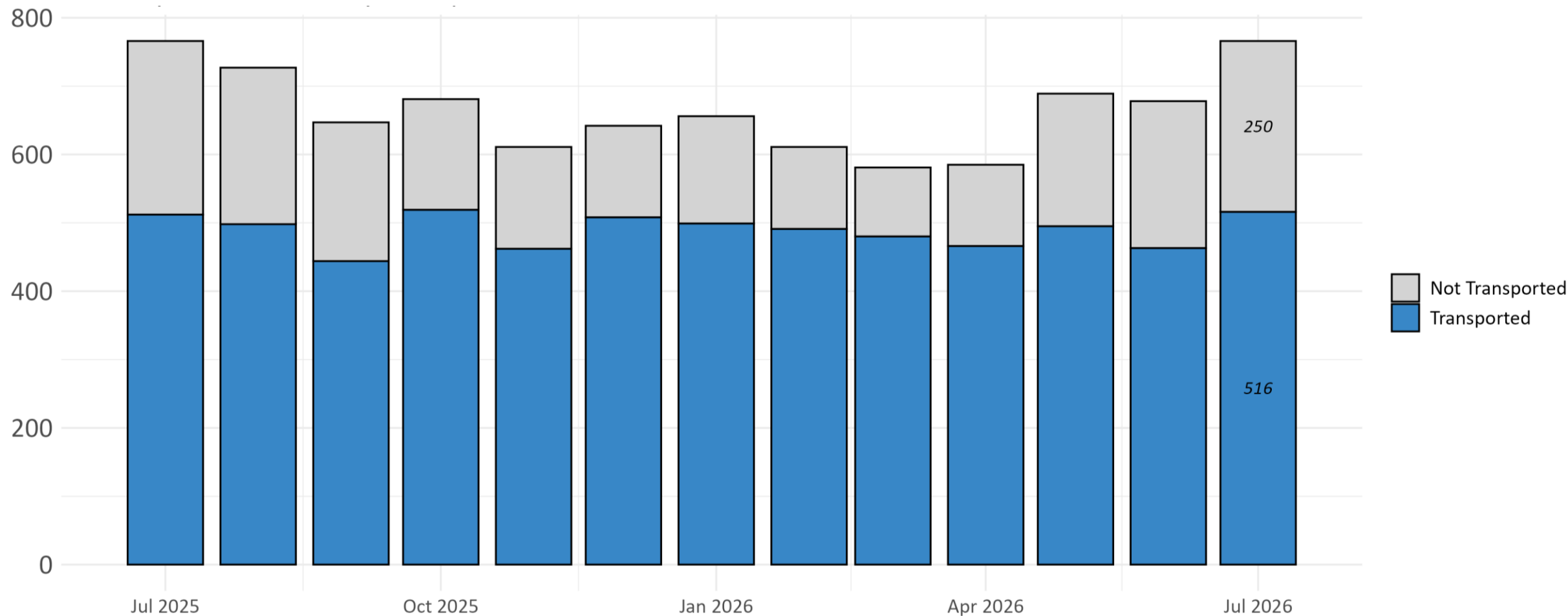
Total Monthly Incidents

July had the highest incident count so far in 2026.



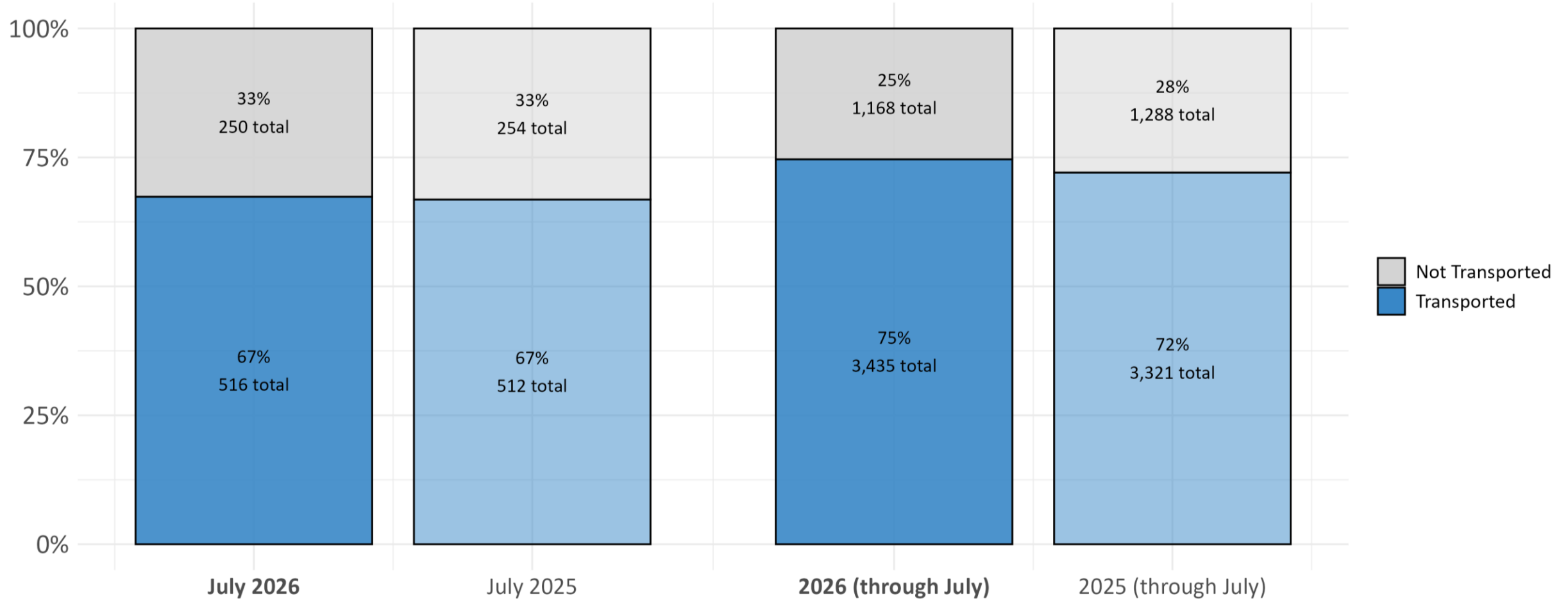
Monthly Transports

July had the lowest transport rate so far in 2026.



Transport Rates July + YTD

EMS is transporting at a slightly higher rate in 2026 than they were at this point in 2025.

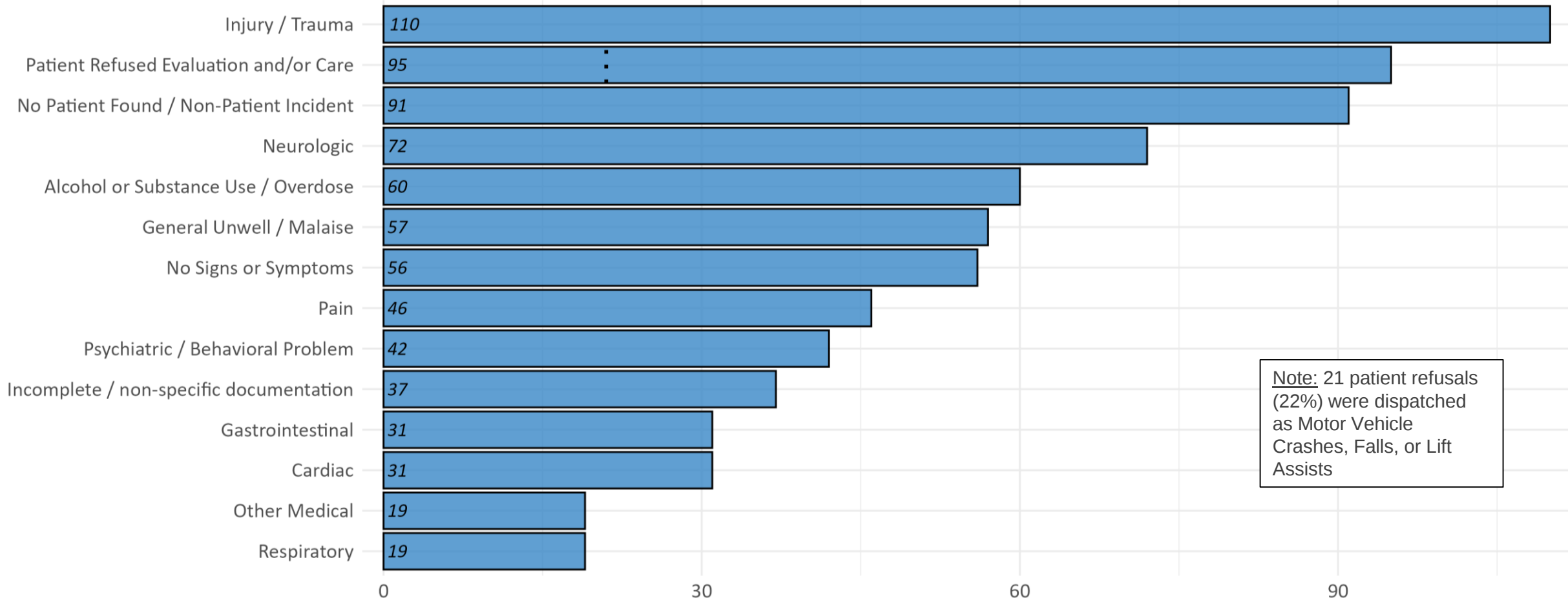


Data through 7/31/2026

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

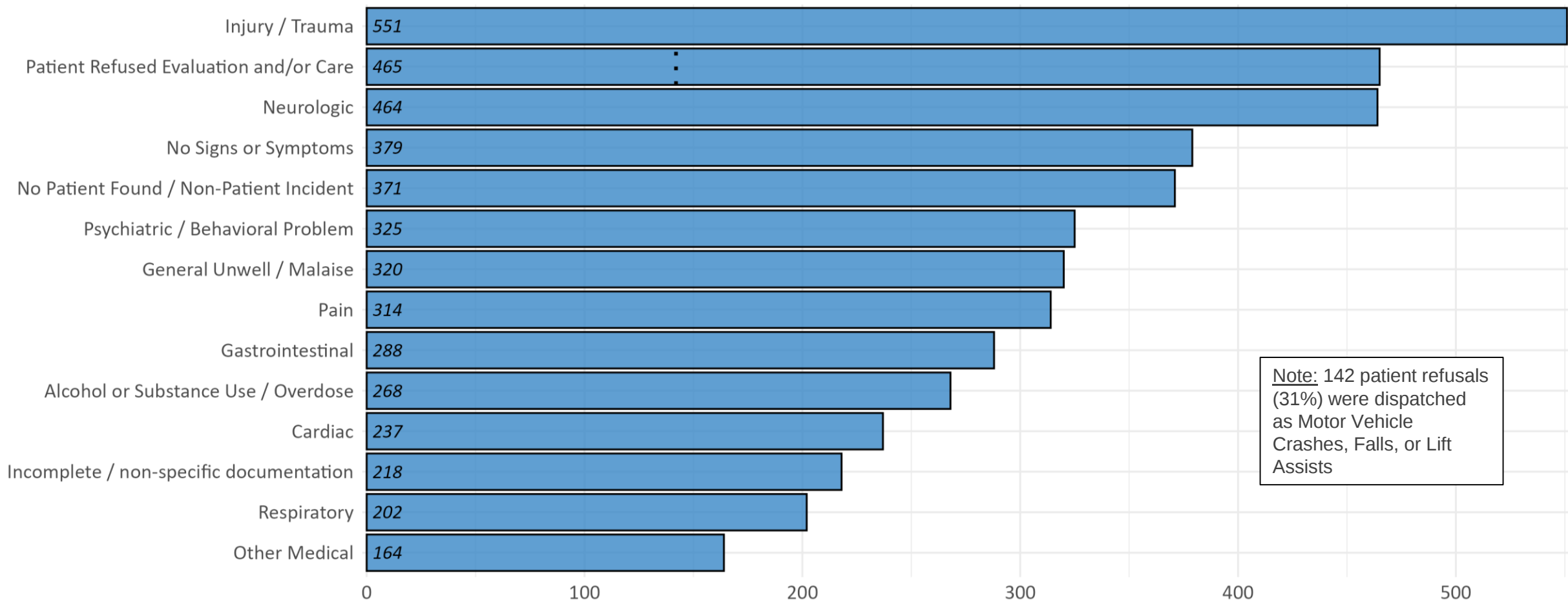
Call Categories July 2026

Injury / Trauma was the top call category, followed by patients refusing evaluation/care and patients being gone on arrival.



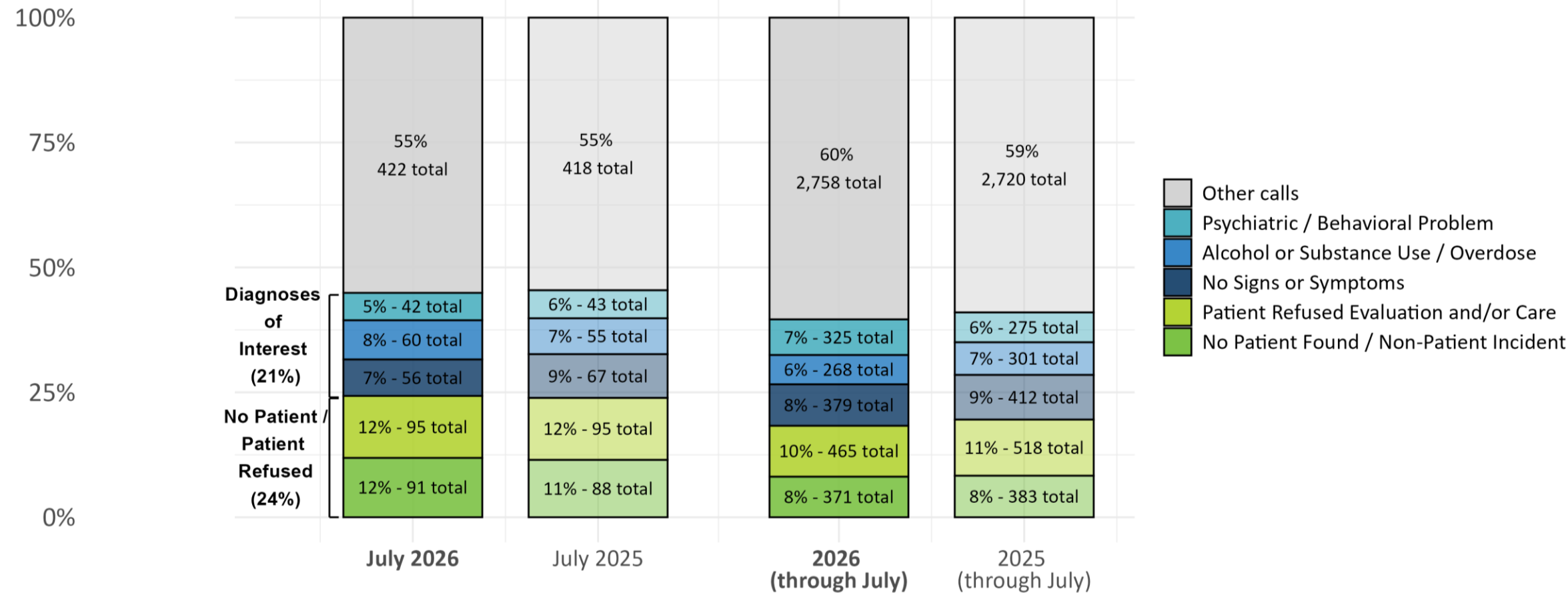
Call Categories, YTD 2026

For the year, Injury / Trauma is the top category, followed by patient refusals and neurologic calls.



Categories of Note July + YTD

2026 rates look very similar to 2025 rates.



Data through 07/31/2026

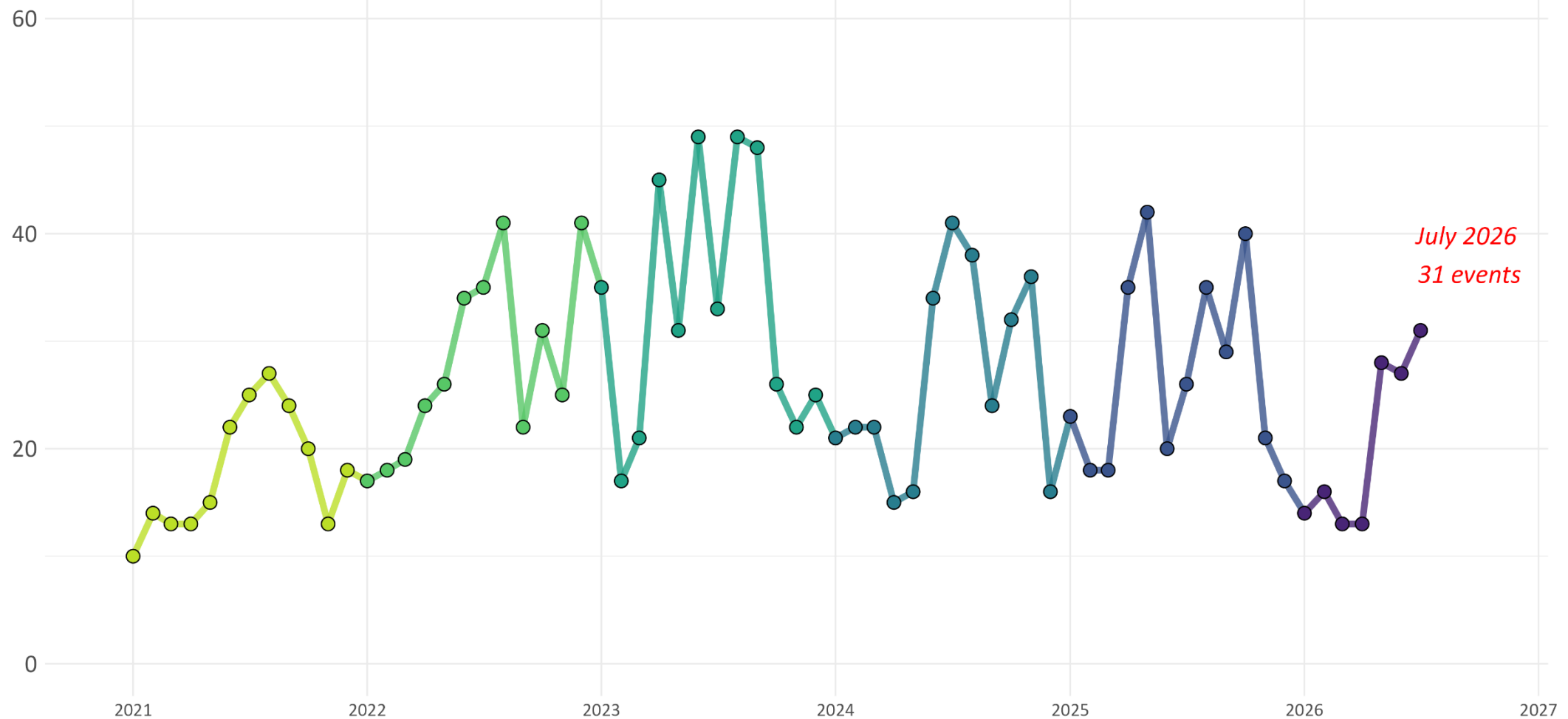
Data through 7/31/2026

Categories derived using the crews on-scene diagnosis.

21 patient refusals In July 2026 were dispatched as Motor Vehicle Crashes, Falls, or Lift Assists.

Substance Use Events

While July was the highest month in 2026, so far this year has the lowest count since 2021.*



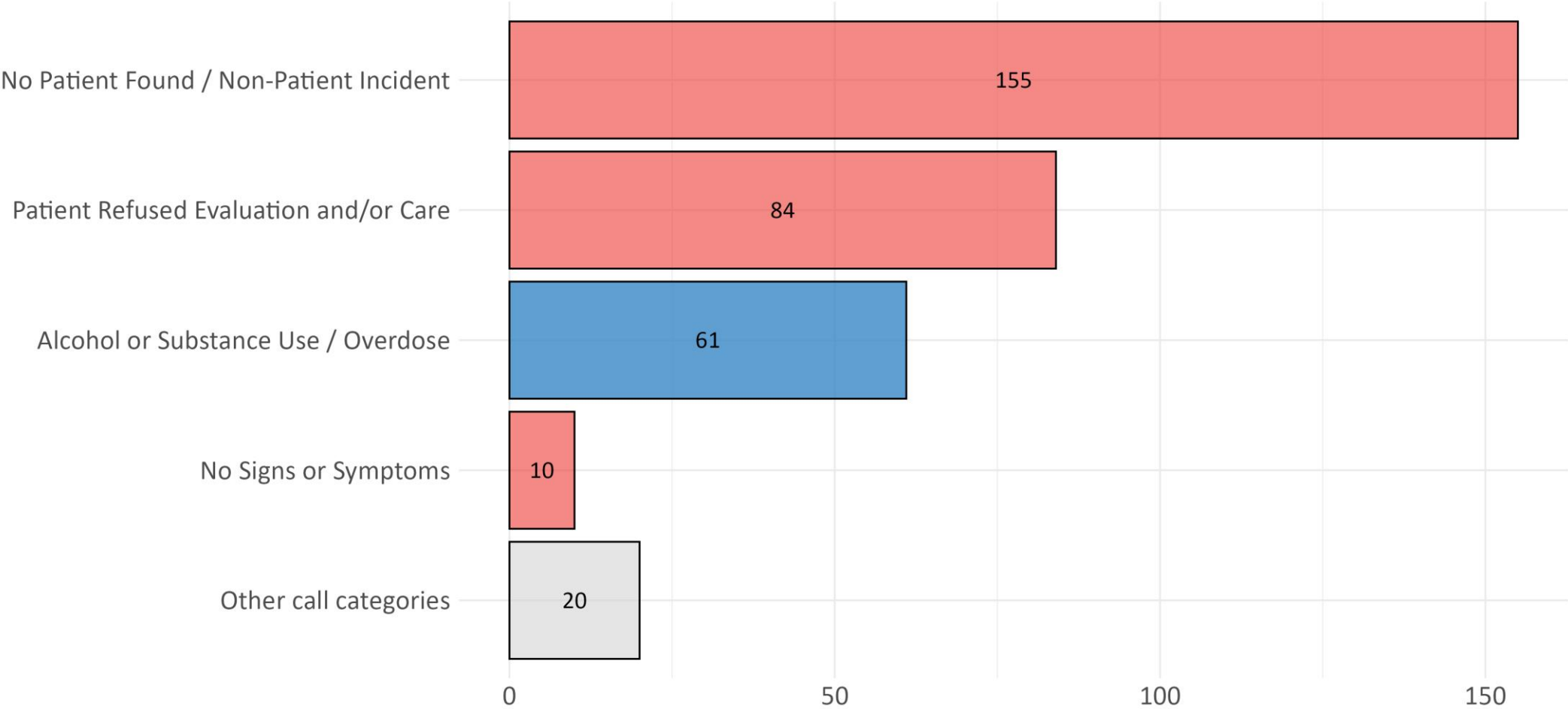
**Incidents where 'substance use / overdose' is in the crew's diagnosis and/or Narcan was administered.*

Does not include all calls dispatched as overdoses that may or may not have been reversed by the time the crew is on scene.

**July 2026
31 events**

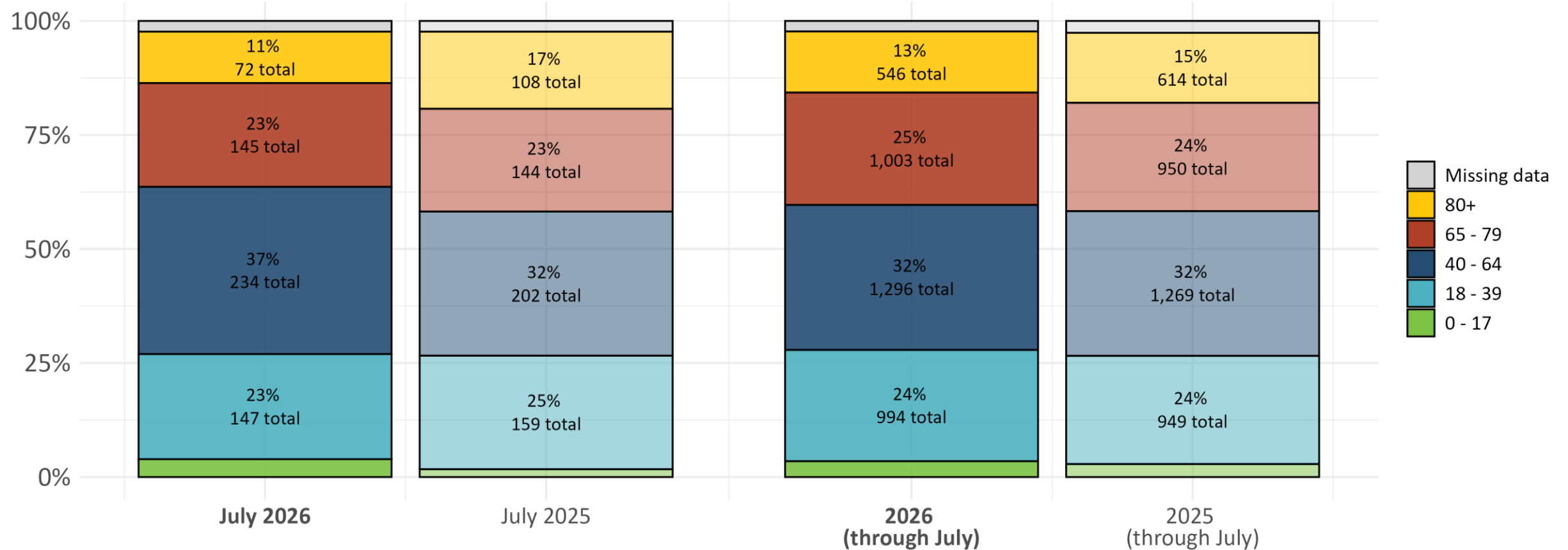
Calls Dispatched as ‘Overdose / Poisoning / Ingestion’, YTD 2026

72% of these calls are no patient incidents or patients refusing evaluation/care



Top ‘other call categories’:
Neurologic,
Psychiatric /
Behavioral
Problem

Patient Age July + YTD



Does not include ages of patients for whom information was not recorded.
These are largely patient refusals / no patient incidents.

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

Data through 7/31/2026

Top Call Categories by Age, 2026 YTD

Top Call Categories by Age Group, 2026 YTD			
Age Group	Call Category	Count	% of Calls for this Age Group
0 - 17	Injury / Trauma	34	24%
	No Signs or Symptoms	20	14%
	Patient Refused Evaluation and/or Care	17	12%
18 - 39	Injury / Trauma	135	14%
	Psychiatric / Behavioral Problem	133	13%
	Neurologic	127	13%
40 - 64	Injury / Trauma	153	12%
	Psychiatric / Behavioral Problem	142	11%
	No Signs or Symptoms	124	10%
65 - 79	Injury / Trauma	130	13%
	Neurologic	110	11%
	General Unwell / Malaise	100	10%
80+	Injury / Trauma	95	17%
	Neurologic	86	16%
	General Unwell / Malaise	52	10%

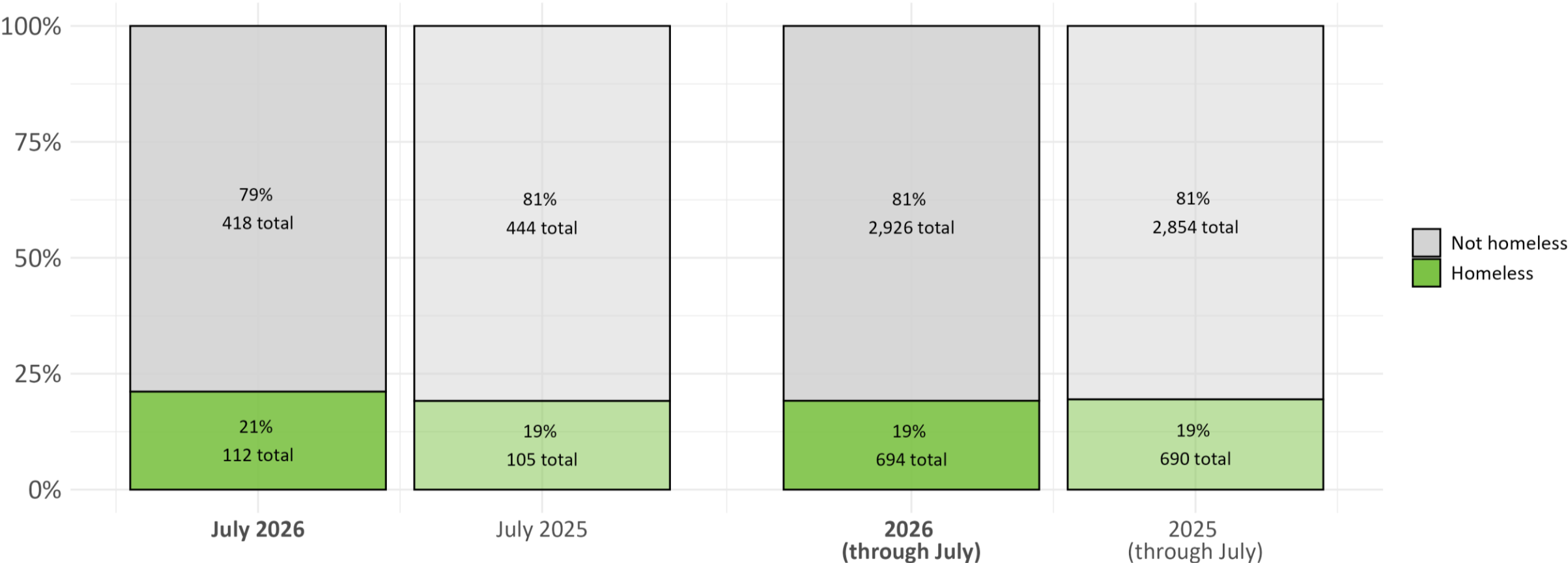
Does not include ages of patients for whom information was not recorded.
These are largely patient refusals / no patient incidents.

Data through 7/31/2026

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

Patient Housing Status

2026 rates are similar to 2025 rates.



Does not include housing status of patients for whom information was not recorded.
These are largely patient refusals / no patient incidents.

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

Impact Cohort

Impact Cohort members are people who have had at least 3 EMS responses in a given month.

Impact Cohort, June & July 2026		
Impact Cohort Metric	June 2026	July 2026
Impact Cohort Individuals	21	24
Calls Generated	96	122
% of Patients	4.5%	4.9%
% of EMS Call Volume	16.6%	19.1%
Top Categories	No Signs or Symptoms, Psychiatric / Behavioral Problem, Patient Refused Evaluation and/or Care	Alcohol or Substance Use / Overdose, No Signs or Symptoms, Neurologic
Individuals Present in Previous Month's Cohort	3	6

*Percentages calculated by removing patients with no recorded name from the denominator.
These are largely patient refusals / no patient incidents.*

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

Data through 7/31/2026

Community Response Team

73% of CRT responses in 2026 have been no patient incidents or patient refusals.

Community Response Team, 2026		
CRT Metric	July 2026	2026 YTD
Staffed CRT Days	5	65
Total CRT Responses	9	67
No Patient Found responses	5	31
Patient Refused Evaluation/Care responses	2	18
Other responses	2	18

Situation Table

BFD has brought more Situations than any other agency in 2026

Situation Table, 2026	
Situation Table Metric	2026 Count
Number of Situations Presented by BFD	16
Situations Closed with Lowered Risk	9
Number of Assisting Agencies	19

Strategic Questions

- What emerging EMS trends should we continue monitoring over the coming months?
- How can EMS data continue to inform operational planning and community partnerships?
- What does the current CRT data tell us about where the program is providing value and where adjustments may be warranted?
- What additional data or performance measures would help guide future EMS initiatives?

Appendix: Working Diagnosis Categories

Alcohol or Substance Use / Overdose

Abuse of Alcohol (F10.9)
Alcohol Abuse and Effects (F10)
Alcohol abuse with intoxication (F10.12)
Misuse of Medication / Adverse Effect (Accidental) (T50.90)
Overdose / Abuse of Cocaine (F14)
Overdose / Abuse of Opiate (i.e. Heroin) (F11)
Overdose / Abuse of Other Illicit Drug or Misuse of Meds (F19.129)
Overdose / Abuse of Psychoactive or Hallucinogenic Drug (Meth, MDMA, LSD...) (F19)
Overdose of Medication (Intentional Self-Harm) (T50.992)
Withdrawal: Alcohol (F10.239)

Cardiac

Cardiac Arrest (I46.9)
Cardiac Arrhythmia/Dysrhythmia (I49.9)
Cardiac Tamponade (I31.4)
Chest Pain, Cardiac / Acute Coronary Syndrome (I20.0)
Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) (I50.9)
HYPERtension (I10)
HYPOtension (I95.9)
Myocardial Infarction (Non-STEMI) - Chest Pain (I21.4)
Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) - Chest Pain (I21.2)
Shock, Cardiogenic (R57.0)
Unspecified Cardiac Disorder (I42.8)

Appendix: Working Diagnosis Categories

Gastrointestinal
Appendicitis, Acute Onset (K35.80)
Constipation (K59.00)
Diarrhea (K59.1)
Foreign Body in Esophageal/GI Tract (T18.9)
GERD (Reflux) (K21)
GI Bleed (Upper and Lower) (K92.2)
Hematemesis (vomiting blood) (K92.0)
Nausea/Vomiting (Unknown Etiology) (R11)
Pain, Abdominal, Acute Onset (R10.0)
Vomiting Due to Pregnancy (O21.9)

General Unwell / Malaise
Bedridden (Z74.01)
Dehydration (E86.0)
Fever (Unknown Cause) (R50.9)
General Unwell / Malaise (Unknown Cause) (R53.81)
Heat Exhaustion (T67.5)
Hyperkalemia (E87.5)
Infection/Infectious Disease (Unspecified) (B99.9)
Kidney / Renal Disease (N18.9)
Muscle weakness (generalized) (M62.81)
Obesity Related Disorders (E66.9)
Other Metabolic Disorder (E88.9)
Reduced Mobility (Z74.09)
Sepsis (With or Without Shock) (A41.9)

Appendix: Working Diagnosis Categories

Injury / Trauma	
Abrasion of unspecified thumb, initial encounter (S60.319A)	Injury, Face (S09.93)
Acute pain due to trauma (G89.11)	Injury, Foot (S99.92)
Burns (T31)	Injury, Forearm (S59.91)
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (T58)	Injury, Genitalia (S39.94)
Concussion with L.O.C. (S06.0X9)	Injury, Head / Scalp (S09.90)
Concussion without L.O.C. (S06.0X0)	Injury, Hip (S79.91)
Decompression Sickness (e.g. scuba diving) (T70.3)	Injury, Knee (S80.91)
Effects of Stings, Bites, Plant Contact (T63)	Injury, Lower Back / Lumbar Spine (S39.92)
Electrocution (T75.4)	Injury, Lower Leg (S89.9)
Frostbite With Tissue Necrosis (T34.90)	Injury, Lung Pneumothorax (S27.0)
Frostbite, Superficial (T33.90)	Injury, Neck (S19.9)
HYPOTHERMIA (T68)	Injury, Nose (S09.92)
Heatstroke (T67.0)	Injury, Pelvis (S39.93)
Inhalation of Toxic Gases / Vapors / Chemicals (J68)	Injury, Shoulder or Upper Arm (S49.9)
Injury, Abdomen (S39.91)	Injury, Thigh, Upper Leg (S79.92)
Injury, Ankle (S99.91)	Injury, Thoracic Spine (S24.109)
Injury, Brain / TBI (S06.9)	Injury, Thorax / Chest (S29.9)
Injury, Cervical / C-Spine (S14.10)	Injury, Wrist, Hand, or Fingers (S69.9)
Injury, Ear (S09.91)	Multisystem Trauma (T07.XXXA)
Injury, Elbow (S59.90)	Shock, Traumatic (T79.4)
Injury, Eye / Orbit (S05)	Smoke Inhalation (T59.81)

Appendix: Working Diagnosis Categories

Incomplete / non-specific documentation
Encounter for examination and observation for unspecified reason (Z04.9)
Not Applicable
Other / No Other Appropriate Choice (R68.89)
(blank)

Neurologic
Altered Mental Status (R41.82)
Headache or Migraine (R51)
Hemiplegia (Paralysis on One Side of Body) (G81.90)
Meningitis (G03.9)
Paralysis (G83.9)
Seizures, Nonstatus Epilepticus (G40.909)
Seizures, Status Epilepticus (G40.901)
Stroke / CVA (I63.9)
Syncope / Fainting (R55)
TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) (G45.9)
Unconscious / Coma (Non-Overdose, Unknown Etiology) (R40.2)
Visual Disturbance / Vision Problems (H53.9)
Weakness (Unknown Etiology) (R53.1)

No Signs or Symptoms
No Signs or Symptoms (Z00)

Data through 7/31/2026

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

Appendix: Working Diagnosis Categories

Other Medical	
ALTE / BRUE (Brief Resolved Unexplained Event) (R68.13)	Hypoglycemia, Non-diabetic (E16.2)
Adrenal Insufficiency (E27.40)	Miscarriage (Suspected) (O03)
Allergic Reaction (T78.40)	Newborn Care Not otherwise Listed (P15)
Allergic contact dermatitis (L23)	Newborn Meconium Aspiration (P24.0)
Anemia, Unspecified (D64.9)	Newborn, Pre-Term (P07.3)
Cancer (Complications Related to) (D49)	Obvious Death (R99)
Childbirth / Delivery Complicated (O75)	Other Urinary Problem, unspecified (N39.9)
Childbirth / Delivery Uncomplicated (O80)	PID / Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (N73.9)
Congenital Deformity (Q89.9)	Postpartum Hemorrhage (O72)
Contact with and (suspected) exposure to unspecified communicable disease (O62.0)	Pregnancy Related Conditions or Complications, Unspecified (O26.9)
Contractions (O62.0)	Preterm Labor Without Delivery (O60.0)
Diabetic: HYPOglycemia (E13.64)	Preterm Labor with Delivery (O60.1)
Eclampsia or Pre-Eclampsia (O15.9)	STD (Complications Related to) (A64)
Encounter for immunization (Z23)	Sexual Abuse/Rape (Suspected) (T76.2)
Epistaxis / Nose Bleed (Non-Traumatic) (R04.0)	Shock, Anaphylactic (T78.2)
Exhaustion due to excessive exertion (T73.3XXA)	Shock, Hypovolemia (R57.1)
Foreign Body in Ear (T16)	Shock, Unknown Cause (R57.9)
Foreign Body in Eye (T15)	Sickle Cell Anemia / Crisis (D57.0)
Foreign Body in Genitourinary Tract (T19.9)	Sunburn (L55.0)
Foreign Body in Nose (T17.1)	UTI / Urinary Tract Infection (N39.0)
HYPERglycemia, Diabetic (E13.65)	Vaginal Bleeding (N93.9)
Hematuria (R31)	

Data through 7/31/2026

Analysis preliminary and subject to change.

Appendix: Working Diagnosis Categories

Pain
Chest Pain, Non-Cardiac (R07.89)
Chronic Pain (G89.2)
Dental Pain or Problems (K08.8)
Pain in ankle and joints of foot (M25.57)
Pain in limb, unspecified (M79.60)
Pain, (Non-Traumatic) Not Otherwise Specified (G89.1)
Pain, Arm (Non-Traumatic) Unspecified Cause (M79.603)
Pain, Back (Non-Traumatic) (M54.9)
Pain, Eye (H57.10)
Pain, Leg (Non-Traumatic) Unspecified Cause (M79.606)

Psychiatric / Behavioral Problem
Anxiety Attack / Acute Stress Reaction (F43.9)
Excited / Agitated Delirium (R41.0)
Psychiatric / Behavioral Problem (F99)
Suicide Attempt (T14.91)

Respiratory
Asthma, Reactive Airway Disease (J45.901)
Bronchitis, Acute (J20.9)
COPD (Emphysema / Chronic Bronchitis) (J44.1)
COVID-19 (U07.1)
Croup (J05.0)
Epiglottitis (J05.1)
Foreign Body in Airway (T17.9)
Influenza (Flu Like Symptoms) (J11)
Pneumonia (J18.9)
Pneumothorax (J93.9)
Pulmonary Edema Acute Onset (J81.0)
Pulmonary Embolism (I26)
RSV (B97.4)
Respiratory Arrest (Non-Overdose with Pulse) (R09.2)
Respiratory Distress Unknown Cause (J98.9)
Shortness of breath (R06.02)
Suffocation / Asphyxia (T71)
URI / Upper Respiratory Infection (J06.9)

U.S. Drug Policy: A Brief National Landscape

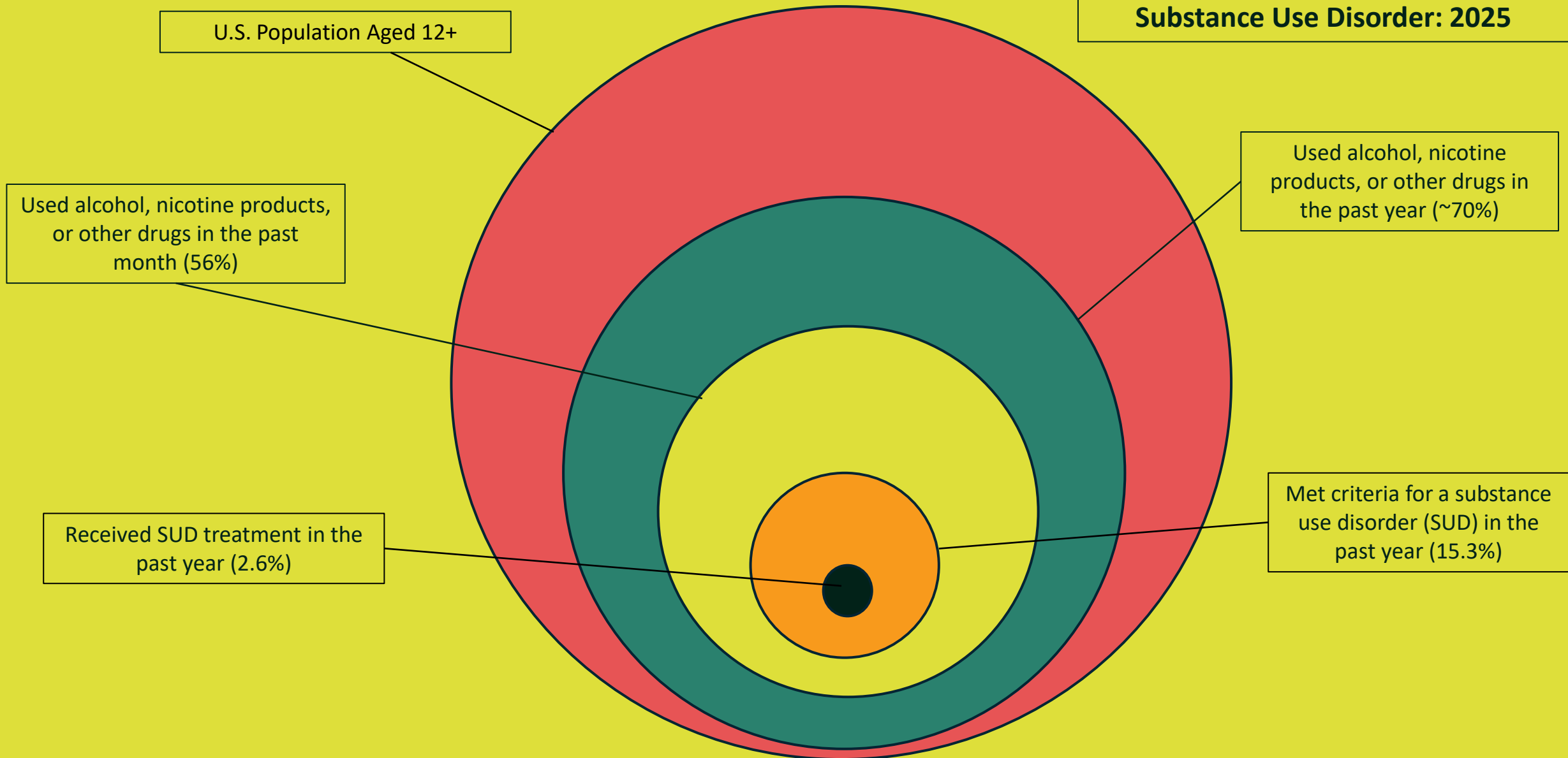
Kellen Russoniello, JD, MPH

Director of Public Health, Drug Policy Alliance

August 25, 2026

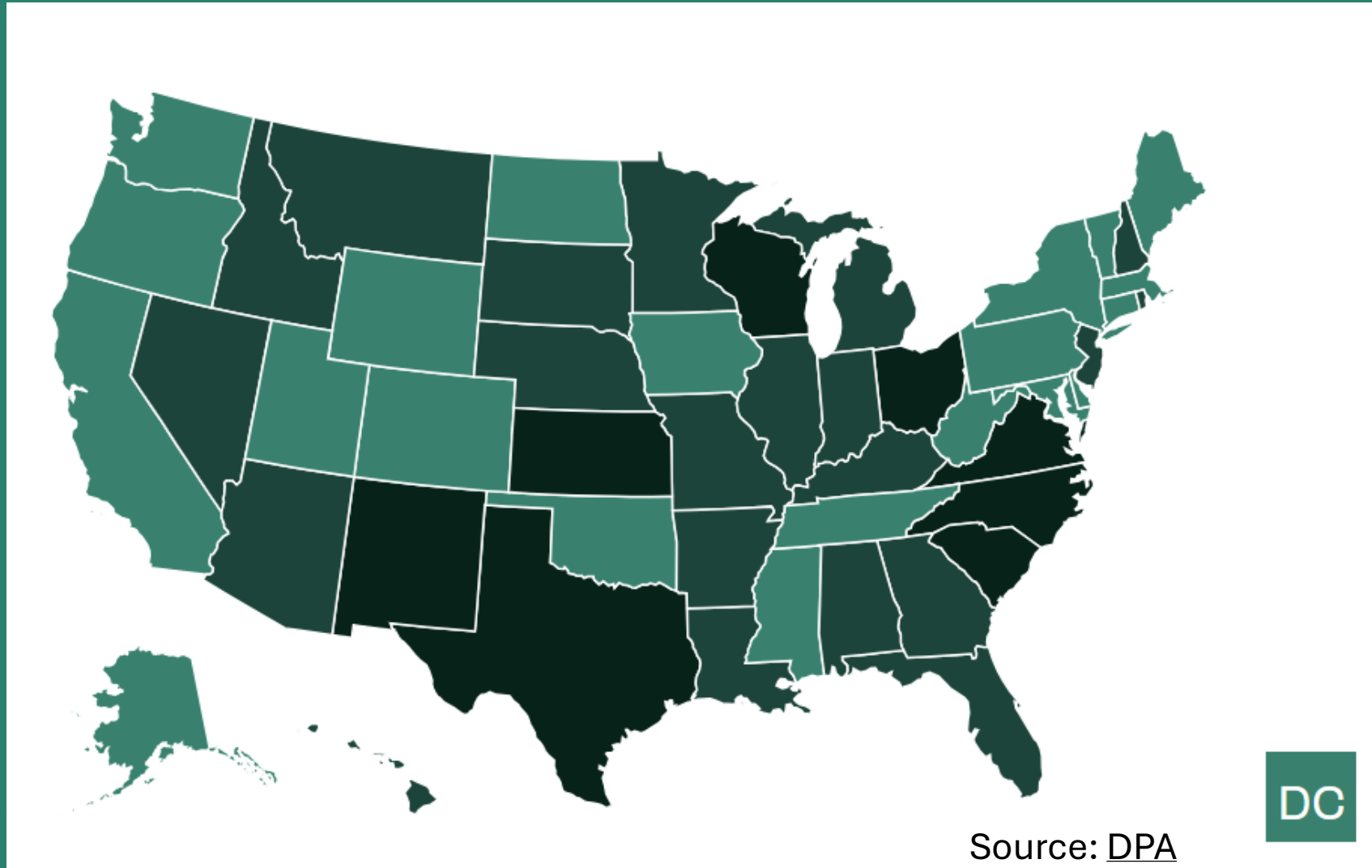


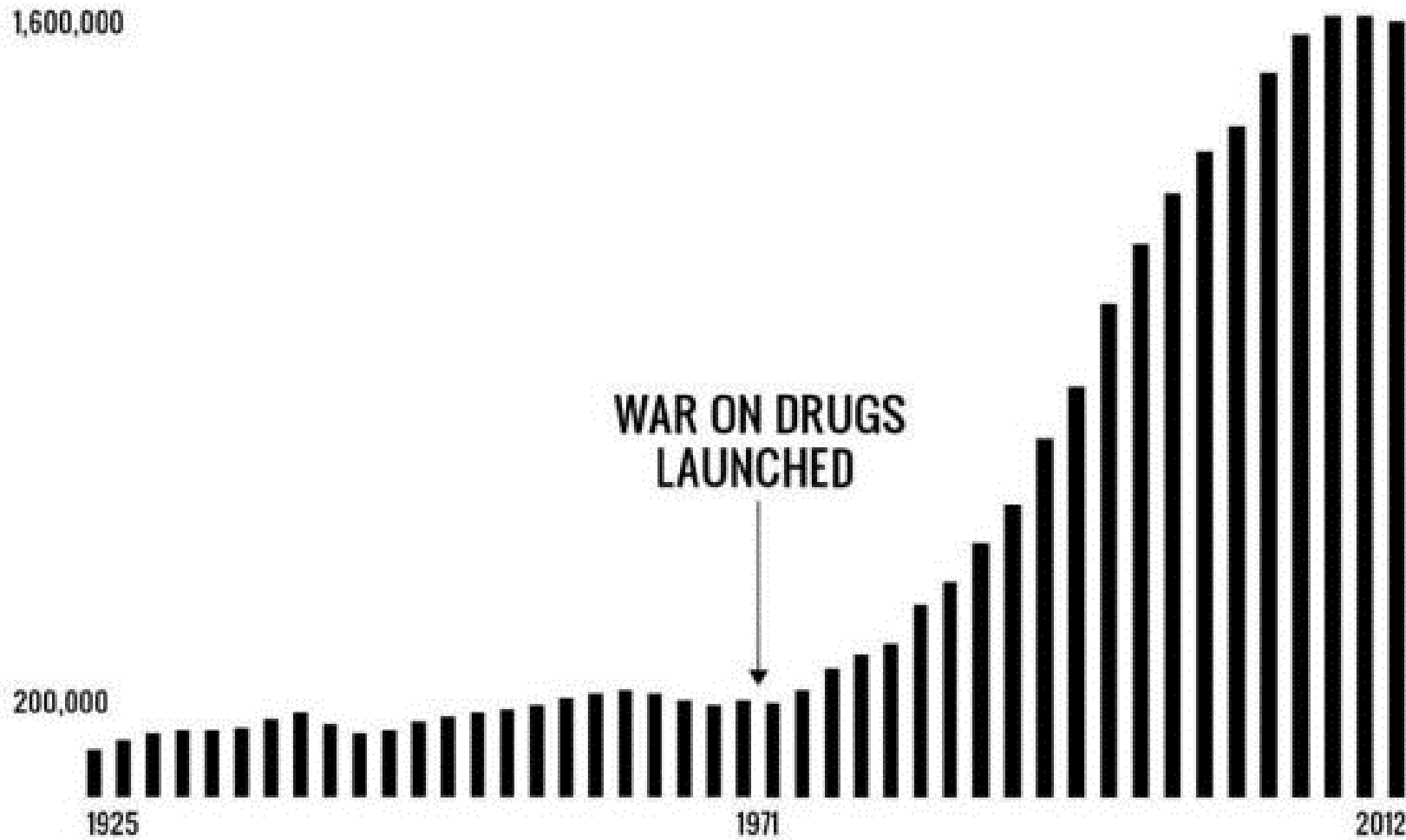
Prevalence of Substance Use and Substance Use Disorder: 2025



Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2026

Drug Possession Laws by State

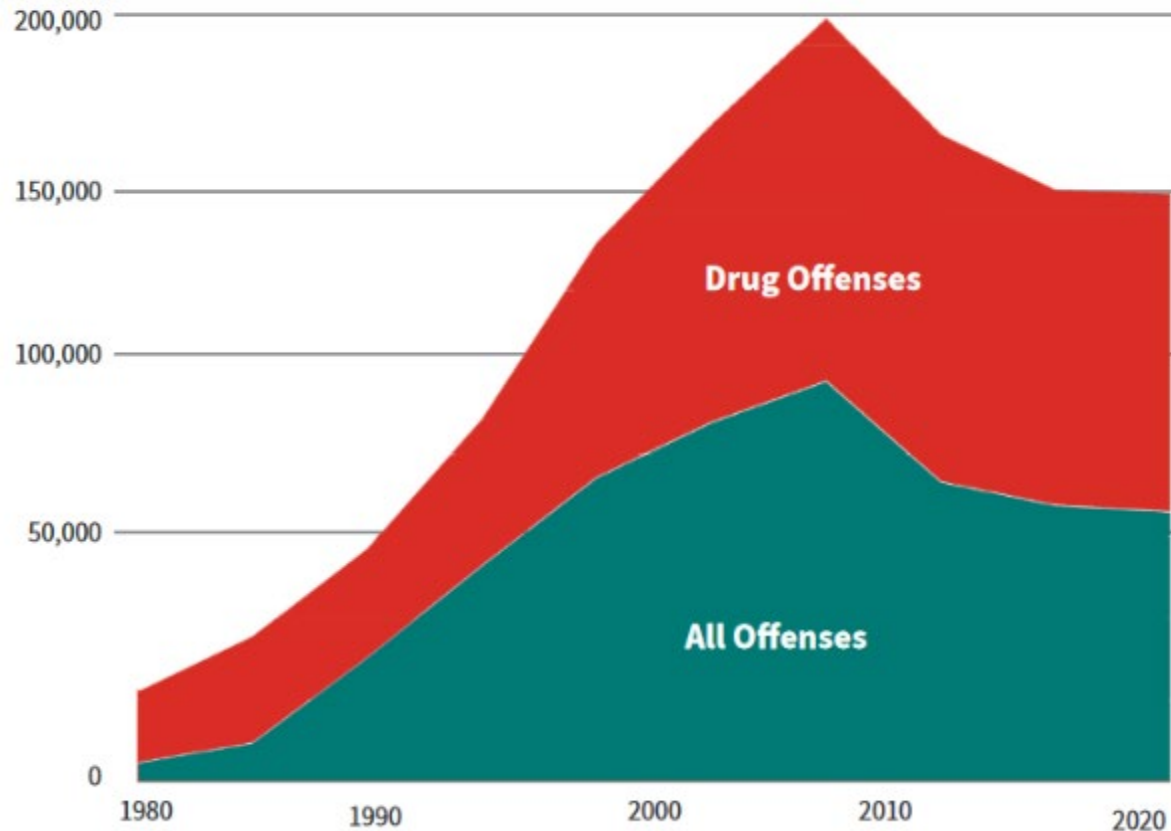




**THE U.S. STATE AND FEDERAL PRISON POPULATION
HAS INCREASED OVER 800% IN JUST 40 YEARS**

Incarceration for Drug Offenses

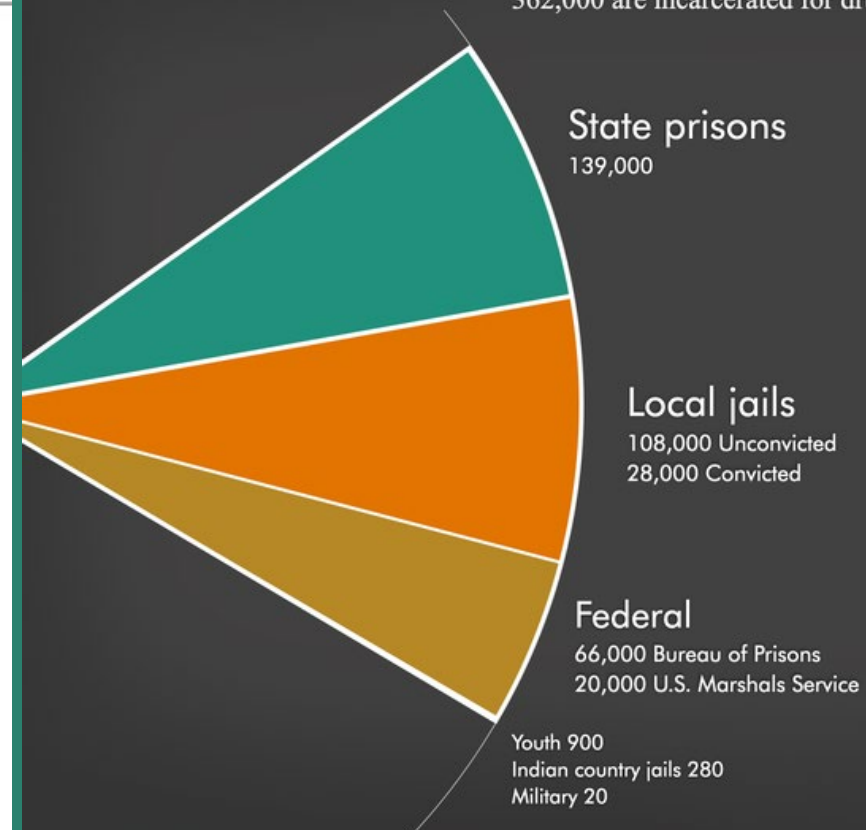
Figure 8. Share of People in Federal Prison for Drug Offenses, 1980-2022



Source: [The Sentencing Project](#)

1 in 5 incarcerated people is locked up for a drug offense

362,000 are incarcerated for drug offenses on any given day



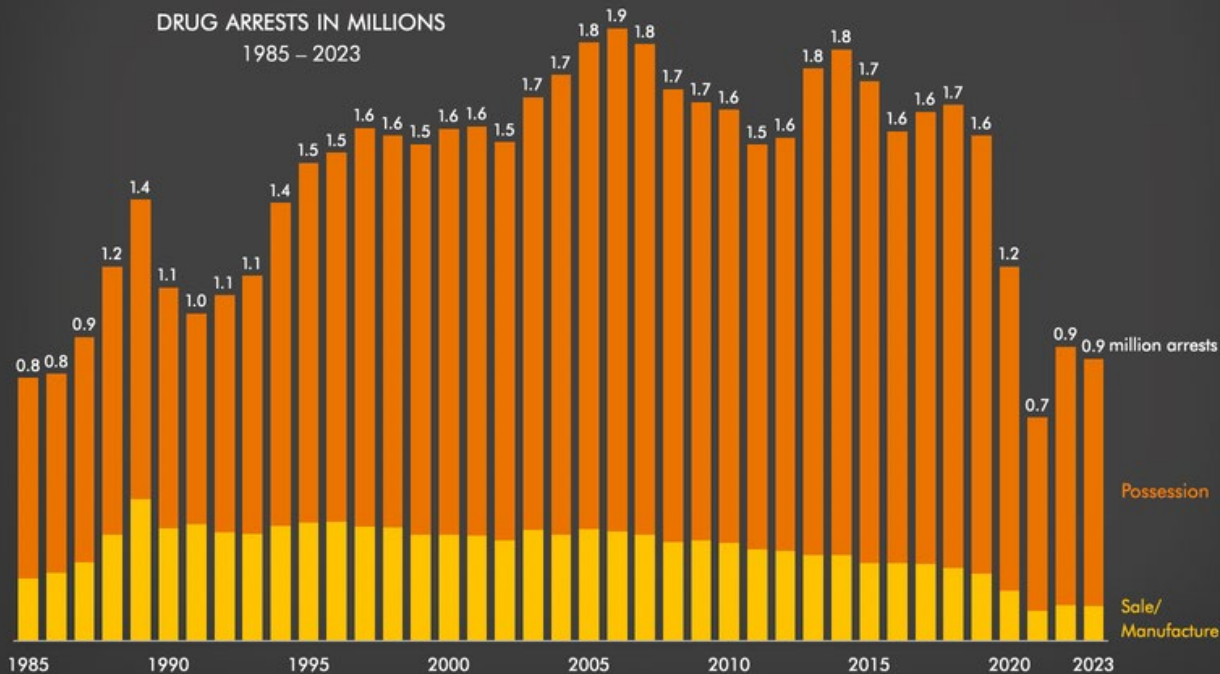
Source: [PPI](#)

Arrests for Drug Offenses

Even with recent changes to drug laws and enforcement, police still make almost a million drug arrests each year

Police arrest people 7 times as often for drug possession as they do for drug sales.

DRUG ARRESTS IN MILLIONS
1985 – 2023

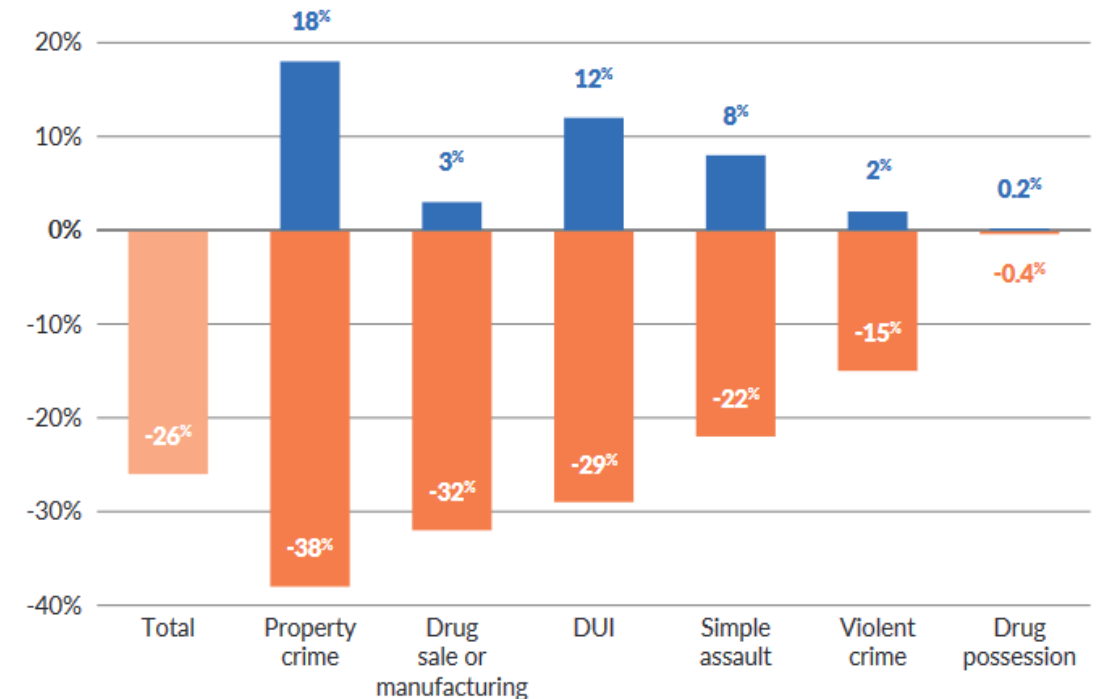


PRISON

POLICY INITIATIVE Compiled by the Prison Policy Initiative from Federal Bureau of Investigation *Crime in the United States* series

Arrests Remained Constant for Drug Possession but Declined for Other Crimes

Percentage change in arrests and share of overall decrease by offense category, 2009-19



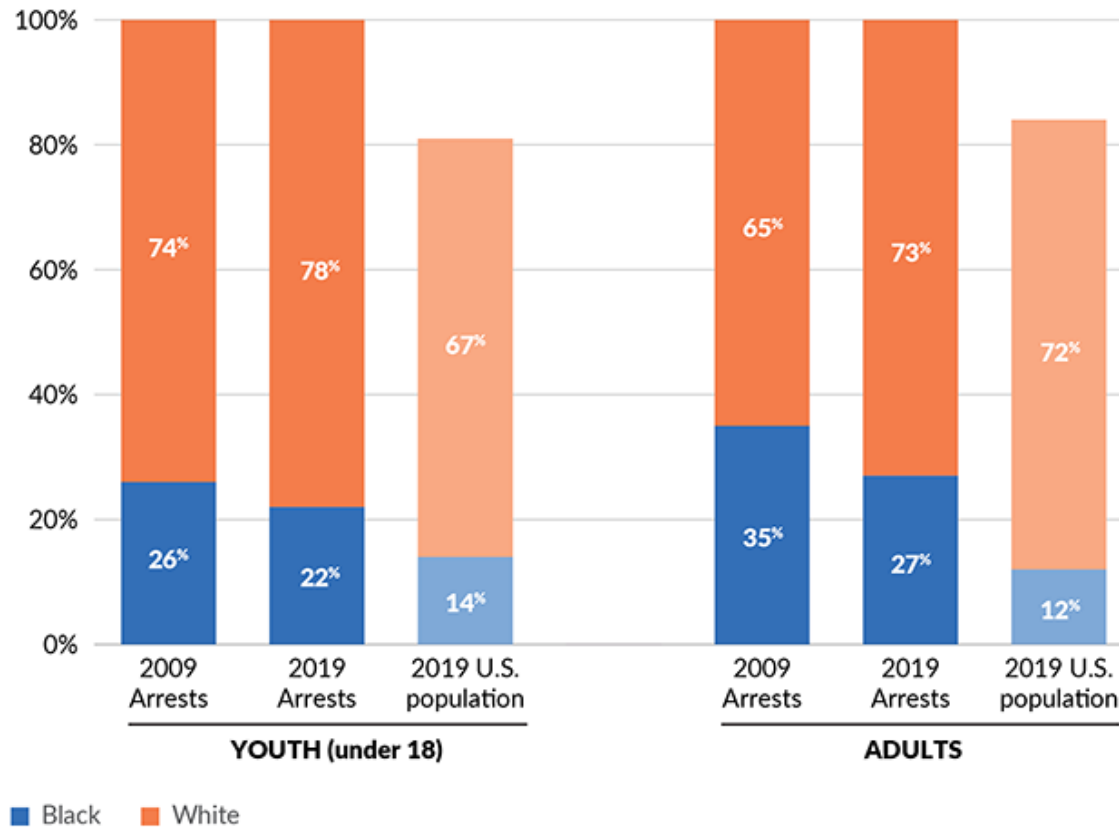
■ Share of total arrest decline ■ Percentage reduction in number of arrests

Source: [Pew](#)

Figure 4

Racial Disparities in Drug Arrests Fell, but Remained Pronounced

Youth and adult drug arrests by race, 2009 and 2019



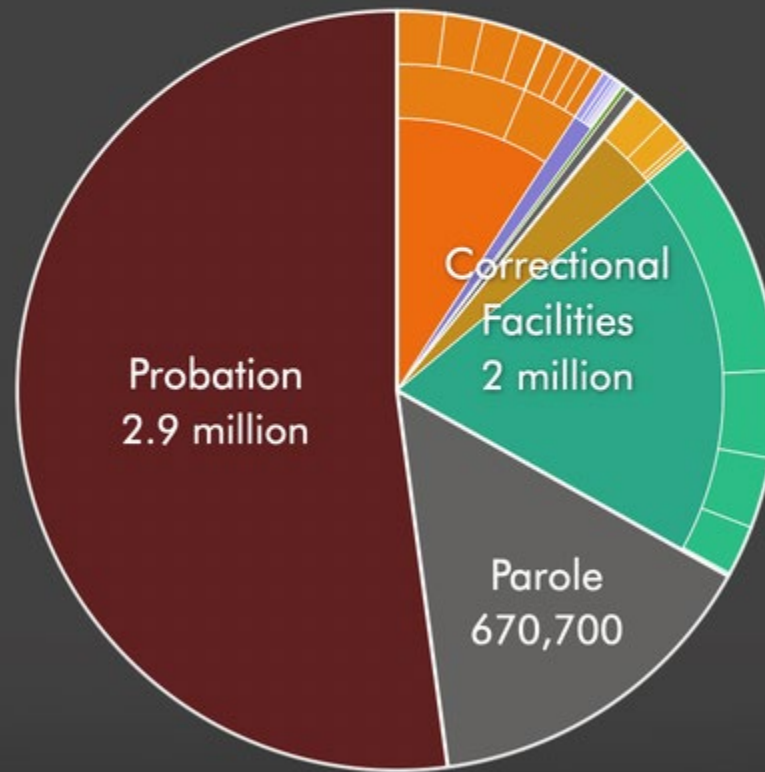
Note: The FBI Crime in the U.S. data does not include ethnicity numbers (e.g., arrests of Hispanic individuals), so racial groups do not indicate ethnicity.

Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Crime in the United States, 2009, 2019"; U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey, 2019 One-Year Estimates"

© 2022 The Pew Charitable Trusts

Incarceration is just one piece of the much larger system of correctional control

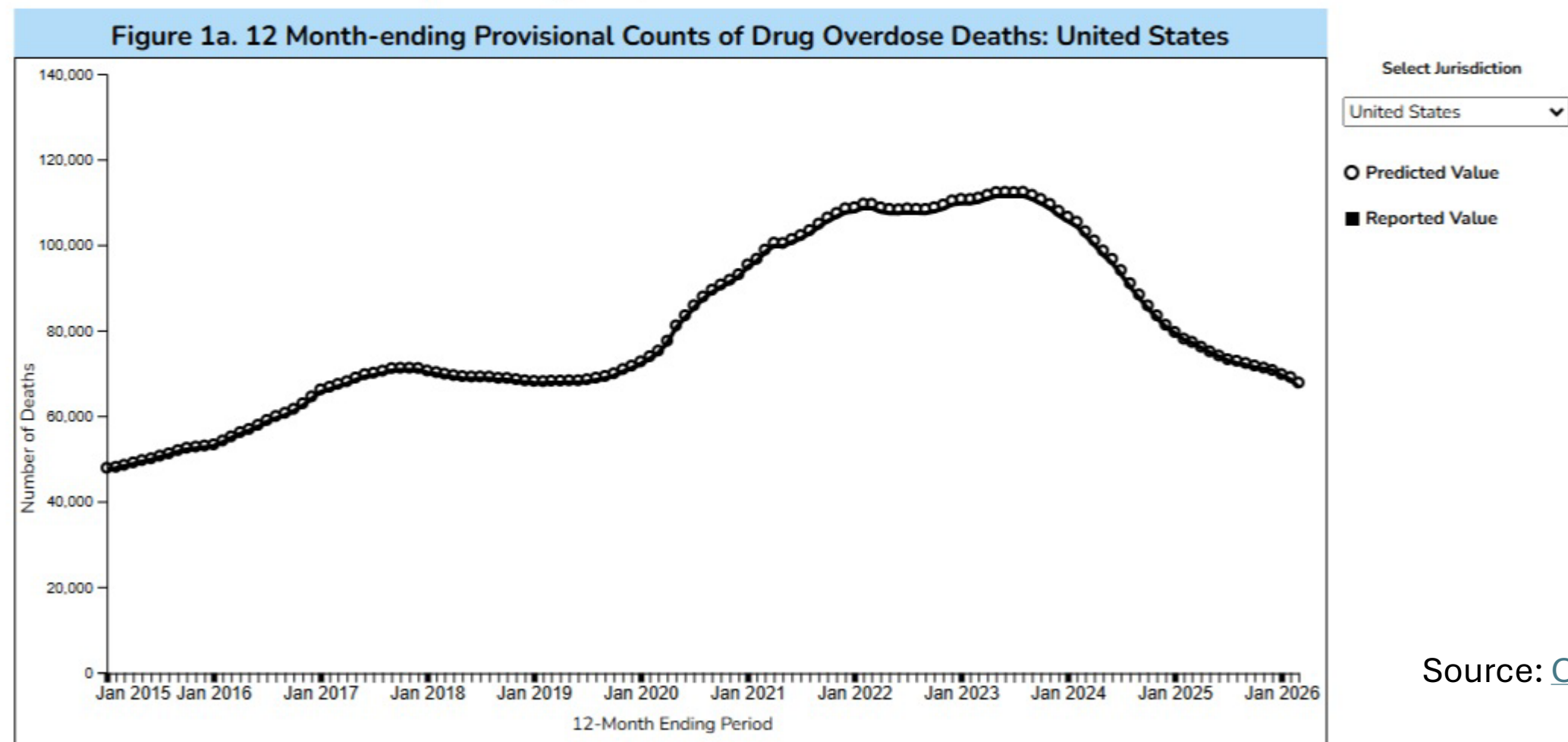
The U.S. justice system controls over 5.5 million people, more than half of whom are on probation.



PRISON
POLICY INITIATIVE

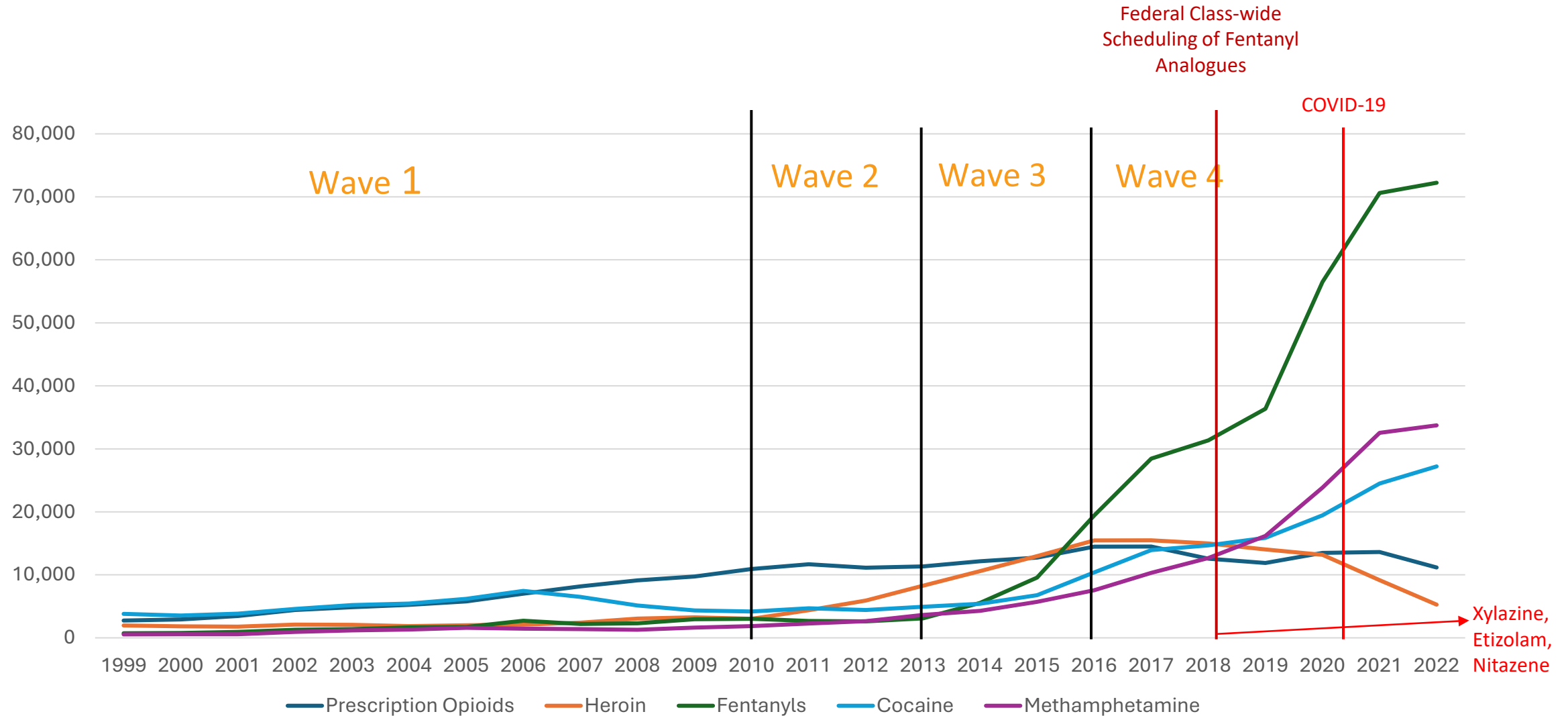
12 Month-ending Provisional Number and Percent Change of Drug Overdose Deaths

Based on data available for analysis on: August 4, 2026



Source: [CDC](#)

A Crisis in Four Waves



Enforcement Precedes Increases in Overdose Deaths

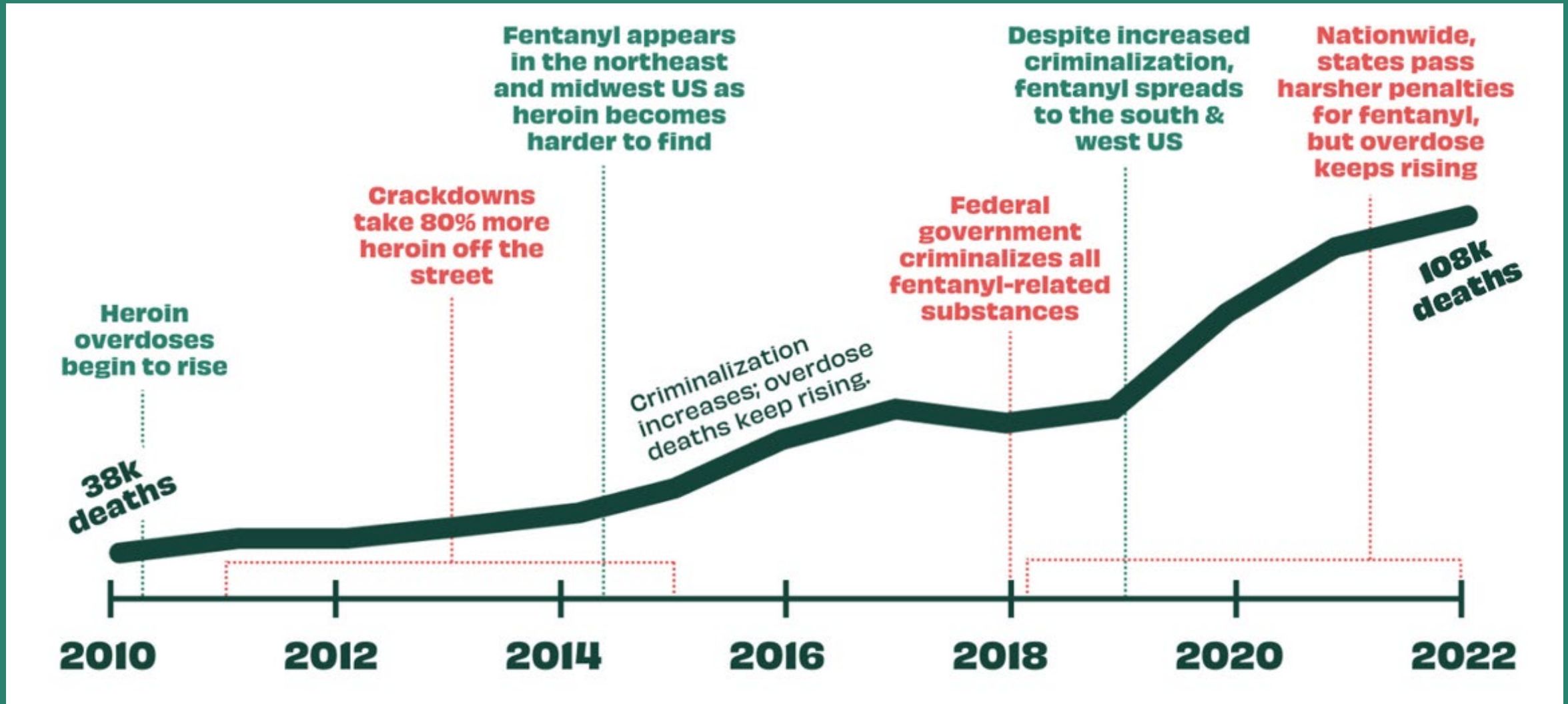
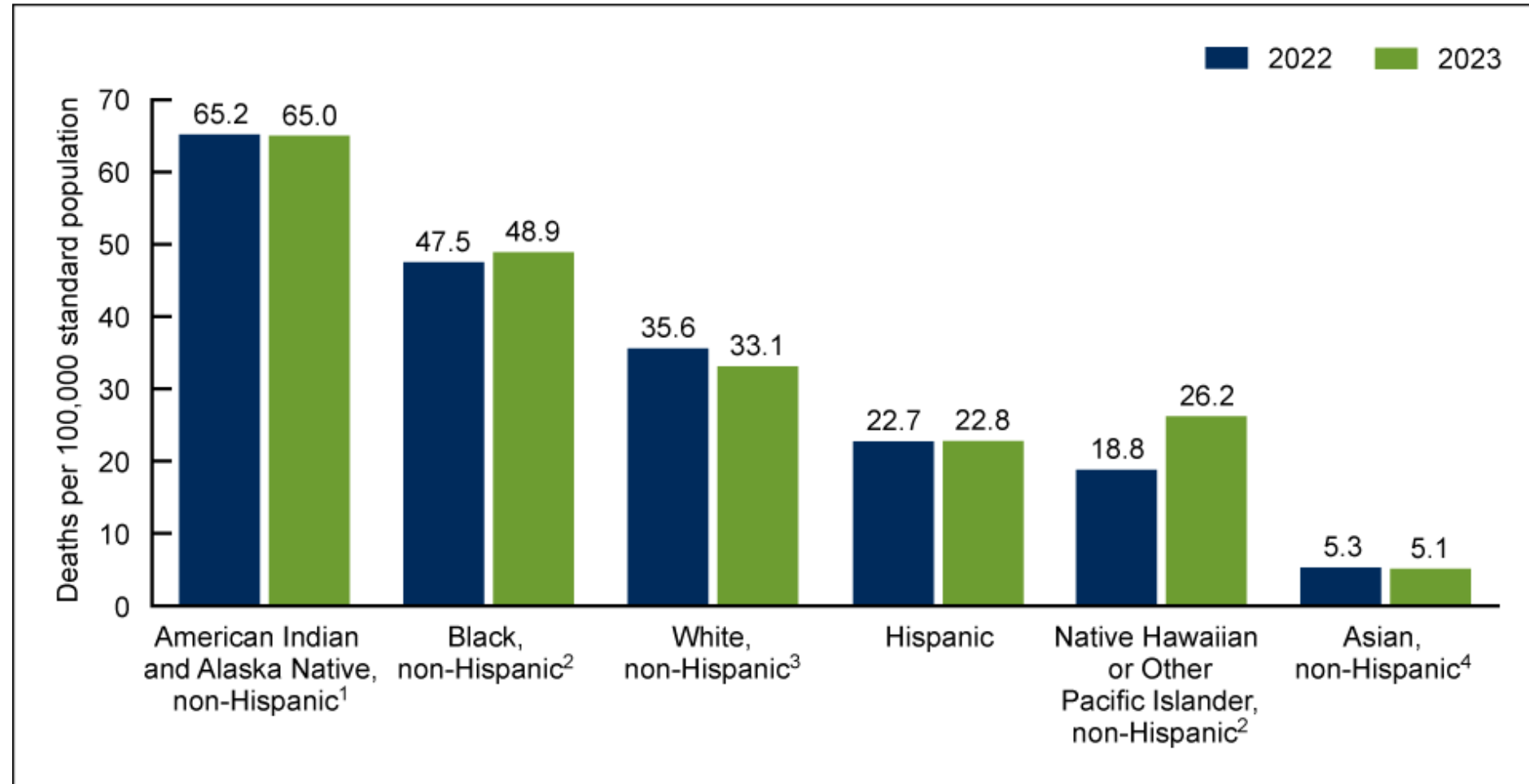


Figure 3. Age-adjusted drug overdose death rate, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, 2022 and 2023



¹Group was significantly higher than all others in 2022 and 2023 ($p < 0.05$).

²Significant increase between 2022 and 2023 ($p < 0.05$).

³Significant decrease between 2022 and 2023 ($p < 0.05$).

⁴Group was significantly lower than all others in 2022 and 2023 ($p < 0.05$).

NOTES: Misclassification of race and Hispanic origin on death certificates results in the underestimation of death rates by as much as 34% for American Indian and Alaska Native non-Hispanic people and 3% for Asian non-Hispanic and Hispanic people. Misclassification for Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander non-Hispanic people has not been evaluated. Drug overdose deaths are identified using the *International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision* underlying cause-of-death codes X40–X44, X60–X64, X85, and Y10–Y14. Age-adjusted death rates were calculated using the direct method and the 2000 U.S. standard population.

SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, mortality data file.

Access to Treatment is Limited

People who want help often can't get it due to:

- High costs
- Long waitlists
- Lack of providers
- Lack of evidence-based care (including non-abstinence-based options)
- Lack of social supports (childcare, transportation, etc.)

Syringe Service Programs



Credit: [SFAF](#)

Naloxone Access



Credit: opcinfo.org

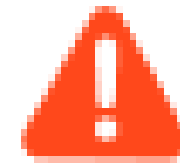
Drug Checking



TWO (2) red lines means... **NO**, there is no fentanyl



ONE (1) red line means... **YES**, there is fentanyl



Overdose Prevention Centers

Nearly 40 years of evidence demonstrates that overdose prevention centers:

- Save lives by reducing overdose deaths
- Reduce risk behaviors associated with disease
- Increase connections to health services, including treatment
- Improve public safety
- Decrease syringe litter
- Save money



Credit: opcinfo.org

Federal Shift

- Executive order condemning harm reduction and housing first
- Call for increasing civil commitment
- Cuts to Medicaid and other funding sources for SUD services
- Drugs used to justify foreign military intervention

Homelessness and Drug Use

- Homelessness is primarily driven by lack of affordable housing
- While the relationship between homelessness and drug use is complex, most people experiencing homelessness do not regularly use drugs
- Gaining stability through treatment is very difficult without a stable place to live
- Housing first is a proven strategy for reducing homelessness and drug use
- Criminalization solves neither the need for housing or for health services relating to drug use

Involuntary SUD Treatment

- Research on involuntary commitment has found no consistent evidence of significant reductions in drug use, overdose, or criminal legal contact following a period of involuntary commitment.
- However, involuntary commitment can:
 - Increase overdose risk
 - Lead to greater instability
 - Damage trust in the treatment system

Interventions We Need

- We all want to feel safe and for people to get the help they need
- If criminalization worked, it would have done so 50 years ago
- Harm reduction and voluntary, evidence-based treatment services have never been funded to the levels needed
- We need more investment in:
 - Comprehensive harm reduction programs
 - Overdose prevention centers
 - Expanded access to evidence-based treatment
 - Mobile crisis intervention
 - Affordable housing, including permanent supportive housing
 - Social supports (food, health, economic opportunities)

Thank You!

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