



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Richard Mendoza, Director, Public Works Department
Ken Snipes, Director, Austin Resource Recovery Department

DATE: August 20, 2020

SUBJECT: Underpass Clean-up Process update, July 29 Council Agenda Item #74

PURPOSE: This memo provides an update on the City's underpass clean-up process associated with the July 29 Council Agenda Item #74.

OVERVIEW: TxDOT maintains highway bridge infrastructure throughout the City to ensure its safety. TxDOT first began under-bridge cleanups several years ago to ensure the safety of its workers during bridge inspections. Four years ago, in the face of increasing trash volumes and complaints from the community, TxDOT expanded the service to monthly cleanups performed under its district-wide debris contract. TxDOT and the City are working as partners to deal with this challenging issue. The increasing number of people experiencing homelessness in Austin resulted in a need for the state to transition the duties to the City, which is better equipped to provide outreach and services to the population at risk. This cleaning program is part of the City's overall Clean City Strategy and is a companion to the Violet Bag Program.

Trash and debris accumulation at these locations can create an unsafe environment for our community, including anyone who may be living at these locations. These routine cleanings are a necessary service and should not be characterized as "sweeps" designed to remove anyone living at these locations, rather the remained focused on making the area clean and safe for all our community members.

Council Guidance

At the July 29 Council Meeting staff informed Council that the process would be reviewed in light of some concerns. Staff committed to taking the following steps:

- Look at the feasibility and cost to transition services from contract to in house.
- Increase the Violet Bag Program over the next year and seek ways to improve the current monthly trash and debris pickup process by engaging with social services providers, HOST and EMS Medics.
- All City and contract employees involved in this process would undergo training to assist with working closely with community members and vulnerable individuals living at these locations
- Revise the current posting notification to include additional details about this service
- Provide a supplemental posting that lists other available City services
- Translate all posting materials into Spanish
- Provide a monthly report on progress in transitioning to a new service model that includes the tenants above as well the services that have been provided.

Based on these commitments, staff would like to take this opportunity to update Council on our efforts and our new path forward.

Feasibility and Cost to Transition Services In-House

Using information provided by Public Works, Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) is analyzing the resources that the contractor needs to accomplish the scope of work under the contract to determine what

would be required to do this work in house. Staff will present these results to Council as part of the October Report.

Increase of the Scope of the Violet Bag Program and Transform our Monthly Process

During the next year, we will be increasing the scope of the Violet Bag Program and transform our monthly process to one that provides more effective results.

Staff has reviewed the current monthly process based on feedback provided on July 29 and has reached out to and met with Integral Care, HOST, and EMS Medics to understand the negative impacts and address them. Integral Care committed to visiting the sites before and after the services performed and all members will provide feedback so that adjustments can be made.

In October, a pilot program will be initiated at two locations, HWY 290 / 71 and Pack Saddle and HWY 183 and Cameron Road. These locations were selected based volume, that they are current Violet Bag locations, and space available to place a dumpster without creating a transportation safety issue.

The pilot program will involve dropping off a dumpster the day before the monthly schedule cleaning and working with the community members residing at the location to help us with trash and debris removal. The dumpster will be picked up at the end of day. The next day Public Works will still visit the site and pick up any other remaining debris.

Pictures will be taken before and after each day and the contractor will provide the tonnage of what was picked up. We will run this pilot for three months and provide detailed observations in the January 2021 Report to Council.

Improvements in the Monthly Process

Based on feedback received from Council and observations and discussions with the social service providers, Public Works has made the following changes to the process:

- The day prior to services, Public Works employees will visit each location and provide BE SEEN / BE SAFE Bags, masks, Violet Bags, and gloves.
- During this pre-service visit, community members at these locations will be reminded to please place all personal items in their tent, so that they will not be mistakenly taken.
- Contract employees have been instructed to consider a “virtual” bubble around all tents and if there is a question whether an item is a “personal item”, then they are to talk to their supervisor prior to picking it up. If the supervisor is not available or is unsure, then the item will be left. If the community member is at the location at the time of the service, then they will be asked to ensure the item is not mistakenly taken.

Training of City and Contract Employees

All City and Contract Employees directly involved with in this cleaning process have completed training from Integral Care and focused on ensuring that we are respecting the integrity of these vulnerable populations.

Moving forward this training will be incorporated into our annual and new hire training process for those City and contract employees that will be responsible for managing and delivering these services.

Revised Postings

Staff has revised the service notice working collaboratively with social services providers, EMS, HOST, and the Communications and Public Information Office (CPIO). The revised notice is provided as **Attachment 1**. Along with this revised service notice, an accompanying poster that lists social services and contact information will be posted with the notice. This poster is provided as **Attachment 2**. These postings will also be provided in Spanish by the end of the next week.

Monthly Reporting

Staff is currently working on a monthly reporting format that will provide Council updates on our transitioning process, including the results of our pilot programs. The first report will be provided at the end of September / beginning of October.

Monthly Schedule

During our meeting with social service providers, it was mentioned that taking a programmatic approach to our cleanings would help to lessen the impact. Starting in October, services will be provided on the same day every month for each location. This is outlined in *Attachment 3*.

August / September Schedule

The City has been working with the Census Bureau regarding the 2020 Census to ensure that all our community members are counted. In coordination with the Census Team, we have grouped August and September as a “virtual month” and will only be performing services once between August 17th thru September 10th. The service schedule is provided in *Attachment #4*.

Conclusion: We are committed to achieving our goal of removing debris and trash from these areas, while also respecting the integrity of any vulnerable population. Doing so will require a continued evolution of our processes described above, and City staff are committed to working with our community members to achieve this goal.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: New Services Posting

Attachment 2: New Social Services Posting

Attachment 3: New Programmatic Approach Starting October 2020

Attachment 4: Monthly Schedule for August / September

CC:

Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Gina Fiandaca, Assistant City Manager
Chris Shorter, Assistant City Manager

Notice

Public Space Cleaning Service: Underpass Cleaning

Posting Date: _____ Service Date: _____

Service Location: _____

Purpose:

The City of Austin provides Public Space Cleaning Services to maintain the health of our residents and prevent litter and debris from creating unsafe conditions. One of these services is our Underpass Cleaning.

Underpass Cleaning:

This area is one of many locations the City of Austin cleans at least once per month in order to provide a clean and safe environment for our community.

How Underpass Cleaning Works:

- Written notices are posted at least 72 hours in advance of cleaning.
- Crews will provide masks, violet bags and gloves to anyone living at these locations the day prior to services.
- On the scheduled day crews will arrive to collect full trash bags and further remove litter, debris, or unsafe items from the area.
- Personal Items will not be removed. Please help us by placing all your personal items in your tent.
- Any individuals that are not involved in the cleaning process will need to leave the work area temporarily.
- Once complete, the cleaned area will be opened back up.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What items are allowed to stay on site?

A: Personal items will not be removed, including tents and any items stored in tents. Bicycles, electronic equipment, personal documents, eyeglasses, medicine, photographs, jewelry, crutches and wheelchairs are a few examples of personal items that can remain. Please place additional personal items in the provided “Be Safe – Be Seen” bags, which will not be removed.

Q: What items are not allowed to stay on site?

A: Trash and debris will be removed, as well as any items considered unsafe. Unsafe items include anything that is wet, soiled, bug-infested, or flammable. Specific unsafe items include indoor furniture, such as couches and mattresses, as well as building materials that pose a safety hazard.

Q: Do I have to move somewhere else?

A: No, you can return to your space once the cleaning is complete.

Q: Why is there a work zone set up?

A: The work zones keep everyone safe while cleaning occurs and allows the crews to complete their work more quickly, limiting disruption. Anyone is free to observe the cleanings from outside the temporary work zone area.

Clean City Strategy - Safe Space Cleaning Service

If you have questions or concerns about this service or want to connect with an outreach specialist about pathways out of homelessness please start by calling 3-1-1.



Community Resources to Get Help

Visit [Austintexas.gov/homelessness](https://austintexas.gov/homelessness) and call 2-1-1 for information about any and all resources

As members of this community, your health and safety are our priority. COVID-19 has changed a lot about what services are available and how to get them. These listings are up to date as of August, 2020.

Mental Health Care

Integral Care Helpline 512-472-HELP (4357)

Integral Care Helpline offers mental health crisis support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For adults and children having a mental health crisis, call 512-472-HELP (4357) for clinic access. When you call the Integral Care Helpline, the person you speak with will listen and ask questions. The Helpline staff will help you with your crisis. If you or someone else is in immediate danger, Helpline staff may call 9-1-1 to get help from a first responder, and a police officer may be dispatched. For scheduled, face-to-face appointments, all clients will be screened for COVID-19.

Location: 1165 Airport Blvd., Austin, TX 78702
Hours: Mon – Fri, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., Sat, Sun and Holidays, 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Healthcare

CommUnityCare – Hancock Walk-in Clinic 512-978-9015

Location: 1000 E. 41st Street, Ste. 925
Austin, TX 78751
Hours: 7 days a week, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Shelter Resources

Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH) 512-305-4100

Location: 500 E 7th Street, Austin, TX 78701
Shelter for men only at night.

Salvation Army - Downtown Shelter & Services Center 512-476-1111

Location: 501 E 8th Street, Austin, TX 78701
Housing-focused emergency shelter, case management, employment services for single women and single men.

Austin Shelter for Women and Children 512-933-0600

For women with or without children needing housing assistance (up to 3 months) and childcare. Does not allow men over 17 years old to visit the shelter.

Rathgeber Center 737-256-6926

Housing-focused emergency shelter, case management, childcare for parents/families with children without regard to gender of parents.

SAFE Alliance 512-267-7233

24-hr hotline for assistance with domestic violence, abuse, or sexual assault.

Other Resources

ECHO: Coordinated Assessment for Housing Programs

Fill out an online application to be screened for a coordinated assessment on the Aunt Bertha website at bit.ly/echoscreener.

Sunrise Community Church

Food, mail services, ID help, hygiene supplies, housing navigation services. Shower service, Mon 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Location: 4430 Menchaca Road, Austin, TX 78745
Hours: Mon – Fri, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Goodwill of Central Texas

Computer lab and virtual case management.
Location: 1015 Norwood Park Blvd., Austin, TX 78753
Hours: Mon – Fri mornings.

Trinity Center

Breakfast, Mon – Fri, 9:00 a.m.
Mail check, Mon – Fri, 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Supper served, Sunday, 3:00 p.m.
Location: 304 E 7th St., Austin, TX 78701

Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC)

Drop-in access to case managers including assistance with basic needs, resource navigation, food access, hygiene, masks, and access to restrooms and water.
Location: 1105 E. Cesar Chaves, Austin, TX 78702
Hours: Mon - Fri, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) 512-804-3720

HOST supports the downtown and West Campus areas:

For more information please visit: austintexas.gov/homelessness or call Austin 3-1-1



Attachment 3

BRIDGE UNDERPASS CLEANUP: SERVICE CALENDAR 2020

JANUARY 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

MARCH 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MAY 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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30						

JULY 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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AUGUST 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER 2020						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

SCHEDULE LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Date = Group 1
 East: First Tuesday (SGT Hallas)
 West: Second Tuesday (SGT Hallas)</p> <p>Date = Group 2
 East: Third Tuesday (SGT Hugonett)
 West: Third Thursday (SGT Hugonett)</p> <p>Date = Group 3
 Grand to 290: First Thursday (SGT Davis)
 183 North: Third Tuesday (SGT Hugonett)</p> <p>Date = Group 4
 Fourth Wednesday (SGT Jefferson)</p> | <p>Date = Group 5
 Second Thursday (SGT Davis)</p> <p>Date = City Holiday</p> |
|--|---|

UNDERPASS CLEANUP
SCHEDULE
AUG / SEPT 2020

LOCATION / TOTAL: 60	SERVICE DATE	POSTING DATE	VIOLET BAG	APD LEAD
GROUP 1: BEN WHITE & 290/71 & Slaughter Lane/ Menchaca Bridge (13 SITES) FIRST AND SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH				
FIRST TUESDAY OF MONTH				
Montopolis	8/18/2020	8/13/2020	VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG	SGT HALLAS
Burleson	8/18/2020	8/13/2020		
IH35	8/18/2020	8/13/2020		
Ben White	8/18/2020	8/13/2020		
Omin Hotel & Ben White	8/18/2020	8/13/2020		
South Congress	8/18/2020	8/13/2020		
1st St	8/18/2020	8/13/2020		
SECOND TUESDAY OF MONTH				
Banister	8/25/2020	8/20/2020	VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG	SGT HALLAS
Manchaca	8/25/2020	8/20/2020		
Packsaddle	8/25/2020	8/20/2020		
South Lamar	8/25/2020	8/20/2020		
West Gate	8/25/2020	8/20/2020		
Cavendar's & Ben White	8/25/2020	8/20/2020		
Slaughter Lane / Menchaca Bridge	8/25/2020	8/20/2020		
GROUP 2: HWY 183 CAMERON ROAD TO SHOAL CREEK TURNAROUND (11 SITES)				
GROUP 2 EAST: THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH				
Cameron Road	9/1/2020	8/27/2020	VIOLET BAG	SGT HUGONETT
I35	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		
Northcrest / Georgian	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		
N Lamar	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		
Anderson Sq	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		
GROUP 2 WEST: THIRD THURSDAY				
Fairfield	9/3/2020	8/27/2020	VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG	SGT DAVIS
Ohlen	9/3/2020	8/27/2020		
Payton Gin	9/3/2020	8/27/2020		
Metric / Burnet Entrance SB	9/3/2020	8/27/2020		
Burnet	9/3/2020	8/27/2020		
Shoal Creek Turnaround	9/3/2020	8/27/2020		
GROUP 3: I35 FROM GRAND AVENUE TO RUNDBERG & US290/SS69 (14 SITES) SECOND THURSDAY / THIRD WEDNESDAY				
IH35 TRACT (10 Sites)				
FIRST THURSDAY OF MONTH				
Grand Avenue	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		SGT DAVIS
Wells Branch	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
Howard Lane	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
Parmer Lane	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
Braker Lane	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
Rundberg	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
US290/SS69 (4 Sites)				
Cameron Road	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		SGT DAVIS
I35	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
Airport Blvd	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
Berkman	8/20/2020	8/13/2020		
THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH				
US 183	9/1/2020	8/27/2020	VIOLET BAG	SGT HUGONETT
US 290 - Entrance Ramp south of Huntland Dr -				
Lincoln Village Shopping Center	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		
Airport	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		
MLK Exit (Lower Deck)	9/1/2020	8/27/2020		

UNDERPASS CLEANUP
SCHEDULE
AUG / SEPT 2020

GROUP 4: I35 FROM 15TH TO CESAR CHAVEZ & RIVERSIDE / PLEASANT VALLEY (SITES 8) FOURTH THURSDAY				
15th Street	9/9/2020	8/27/2020	VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG	SGT JEFFERSON
12th Street	9/9/2020	8/27/2020		
8-11th Street	9/9/2020	8/27/2020		
6-7 Street	9/9/2020	8/27/2020		
4th Street	9/9/2020	8/27/2020		
1st Street (Cesar Chavez)	9/9/2020	8/27/2020		
Holly St	9/9/2020	8/27/2020		
Riverside & Pleasant Valley	9/9/2020	8/27/2020	VIOLET BAG	
GROUP 5: US183 -GREAT HILLS TRAIL TO LAKE CREEK PKWY: (14 SITES) THIRD THURSDAY				
US183/LP1 (5 Sites)				
US 183	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		SGT DAVIS
MoPAC Interchange	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
LP 360	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
LP 1	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Parmer Lane	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
US183 BRIDGES UNDERNEATH (9 Sites)				
Great Hills Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020	VIOLET BAG VIOLET BAG	SGT DAVIS
Balcones Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Braker Lane Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Duval Road Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Oak Knoll Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Ponds Springs Road Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Spicewood Springs Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Anderson Mill Overpass	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		
Lake Creek Pkwy	8/27/2020	8/20/2020		