

2023-2024 PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW

Unified Care Team/Clean Seattle

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Table 1: Budget Summary (\$ in 000s)^a

| | 2022 Ongoing | 2022 One-Time | 2023 Changes | 2023 Proposed |
|--|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) | | | | |
| Cleaning – Recreational Vehicle (RV) Removal | \$1,030 | -- | (\$210) | \$820 |
| UCT Operations – Customer Service | -- | \$220 | \$220 | \$220 |
| FAS Subtotal | \$1,030 | \$220 | \$10 | \$1,040 |
| Human Services Department (HSD) | | | | |
| System Navigators – Unsheltered Outreach | \$850 | -- | \$980 | \$1,830 |
| Unsheltered Outreach Data & Resource Coordination | \$350 | -- | | \$350 |
| UCT Operations – Program Coordination | \$200 | -- | \$300 | \$500 |
| HSD Subtotal | \$1,400 | -- | \$1,280 | \$2,680 |
| Information Technology Department (ITD) | | | | |
| UCT Operations – Technology/GIS | -- | -- | \$180 | \$180 |
| ITD Subtotal | -- | -- | \$180 | \$180 |
| Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) | | | | |
| Clean Teams | \$1,100 ^b | \$4,190 | \$3,490 | \$4,590 |
| SDOT Subtotal | \$1,100 | \$4,190 | \$3,490 | \$4,590 |
| Seattle Police Department (SPD) | | | | |
| Alternative Response | \$2,150 | -- | -- | \$2,150 |
| SPD Subtotal | \$2,150 | -- | -- | \$2,150 |
| Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) | | | | |
| Clean Teams | \$2,510 | \$4,200 | \$6,400 ^c | \$8,910 |
| UCT Operations – Training | -- | -- | \$130 | \$130 |
| SPR Subtotal | \$2,510 | \$4,200 | \$6,530 | \$9,040 |
| Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) | | | | |
| Cleaning, RV Pump-Outs, RV Remediation | \$15,280 | \$960 | \$3,210 ^d | \$18,490 |
| SPU Subtotal | \$15,280 | \$960 | \$3,210 | \$18,490 |
| Total Appropriations | \$23,470 | \$9,570 | \$14,700 | \$38,170 |

- The categories and amounts in this table were provided by the Executive. Central Staff is still working to understand and reconcile some of the amounts.
- This is the transportation funding that SDOT has been paying to SPR to perform work in the right-of-way. The table shows this funding in SDOT and not in SPR to avoid double counting.
- This includes (i) \$5.3 million in new appropriation for Unified Care Team items, and (ii) \$1.1 million in new GF to backfill their base due to no longer billing SDOT for \$1.1 million.
- The 2023 increase is offset by a \$1.2 million reduction in public hygiene, resulting in a net addition for SPU of \$2 million.

I. Introduction

The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget includes a suite of increases intended to maintain increased levels of cleaning begun during the pandemic and to shift the City’s response for addressing the impacts of unsheltered homelessness from a citywide approach to an approach organized by geographic areas.¹ The proposal is known as the Unified Care Team (UCT)/Clean Seattle pilot program and includes additions in the following departments: Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Human Services Department (HSD), Information Technology Department (ITD), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). The Executive has described the UCT/Clean Seattle pilot as an operational structure designed to coordinate cross-departmental work to ensure that public spaces are clean, safe, and accessible.

This paper provides brief background information, pulls together information related to the UCT/Clean Seattle pilot from the various department-specific budget overview papers describing changes contained in the 2023–2024 Proposed Budget, and identifies one issue for Council consideration.

II. Background

The UCT/Clean Seattle pilot program can be thought of as a combination of work the City has been performing in two distinct, but related, realms: encampment response and removals, and citywide clean-up activities. The following sections provide brief descriptions of these bodies of work.

Encampment Response and Removals

Since 2017, the Navigation Team constituted the primary entity for responding to unsanctioned encampments in the City, primarily to remove or clean-up encampments. In 2018, SPR reallocated existing staff to form a 15-person Special Maintenance Team (including 2 Field Coordinators) to support the Navigation Team to respond to the increasing number of needed clean-ups of unsanctioned encampments on public property and to support SPU’s RV Remediation program. The annual cost of this effort was \$2.5 million in its first year. During the summer of 2020, the Council repurposed funding for the Navigation Team to increase funding for contracted homelessness outreach providers, while leaving the SPR funding unaffected. The 2021 Adopted Budget [replaced the Navigation Team](#) with the smaller Homelessness Outreach and Provider Ecosystem (HOPE Team). This action reduced the number of positions associated with assessing and addressing site conditions and called for a team that coordinated outreach and shelter referral among homelessness outreach providers generally without direct engagement with people experiencing homelessness. However, because contracted homelessness outreach providers expressed opposition to being present when encampments are removed, the System Navigators on the HOPE Team continue to be the only people consistently present during the posted removal period who make final offers of shelter.

With the elimination of the Navigation Team in 2021, SPR’s Special Maintenance Team assumed responsibility for facilitating the City’s process for assessing and prioritizing unsanctioned encampment sites in parks and SDOT rights-of-way for removal based on hazards and other site conditions (see [Multi-](#)

¹ The expanded UCT would include five teams: Northwest (D6 and D7), Northeast (D4 and D5), DT/Central (D7), Southwest (D1) and Southeast (D2 and D3).

[Departmental Administrative Rule \(MDAR\) 17-01](#) and [FAS Rule 17-01](#)). When an encampment is prioritized for removal, the HOPE Team initially identifies the homelessness outreach providers who have engaged with the encampment's residents, collaboratively develops a list of those in the encampment and their service and shelter needs and seeks to match encampment residents with appropriate shelter vacancies, though the ability to refer to the most appropriate shelter is dictated by availability and the length of advanced outreach needed. The Special Maintenance Team collaborates with the HOPE Team, which coordinates outreach and offers of shelter. The Special Maintenance team also manages the storage process for personal belongings, coordinates and performs site cleaning activities with contractors and the Seattle Police Department (as necessary), and performs litter picks and debris removal in accordance with formal encampment abatement rules while awaiting outreach services and offers of shelter. SPR's Special Maintenance Team consists of 21.5 FTE.

Citywide Clean-Up Activities

In Fall 2020, the Executive began a new initiative intended to provide a temporary surge in cleaning activities to address illegal dumping, trash, and graffiti in City parks, natural areas, and public rights-of-way that occurred during the pandemic. This new effort, known as the Clean Cities Initiative, was primarily led by teams of employees from SPR and SDOT. The initiative also provided funding to SPU to support the SPR and SDOT cleaning teams and increase the number of litter abatement routes, disposal boxes for sharps (e.g., syringes, needles), and the removal of graffiti.

The 2021 Adopted Budget continued the temporary surge by including a little more than \$2 million in the three departments to cover activities through April 2021, with some of the SPU activities stretching further into the year. In April, via [ORD 126320](#), the Council appropriated \$5.8 million of unallocated 2020 Coronavirus Relief Funds to support the surge activities through the end of 2021, bringing the total 2021 spending on the Clean City Initiative to approximately \$7.8 million.

The 2022 Adopted Budget continued the temporary surge funding again by including approximately \$9.3 million. The 2022 funding, however, was provided by one-time Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery (CLFR) funds that will end in December 2022.

III. Proposed Changes by Department

The following sections provide brief descriptions, by department, of the notable UCT/Clean Seattle-related changes contained in the 2023–2024 Proposed Budget.

A. Finance and Administrative Services

The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget for FAS would add \$219,000 GF and 2.0 FTE Senior Customer Service Representatives in 2023 and \$210,000 in FAS rates in 2024 to track complaints directed to the UCT/Clean Seattle pilot program by the Customer Service Bureau from assignment through resolution.

B. Human Services Department

HSD's HOPE Team is part of the UCT. The UCT is lead on encampment removals and coordinating the City's multi-department response. The role of the HOPE Team is to: (1) assess encampment site

conditions; (2) coordinate outreach partners, including the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA), prior to encampment removals; (3) coordinate outreach with other City departments related to encampment mitigation and removals; and (4) provide final offers of shelter prior to encampment removals.

The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget would increase staffing and funding at HSD to support the following activities of the UCT:

- System Navigators – The 2022 Adopted Budget included 4.0 FTE System Navigators (\$850,000).² The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget would add 6.0 FTE system navigators (\$980,000) for a total of 10.0 FTE system navigators (\$1,830,000). Two system navigators would be assigned to each of five geographically based teams. Within each team, the system navigators would be responsible for:
 - Conducting needs assessment at each site within an assigned geographic area regardless of a scheduled removal;
 - Beginning a “By Name List” (BNL) for each site;
 - Assigning outreach for each site to a provider who will develop relationships with people and help move them inside (regardless of a scheduled removal);
 - Convening on-site regional meetings to discuss how to support identified needs;
 - Collecting shelter availability (for set-aside beds) and referrals; and
 - Facilitating, coordinating, and communicating between stakeholders, service providers, and KCRHA.
- Unsheltered Outreach Data and Resource Coordination – The 2022 Adopted Budget included 2.0 FTE (\$350,000) to support data analysis for the City’s homelessness response. This would remain the same in the 2023–2024 Proposed Budget.
- UCT Program Coordination – The 2022 Adopted Budget included 1.0 FTE for a Program Manager (\$200,000) for the City’s homelessness response. The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget would add 2.0 FTE (\$300,000) to support program management, for a total of 3.0 FTE in 2023 (\$500,000).

C. Seattle Department of Transportation

Currently, SDOT provides \$1.1 million for SPR’s Special Maintenance Team to provide for clean-up of the right-of-way. In 2022, SDOT received \$4.2 million of one-time CLFR funds as part of the Clean City Initiative temporary surge that allowed SDOT to provide additional cleaning of the right-of-way utilizing temporary labor.

The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget would establish a permanent SDOT team to provide right-of-way clean-up services in the model of the SPR team. The proposed budget would add 18.0 FTE in SDOT, including 14.0 FTE Maintenance Laborer positions (converting temporary positions to regular positions), 3.0 FTE Inspector (Strategic Advisor 1) positions, and 1.0 FTE Manager 2 position to oversee the effort. These SDOT positions would be funded with an additional \$3.6 million of GF and the existing \$1.1 million of SDOT funds that had previously been transferred to SPR. With these resources, SDOT would maintain the current 2022 levels of service for clean-up services. The use of General Fund resources to support these positions would allow this SDOT team to work at locations outside of the right-of-way.

² One system navigator is currently out-of-class.

D. Seattle Parks and Recreation

The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget for SPR includes \$5.4 million GF in 2023 and \$5.6 million in 2024 to continue funding work that started under the Clean Cities Initiative and to expand that work. The largest portion of the proposed funding is \$3.3 million that would support the cost of a new 30.0 FTE to staff this initiative on a permanent basis. SPR has used temporary positions, out-of-class positions, and re-assigned staff from other duties to support the Clean Cities Initiative since 2020. A total of 20.5 FTE currently carry out this work at an annual cost of \$2.6 million in 2022. The new positions would perform the following duties: cleaning and maintenance, field coordination, policy compliance, data tracking and reporting, staff trainings, and overall leadership/management. These positions appear to be added to SPR’s Special Maintenance Team which performs encampment clean-ups and the management team that oversees this team. As such, this would increase the City’s capacity to do encampment clean-ups in addition to other UCT activities.

Additionally, \$2 million of the proposed funding would support non-labor costs, including: activation at cleaned sites, bio-clean contractors, dump fees, purchase of two vehicles, miscellaneous supplies and rentals, and training classes (first aid, de-escalation, etc.) for staff. Total non-labor costs in 2022 is \$1.6 million.

E. Seattle Public Utilities

The 2023–2024 Proposed Budget for SPU includes a number of changes related to the department’s General Fund budget, which contains the programs that address issues such as litter, graffiti, hygiene, illegal dumping, sharps collection, rodent abatement, and abandoned vehicles. Historically, these programs have been known as Clean City programs. It is not entirely clear at this point which SPU services will be directed by the new UCT/Clean Seattle organizational structure and which services will be directed by SPU and will work in coordination with the effort on an as-needed basis.

Some of the notable changes for programs related to the UCT/Clean Seattle effort are:

- \$1.7 million increase in 2023 for increased litter pickup and cleaning services. This funding would be used for increased abatement of litter, trash, biohazardous waste, needles, and other illegal dumping in the public right-of-way across the city five days per week. In addition, the proposal states that contractors would report encampment locations and weekly RV counts citywide.
- \$1.2 million increase and 3.0 FTE in 2023 for an expanded graffiti control and abatement program. The new positions include 2.0 FTE Painters, one that will focus on abating graffiti on SDOT structures and one that will engage with and coordinate assistance for private property owners that have graffiti on their property. The other position is a 1.0 FTE Executive 2 that will be tasked with planning and implementing enhanced graffiti abatement efforts and coordinating that work with the UCT/Clean Seattle. The position will be matrix managed between SPU and the Mayor’s Office and will be the single point of contact at the City designated to lead graffiti efforts and will be responsible for establishing standard graffiti tracking metrics and abatement procedures.
- \$620,000 increase in 2023 for the Encampment Trash program, also known as the Purple Bag program. The program provides proactive weekly garbage service to unsanctioned

homeless encampments by working through contracted outreach partners to provide purple garbage bags to encampment residents. In 2022, the program has been serving 32 sites per month, and the proposed funding would increase that to 60 sites per month.

- \$1.2 million reduction to the Public Hygiene program in 2023, and \$100,000 reduction to the Public Sinks program in 2023. The reductions to Public Hygiene include a reduction in the number of funded hygiene stations (from 21 down to 15) and a shift in the hygiene trailer program to only offer service at three stationary sites. The reduction to Public Sinks would result in the elimination of the program. See the SPU Budget Overview Paper for a discussion of these reductions.

IV. Issues for Council Consideration During Budget Deliberations

1. Increased Capacity to Perform Encampment Removals

The expansion of the UCT could significantly increase the capacity of the UCT to conduct encampment removals. As noted above, current rules governing encampment removals are found in MDAR 17-01 and FAS 17-01. FAS 17-01 specifies that:

7.1 Prior to removing an encampment, the City shall offer alternative locations for individuals in an encampment or identify available housing or other shelter for encampment occupants....

7.2 The alternatives may include housing programs, shelter programs with or without day programs, authorized encampments, and “no-barrier” authorized shelter or encampment programs. The City is not required to provide additional alternatives to individuals who have been previously or are currently excluded from all usual and appropriate alternatives because of the individual’s behavior.

If these rules are being followed, encampment removals should only increase commensurate with the growth of alternative locations, housing or other shelter options to offer individuals living in encampments. The expansion of the number of system navigators could also increase capacity to do outreach and encampment mitigation without removals; however there is no guarantee in the proposal that UCT expansion would not accelerate encampment removals.

Options:

- A. Eliminate all increased funding and staffing for the UCT.
- B. Reduce appropriations to scale changes in funding and staffing to better reflect a phased implementation of the expansion and reorganization into geographic teams.
- C. Impose a proviso on some or all of the funds restricting how the additional funding may be used.
- D. Reduce appropriations to only provide funding and staffing for the Clean Cities Initiative work to continue at the 2022 level of service.
- E. Eliminate increased funding and staffing for additional system navigators.
- F. No change.