

ANNUAL WORK PLAN

SUBSTANCE USE ADVISORY COMMISSION

FY 2026

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Substance Use Advisory Commission (SUAC) serves to inform, advise, and support the City of Raleigh in addressing substance use and its related challenges. We envision a Raleigh where all individuals affected by substance use are met with compassion, supported by resources, and empowered to thrive in a community free from stigma.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The City of Raleigh's Strategic Plan outlines the City's key priorities and sets a clear path for future goals and actions. The Substance Use Advisory Commission and its initiatives are aligned with the following strategic objectives:

- ☐ Community Safety
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Quality of Life
- ☐ Organizational Excellence

FY 25 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Bi-Annual Medicine Takeback Event: The commission held two medication takeback events in FY2025. These events allowed individuals to drop off unwanted, expired, or unused medications to Raleigh Police who then dispose of it properly.

Community Listening Sessions: The commission hosted 2 listening sessions in FY2025. Participants were given a participant feedback survey which gathered insights on program effectiveness, relevance, and satisfaction.

Partnership Development: SUAC partnered with numerous organizations in Raleigh to be present at a variety of events including First Friday, Rally for Recovery, and more. At these events the commission distributed notebooks, pens, drawstring bags, feminine products, hand sanitizers, first aid kits, and more.

FY26 FOCUS AREAS

List or describe upcoming or planned projects for the board or commission

Project	Description	Strategic Plan Alignment	Target Date
Partnership Development	Partnering with local organizations, agencies, businesses, and institutions to share resources, broaden outreach, and strengthen our collective impact in addressing substance use disorders and related concerns. Extending monthly invitations to guest speakers to share their experiences, challenges, ideas, or innovations related to substance use. See Partnership Develop under Events for more information.	Community Safety	Monthly presentations
Unhoused Encampment Outreach	Work with local organizations to deliver resources to unhoused populations in Raleigh. Some people who are unhoused experience mental health disorders and/or substance use disorders, which can be co-occurring. While one condition may not directly cause the other, they often share overlapping risk factors such as lack of housing, resources, and other. By delivering resources to unhoused individuals, the commission is able to help combat risk factors associated with housing and quality of life.	Quality of Life, Housing	Winter 2025 and Spring 2026
Listening Session	To gather input, feedback, and insights directly from community members, individuals with lived experience with substance use disorders, and service providers	Quality of Life	Early Summer 2026
Medication Take Back Events	Partner with Raleigh Police Department to collect unwanted, unused, or expired medications.	Community Safety	Summer 2026
Creation of New Bylaws	Create new bylaws using the new council-approved template.	Organizational excellence	Spring 2026

Events

- **Community Listening Session** to gather input, feedback, and insights directly from community members, individuals with lived experience, and service providers. Minimum of 1 per fiscal year. Aligning with the quality-of-life strategy from the strategic plan and estimated cost \$1000.

- **Evaluation:** Assess attendance rates, participant engagement, and feedback received during listening sessions. Use qualitative data collected to identify emerging trends, community

priorities, and areas for collaboration with stakeholders. Incorporate community input into the planning and implementation of education and outreach initiatives.

• **Participant Feedback Surveys** following community events, workshops, and educational sessions to gather insights on program effectiveness, relevance, and satisfaction. This event aligns with the Quality of Life strategy from the strategic plan and has no estimated costs. We will implement short participant feedback surveys that include the following yes/no questions:

1. **Was today's event informative and relevant to the needs of your community?**
2. **Did you gain new insights or resources related to substance use, mental health, or available services?**
3. **Do you feel more confident in your ability to locate and access local support services for substance use or mental health concerns?**
4. **Would you be interested in attending additional events such as workshops, trainings, or recovery-focused programming?**
5. **Have you or someone close to you faced challenges related to substance use or mental health within the past year?**
6. **Would you like to receive follow-up information, referrals, or support resources from the Substance Use Advisory Commission?**

Evaluation: Analyze survey responses to assess participant satisfaction levels, knowledge gained, and perceived impact of engagement activities. Use feedback to identify strengths and areas for improvement in event planning, content delivery, and community engagement strategies. Incorporate suggestions and recommendations from participants into future programming to enhance community engagement efforts.

• **Partnership Development** in support of the City's goal of enhancing public well-being and reducing disparities, SUAC will collaborate with the Department of Economic and Social Advancement, Raleigh Police Department's ACORNS team, and local behavioral health coalitions to pilot initiatives that strengthen care coordination and improve access for impacted populations. These efforts will support broader citywide metrics around reducing overdose deaths and increasing trust in public health systems. Aligning with all three of the selected strategies from the strategic plan: housing, quality of life, and community safety. No estimated costs.

Use experience mapping during meetings to visualize the path from crisis to recovery, highlighting key barriers and potential solutions. SUAC can allocate time in each meeting to focus on a specific stage in an individual's experience with substance use services, from the initial emergency response through long-term recovery.

Month	Focus Area	Goal / Outcome
Session 1	Acute Response	Understand immediate crisis response and triage
Session 2	Emergency Medical Care	Explore medical stabilization, barriers to follow-up care
Session 3	Behavioral Health Triage	Learn about immediate mental health and substance use evals
Session 4	Inpatient/Outpatient Treatment + MAT	Discuss access, intake, continuity of care, e.g. medication assisted treatment
Session 5	Recovery Housing	Evaluate gaps in transitional and sober housing options

Session 6	Long-Term Recovery Supports	Examine social reintegration and wraparound services
Session 7	Community Impact + Lived Experience	Capture first-hand experience and community needs
Session 8	Policy + System-Level Change	Identify structural barriers and policy recommendations

Evaluation: To support the City of Raleigh’s strategic priorities, SUAC will track the impact of its monthly speaker series and related engagement efforts using practical, community-informed measures. Indicators of success may include:

- Consistent participation from residents and community partners in listening sessions and discussions related to mental health, addiction, and recovery.
- Increased visibility and distribution of educational materials highlighting local behavioral health and harm reduction services.
- Opportunities for attendees to receive information about overdose prevention, including referrals to naloxone access points or training partners.
- Completion of brief post-event surveys capturing participant feedback, with a focus on knowledge gained, perceived relevance, and interest in future programming or follow-up resources.

Education and Outreach

The Community Education & Outreach Task Force (formally Events Task Force) will work to ensure SUAC is present at applicable community education and outreach events related to raising awareness and fostering community engagement in substance use prevention and intervention. Key initiatives and impacts may include:

Education programs:

Annual Medication Drop-Off Events: As part of our ongoing efforts to prevent prescription drug misuse and promote safe medication disposal practices, SUAC plans to continue its participation in the bi-annual medication drop-off events in collaboration with local pharmacies and law enforcement agencies. These events provide community members with a safe and convenient way to dispose of unused or expired medications, reducing the risk of diversion, abuse, and environmental contamination. Aligning with the community safety strategy from the strategic plan. These take place in the Fall of 2025 and Spring of 2026. Estimated cost for both is \$200.

Community Workshops and Seminars: Attend workshops and seminars focused on various aspects of substance use disorder, including prevention, early intervention, treatment, and harm reduction. These events should provide valuable information to community members, healthcare professionals, educators, and law enforcement personnel, fostering a deeper understanding of substance use and its impact on individuals and families. Workshops should facilitate discussions to identify actionable steps for improving community resources, advocating for policy changes, and promoting health equity. Aligning with community safety and quality of life strategies. It is estimated to cost \$1000.

Workshop topics could include...

- **Capital City Rally for Recovery Annual** Event to celebrate recovery and offer hope to

anyone seeking or in need of recovery from substance use disorders.

- **i.e., Stigma Reduction** tailored to different community groups such as parents, healthcare professionals, employers. The workshop could provide education on challenging stigma, promoting empathy and supporting individuals with substance use disorder.
- **i.e., Social Determinants of Health Event** focused on exploring the impact of social determinants of health on substance use disorder and strategies for addressing systemic barriers. Option to invite experts, community leaders, and policymakers to present on topics such as housing insecurity, poverty, trauma, and healthcare access.

Community outreach:

First Friday Market Events: By engaging at events like First Friday, SUAC supports Raleigh’s broader strategy to enhance residents’ quality of life through improved community wellness, education, and public engagement. These events provide a valuable opportunity for SUAC to connect with the city’s nightlife industry, engage with local vendors and attendees, and expand its presence while gathering meaningful resources and data. Aligning with the community safety strategy from the strategic plan and estimated to cost \$500.

Social media: To disseminate information, raise awareness, and engage with the community on topics related to substance use disorders, stigma reduction, and access to treatment. Evaluation: Monitor social media metrics such as reach, engagement, and follower demographics to gauge the effectiveness of outreach efforts. Track user interactions, comments, and shares to measure community engagement and identify content preferences. Adjust social media strategies based on performance data to optimize impact and reach. Estimated to cost \$1200.

These initiatives reflect SUAC’s commitment to equipping individuals, families, and communities with the knowledge and resources needed to address substance use disorders effectively. They also directly support Raleigh’s strategic goal of advancing a holistic approach to community safety, emphasizing trauma-informed care, stigma reduction, and the cultivation of community trust. Through collaboration, public education, and evidence-based practices, SUAC will continue to drive meaningful progress and contribute to a healthier, more resilient Raleigh.

BOARD OR COMMISSION MEMBERS

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