

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2021

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

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WORKING TOGETHER TO BRING HELP & HOPE

Unsheltered Homeless in Topeka.

Over the last few years almost every city in our nation has seen an increase in its number of unsheltered homeless. Lack of affordable housing, higher rates of unemployment, rising costs of food and medical care and a variety of other issues, not to mention Covid, have contributed to more homeless individuals living throughout the community than we have seen before.

They live in tents and makeshift structures without water, heat or electricity, often surrounded by garbage and in unsanitary conditions. We see them on our streets, in public spaces, and in our parks, fields and wooded areas. We estimate that on any given day we could locate over 200 different unsheltered homeless in our community, but we believe there may be at least double that number. And that doesn't include people who may be staying out of sight - in garages, backyards or abandoned

buildings, living without basic human necessities.

Many of these individuals are not ready to come into a homeless shelter like TRM. Many have no idea how to seek out services or ask for help. Some have deep trauma and are not capable of being around other people without debilitating fear and anxiety. Some do not understand rules or structure or have trouble following them. Some are not yet ready to give up drugs or alcohol. Most

have lived for years in whatever way it takes to survive and are so consumed by this everyday struggle they have forgotten how to engage with the world around them, or how to live within the boundaries of society.

As the number of the unsheltered homeless is rising and soon a new wave of people may be forced to take to the streets after eviction moratoriums expire, cities around the country are becoming more invested in the issue of homelessness than ever before.

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Partnering with TPD & Valeo!

Over this past year, alongside other community organizations, TRM has begun looking for different access points to more effectively engage with the unsheltered homeless. If someone can't or won't come to us, what can we bring to them?

This month, beginning May 4, TRM will begin a new initiative alongside Valeo, Stormont

Vail and the Topeka Police Department to engage with the unsheltered homeless in the Topeka area in a new and innovative way. The **Mobile Access Partnership (MAP)** program will focus on getting services out to people who need them in our community. These services will provide mobile bathrooms, showers and laundry facilities, a mobile health clinic, a mobile food pantry/ kitchen and more.

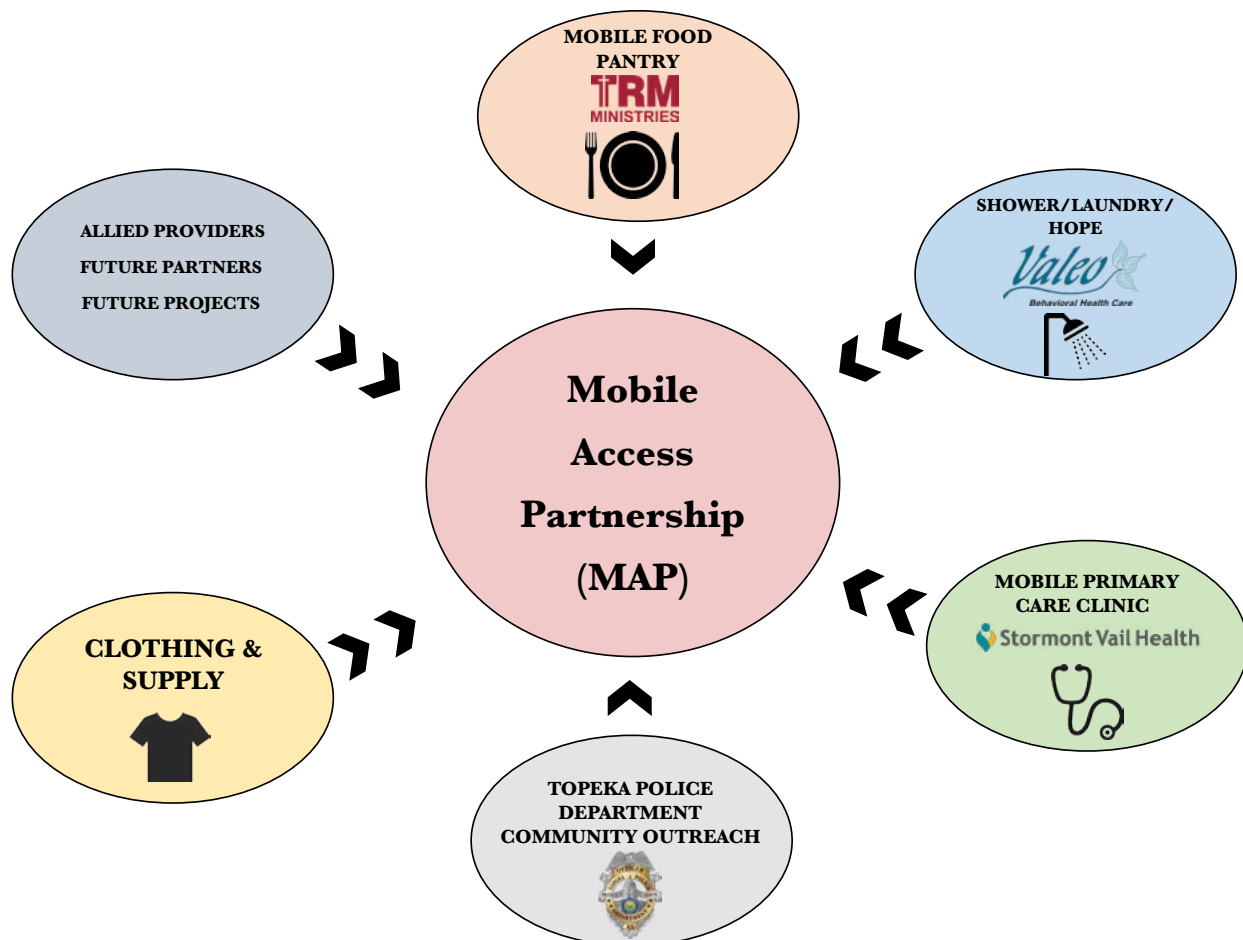
Working together, TRM, Valeo, Stormont Vail and Topeka Police Department will take these services out to many locations in our community with

the goal of meeting the simple, daily needs of the unsheltered homeless to help them learn they are valued, respected, and have the support of their community as they learn how to accept help, find jobs and stable housing, and rejoin society - or sometimes, as they learn how to do more than "just survive" for the very first time.

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Valeo's Laundry & Shower Trailer



At TRM we have seen success stories over and over again of people who came to us broken and alone and are today living healthy and vibrant lives in our community. They have been stabilized with education, jobs, housing, and healing relationships. As Covid restrictions have decreased the capacity of our shelters and as homelessness increases in our nation, it is the goal of TRM to expand our services outward to all those in need in our community, in addition to our guests.

Over the past year our Operation Food Secure program, created in response to the Covid economical crisis, has worked with over 90 partners to distribute over 5 million meals to the hungry in an 8 county radius. The success of this program and continued collaboration with other agencies has propelled us forward to seek out other ways we can meet increasing needs, and going forward it's our goal to continue to expand the MAP



program, work alongside other community leaders, and continue to provide the services already offered by TRM.

Once again, without compassionate individuals like you, our efforts to bring help and hope to the growing number of our neighbors in need would not be possible. Your sacrifice of resources, time and prayers inspire us to press forward, to reach the most desperate in our community and stand in the gap. Thank you for rolling up your sleeves, helping us to not only think outside the box of

possibilities, but to actually do something many call impossible. As Mother Teresa once said,

“Faith in action is love, and love in action is service. By transforming that faith into living acts of love, we put ourselves in contact with God Himself, with Jesus our Lord.”

At TRM, we call this, **“faith with its sleeves rolled up!”** May God bless you for joining us at TRM with **your sleeves rolled up! †**



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