

The Scope

Bigger Vision Of Athens
Monthly Newsletter
June, 2021



Our Mission: To provide a safe and comfortable place for those in homelessness in Athens, Georgia, as they navigate the path towards sustainable housing.

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Bigger Vision Highlight

Athens, like everywhere else, has experienced a surge of unemployment due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This has led to a worsening homelessness situation as residents can no longer afford to pay their rents and mortgages. Restrictions and limitations placed on evictions have helped, but many residents are now living on the street. Without a corresponding increase in capacity in area shelters, this has resulted in more and more people living in outdoor makeshift campsites in various spots around the city. Without proper sanitation and amenities, landowners have become increasingly unwilling to permit these campsites to operate. In some cases, the owners have notified the city that they will be closing the campsites and expelling the residents. One example is the CSX Rail company, which has given the city notice that the large encampment on Willow Street must be vacated by the second week of August.

A current effort is underway among area elected officials, county staff and human service providers to find solutions to this problem on a short- and long-term basis. One possibility is allocating publicly owned lands to be used for these purposes, and possibly using public funds to add needed amenities such as trash removal, toilets and showers. Longer term solutions include the development of more affordable housing, increases in subsidized housing, more job training programs and pressure being put on employers to increase wages.

Draft proposals and resolutions are being discussed, and a virtual roundtable discussion with all parties is scheduled for June 2nd.

Donor Spotlight of the Month

This month, Bigger Vision would like to honor the hard work done by the Period Project at UGA. The Period Project is part of a nationwide movement to end period poverty and period stigma. Through partnerships with local shelters like Bigger Vision, Period Project helps provide menstrual products and health education to those in need across Athens-Clarke County, including feminine hygiene bags for individuals that rely on shelter resources at Bigger Vision. Guided by a mission aimed at expanding access to feminine resources through education, advocacy, and outreach, Period Project is helping improve the lives of Athens-Clarke County residents. Bigger Vision is proud to continue working together to further our mutual goals!



COVID-19 Shelter Updates

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, we modified our services to better serve those experiencing homelessness in our community including:

- Upon further review of CDC approved COVID-19 protocol, we have increased our bed capacity to 24 (a reduction from our usual 34 guests, but up from the 17 we've been able to serve) to allow for appropriate distancing.
- Offering a limited number of to-go dinners each day.
- Offering afternoon showers & laundry from 1:00pm to 4:00pm Thursday-Sunday by appointment.
- Guests are having their temperature checked, are asked to sanitize their hands & are required to wear a mask.
- In the case of exposure to the virus, we will close the shelter until we deem it safe to return.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Due to COVID-19, we reduced volunteer opportunities to better ensure everyone's safety, but we still need volunteers! New, exciting volunteer opportunities will be added when normal volunteering resumes!

Sign up to Volunteer as a Meal Provider:

- In a group or individually, plan & prepare, or purchase a meal for a minimum of 40 guests.
- Deliver & drop off the meal at Bigger Vision between 5:00-5:30pm.
- Usually, we would ask volunteers to serve the meal to the guests but due to COVID-19 we ask that they only drop off the meal.
- *If you would like more information on our current volunteer guidelines or if you would like to sign up, visit our [website](#) and [contact us](#)

“Bigger Vision is committed to working with our community partners to help develop solutions pertaining to the camps in Athens-Clarke County”

Steven Mason

Executive Director
Bigger Vision

Upcoming Events:

Please follow us on Facebook to stay updated on any events during the month of June!

Opportunities for Financial Donations:

Bed Sponsorship Program: While any donation is greatly appreciated, we have a goal of raising enough money to sponsor beds for guests of our overnight stay program. One night's stay includes two meals, a shower/laundry, and any basic necessities a guest may need. Please email Director@BiggerVisionOfAthens.org or go to our website if you are interested in donating to one of our three commitment tiers:

Bronze Bed Sponsorship: \$20/Monthly Commitment	Silver Bed Sponsorship: \$250/Monthly Commitment	Gold Bed Sponsorship: \$500/Monthly Commitment
<p><i>*Sponsor 1 bed for 1 night each month*</i> Sponsor recognized with: Standard Magnet with Name on Bed Recognition on the BVOA Website & Social Media</p>	<p><i>*Sponsor 1 bed for 182 nights each year*</i> Sponsor recognized with: Custom Magnet with Name & Logo on the Bed Photo-Op Around the Bed Recognition on the BVOA Website & Social Media</p>	<p><i>*Sponsor 1 bed for 365 nights each year*</i> Sponsor recognized with: Custom Magnet with Name & Logo on the Bed Photo-Op Around the Bed Recognition on the BVOA Website & Social Media</p>

Paypal- Using Paypal, you will be able to contribute as a one time donation, or as a monthly contribution to the Bed Sponsorship program through the link on our website.

Check- If your check represents a Bed Sponsorship, please indicate so in the memo line. Either drop them off in-person M-F between 9am-4pm, or mail it to:
The Bigger Vision of Athens, Inc.,
P.O. Box 8022, Athens, GA 30603

Other Opportunities: If the bed sponsorship program isn't right for you, we appreciate one-time donations as well (through the avenues listed above), or have the option for you to donate while also shopping for your groceries, or shopping online:

Amazon Smile- When using [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) (instead of Amazon.com), a percentage of every purchase you make will be donated to BVOA if you select our organization.

Kroger Plus- Activate Kroger Community Rewards to donate a percentage of every purchase you make using your Kroger Plus card to BVOA if you select our organization.

Creative Ways to Donate: Here are some fun ways to get your network involved in your support of Bigger Vision!

Start a Good Drive	Technology Upgrade	Old Games and Books
Check out Bigger Vision's most needed items for the month and start an item drive with friends and family!	Planning on upgrading an old computer? Check with Bigger Vision and see if we can put your old tech to good use!	Donate gently used books and games that you haven't played in years, guests and volunteers will love them!

*For links to online donation options, please go to <https://biggervisionofathens.org/donate> After the first newsletter, all information about regular donations can also be found at this link.

Opportunities for Item Donations:

<p>Amazon Registry: Our supply of items fluctuates, so we keep a list of items we currently need on Amazon. Link to our comprehensive list: https://www.amazon.com/wedding/bigger-vision-of-athens-2016-2017-season-athens-april-2017/registry/Z12VT8YP7C2U</p>	<p>This month's highest needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disposable Water Bottles • Assorted Snacks • Blankets
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Item Donations can be made to our main location, 95 North Avenue, Athens, GA 30601, on Monday- Friday, from 8am-4pm.

*Note: Items do not have to be purchased from Amazon or be the exact item selected. However, we do ask that all items be donated new or unused.

FAQ's

Is Bigger Vision involved in helping find solutions surrounding the campsites in Athens-Clarke County?

- Yes! Bigger Vision is working alongside community partners to help develop strategies that will address the current situation, as well as strategies aimed at preventing similar occurrences in the future.

Does Bigger Vision plan on resuming in-person volunteering?

- Yes! Bigger Vision is closely following CDC guidelines to ensure that in-person volunteering does not begin until it is safe for guests, volunteers, and staff members.

Will Bigger Vision be offering the same volunteer opportunities once fully reopened?

- Yes! Upon reopening, Bigger Vision will be offering the volunteer opportunities that were available prior to COVID-19. In addition, Bigger Vision will be adding new volunteer positions. Stay tuned to learn more!

Follow us on:



Contact us!

Director@BiggerVisionOfAthens.org

(706) 340-6062 ext. 3

[Website](#)