



**City of Dallas**

# **Homeless Engagement Initiatives at Dallas Public Library**

**Housing and Homeless  
Solutions Committee  
June 24, 2024**

Jo Giudice, Director  
Dallas Public Library

# Presentation Overview



- History of Homeless Engagement Initiative (HEI)
- Focus of HEI
- Operational Impact/Data
- Partnerships
- Next Steps



# Background/History



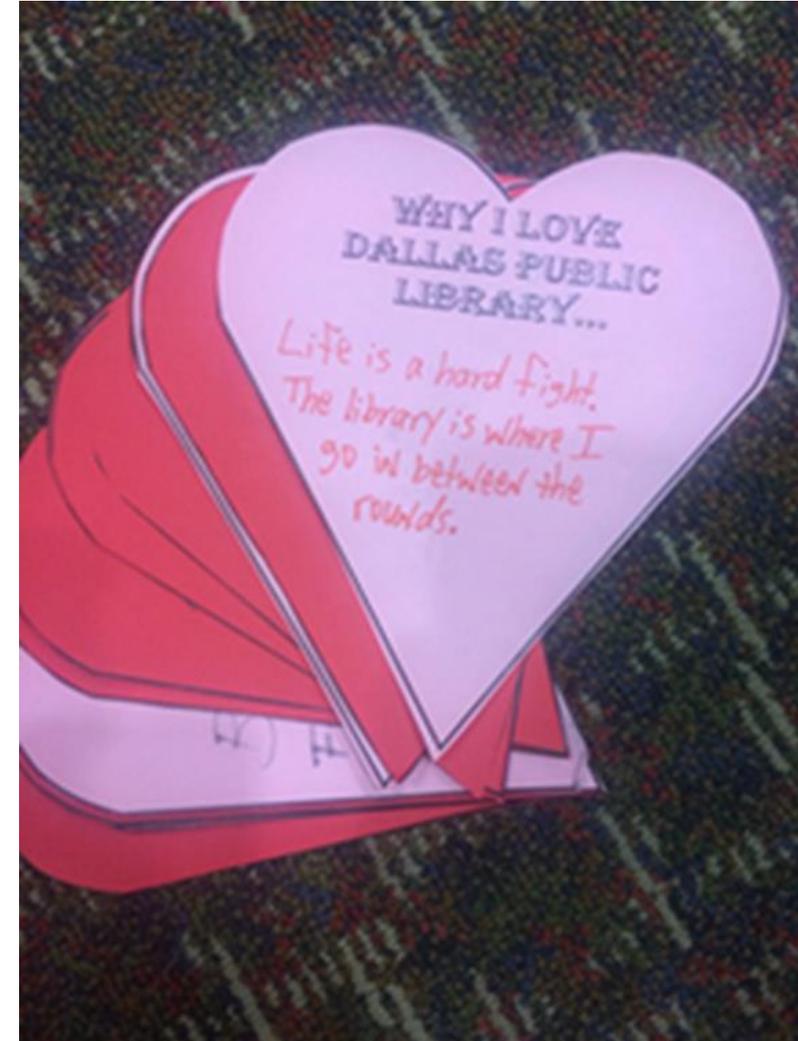
- As with downtown in general, homelessness has been associated with the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library since it opened in 1982
- In 2013 with grant funding, the Library launched its Homeless Engagement Initiative building on the Library's core service of information navigators and resource providers



# Background/History



- Focused on efforts to connect customers with resources and intentionally build relationships
  - Greeting customers
  - HELP Desk – information and referral to social services, benefits, job seeking focused on homeless population
  - Coffee & Conversation
  - Homeless Engagement Coordinator
  - Streetview podcast
  - Central Library's 1<sup>st</sup> floor can transition to inclement weather shelter
  - First served as shelter in 2019



# Focus of HEI



- Referral Connections
- Engagement and Relationship Building
- Awareness



# Referral Connections



- HELP Desk - connecting resources and information for emergency shelter, housing information, connecting with family, resume and job application assistance, connection to other available resources or wrap around services in the community.
  - Branch staff are trained to provide similar services
- Wraparound service provider information sessions
- Staff training and support



# Engagement and Relationship Building



- Programs to engage unhoused patrons, providing positive social interactions and inclusion
  - Coffee & Conversation
  - Artful Fridays
  - Game Days
- Volunteer opportunities for the unhoused
- Maintaining partner relationships to encourage customers to engage with wraparound services and make appropriate referrals



# Awareness



- “On the Block” podcast featuring the unhoused and providers
- Active participation in coalition meetings to stay abreast of supportive services and initiatives for the unhoused population
- Partnering with OHS in target neighborhoods to host meetings about OHS’s role and community effort to address homelessness
- Creating programs that naturally blend customers that are housed and unhoused
- Recruiting volunteers to help with HEI services



# Operational Impact/Data FY '23



HEI Program	Program Attendance
Artfull Fridays	312
CARDboard Project and Downtown Dallas Inc. Job Assistance	137
Coffee & Conversation	1,095
Movie Saturdays	555
Game Day	41



# Partnerships

- Office of Homeless Solutions
- Office of Integrated Public Safety
- Office of Community Care
- Downtown Dallas, Inc.
- Housing Forward
- The Bridge Homeless Recovery Center
- Our Calling
- CARDBOARD Project
- Austin Street Shelter
- Dallas Life Shelter
- Union Gospel Mission



# Next Steps



- Continue engagement with OHS
  - Sharing homeless hotspots at branch locations bi-weekly
- Develop library staff training
- Increased volunteer recruitment to help with HEI services and efforts
- Community engagement to support programs and initiatives
  - Summer giveaway – water bottles
  - Coffee & Conversation





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# Appendix – Additional Partner Info



## VIRTUAL CALL CENTER: CBP 10 Step Roadmap

### CARDBOARD PROJECT 10 Step Roadmap to Self-Sufficiency



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