

## Banishment: *more of the same*

Recently, the Atlanta City Council considered a “banishment” ordinance as a way to address street-level prostitution. This ordinance would have increased fines, jail time, and would have made it illegal for those convicted of a first offense to be in parts of the city, even for legitimate purposes. It would have made people less safe and experts say it could increase prostitution.

Concerned community members, churches, and neighbors mobilized to stop this outdated proposal and won the creation of the Working Group to Reduce Prostitution, which is now considering alternative approaches, like pre-booking diversion.

## Pre-Booking Diversion will reduce street-level prostitution and recidivism

There is a growing consensus that enforcement-only approaches such as arrests and jail time for prostitution and low-level drug offenses are costly and ineffective. Pre-Booking Diversion is an innovative model (based on the successful Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program in Seattle) that offers a new approach to an age-old problem.

If fully implemented, the Atlanta Community Based Pre-Booking Program will reduce street level prostitution and the problematic behaviors associated with drug use and addiction. It will lead to improved outcomes for some of our most vulnerable residents.

In addition, investing in the quality support services necessary for a successful pre-booking diversion program will expand needed services for the broader community.

### Solutions Not Punishment Coalition

*Solutions Not Punishment (SNaP) Coalition works to transform the culture of the Atlanta Police Department, elected officials, and larger community to ensure the well-being and dignity of all Atlantans.*

[www.rjactioncenter.org](http://www.rjactioncenter.org)

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/snapco>

## Atlanta Community Based Pre-Booking Diversion



*La Gender*

Trans(forming)



## What is Pre-Booking Diversion?

### Solutions, not punishment.

A pre-booking diversion program identifies people for whom probable cause exists for an arrest (such as for street-level prostitution or low-level drug offenses) and redirects them to quality community-based treatment and support services *rather than booking them into jail*.

Pre-Booking Diversion offers people the help they need to get into recovery and get off the streets for good instead of being caught in the constant revolving door of jail, streets, and jail again.



*"I can tell you what got me off the streets: finding a safe place to lay my head and food to eat."*

-Atlanta resident & former sex worker

### The Old Approach:

- Individuals cycle in and out of jail
- Increased joblessness, mental health challenges, and drug addiction
- Decreased quality of life in communities
- Increased vigilante violence and police harassment of the most vulnerable sex workers
- Wasted taxpayer dollars with no increase in public safety

### The New Approach

- Services that are evidence-based, cost-effective and adhere to best practices
- Decrease in prostitution, public drug use and increase in public safety
- Bypasses costs and impact of booking, jail, & court appearances
- Immediate case management and access to high-quality services tailored to individual needs
- Positive culture shift in police department and improved community relations