

# New Approaches to Capturing Unsheltered Homelessness Data: One Community's Journey

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**NHSDC**  
**MOVING UPSTREAM**  
SPRING 2024 CONFERENCE

**NHSDC SPRING 2024 | APRIL 10-12 | KANSAS CITY**

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Coordinated Entry



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Simtech*Solutions*,inc.



Kansas City is Fun!

WE  
W GOT IT  
THE  
WORLD  
CUP



KC2026.COM



KC2026





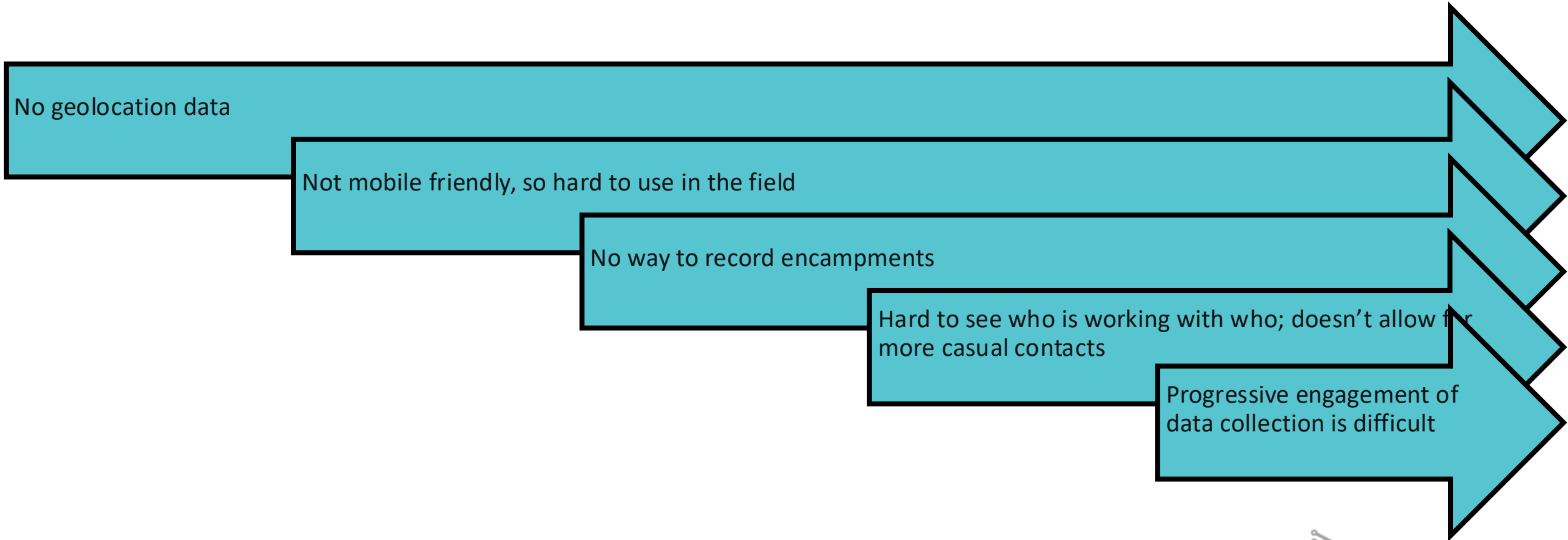
## Let's Talk

- We have great things going on
- We can't ignore some realities

# History of Collecting Unsheltered Data in KC



# HMIS Constraints





# 2004 HMIS Data and Technical Standards Final Notice (July 2004)

Date Published: August 2004

## Description

The Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS): Data and Technical Standards Final Notice, effective August 30, 2004, specifies the data elements and standards that guide HMIS data collection across the country. The Notice standardizes data collection nationally and allows local agencies to submit consistent reports on the characteristics of homeless persons. The Notice also describes how data is collected and safeguarded. This Notice reflects an effort to consult with Federal agencies, the Interagency Council on Homelessness, and a consortium of Care agencies experienced in data collection. The Notice was developed in consultation with the Interagency Council on Homelessness and national experts on HMIS. The Notice is the final version of the Technical Standards in 2010.

**Misaligned  
Systems**

User experience

Design

Resource Links

## HMIS is Not a Good Fit for Outreach

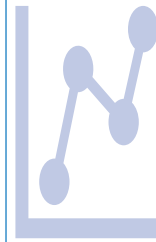
- Not person-centered
- Laptops are bulky and awkward
- Project Descriptor Data are missing key details
- Poor data quality
- Prior residence missing (patient dumping)
- Manual Tracking; No data exchanged
- Flaws in Coordinated Entry model
- HMIS Intake is lengthy; Does not enable progressive engagement
- HMIS is missing Safe Parking, Legal Camping project types
- HMIS Data is not readily converted to actionable intelligence



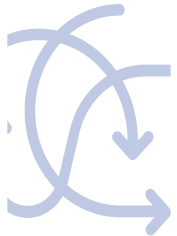
# The Results



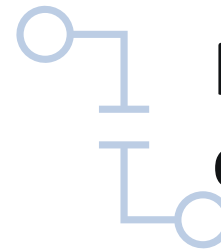
Missing and incomplete data



Everyone keeping track of information using their own system



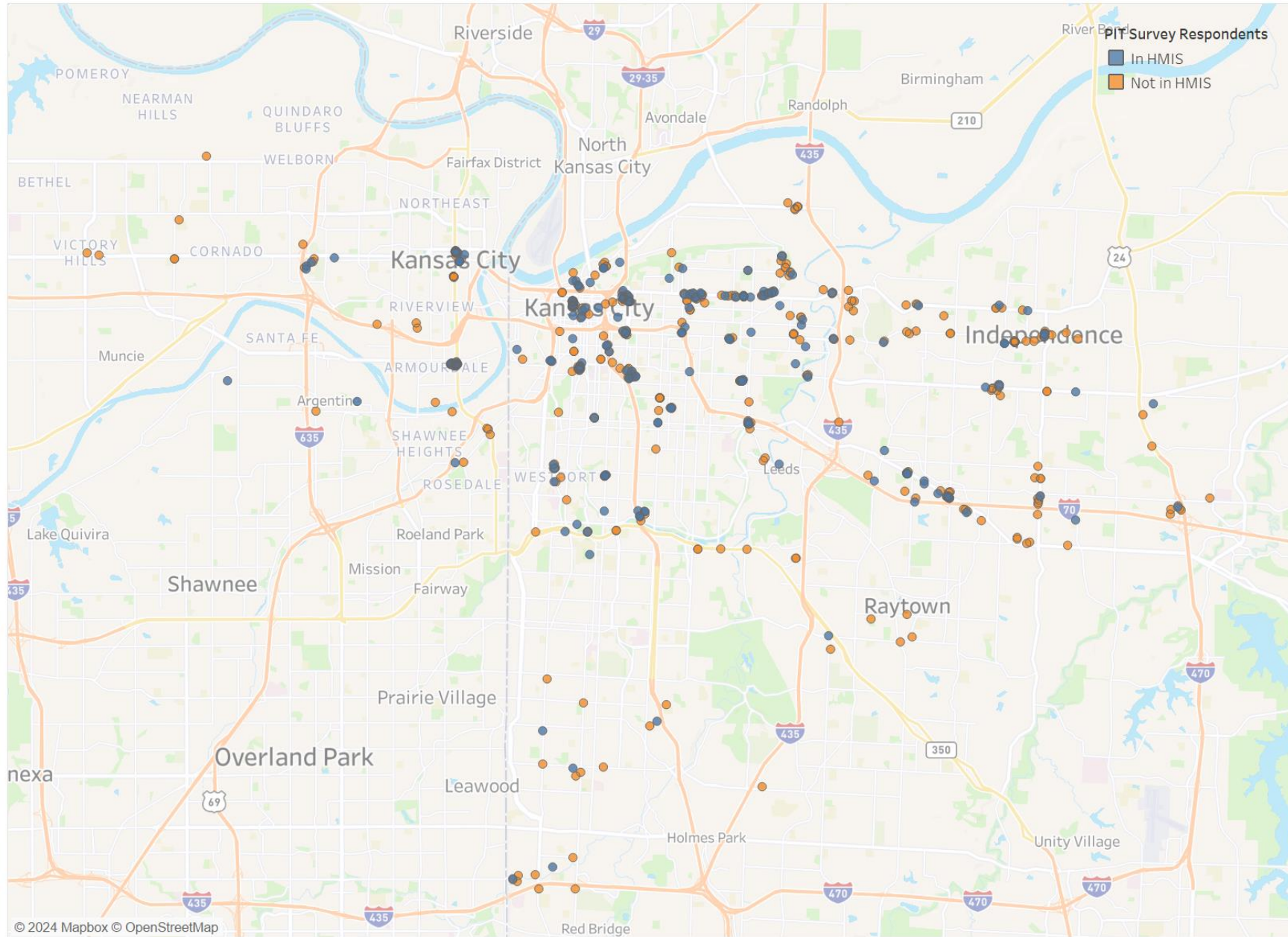
Lack of coordination



People fall through the cracks

"Everyone was using a different system that worked for them, but it was really subjective how people would track that data... Reports that we would run before from HMIS weren't useful because we knew how incomplete the information was."

- Homeless outreach manager



## 2024 PIT Unsheltered Survey Responses

60% of unsheltered individuals surveyed were not in our HMIS.



## Highest percentage of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are unsheltered

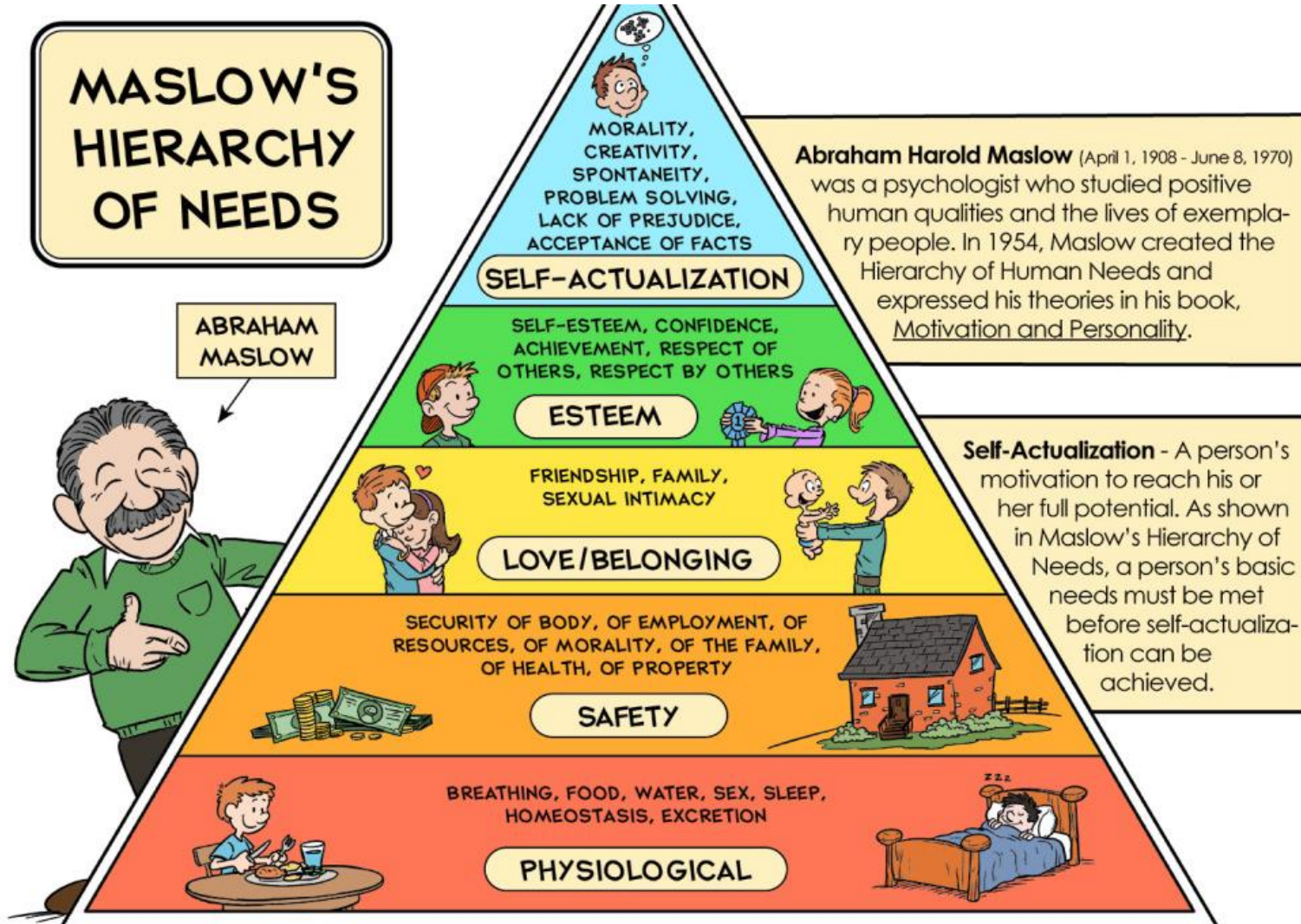


CoC Name	Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	Percent Unsheltered	CoC Name	Veterans Experiencing Homelessness	Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness
Major Cities			Other Largely Urban CoCs		
Kansas City, Independence, Lee's Summit/Jackson, Wyandotte Counties, MO & KS	343	89.5%	Topeka/Shawnee County, KS	129	87.6%
Raleigh/Wake County, NC	275	88.0%	Savannah/Chatham County, GA	103	86.4%
Los Angeles City & County, CA	25,583	85.8%	Huntsville/North Alabama, AL	112	84.8%
Long Beach, CA	1,277	83.3%	Eugene, Springfield/Lane County, OR	1,169	75.9%
Tucson/Pima County, AZ	661	82.5%	Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma County, CA	711	70.5%

EXHIBIT 6.10: CoCs with the Highest Percentages of Individuals Experiencing Chronic Patterns of Unsheltered Homelessness  
By CoC Category, 2023

CoC Name	Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	Percent Unsheltered	CoC Name	Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	Percent Unsheltered
Major Cities			Other Largely Urban CoCs		
Kansas City, Independence, Lee's Summit/Jackson, Wyandotte Counties, MO & KS	280	95.7%	Amarillo, TX	102	97.1%
Los Angeles City & County, CA	30,442	86.6%	Mobile City & County/Baldwin County, AL	133	91.7%
Long Beach, CA	1,338	85.1%	Huntsville/North Alabama, AL	192	82.8%
Raleigh/Wake County, NC	330	83.3%	Topeka/Shawnee County, KS	162	82.1%
San Jose/Santa Clara City & County, CA	3,485	80.5%	Little Rock/Central Arkansas, AR	401	81.0%
Largely Suburban CoCs			Largely Rural CoCs		
Fort Pierce/St. Lucie, Indian River, Martin Counties, FL	202	100.0%	Gainesville/Alachua, Putnam Counties, FL	113	100.0%
Pasco County, FL	136	100.0%	Tehama County, CA	104	99.0%
Palm Bay, Melbourne/Brevard County, FL	212	95.8%	Southwest Oklahoma Regional, OK	170	97.1%
Imperial County, CA	803	95.6%	Chattanooga/Southeast Tennessee, TN	434	95.2%
San Bernardino City & County, CA	1,421	91.4%	Hawaii Balance of State	696	91.8%

## A Person-Centered Approach to Capture Data and Progressively Engage



*Mobile app technology empowers outreach teams with the tools to address basic human needs, build connections with people, **and** meet HUD requirements.*

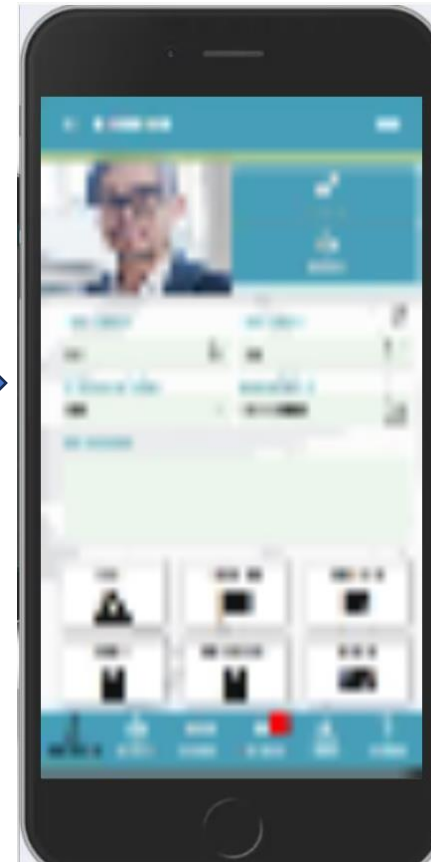
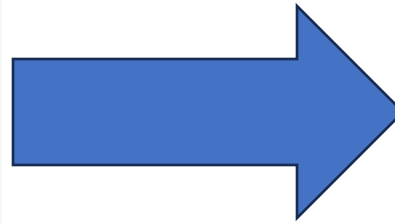
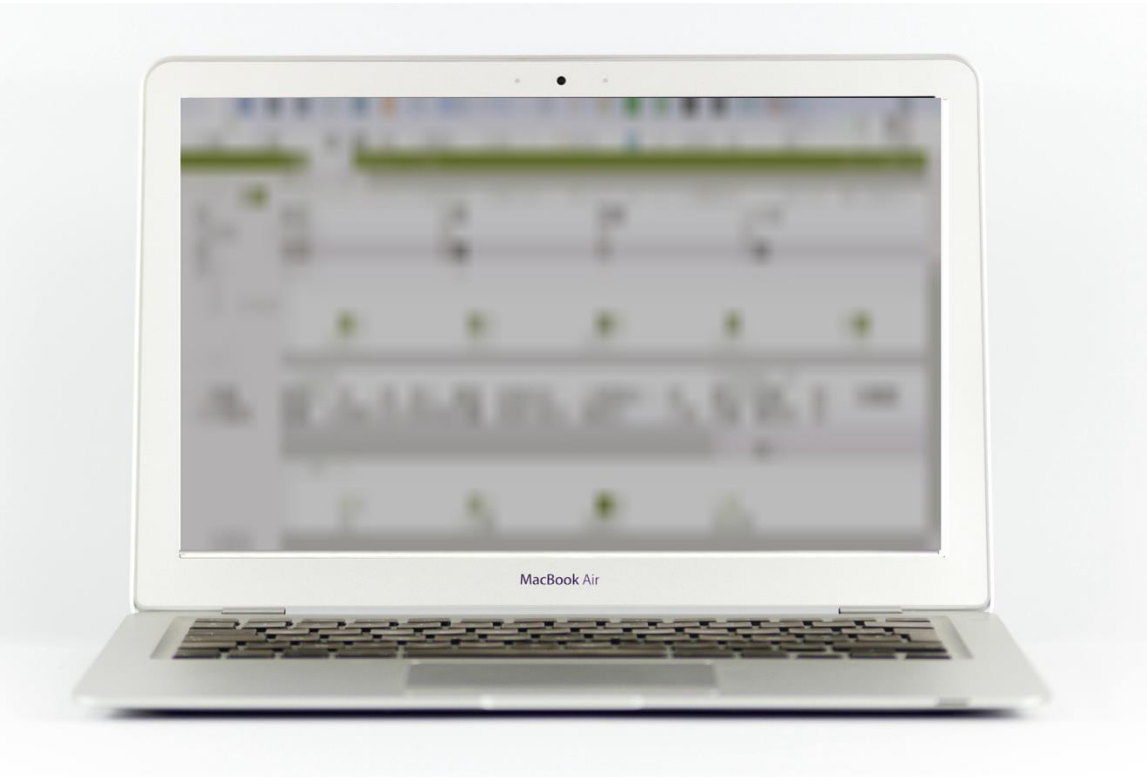
*"How can I help you today?"*

VS.

*"How can I capture your information and assess you today?"*

# Solution?

New street outreach mobile technology!





## Providing Services

Lookup  
Clients

- View clients staying at a camp

Provide  
Services

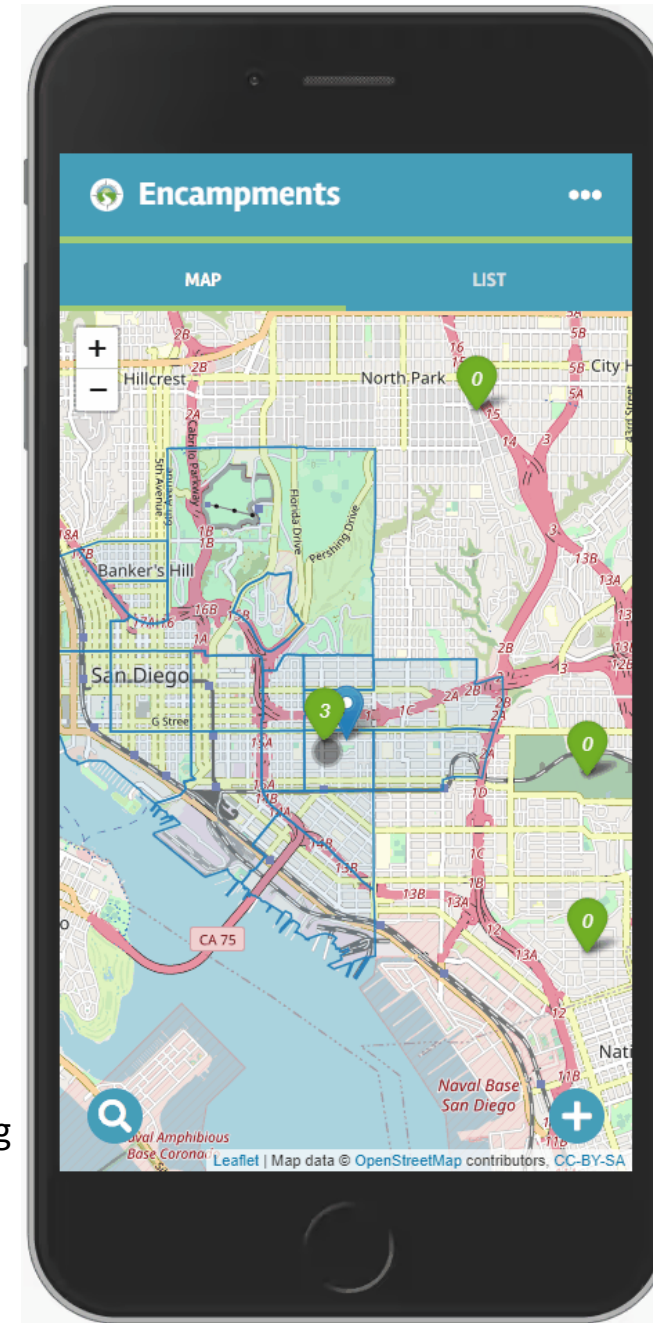
- Provide services and drop a pin

Identify  
Needs

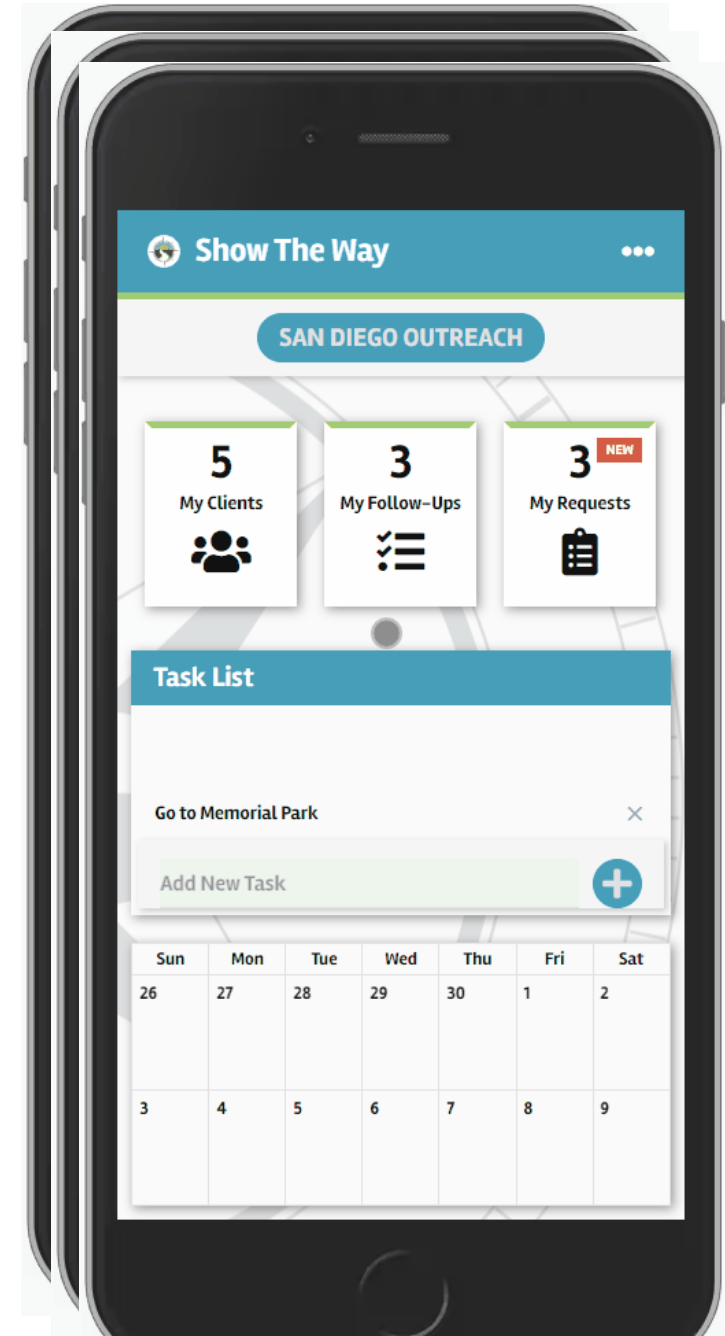
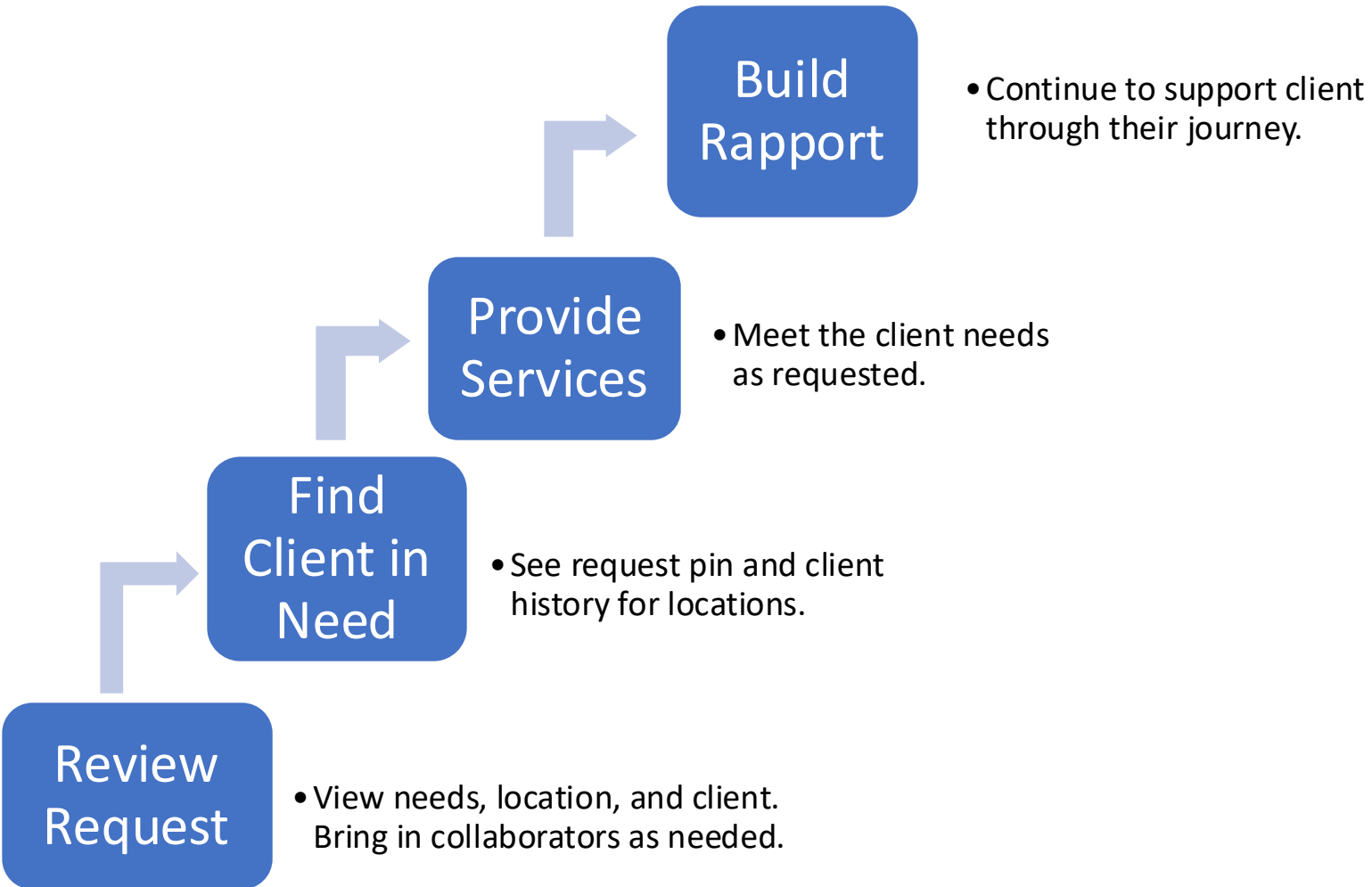
- Capture unmet needs

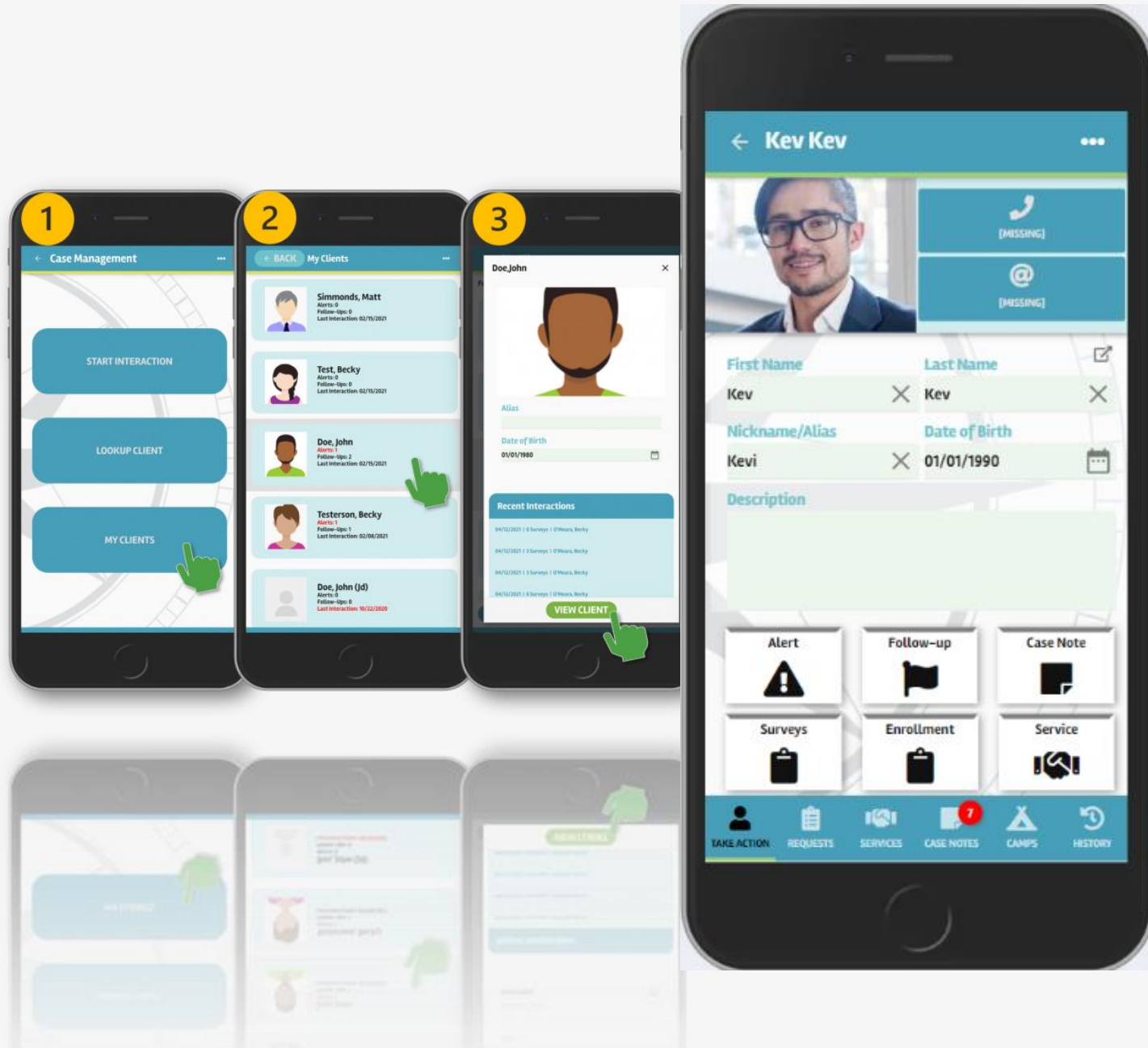
Request  
Assistance

- Reach out to partnering agencies



## Requests for Assistance





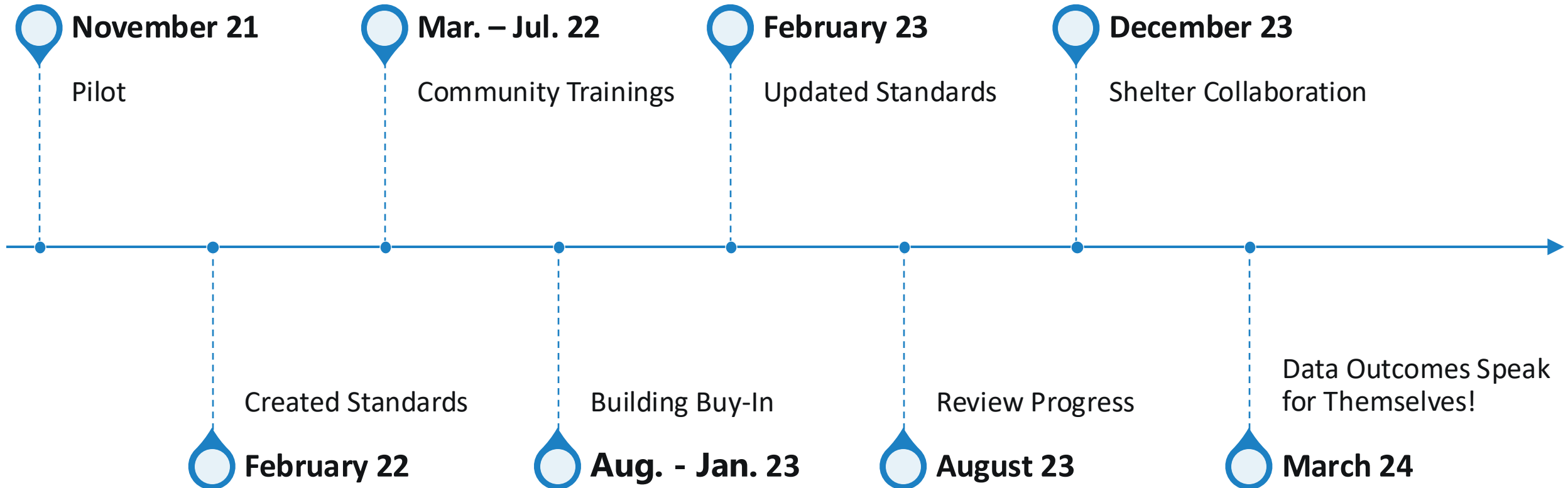
## On the Go Solution

### Key Features

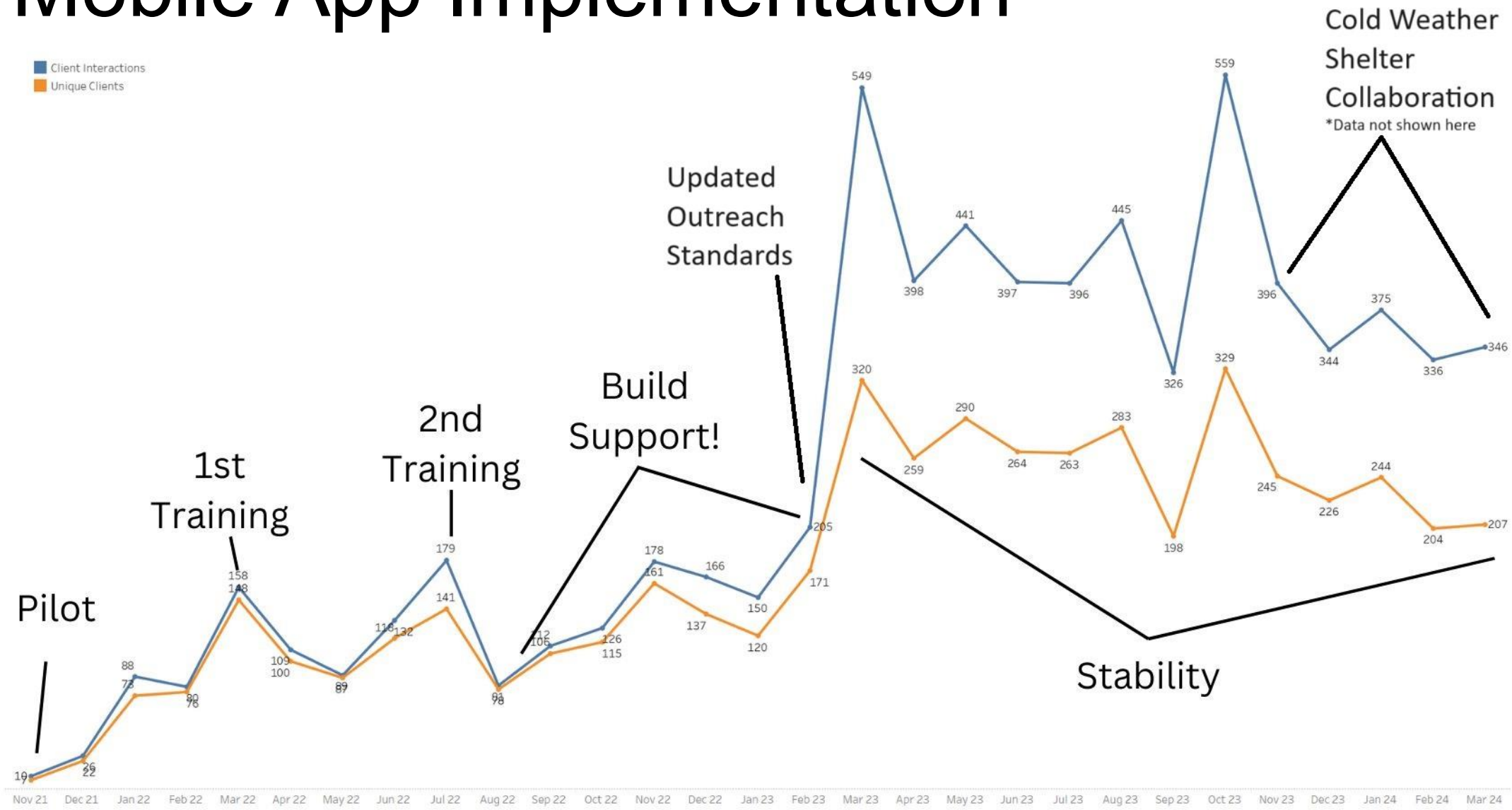
- Person-centered care
- Easy coordination of care with other outreach workers
- Very accessible to use in the field
- Allows for progressive client data collection
- Pictures on client profile
- Encampment management



# Mobile App Implementation



# Mobile App Implementation



# Struggle Bus



**The struggle is real**





# System change is *hard*

Creating new data  
collection habits

Supervisor buy-in -  
Needed better access  
to data reporting

Staff turnover

Double data entry  
struggles

Data privacy/informed  
consent concerns -  
especially for workers  
at MH and SU agencies

Challenges integrating  
first responders

Keeping encampments  
up-to-date with how  
frequently they  
move/are cleared

Keeping people  
motivated over time

# Building Buy-In

Show The Data!  
-> Motivation

Creating rewards  
-> 'STW Giveaway'

Communal/competitive  
mindset in  
collaborative outreach  
team meetings

Group check-ins in  
CORE -> Accountability  
-> FOMO

Intentional  
Conversation  
Integration

Reaching a critical mass  
- people seeing others  
using it and seeing the  
utility

Mandating use (Cold  
weather shelter, esp.)

Integration into  
community outreach  
standards

## Local Government Collaboration



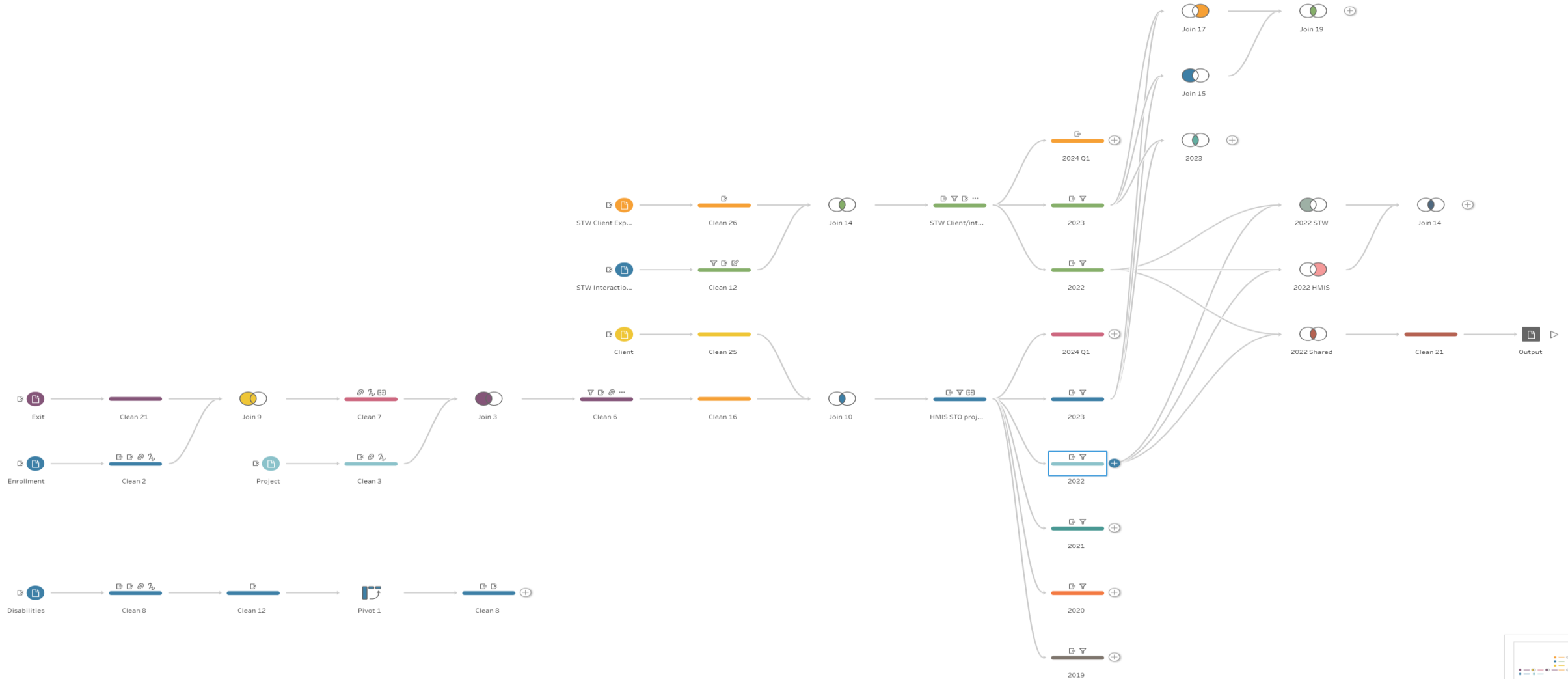
## CoC Collaboration



# **Lessons Learned Successes Results**

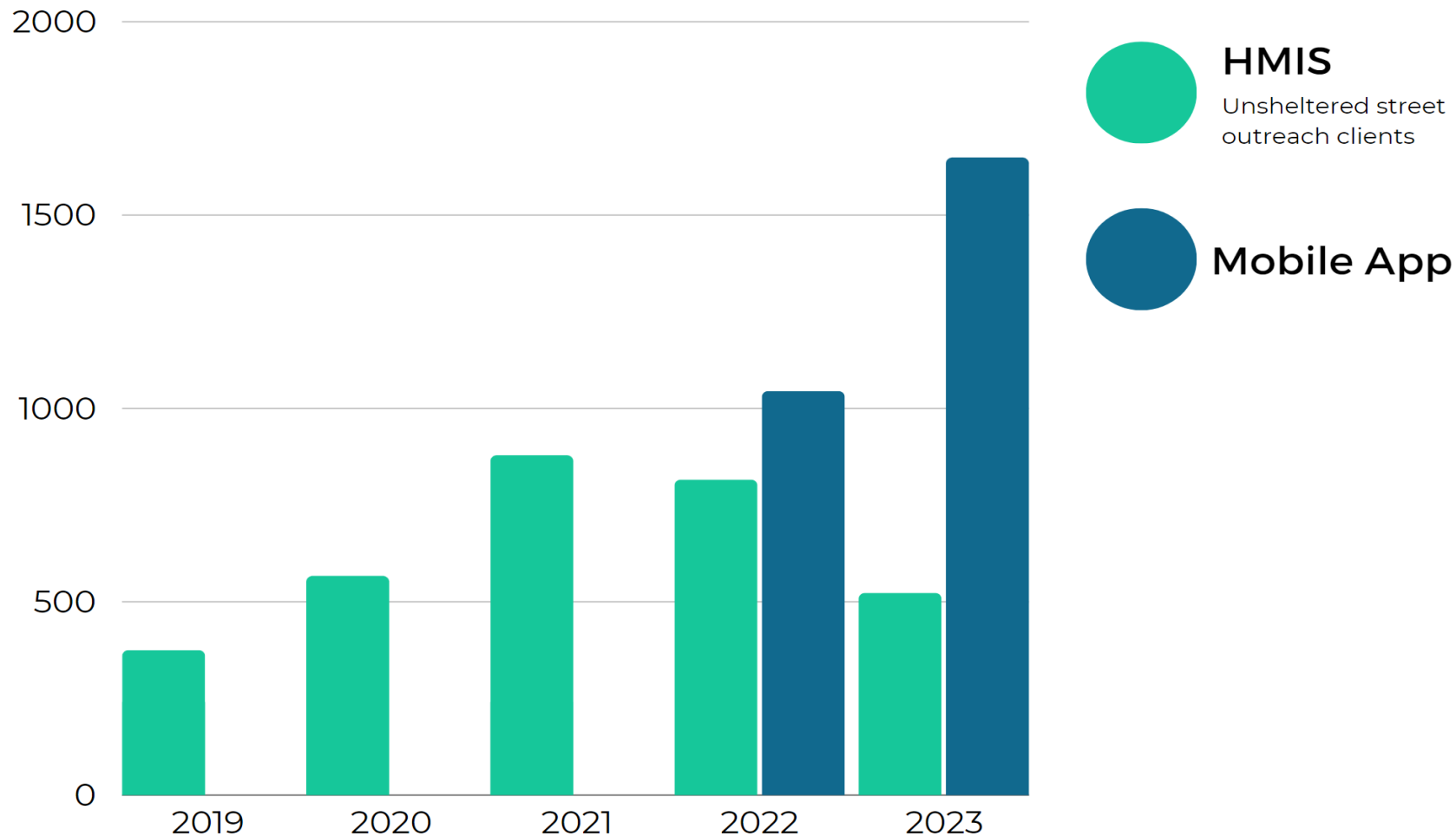


## So I did a little data analysis...



# The Reach of Street Outreach

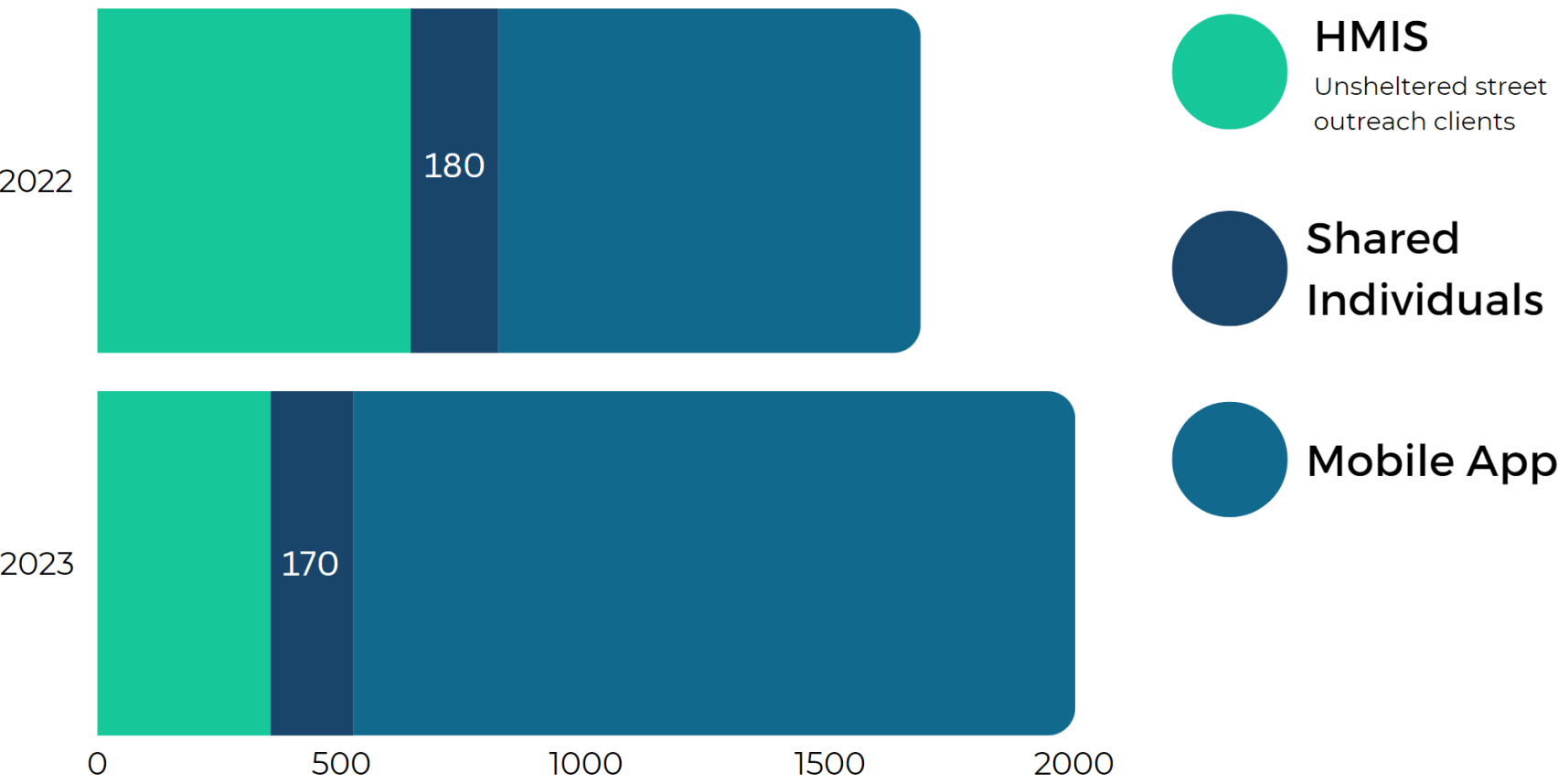
Unique individuals engaged in street outreach each year



The first two years of using the mobile app demonstrates our increased reach in capturing unsheltered data during street outreach.

# The Reach of Street Outreach

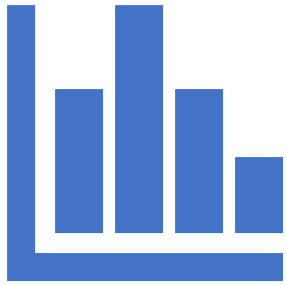
Total unique unsheltered individuals on mobile app and HMIS street outreach



In 2022 only 11% of individuals engaged in street outreach were in both HMIS and the Mobile App

In 2023 HMIS and our Mobile App only share 8.5% of street outreach clients.

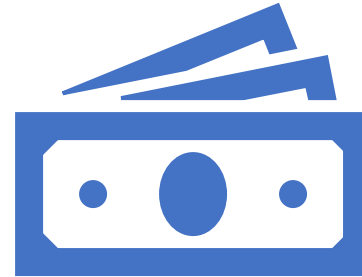
# Access to data is critical



Supervisors want data



Elected officials and local government want data



Funders want data



Outreach workers are motivated by seeing their own data



# NHSDC Spring 2024 Conference

## Show the Way User Report

Click on any data point to filter

Include Cold Weather Shelter Data?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

Select User

~All Users

Select Project(s)

(All)

Projects Selected:

Beehive Service Center Comprehensive MH - PATH  
Comprehensive MH Housing Liasons Cross Lines Outreach Services  
CSL Outreach GKCEH Outreach Homeless Outreach  
Hope City Outreach KCMO Street Outreach WCB-PRE PATH(STO)  
Wyandotte County Outreach

Select Date Range

Move slider or click on date field

3/2/2024

4/2/2024

Client Interactions

354

Unique Clients

209

Total Services

912

Number Housed

3

## Client Demographics

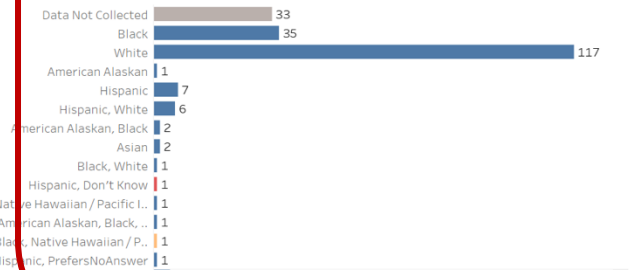
Veterans



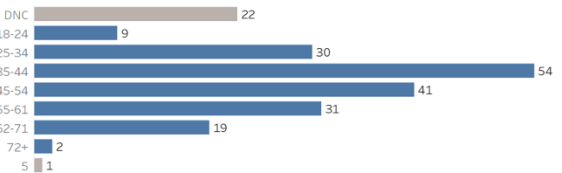
Clients by Gender



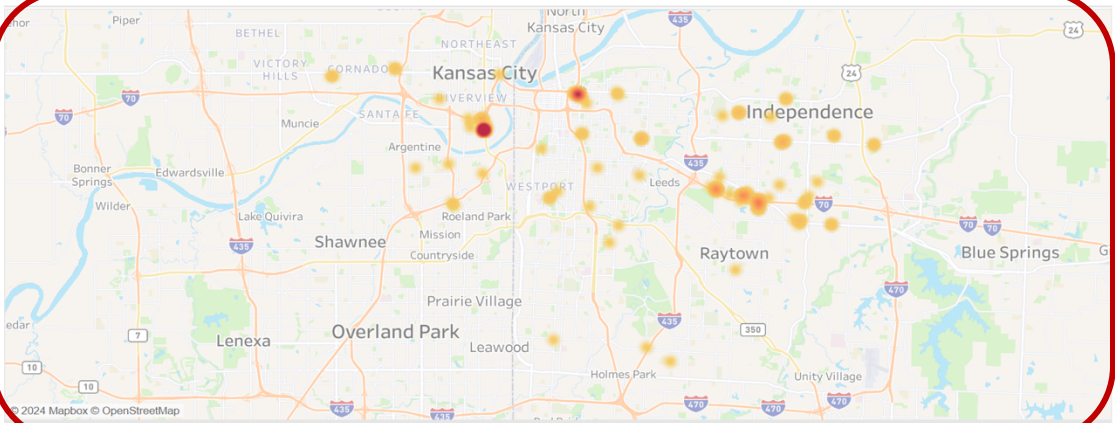
Clients by Race



Clients by Age Group



## Interactions Map



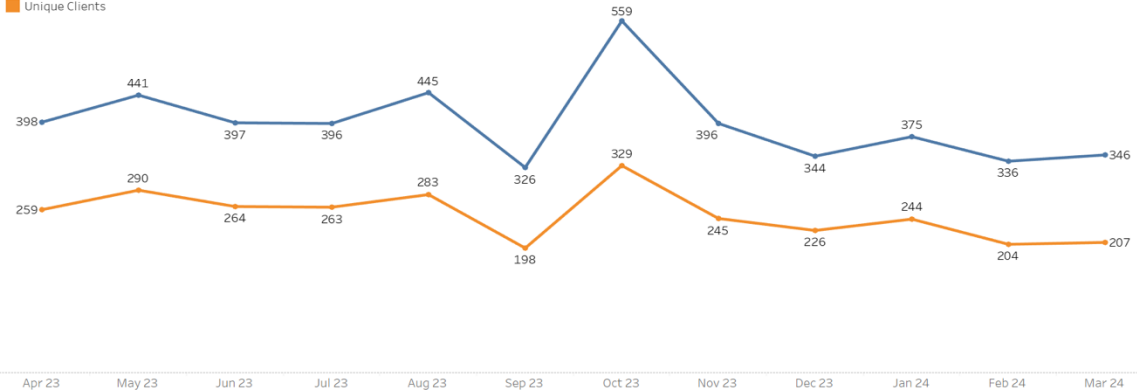
Interactions

- Client Interactions  
■ Unique Clients

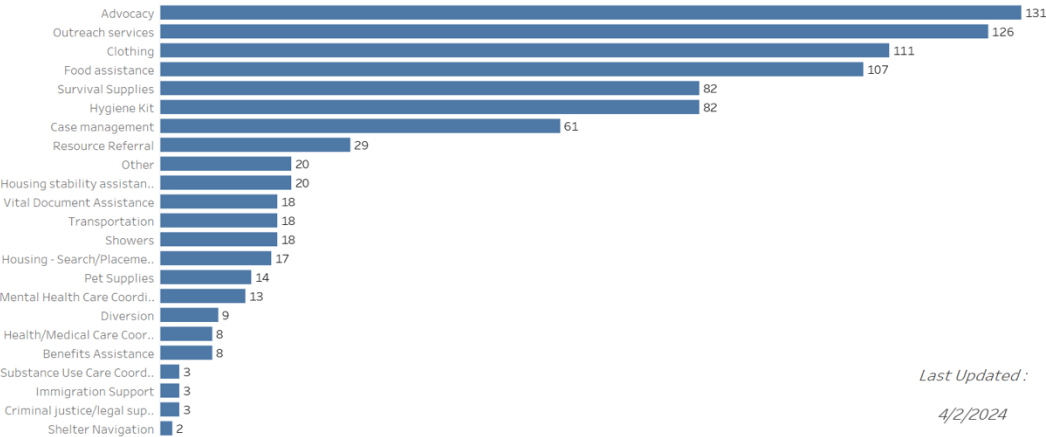
Interactions History --

4/1/2023

3/31/2024



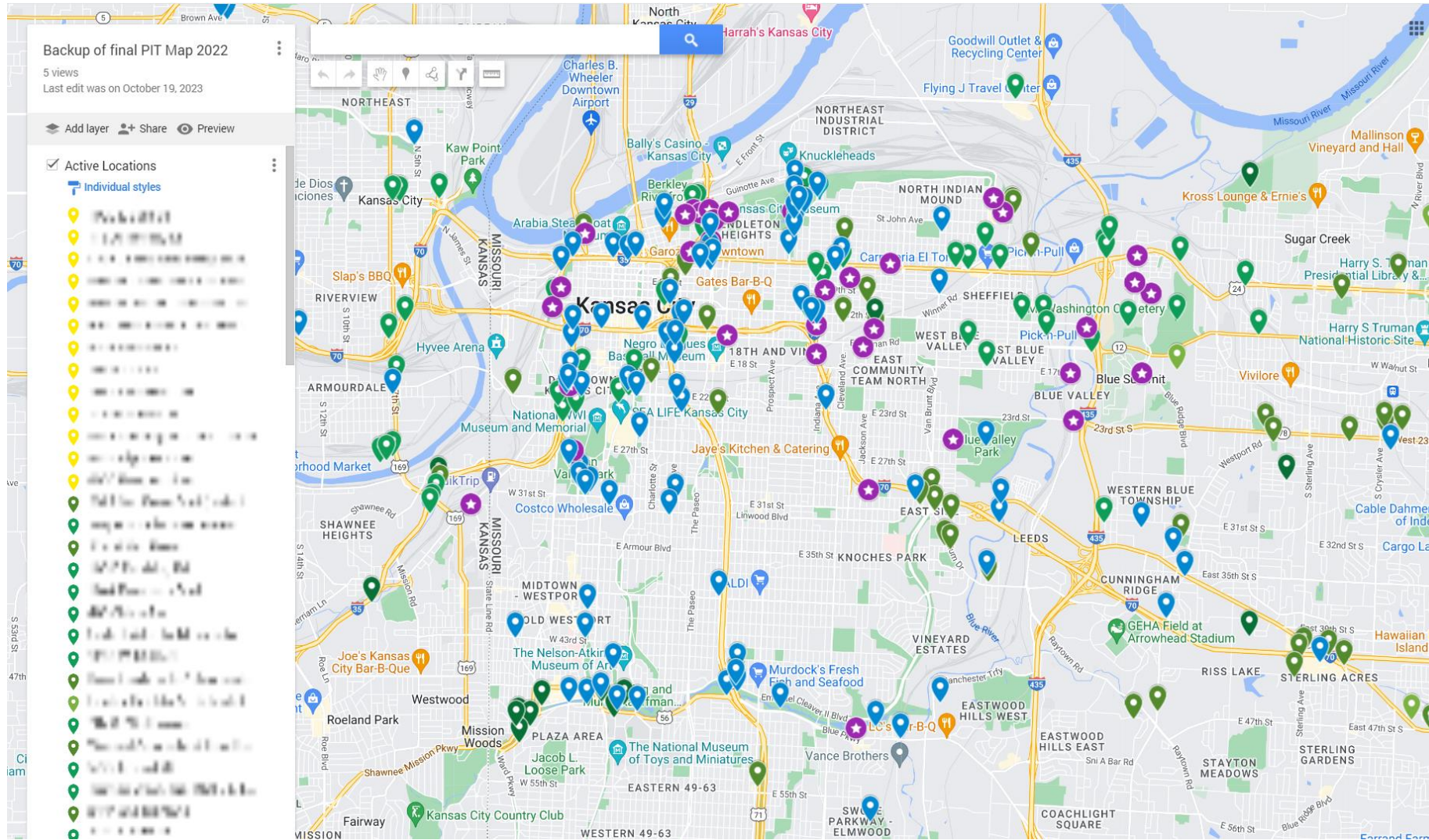
Services



Last Updated :

4/2/2024

## Improved PIT Mapping

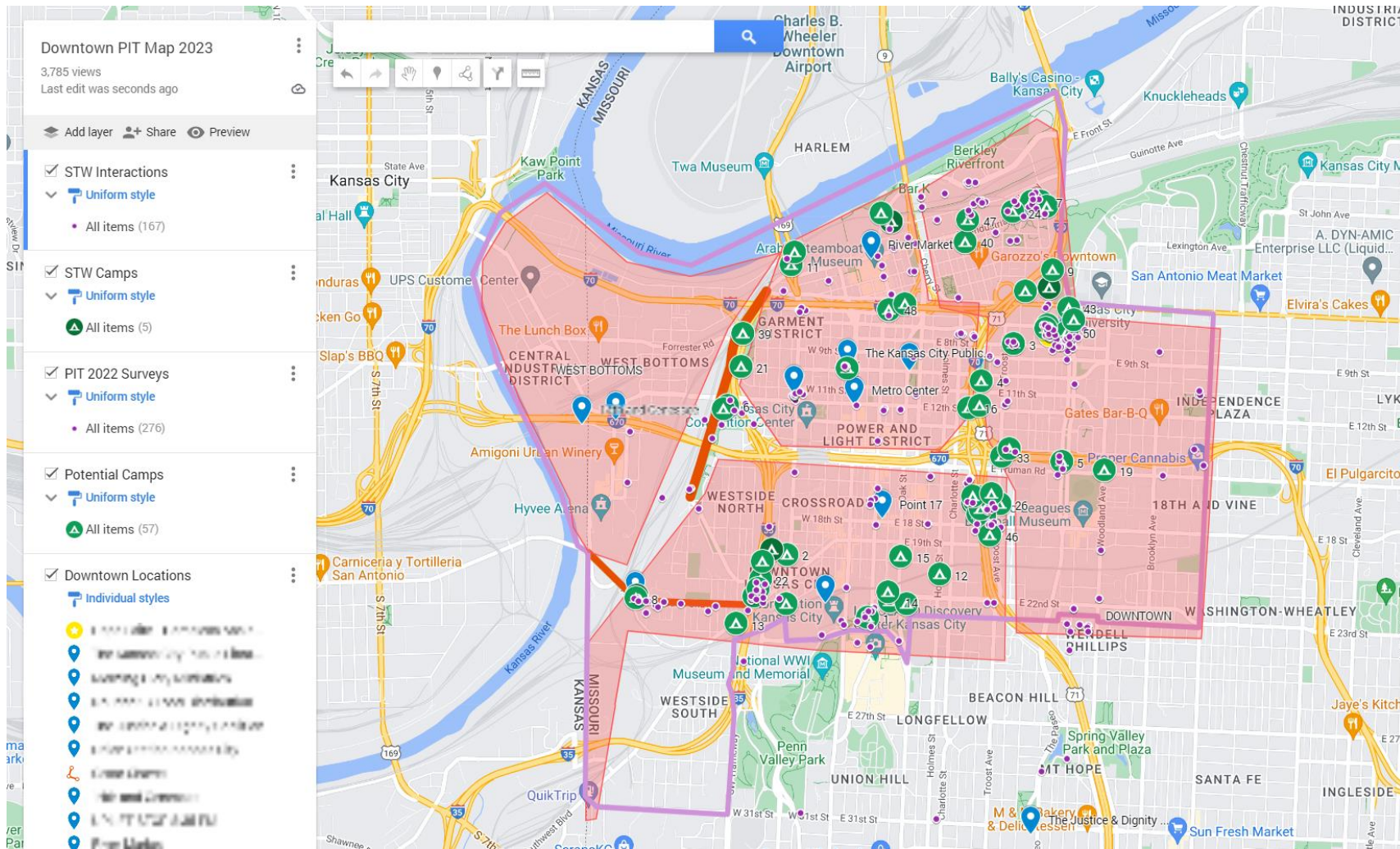


**2022 PIT Map**

Just on big Google  
Map with points



## Improved PIT Mapping

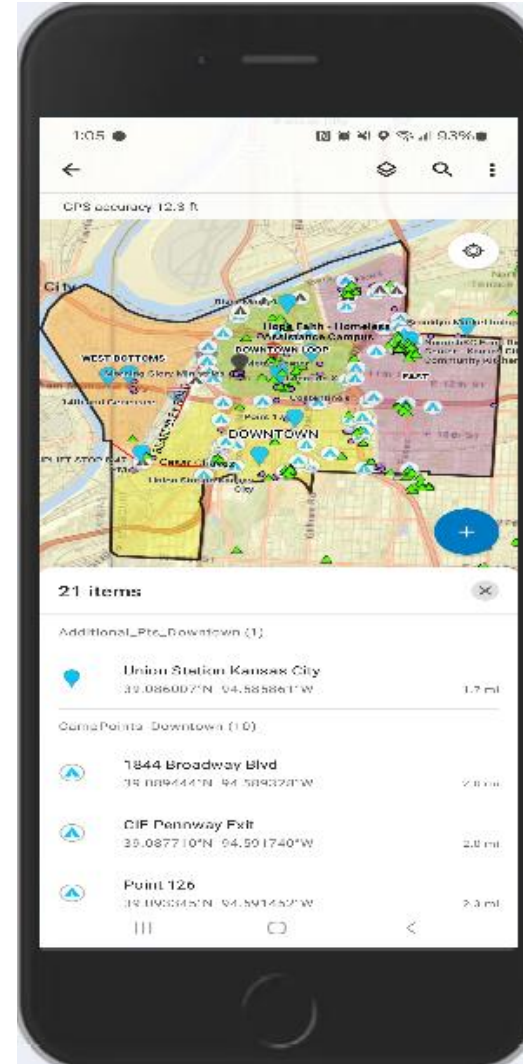
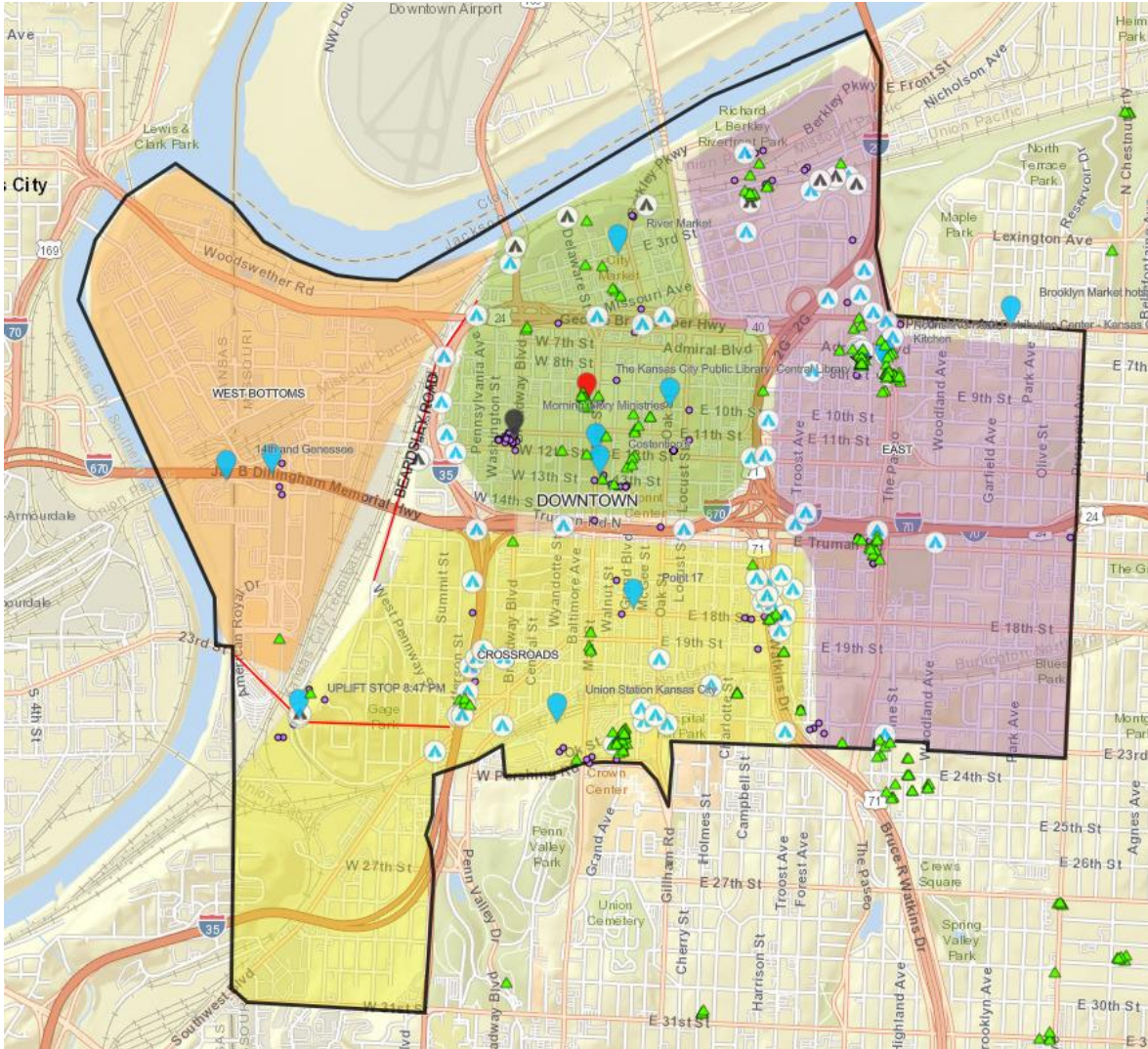


### 2023 PIT Map

- Regional Maps
- **Geolocation data from mobile app!**
  - o Encampments and recent interactions
- Survey locations from 2022 PIT count from mobile PIT count app



## Improved PIT Mapping



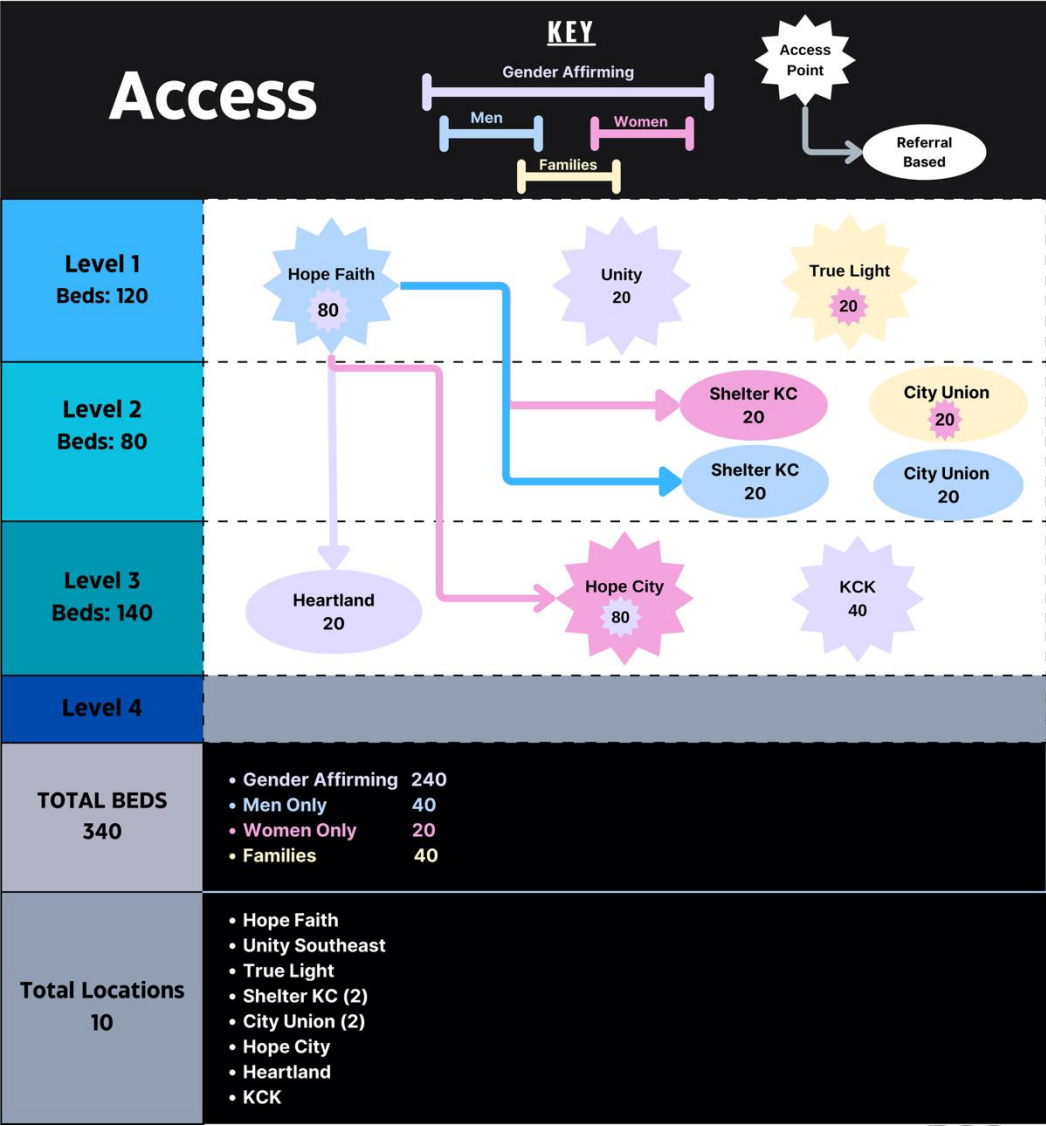
### 2024 PIT Map

- Regional maps created with GIS software
- Useable in the field with an app that allows for real-time feedback
- **Geolocation data from outreach app, 311 calls, & 2023 PIT surveys!**



# CWS Strategy

▶ <b>LEVEL 1: December to March every night, 210 beds</b>	<b>Access Sites</b>			
Hope Faith	100 Male (Gender Inclusive)			
Unity Southeast	40 All Gender			
True Light	17 Female Beds (Gender Inclusive), 3 Family			
Hope City	50 Women			
▶ <b>LEVEL 2: 32 degrees and below, 60 beds</b>	<b>Referral Only Sites</b>			
Shelter KC Men	20 Men			
City Union Men	20 Men			
City Union Women	17 Female, 3 Families			
▶ <b>LEVEL 3: 25 degrees and below (Nov. to April), 80 beds</b>	<b>Referral Only Sites</b>			
Heartland	12 Male (Gender Inclusive), 8 Female (Gender Inclusive)			
KCK	40 All Gender			
Shelter KC Women	20 Women			
<b>TOTAL BEDS: 350</b>	All Gender - 80	Men Only - 152 (112 Inclusive)	Women Only - 112 (25 Inclusive)	Families - 6
▶ <b>LEVEL 4: 0 degrees (Capacity increases; 100 additional beds)</b>				



MAP

LIST



**Org: Heartland Center for Behavioral Change**  
**Proj: (CWS) Heartland**

Website:  
Hours: Level 3 Activation -- Open when 25 degrees and below -- Referral only through access sites

Phone: 816-513-3699  
Email:

Available Beds: 0  
Reserved Beds: 20



**Org: Hope City**  
**Proj: (CWS) Hope City**

Website:  
Hours: Level 1 Activation - Open Every Night Dec. 1 - March 31 -- Access Site

Phone: 816-513-3699  
Email:

Available Beds: 21  
Reserved Beds: 29



**Org: Hope Faith**  
**Proj: (CWS) Hope Faith**

Website:  
Hours: Level 1 Activation -- Open Every Night Dec. 1 - March 31 --

Phone: 816-513-3699  
Email:

## Activation

Locations are activated to provide beds, meals, and services

LEVEL	ACTIVATES*	DATES
1	Open every night regardless of temperature	December 1st - March 1st
2	32 Degrees and Below 25 Degree Windchill Precipitation with Windchill of 32 Degrees	November 1st - April 1st (Pending Funding Availability)
3	25 Degrees and Below 15 Degree Windchill Precipitation with Windchill of 25 Degrees	
4	0 Degrees 0 Degree Windchill Precipitation with Windchill of 5 Degrees	

\*Determined by 8 am daily based on forecasted weather for that night, 6 pm to 6 am



How did it go?

# KC Cold Weather Shelter Dashboard

## Cold Weather Shelter

All Cold Weather Shelters

## Select Date Range

Move slide or click on date field

11/26/2023



4/2/2024

Last Updated :

4/5/2024

Click on any data point to filter

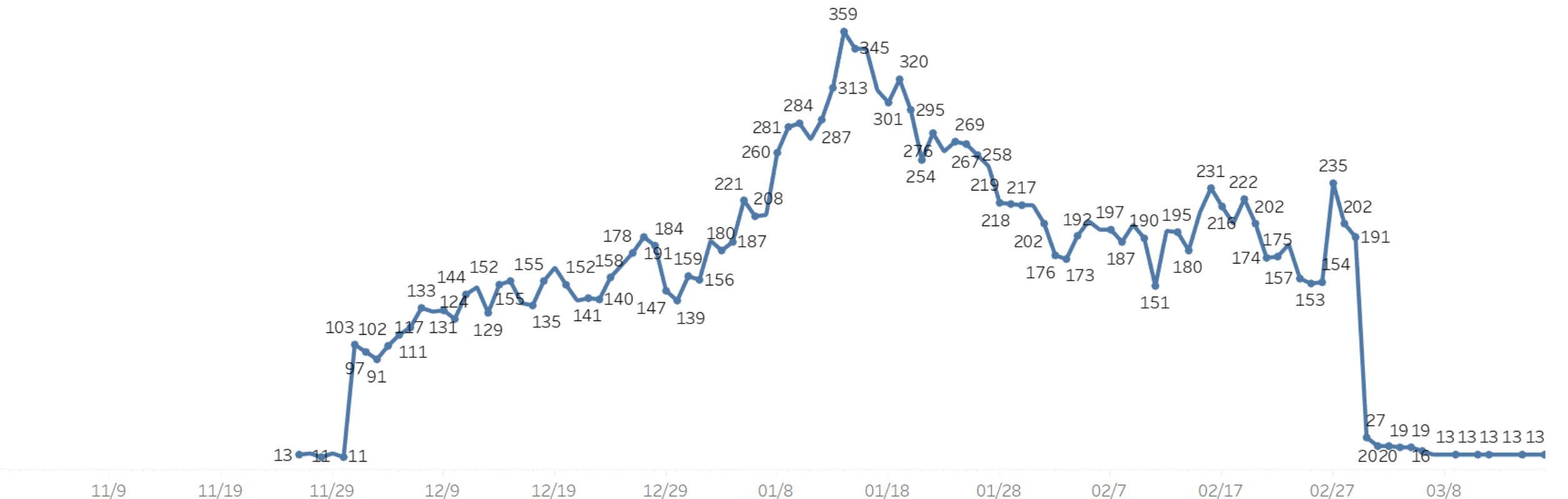
Total Bed Nights

18,557

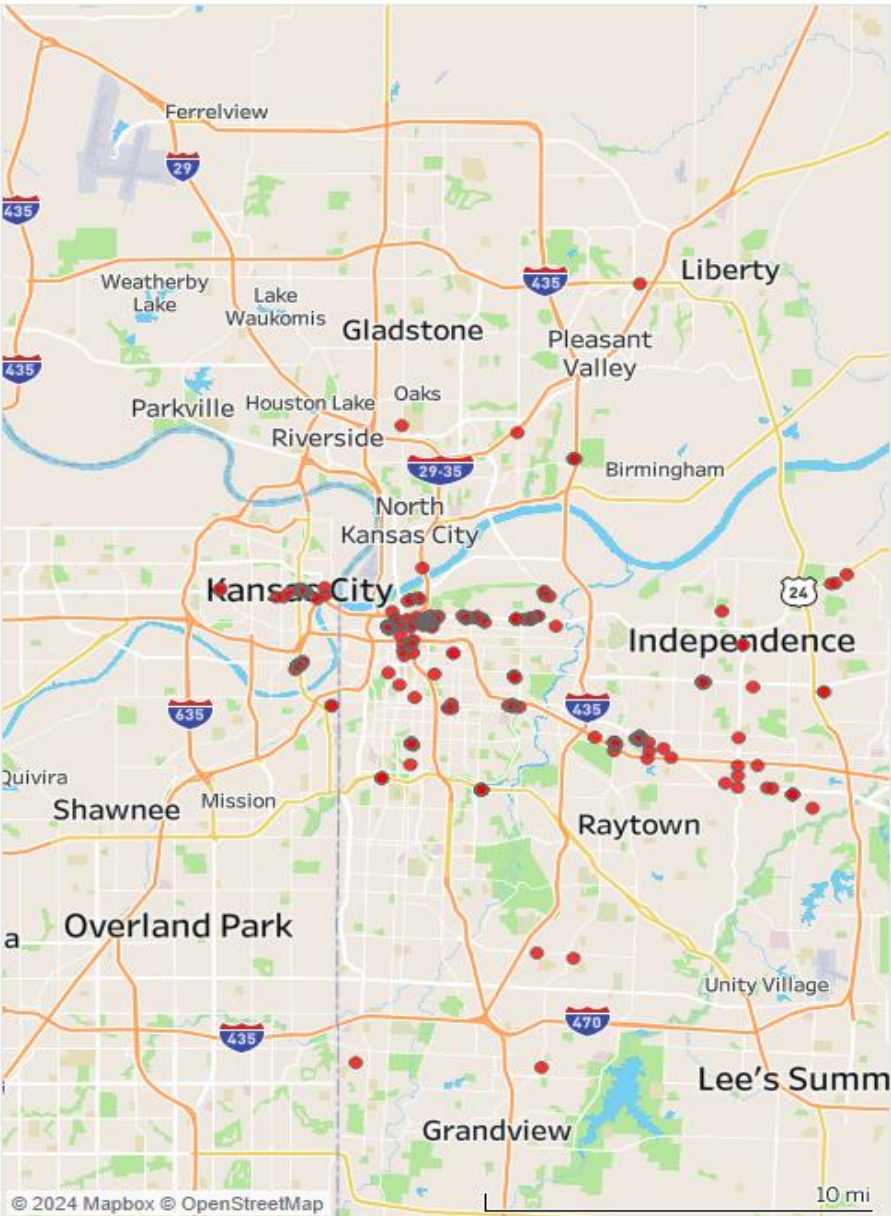
Unique Clients

1,671

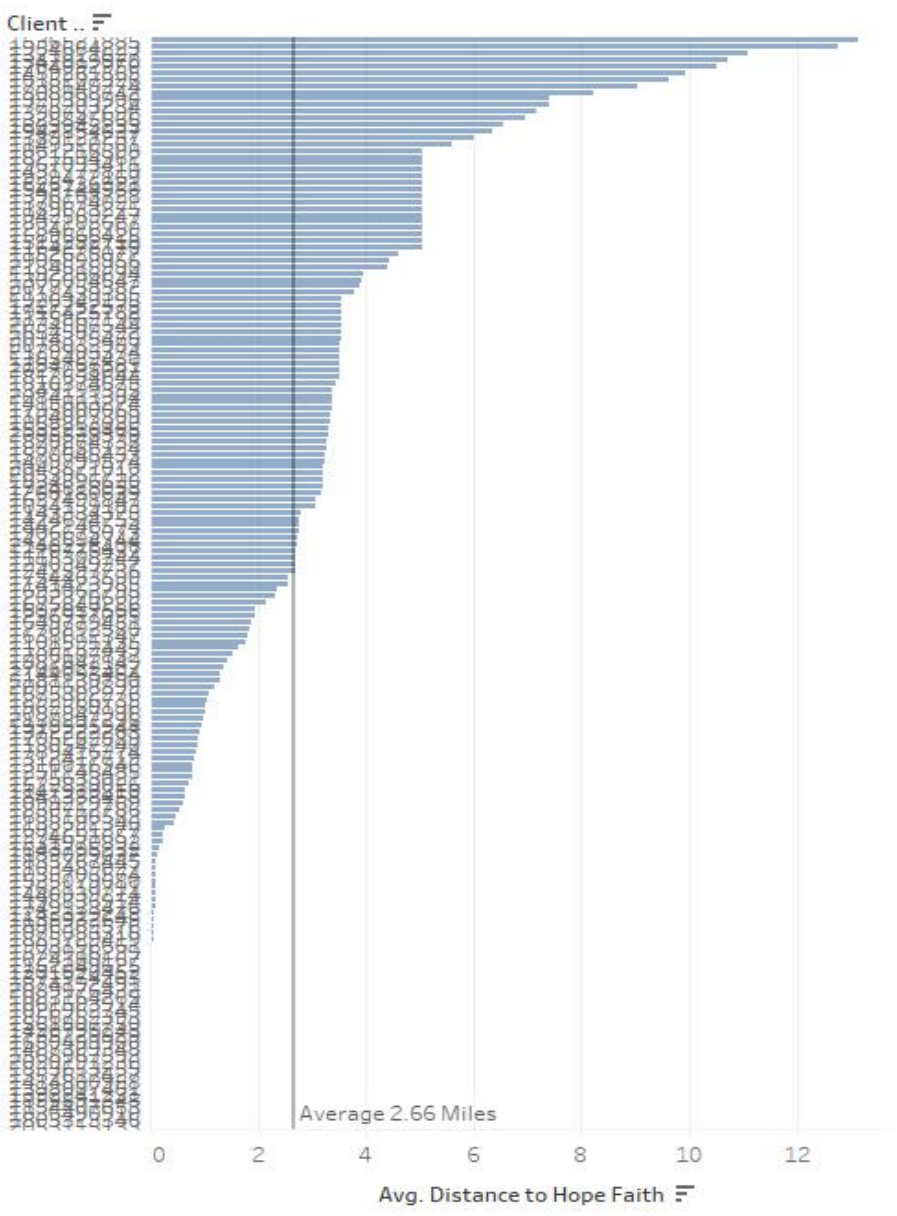
Shelter Guests by Date



Hope Faith CWS Client map



Average Distance to Hope Faith



Data vs.  
NIMBYism

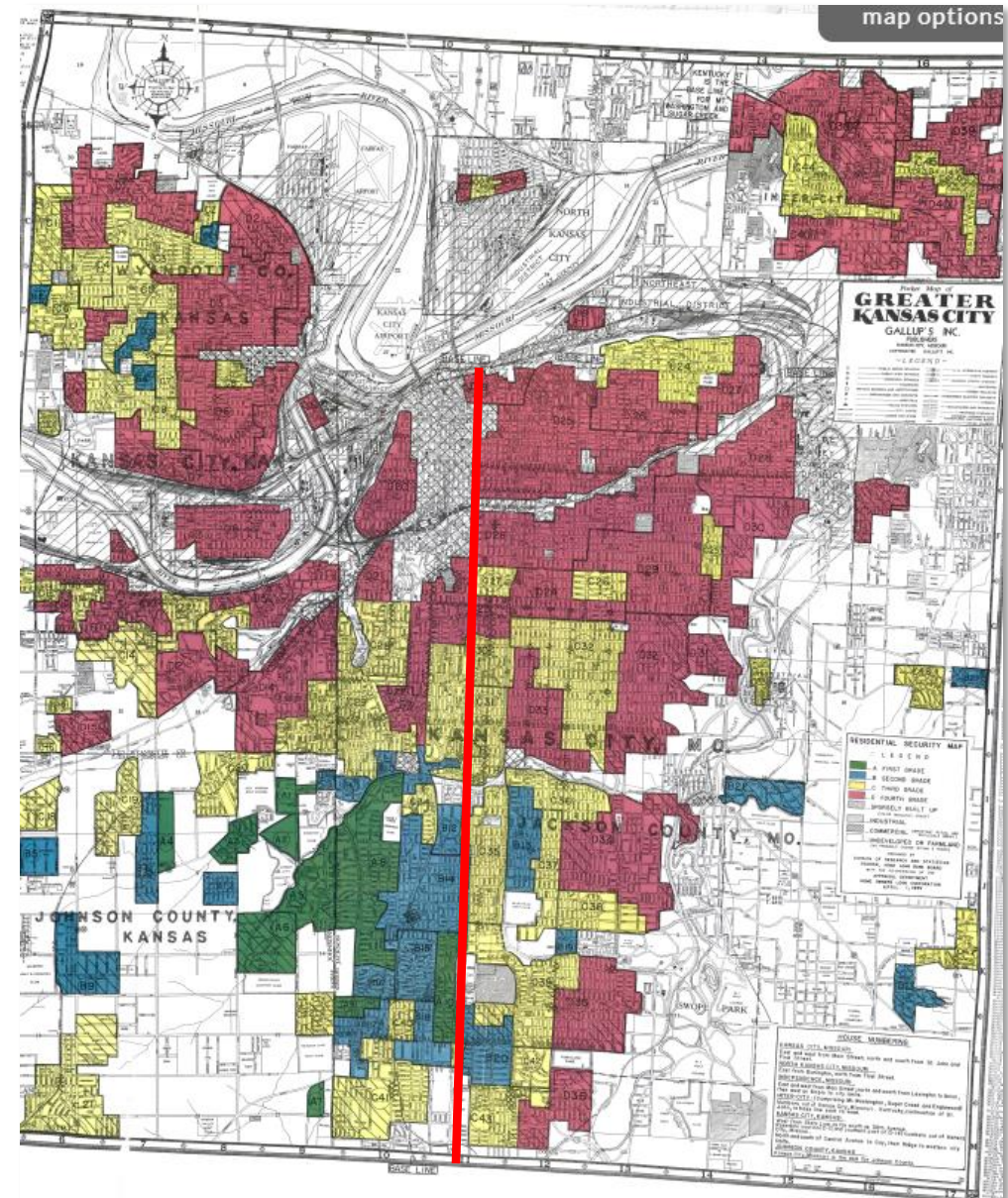
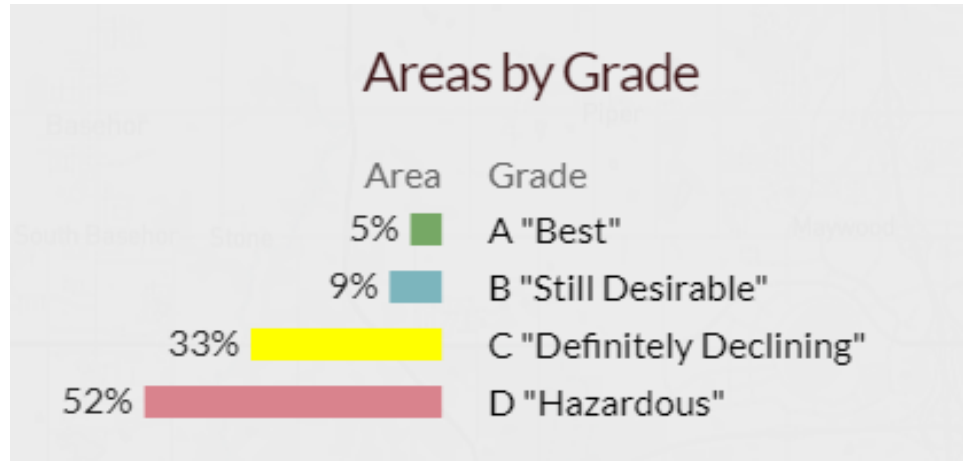
Distance  
traveled to Cold  
Weather  
Shelter



# Equity Equity Equity

We can't address equity issues with the unsheltered population without the data

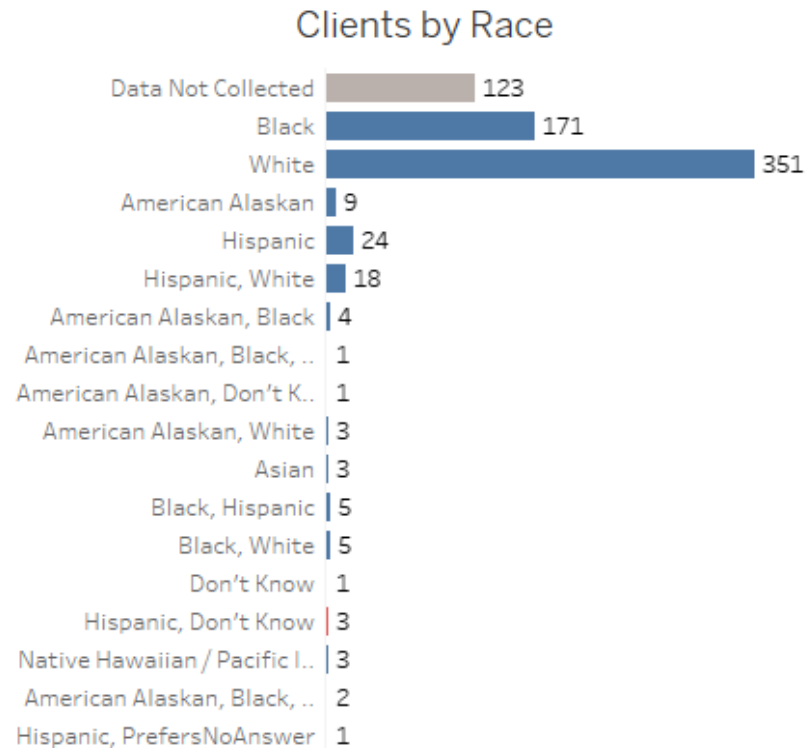
# Redlining in Kansas City



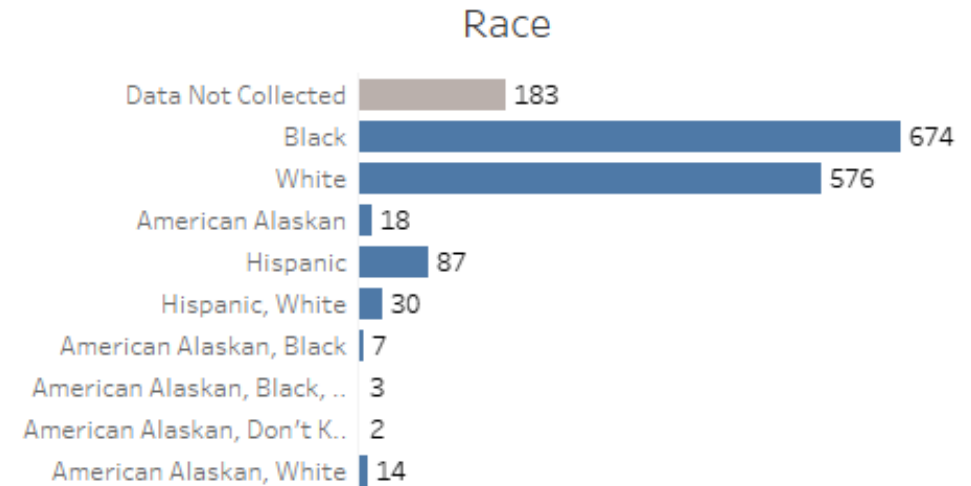
Source: [Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America](#) (University of Richmond)

## Equity Analysis

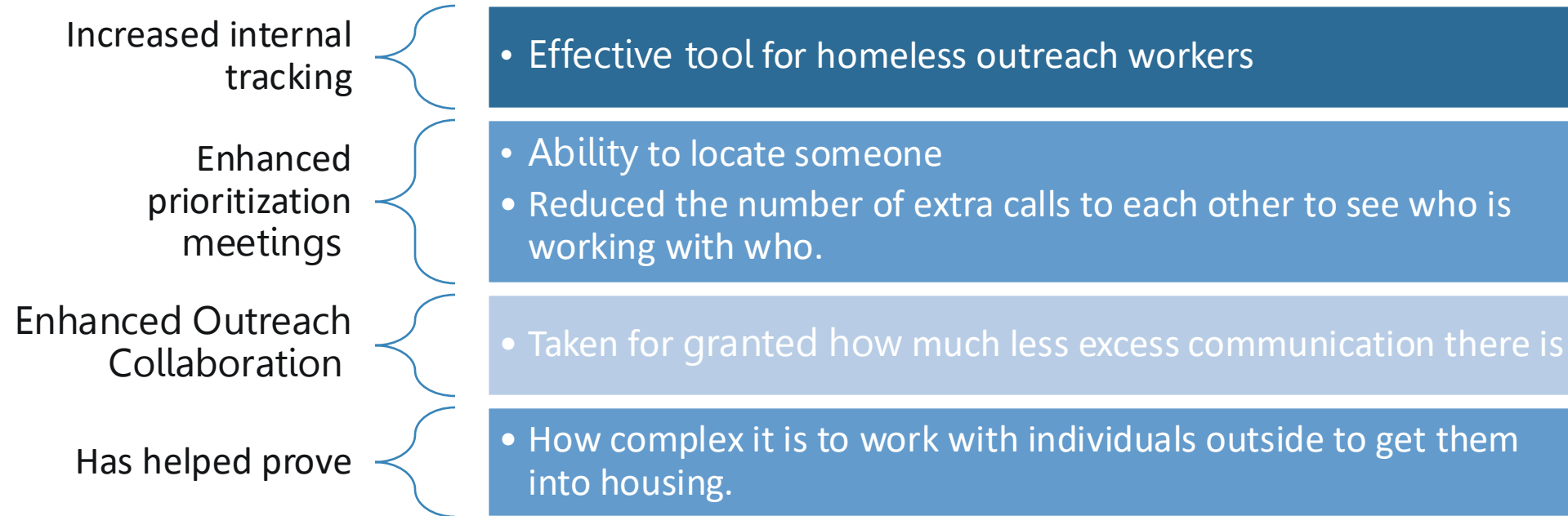
### Client Engaged in Street Outreach



### Client at Cold Weather Shelter

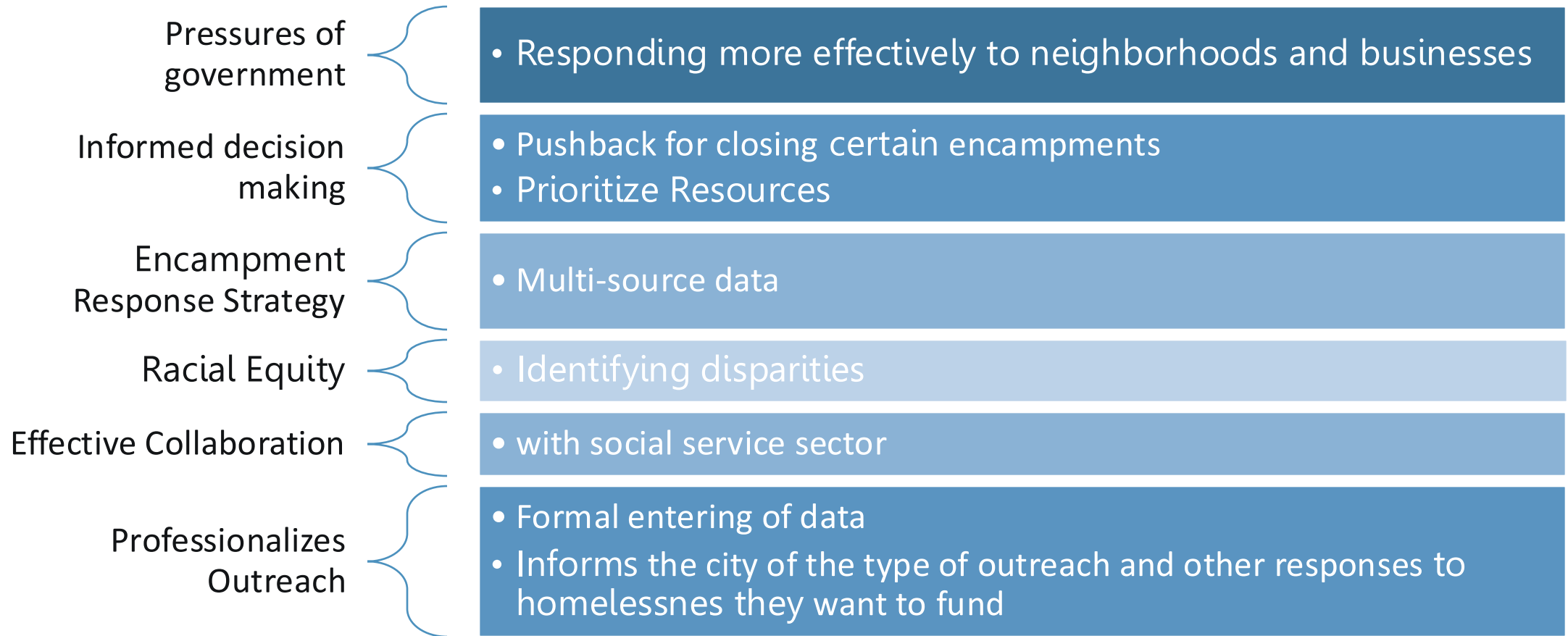


# CoC Impact



**"We have the most quality data that we've ever had"**

# Governmental Impact



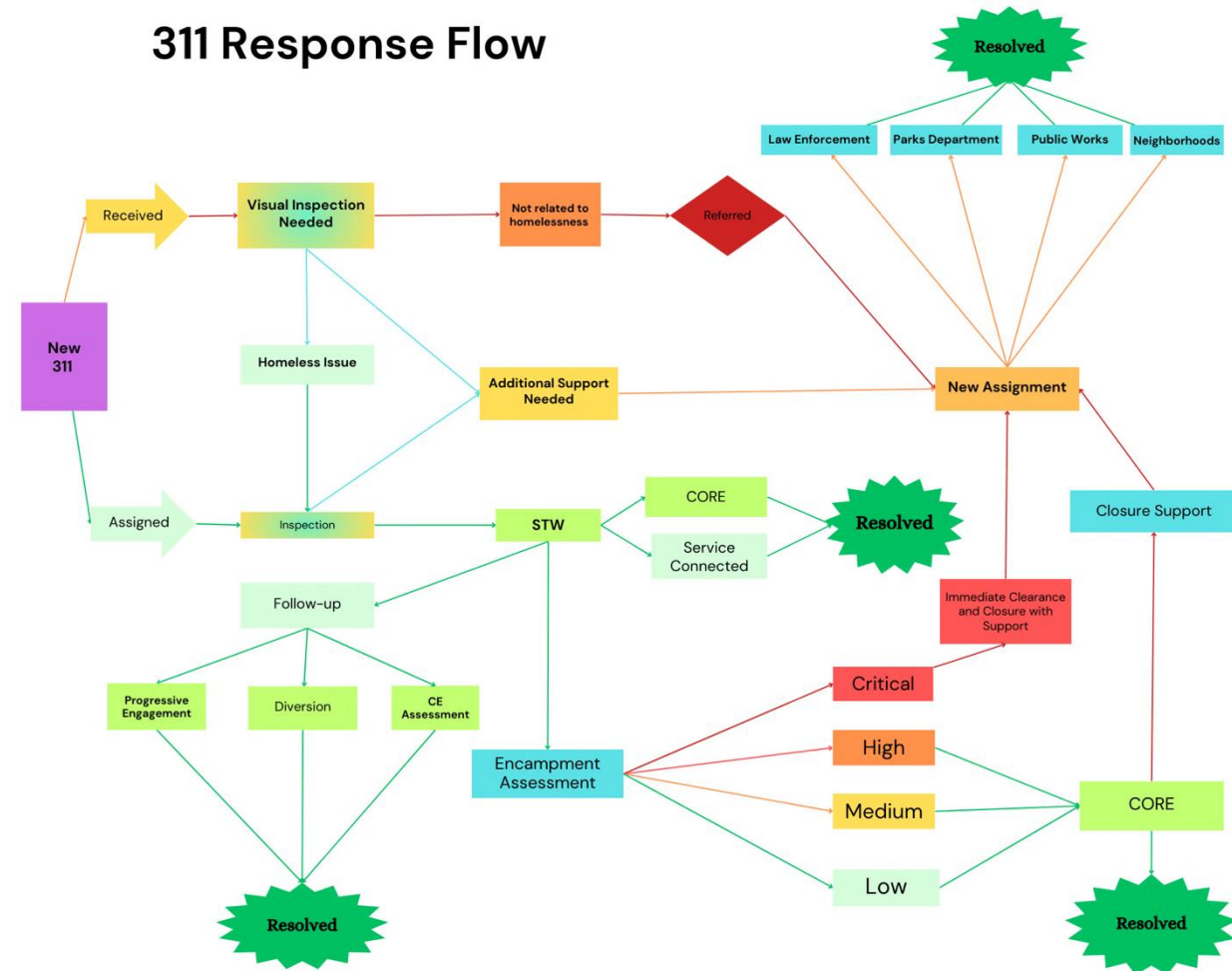


## Next Steps

## Cross-Departmental Collaboration

- 311
- Public Works
- Parks Department
- Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)
- Law Enforcement (HOT)
- Health Department
- Office of Unhoused Solutions

### 311 Response Flow



# Bringing Data Together

HomelessData

Kevin

Navigation

Home

Reporting and Analytics

By Name List

Analytics

Performance

Clients

Reports

Administration

Warehouse

Regions

Project Lists

Data

Users

System Admin

Role Manager

Dashboard Editor

Errors

Help Manager

Settings

My Account

Kansas City - HMIS and STW

January 2023

Overview Map

Client By-Name List

0

Already Active

+

0

Newly Identified

0

Returned to Active

-

0

Housing Placements

0

Other Exits

=

0

Actively Homeless

All Geographies

Filters

Filter Bar Visibility

Hide Inactive Clients

Reporting Time Frame

Community:

Kansas City - HMIS and STW

Year:

2023

Month:

2024

2023

Days Until Inactive:

90

Confirm

Export to...

Run Report...

Send Aggregate Results

Days Homeless

Calculations as of: March 1st 2024 12:00:00

Total Clients: 0

# Ongoing Engagement

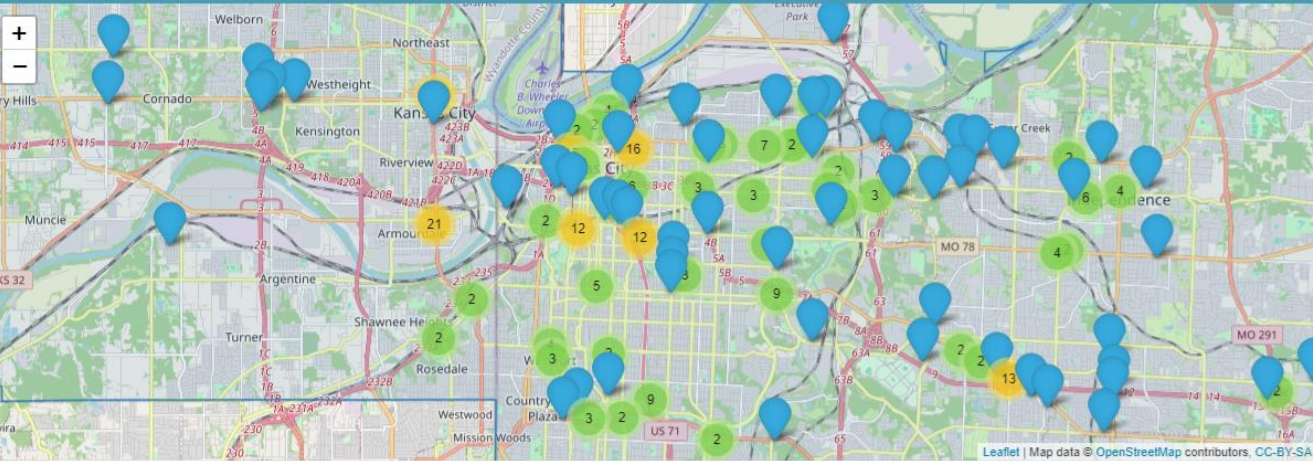
## Chronically Homeless

Requests

KEVIN CHAROENWO...

Map

VIEW REQUEST



List

TOOLS

Type	Client	Client Description	Last Interaction	Days Since Last Interaction	Tags
Unsheltered Homeless Survey - 2024					Chronically Homeless, PIT 2024
Unsheltered Homeless Survey - 2024					Chronically Homeless, PIT 2024
Unsheltered Homeless Survey - 2024					Chronically Homeless, PIT 2024, ...
Unsheltered Homeless Survey - 2024					Chronically Homeless, PIT 2024

EXPORT


REFRESH

Requests

KEVIN CHAROENWO...

Map

VIEW REQUEST



TOOLS

estID	DOB	Gender(s)	Race(s)	Veteran	Priority	Status	Assignees	In-Process On	Completed On	Tags
					Medium	New				Unclaimed Property Match
					Medium	New				Unclaimed Property Match
					Medium	New				Unclaimed Property Match
					Medium	New				Unclaimed Property Match
					Medium	New				Unclaimed Property Match
					Medium	New				Unclaimed Property Match

REFRESH

Unclaimed Property





**Amber Holmes**

[Amber.Holmes@kcmo.org](mailto:Amber.Holmes@kcmo.org)



**KANSAS CITY  
MISSOURI**

**Nehemiah Rosell**

[NRosell@gkcceh.org](mailto:NRosell@gkcceh.org)



**Kevin Charoenworawat**

[Kevin@simtechsolutions.com](mailto:Kevin@simtechsolutions.com)

**Simtech***Solutions*,inc.