



VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER ANALYSIS AUGUST 20, 2019

Human Resources Department & Combined Arms
Joya Hayes, Director Human Resources Department
John Boerstler, CEO Combined Arms



Overview

- Background
- Needs Assessment Results
- Survey Results
- Recommendations from Vendor
- Next Steps





Background

- April 19, 2017 – Veterans Affairs Commission recommendation for VRC
- June 22, 2017 – Council approved resolution 20170622-035
- December 15, 2017 – HRD response sent to Council
- June 3, 2018 – Veterans Affairs Commission made a recommendation to fund a VRC
- HRD staff reached out to 48 local veteran service providers to gauge interest in co-locating. 12 of the 48 showed some interest
- HRD held 4800 sq. ft. at the new Learning and Research
- October 2018 presentation to Council based on feedback
 - ✓ Issued solicitation and contracted with Combined Arms
 - ✓ Survey Conducted
 - ✓ 3 Stakeholder meetings
- August 8, 2019 – Veterans Commission meeting



Highpoints of Last Council Briefing

- Complete a Business Plan on how a VRC should be implemented
- Benchmark where VRCs are currently being run
- Review idea of a non-profit due to the ability to fund raise
- Address Duplication of Services
- Co-locating
 - ✓ AISD
 - ✓ Community Centers
 - ✓ Army Future Command
 - ✓ VA Clinic
 - ✓ Travis County
- Council for final deliberations – metrics on veterans using services at other City locations are they using public transit because location won't be ideal.



7 Contract Project Objectives

- Conduct veterans resource needs assessment to determine need
- Utilize data results to determine service needs of veterans
- Evaluate Veteran Resource Center operating models
- Identify potential duplication of services within Travis County by entities and the willingness of other entities to participate both public, non-profit and private
- Evaluate transportation needs
- Evaluate opportunities to co-locate
- Evaluate space location and size
- Business Plan will be provided at the end of September





Project Phases

Understanding the Austin Veteran Community

Conduct a needs assessment and landscape analysis to quantitatively evaluate top challenges, service providers' willingness to participate, and resources and opportunities provided to Austin area veterans

Stakeholder Meetings

Convene town halls to qualitatively evaluate the need for a VRC and the lessons learned in phase 1 and develop recommendations

Evaluation and Presentation of Findings

Present information and evaluation of findings and recommendations to the City Manager's Office and Mayor and Council





Needs Assessment Methodology

- ❑ Combined Arms, TexVet, and staff from the Human Resources Department collaborated to create a needs assessment survey for veterans and their family members who reside in Greater Austin
- ❑ The survey was made available for 53 days and consisted of no more than 34 possible questions for any respondent
 - ✓ 562 total veteran respondents
 - ✓ Distribution method - email messages, social media posts, and organization's websites
 - ✓ Available via internet



Greater Austin Area

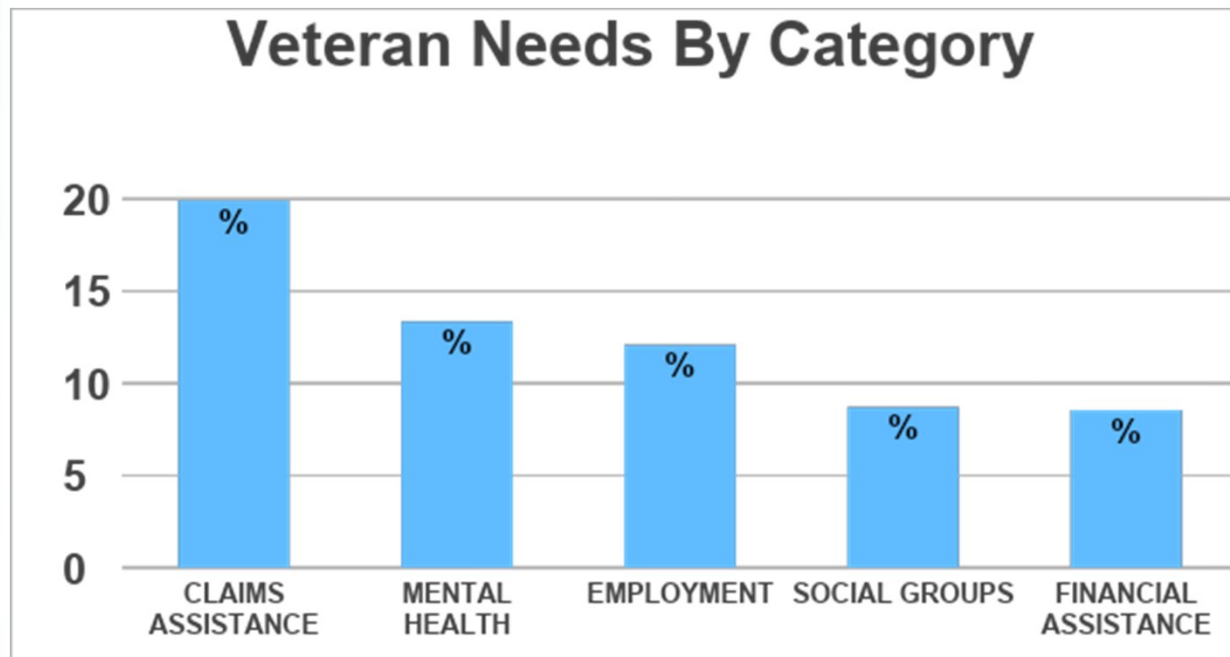
- ❑ The survey evaluated the needs of veterans in the Greater Austin Area which is defined as the following counties: Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, and Caldwell.
- ❑ The number of respondents represented by each county are as follows:
 - ✓ 55.34% Travis County (311 respondents)
 - ✓ 29.89% Williamson County (168 respondents)
 - ✓ 9.79% Hays County (55 respondents)
 - ✓ 4.09% Bastrop County (23 respondents)
 - ✓ 0.89% Caldwell County (5 respondents)





Veteran Needs Assessment by Category

Top 5 Responses



Additional Categories:

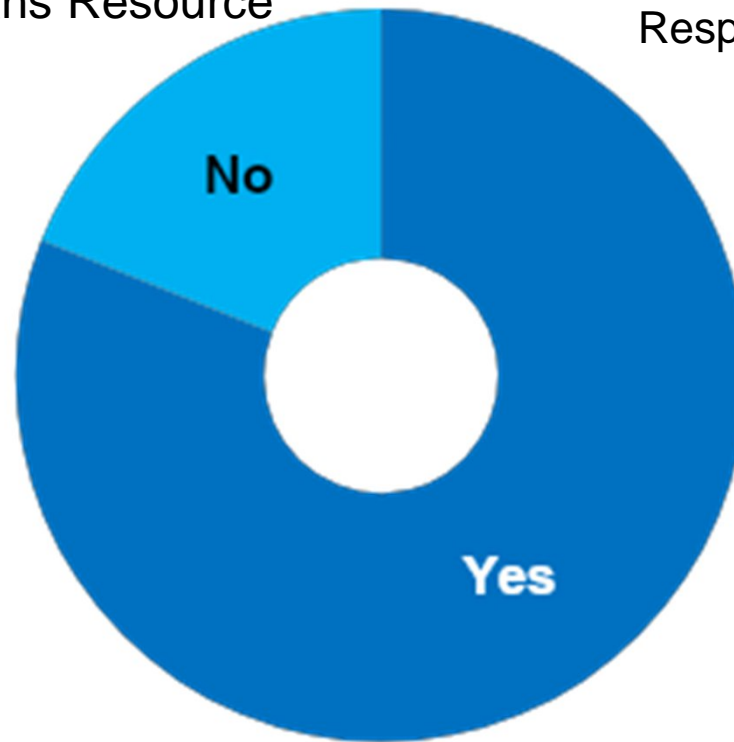
- Legal assistance
- Paying rent, mortgage, or utilities
- Homelessness prevention/rehousing
- Substance abuse/addiction treatment
- Child care
- Transportation
- Food
- Volunteer opportunities
- Living expenses other than housing or food
- Home modifications due to disability



Survey Results

Would you utilize the services offered in a Veterans Resource Center?

Number of Yes Responses	453
Number of No Responses	103
Responses	556





Veteran Resource Center Models

	City-Run Model	Nonprofit Model	Public-Private Partnership
Description	Run solely by City	Run solely by Nonprofit	Run by a partnership between the city and nonprofit.
Pros	<p>Public funds and in-kind space</p> <p>Access to a wide variety of shared services that can provide long-term stability to social service programs</p> <p>Recommended by the Commission – COA would be the first across country</p>	<p>Nonprofits can respond to changing needs of veteran families incredibly fast and effectively</p> <p>Diverse ways of raising revenue where government may not</p> <p>Minimal costs</p>	<p>Public-private partnerships can maintain the agility and speed of a nonprofit model and the benefits of the City's resources</p> <p>In-kind publicly provided space managed by a nonprofit could reduce redundancy and overhead</p> <p>Sustainability with a combination of public and private funds</p>
Cons	<p>Duplication of services</p> <p>Sustainability of funding</p>	<p>No city input</p> <p>Local service providers could be eliminated from participation</p> <p>Sustainability of funding</p>	<p>Diverging of ideas and management between city and nonprofit</p> <p>Sustainability of funding</p>



Public Service Duplication Matrix

	Travis County VSO	VA Clinic	TexVet	Texas Veterans Commissions	Austin Community College VSO
Footprint	7 staff	20 staff estimated	3 staff	7 Counties	7 Counties
Services	Claims Benefits	Benefits Mental health Homelessness Healthcare Social work	Information	Employment Education Benefits Peer Support Women Veterans	Education Benefits
Location	Downtown	Southeast	Round Rock	Downtown	North
Service Area	Travis	All Counties	All Counties	All Counties	Students
Space Available	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited
Collaboration*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*** Willing to participate in a collaborative system and potentially co-locate once VRC details are confirmed**



Non Profit Service Duplication Matrix

	Operation Finally Home	Heroes Night Out	Comfort Crew for Kids	Military Veteran Peer Network	Travis Manion Foundation
Footprint	12 staff	1 staff	3 staff	1 staff	1 staff
Services	Home modifications	Peer support Employment Mental health Financial assist	Family support	Peer support	Community engagement
Location	New Braunfels	Cedar Park	North	North	No Austin Office
Service Area	Statewide	Cedar Park	Statewide	Statewide	Austin
Space Available	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited
Collaboration*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*** Willing to participate in a collaborative system and potentially co-locate once VRC details are confirmed**



Observations

CO-LOCATING

- Most existing spaces have limited space or
- Unavailable/inaccessible space for partner organizations

PUBLIC FOCUS

- Public entities reported that they have a desire to collaborate on this initiative
- AISD and Army Futures Command collaboration opportunities will be provided in the final written report

LOCATION

- A consensus was not found on the location for the VRC
 - ✓ Survey respondents and stakeholders at the town hall meetings had diverse responses on the ideal location
 - ✓ Stakeholder feedback indicated Pflugerville/Round Rock location and also felt that South Austin is not currently represented
 - ✓ 45% of survey respondents indicated Central Austin

OPPORTUNITY

- The City providing space would allow support for any model – however space reserved by HRD may not be ideal
- The City has an opportunity to continue engaging stakeholders to develop VRC model through targeted communication



Benchmark

VRC CITIES	HOUSTON	COLORADO SPRINGS	WACO	SAN ANTONIO
Space allocated	16,000 sq. ft.	16,000 sq. ft.	9,000 sq. ft.	12,000 sq. ft.
Participating organizations	56 Non-Profit & Government Agencies	36 Non-Profit & Government Agencies	33 Non-Profit & Government Agencies	7 Non-Profit & Government Agencies
Veteran population	169,989	101,506	150,026	162,870
Veterans Served	4,859	4,916	41,000+ services	2,329
Operating model	Non-Profit Operated	Non-Profit Operated	Non-Profit Operated	Non-Profit Operated; City owned
Funds allocated	Sponsors, donors, corporate partnerships, foundations	Sponsors, donors, corporate partnerships, foundations	Sponsors, donors, corporate partnerships, foundations	\$4.92MM:City, 11 funding sources including Alamo colleges
City location	East Downtown	SW of City Center	SE of City Center	East San Antonio
Decision process	Joint Non-Profit collaboration	Joint Non-Profit collaboration	Joint Non-Profit collaboration	City Council approved to renovate Hospital into VRC



Combined Arms Recommendation

An Austin Veterans Resource Center has the opportunity to connect service providers in the area, which in turn would expand community engagement. This is based on:

- Benchmarking other cities
- Co-working shared facility creates intentional collaborative collisions for those professionals that serve military veteran families
- Single point of entry
- Integrated technology platform ensures veterans have access to customized resources provided by member organizations.
- Combining data & accountability collaboratively to ensure veterans connect with services.
- Collaborative marketing reaching further upstream

Based on the pros/cons of models presented if this item is moved forward we would recommend either the Non-Profit or Public/Private Partnership.



Veteran Needs by County

Travis	Williamson	Hays	Bastrop	Caldwell
Claims Assistance	Claims Assistance	Claims Assistance	Claims Assistance	Claims Assistance
Mental Health Services	Mental Health Services	Mental Health Services	Mental Health Services	Locating Veteran Centric Social Groups
Locating Veteran Centric Social Groups	Locating Veteran Centric Social Groups	Locating Veteran Centric Social Groups	Locating Veteran Centric Social Groups	Employment
Employment	Volunteer Opportunities	Employment	Assistance paying rent/mortgage and utilities	Assistance paying rent/mortgage and utilities
Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance	Employment	Legal Assistance



Next Steps

Final report will include all survey data and business plan for all three VRC models

Return to the Veterans Commission to:

- To review report & recommendations from Combined Arms
- Meet with service providers to discuss community needs





QUESTIONS?

