

Operation Rio Grande Timeline

Operation Rio Grande

An unprecedented partnership between state and local government coming together to restore public safety and order in the Rio Grande area.

July 25, 2017

Concerns of public safety in the Rio Grande area hit all time high.

Multiple homicides in a two-week window and ongoing concerns of the open drug market continue.

July 26, 2017

Governor meeting with state and local officials

State and local leaders met to announce immediate actions to restore public safety.

July 27, 2017

Operation Rio Grande leadership established

State leadership: Lt. Governor Spencer Cox, Speaker Greg Hughes, Sen. President Wayne Niederhauser

Local leadership: Mayor Ben McAdams (SL County) and Mayor Jackie Biskupski (SLC)

August 11, 2017

Securing 300 new jail beds

Working to secure 300 new jail beds was a lofty goal but made possible by determined leadership of Mayor Jackie Biskupski, state Corrections Executive Director Rollin Cook, and collaboration with Salt Lake County Jail and other county jails.

August 14, 2017

Operation Rio Grande launched with three phases announced

Phase 1 began August 14, 2017 with a focus on restoring public safety and order. Additional phases include treatment and providing employment opportunities.

Phase 1 begins August 14 with intense law enforcement presence

The purpose of Phase 1 consisted of four objectives: (1) Restoration of law and order; (2) Sustained, long-term law enforcement presence; (3) Getting dangerous felons off the street; (4) Disrupt narcotics trafficking.

September 1, 2017

Rio Grande Street closed to vehicle traffic at 200 South

Segment of Rio Grande Street closed to traffic; S.L. seeking input on 2-year closure

September 7, 2017

Phase 2 begins adding first wave of treatment beds

Additional 37 treatment beds were added to the system between Odyssey House, First Step House, and House of Hope.

First assessment day

A team of social workers with Salt Lake County conducted the first assessment day in the Salt Lake County Jail. The assessments help determine treatment options to inmates arrested as a result of Operation Rio Grande.

September 12, 2017

Fence to create safe space goes up

The focus turns to creating a safe space that allows access to services in a what is considered a "safe space."

September 13, 2017

New specialty drug court announced

First group of individuals join the new specialty drug court, which opens the door for those arrested from Operation Rio Grande the chance to take a different path other than jail for recovery.

September 20, 2017

Special Session

Two bills were passed by the Utah Legislature during the special session -- one to fund nearly \$5 million for operation costs and one to change a state law to allow Salt Lake City to close Rio Grande Street near 200 South and lease it to the state.

September 28, 2017

Encampment cleanups begin

Salt Lake County begins encampment cleanups near Jordan River Parkway. The state supports the efforts with UDOT providing equipment and hauling waste away and Corrections provided inmate workers.

October 3, 2017

Delegation visit to Washington, D.C.

Utah officials, including Governor Herbert and Speaker Hughes, went to D.C. last week to meet with HHS regarding our Medicaid waiver.

October 5, 2017

Second assessment day and new treatment beds

Salt Lake County partners conduct second assessment day in Salt Lake County jail and 24 new treatment beds announced with Odyssey House.

October 6, 2017

Salt Lake City hosts Project Homeless Connect

Hundreds of individuals experiencing homelessness enjoyed a daylong, one-stop event that brought together 90 service providers to help those in need.

October 10, 2017

Safe Space established with fencing, tables, tent

Outreach efforts begin to educate individuals on the street about the Safe Space and coordinated services card.

October 18, 2017

Two-month update on successes and next steps

After two months of Phase 1 and 2 in place, government officials reviewed successes, challenges and activities in progress.

October 27, 2017

Coordinated service cards being required for Safe Space

The Safe Space opens with the coordinated service card required for access to the area and services inside.

November 1, 2017

Medicaid waiver approved

HHS approves Utah's Medicaid waiver opening the door for more than a hundred new treatments coming over the next several months.

November 2, 2018

Law enforcement outreach efforts increase

The Department of Public Safety continues to increase outreach efforts in working with individuals on the streets near and around Rio Grande Street.

300 tons of waste cleaned up

The combined efforts of Salt Lake County Health Department, the Department of Corrections and UDOT, more than 300 tons of garbage has been removed from encampment areas and taken to the dump.

November 9, 2017

First community screening and assessment day

Salt Lake County hosts first "community" screening and assessment day to provide treatment options to those out of custody.

Phase 3, Dignity of Work plan announced

The Dignity of Work phase will work to build individual plans to determine next steps with individuals that will help them become work ready and lead to employment.

November 11, 2017

First community screening and assessment day

Salt Lake County hosts first "community" screening and assessment day to provide treatment options to those out of custody.

November 14, 2018

First Dignity of Work Job Fair

More than 65 job seekers attended and met with eight different employers. Workforce Services' staff met with individuals and started scheduling appointments for individual plans.

November 27, 2017

Dignity of Work daily workshops begin

Workshops will help prepare individuals for employment with variety of trainings designed to help people become work ready.

December 1, 2017

More than 10 individuals residing at The Road Home paired up with Okland Construction to replace the wooden fence along 200 South and 500 West.

December 6, 2017

Outreach for Hepatitis A outbreak

Salt Lake County Health Department continues to educate and provide vaccinations to individuals in the area.

December 11, 2018

Winter donation message

Lt. Governor Spencer Cox with SLCPD and Salt Lake County Health Department asked the public to donate the better way by supporting the service providers.

December 21, 2017

The Road Home Media-A-thon

The Road Home serves individuals at the downtown shelter, Midvale family shelter, permanent supportive housing locations, and family hotel voucher program. The resources needed year-round is supported by the annual media-a-thon.

January 5, 2018

DPS introduces Mike and Ike

The Mike and Ike K-9 team prepares to start work in Rio Grande neighborhoods

January 11, 2018

112 new beds for residential treatment

Odyssey House opens two new facilities adding much needed capacity for treatment.

Homeless experts discuss Operation Rio Grande

"You're doing the right thing" stated homeless and addiction experts at pre-legislative session discussion.

Third community assessment day

With added treatment capacity comes the need for more assessments. Salt Lake County led the effort at the Salt Lake County Jail.

January 15, 2018

Social workers assisting law enforcement

DPS hires a social worker through Valley Behavioral Health to assist law enforcement with outreach to homeless individuals in the Rio Grande area.

January 29, 2018

New sober living facilities

Salt Lake County announces sober living vouchers pilot program to provide safe and affordable housing to individuals transitioning from residential treatment to the community.

February 1, 2018

Faces of Operation Rio Grande

These three individuals were arrested back in August 2017 as part of Operation Rio Grande. They went through the drug court program and entered treatment. All three are progressing and working towards employment and housing. They visited the State Capitol wearing suits donated by legislators.

February 5, 2018

Web tools go live on OperationRioGrande.Utah.Gov

Website will display outcomes and monthly data measurements to help demonstrate the work taking place with each phase. In addition, a visual timeline was added to highlight key milestones of the operation.