




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Sara Hensley, Interim Assistant City Manager 

DATE: December 6, 2018

SUBJECT: Response to Resolution 20180614-066 (Utilizing Waller Creek TIF/TIRZ Funding for Homelessness) and Homelessness Update

Background

Homelessness is a complex, non-linear issue. People can become homeless as a result of failures or extreme situations within modern day systems like health care, the economy, or the housing market. The combination of difficult circumstances of system failures, broken relationships, or individual struggles with substance abuse, mental health, or physical health issues can be the last piece leading to someone's loss of their home.

There are ongoing City efforts to identify long-term solutions for homelessness. In April 2018, City Council received a presentation from City staff and passed a resolution endorsing "Austin's Action Plan to End Homelessness," a report developed with broad community input and led by ECHO. In August 2018, I sent an [update memo](#) detailing the funding sources we typically use for homelessness initiatives and programs, as well as outlining the types of short-term and long-term investments we have made as a community.¹ In early October, my last [memo](#) related to homelessness laid out staff's recommendations for the quick and effective use of new funding for fiscal year 2018-2019.² This FY 2018-2019 funding will increase rapid re-housing dollars for clients in and outside of downtown, expand navigation and outreach throughout our community, provide additional safety resources to our downtown shelter, and provide an opportunity to pilot and expand on navigation centers and respite care for the homeless programs. By the end of calendar year 2018, we should also know more detail about the potential for long-term funding streams for homelessness from downtown projects.

Finally, with the results of the November 6, 2018 election, we now know the City will have \$250M for affordable housing, including \$100M for land acquisition and \$94M for rental housing development assistance projects (to include permanent supportive housing (PSH)). Over the coming months, staff will be discussing with City Council how to best allocate these funds across the many needs of the community,

¹ <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=303465>

² <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=307135>

and efforts are already underway to develop new guidelines and scoring criteria for the Rental Housing Development Assistance (RHDA) program to ensure projects receiving funding will include a significant number of housing units for people experiencing homelessness are included.

This memo serves to respond to Council's recent resolutions on homelessness, as well as a general update on homelessness efforts.

PART 1: Waller Creek Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) Recommendations

In June, City Council passed [Resolution 20180614-066](#) which included direction to make recommendations on the use of TIRZ funds to benefit the area.³ This included how to best address the health and safety outcomes for those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, the possible re-scoping of the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless, an analysis of finance and revenue options with both "pay as you go" and certificates of obligation considered alongside potential use of third party funding. In addition, the City Manager was directed to invite Travis County to consider a continuing contribution of the County's tax increment for TIRZ No. 17 beyond 2028 for the purposes of improving the health and safety outcomes for individuals in Travis County experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Finally, the resolution stated staff should review the possibility of directing supplemental funding from other Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones towards addressing homelessness and other housing initiatives.

Following passage of the resolution, I led multiple discussions of our City Homelessness Coordination Steering Team, with representatives from over seven City departments and offices, to discuss prioritizing options for capital investments. It was critical that we received input from our community partners who also invest in homelessness, so a "Community Brain Trust" was formed comprised of staff from other governmental entities, local foundation representatives, and non-profit leaders to help co-create the options recommended within this memo. This series of facilitated meetings with these two groups over the last few months helped to clarify and define financial constraints, investment concepts, prioritization criteria, and final recommendations.

Financial Constraints with TIRZ Funding

As stated in the FY2018-19 budget question response, any investments tied to the Waller Creek TIRZ would need to benefit the TIRZ (although projects can be outside of the TIRZ boundaries). The City could use the "pay-as-you-go" model (cash funding) to set aside a portion of TIRZ revenues on an annual basis for homeless shelters, transitional housing, and possible permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness.⁴ However, it is difficult to implement specific projects, especially with other partners at the table, when you are dependent on annual TIRZ revenues which may fluctuate in value each year. In addition, annual revenue into the Waller Creek TIRZ is dedicated to paying debt service for the original tunnel project (\$106M of debt) and the recently approved Waller Creek Chain of Parks (\$110M of debt). Our understanding is that annual revenue would not be available for a "pay as you go" program from the TIRZ until all debt has been repaid at an uncertain future date.

Bond counsel has confirmed that the City can issue non-voter approved property tax backed debt and available City revenues, including TIRZ revenues, to finance capital investments as they relate to facilities (i.e. centers, emergency shelters, and transitional housing) that serve people experiencing homelessness. Through the series of meetings held with City staff and with community members, staff recommends

³ <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=301258>

⁴ Please reference the [response](#) to FY19 Council budget question #206 for more detail.

utilizing this approach in order to have faster access to the funds and more immediate impact on the ground. While this would prohibit the use of these funds for direct services, we feel that service dollars can be supplemented through the City's social service contracts, through support of foundations and other grant providers, and private philanthropy. With approximately \$30M available for investment in homelessness strategies, our finance team recommends keeping the project plan simple with a few focused investment rounds.

Investment Concepts and Prioritization Criteria

There are four investment concepts that were considered for the potential TIRZ dollars, which were outlined in previous memos to Council:

- Navigation centers
- Respite care/recuperative care facilities
- Emergency shelter spaces
- Transitional and permanent supportive housing (PSH) (PSH is pending bond counsel review)

With many diverse perspectives at the table, including City staff who provide direct services along with other high level investors in the homelessness system, we developed a ranking system with criteria to better understand everyone's highest priorities as related to maximizing the impact of these funds for investment. The top four criteria are marked with an asterisk (*).

- Maximize number of people housed*
- Timeliness of impact to people*
- Maximize number of people served (medical, navigation, etc.)*
- Maximize number of subgroup housed (i.e. families/children)*
- Maximize avoidance of public system costs (Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC), Emergency Medical Services, Austin Police Department, hospital visits)
- Maximize serving the most vulnerable
- Type of impact (increases quality of life, better equipped to self-resolve next time)

While the criteria were prioritized differently between the two working groups, everyone agreed that we need to utilize the most money on the front end of this funding period. Feedback was clear that there should be a focus on both increasing the number of people getting into housing units, as that appears to be the primary bottleneck in our homelessness system, as well as increasing capacity in the community to meet daily needs and provide supportive services.

In addition, we received valuable input on criteria to use as we seek partners for implementation of these funds. Key suggestions for proposal-specific criteria included: enhancing system alignment and effectiveness, meeting ECHO's Action Plan for Homelessness objectives, leveraging additional funding, co-locating services and providers, investing in innovative approaches, and providing additional locations outside of downtown. These will be considered for use within any request for proposals moving forward.

Learnings from Recent Local Projects and Additional Considerations

The Austin community has produced creative local projects to respond to homelessness, but the need is great and the speed of delivering projects needs to be faster. These previous projects, which serve the same target population, required multiple funding sources and a variety of partners in order to address all of the necessary project aspects. A few local project examples include:

- Terrace at Oak Springs (formerly known as Housing First Oak Springs) – a 50-unit PSH project (currently under construction) led by Integral Care, which leveraged City capital and supportive services dollars with multiple other funding sources
- Capital Studios - a 135-unit supportive housing project with PSH units led by Foundation Communities, which leveraged City funding of ~\$4.6M with over \$17M from 19 other partners
- The Works at Pleasant Valley – a 45-unit supportive housing project with PSH units (currently under construction) led by Lifeworks
- Jeremiah House – a 35-unit supportive housing project led by Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation

The TIRZ funding would provide a welcome injection of capital dollars, but the ultimate success of the projects will depend on securing the remaining funds needed for construction, operating costs for the facilities, and service dollars for the clients. While a supportive housing model can look and operate in a variety of ways, an average breakdown of capital, operational, and service costs are:

- \$150,000-\$200,000 per person/unit in one-time capital costs,
- \$9,000 to \$11,000 per person in annual operational costs (including rent and utilities), and
- \$8,000-\$14,000 per person in annual supportive service costs (depending on intensity of need).

Typical sources and considerations when designing the funding framework for supportive housing include:

- Capital sources to leverage TIF funding
 - City of Austin General Obligation Bond Funding – pending an update to scoring priorities and requirements
 - Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program – 4% or 9% with the amount dependent on project size; annual cycle beginning in January
 - Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) Multifamily Direct Loan Program – Supportive Housing/soft repayment set-aside of up to \$2M per project; rolling application cycle
 - Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) Affordable Housing Program – grants can range from \$350,000 to \$2M depending on the FHLB regional office; supportive housing projects score well; typically an annual competition in the spring
 - Capital Magnet Fund – an annual competition through the U.S. Department of Treasury Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund which enables nonprofits and CDFIs to establish a flexible pool of funds for affordable housing development (range of \$500k to \$7M); application in summer
 - Private Foundations and Capital Campaigns – these sources can provide gap funding and ultimately depends on the project partners and their donor relationships in the community
- Capital Development Considerations
 - In order to optimize TIF funding for capital, the funding should be made available as first money in a project without other sources committed.
- Operational Considerations
 - Projects will need vouchers and/or an operating subsidy. Sources include: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Choice Vouchers, Section 8 project-based vouchers, Shelter Plus Care or Supportive Housing Program through HUD Continuum of Care (COC), HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers, Tenant Based Rental Assistance through a variety of programs.

- Projects would benefit from property tax exemptions to assist with keeping operational costs low, therefore allowing the project to sustain lower rents.
- The City will coordinate with ECHO to make sure the local HUD COC competition prioritizes projects that will leverage TIF funding.
- Supportive Service Considerations
 - Supportive services are often the most complex and expensive part of supportive housing to fund. The best practice approach is to have the services coordinated and at least partially funded by partners for each project.
 - Coordination among all foundations, corporations, and institutions with a vested interest in addressing homelessness in downtown is critical. One approach could be for these partners to create a pool of funds to pair with each project, thereby taking the burden off the applicant to fund services. The project applicant can be required to match the service funding with a specified percentage amount.

Recommendation

After discussion with all stakeholders, staff is recommending that Council utilize certificates of obligations, reimbursed with TIRZ revenue, in three funding rounds that are progressively smaller amounts. This ensures a large immediate influx of capital into the system, while also ensuring there are dollars available in future years to apply to the situation at that point in time with lessons learned from the earlier funding rounds. This funding would be utilized for housing the chronically homelessness currently in the downtown area in and around the TIRZ boundary, capital improvements at the ARCH, and new navigation centers.

Round 1: \$12M

- \$10M for transitional housing/possible permanent supportive housing (PSH). The City would create a flexible Request for Information (RFI) to solicit partners to develop innovative housing solutions, operate that housing, and provide wrap-around supportive services to provide immediate relief in response to homelessness in downtown Austin. Multiple partners will likely be selected for each project due to the specific experience desired for each component. The goal of the RFI will be to leverage the TIRZ money to catalyze innovative and lasting solutions that will long surpass the availability of TIRZ funds. A key consideration for the success of an RFI is to have sites already available. The RFI will be marketed to not only help build the capacity of local partners, but to also bring in national players who can provide best practice knowledge and experience to boost Austin's response. Proposals could include:
 - Purchasing and rehabilitating an existing multi-unit apartment building, hotel/motel or adaptive re-use: the City could engage with a broker to identify sites to be submitted for development/operation in the RFI
 - New construction that will serve downtown shelter clients – the City could act as partner to explore a potential property tax exemption, provide City-owned land, and/or leverage community relationships to develop new potential sites
 - Bridge housing on City-owned land utilizing an innovative modular design for immediate deployment: cities like Los Angeles and Vancouver are leading in this area, and the RFI would include an option for a design team to create a concept for quick implementation; these could be temporary structures which would not require large amounts of land and provides an easy way to integrate solutions throughout the City in each Council District
 - Tiny homes/micro-units that can be built and deployed quickly, dedicated to clients meeting certain criteria with long-term stays at the ARCH and frequent users of public

safety system (Downtown Austin Community Court, Emergency Medical Services, and Austin Police Department)

Staff would analyze the proposals and determine the best mix of projects to fund with these capital dollars and whether there would be a need to dedicate ongoing service dollars through future City fiscal year budgets. There will be ongoing discussions with other local funders to determine an approach to make supportive service dollars available in conjunction with the TIRZ capital dollars.

- \$1.5M for capital improvements at the ARCH. In order to continue to operate as the primary emergency shelter option, the building is in need of capital investment. Projects include four restroom remodels, HVAC system upgrades, plumbing improvements, and multiple space re-configurations in order to best support clients and provide areas for enhanced client use of computers and services.
- \$500,000 for navigation centers. Funding would result in building 2-4 prefabricated structures (modular/panelized) permanently located at a City site, purchasing a manufactured home (mobile/shipping container) to potentially rotate at appropriate central City of Austin facilities, and/or renovating existing space at a City facility. These navigation centers would include case management and minor medical treatment, and meet daily needs like laundry, phones, and restroom facilities for daytime use. Operational needs would be met through partnering and leveraging existing City resources.

Round 2: \$10M

- RFI for transitional housing/PSH: Repeat the process of a flexible Request for Information to solicit partners to operate housing facilities and provide necessary services. Proposals could include purchasing and rehabilitating an existing multi-unit apartment building, hotel, or motel; supporting new construction that will serve downtown shelter clients; and/or supporting construction of tiny homes/micro-units that can be built and deployed quickly, with all options dedicated to clients meeting certain criteria like long-term stays at the ARCH and frequent users of public safety system (Downtown Austin Community Court, Emergency Medical Services, and Austin Police Department).

Round 3: \$8M

- RFI for transitional housing/PSH: Repeat the process of a flexible Request for Information to solicit partners to operate housing facilities and provide necessary services. Proposals could include purchasing and rehabilitating an existing multi-unit apartment building, hotel, or motel; supporting new construction that will serve downtown shelter clients; and/or supporting construction of tiny homes/micro-units that can be built and deployed quickly, with all options dedicated to clients meeting certain criteria like long-term stays at the ARCH and frequent users of public safety system (Downtown Austin Community Court, Emergency Medical Services, and Austin Police Department).

Alternative Solutions Considered for Funding

- Additional Emergency Shelter Locations: Invest in materials needed to utilize a City facility as emergency shelter or buy a new building or semi-permanent solution

- Medical-Social Respite Care Center: Issue an RFI to work with partners to buy or build a respite care center in an appropriate location, dedicated to frequent users of the downtown public safety net.

In order to move forward with these or any other approaches, Council will need to approve a TIRZ amendment, including project and financing plans. Staff plans to set up a work session agenda item to discuss these recommendations and solicit Council's feedback and direction in order to move forward. The intent would be to issue an RFI and have the process completed by late summer 2019 to match up with timing to secure other funding sources that developers may be utilizing.

Supplemental funding from other TIRZs towards homelessness

While the Resolution included direction to review the possibility of using supplemental funding from other TIRZs towards addressing homelessness, staff does not recommend any other TIRZ program at this time until the Waller Creek TIRZ is more mature and the timing is more certain. Staff will continue to explore this possibility in the future should additional revenues become available.

PART 2: CITY HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES UPDATE

The City's Strategic Direction 2023 includes a strategy to, "Define and enact our response to homelessness focusing on efficient and effective use of our resources to address disparities, prevent homelessness, and support housing stability." The following outlines the City's response to homelessness and our ongoing efforts to create a more efficient and effective use of resources.

Staying in Place / Prevention

Multiple organizations are funded through the City's social service contracts to provide prevention activities. These programs offer case management, financial assistance and debt reduction, legal and other professional services, rental tenant education, landlord mediation, and connections to public benefit programs. However, we acknowledge that there needs to be more focus on this area considering how many households are at risk to become homeless today. There are many more eligible families and individuals than there are dollars available. Austin Public Health staff are already analyzing our current social service contracts to ensure we are serving those at the highest risk levels, and we will continue to use available data and best practices to explore reallocating dollars toward higher priority needs as appropriate.

In addition, the FY2018-19 pilot of the navigation center concept will create spaces to both serve people currently experiencing homelessness and also provide resources for those who are at risk of becoming homeless. The intention is to reduce the flow of new people into the homeless system so that we can best serve those in need today.

Some Way to Connect to Services / Outreach and Navigation

In 2016, the City and its partners formed a Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) to coordinate engagement efforts in concert with staff from Integral Care. This team has been successful in referring downtown clients to services and other providers. New funding in FY2018-2019 expands this type of program to areas beyond downtown and will enable us to address 'hot spots' where we know there are people who could benefit from connections to medical and housing services. This new funding provides the HOST team the ability to refer individuals they encounter in the field to intensive wraparound case management services and the ability for City staff to fill gaps in the support service continuum.

The ARCH has served as a place for receiving services for clients of the shelter and anyone else for the past decade. With the upcoming change to the operating model, daytime access will be limited to clients staying at the ARCH overnight, so there will be dozens of people who need alternative locations to access services and restrooms on a daily basis. Funding from FY2018-2019 will enable staff from City departments to pilot navigation centers at multiple locations testing multiple methods to see how to best move forward with more permanent solutions. With funding from the new budget, APH will amend the current agreement with Integral Care to expand the PATH (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness) Team by two additional outreach and navigation specialists. They will coordinate with the new Community Health Paramedic and case manager performing the HOST-like activities outside of downtown. This amendment will be on the Council agenda in December.

Somewhere to Recover and Rest / Respite and Recuperative Care

The current medical recuperative care program for physical health issues, operated by Front Steps and Central Health, utilizes a skilled nursing facility to treat clients discharged from the hospital who need continued medical assistance to recover. The program has approximately 12 beds and is primarily for patients who need specific medical treatment like IVs or physical or occupational therapy.

There is an effort among community partners to form a new Healthcare for the Homeless Alliance, similar to many other cities in the U.S. This group includes staff from Central Health, the Community Care Collaborative, CommUnityCare Health Centers, Integral Care, Front Steps, and others. This new group would lead in developing a local medical-social respite care program, based on a national best practice model that provides options for the many people discharged from the hospital who need a place to recover from conditions such as pneumonia, a heart attack, stab wounds, or surgery. With the FY2018-19 funding approved, City staff will participate with this new initiative and assist in finding a location to make this program a reality.

Somewhere to Sleep Tonight / Emergency Shelter

As has been highlighted in prior memos, the ARCH is one of the primary shelters for the City and there is an active effort to redesign the model so it can meet its original intention of a place for short-term stays with connections to services to rapidly move people into stable housing. The solicitation for the operator of the facility closed in late October, and staff plans to bring a recommendation to Council in January.

Through our due diligence over the past few months exploring all potential alternatives, we received an update on the financial status of the building loans. The City used HUD 108 loans as well as General Obligation (GO) bonds to fund the construction of the facility. The HUD 108 loans are paid off and the outstanding GO bond principal is approximately \$1.6M, with final maturity in August 2023. I wanted to provide this context should Council be interested in exploring alternative options for this site at some future date.

APD initiatives are focusing on increased safety and security near the ARCH for the months of October, November and December, with additional police presence at various times each day. Increased support from APD coincides with additional efforts from the Downtown Strategies group, made up of staff from several City departments, ECHO, homeless service providers, DAA, and substance use recovery providers. This group continues to work on how to best address the challenges people are facing at and around the ARCH. Outreach staff are engaging people on the sidewalks, discussing their needs, and connecting them to services.

The Salvation Army also provides 242 shelter beds downtown for men, women and families. Recent completion of the bond funded expansion to the Austin Shelter for Women and Children will help to move some families with children out of the downtown shelter as well as address some of their waitlist for shelter beds. The Salvation Army's new shelter with over 200 beds is under construction and scheduled for completion in spring of 2019. There are other City contracts with organizations that provide shelter for specific populations, including sexual and/or domestic violence victims, immigrants and refugees, families with children, and youth.

Knowing that even with the shelter beds we have in place now there are still thousands of people on the street, City staff continues to evaluate alternative emergency shelter solutions. Council Resolution 20170810-033 requested staff analyze City-owned buildings that would be most suitable for use as temporary emergency shelters. PARD led the process and provided a [comprehensive response](#)⁵ should Council choose to explore this option further. Other cities have utilized [semi-permanent structures](#)⁶ that can be erected quickly to house hundreds of people experiencing homelessness. Staff stands ready to provide additional information on this approach, and could identify potential locations in a timely manner. We believe that Council should strongly consider this as an option for new capital investment in this fiscal year, and there would be a need to identify an operator for the site, along with security and service provider partners, and the associated operational costs.

Somewhere to Sleep Every Night / Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing

The ultimate goal is to house all individuals who utilize alternative sheltering into permanent housing. There are different housing options and which ones are appropriate for any specific individual or family are dependent on the level of services needed, proximity to employment and services, and other factors.

Many communities utilize transitional or "bridge" housing as an option for those who may not need deep levels of assistance. Some of these models utilize a dormitory-style living model as "workers dorms" for highly functioning individuals who need some time to build up savings but are capable of work.

Rapid re-housing is an approach that provides housing location services, short-term rental assistance and housing stability case management to get people into housing as quickly as possible. This type of housing assistance is most appropriate for individuals and families who may have recently become homeless or for those without significant disabilities or need for long term services. The City has increased funding for rapid re-housing in recent years, and the new funds in the FY2018-2019 budget will enable dozens more people to access housing. In particular, a new contract is moving forward for rapid re-housing for ARCH clients, and it will serve 25-35 people annually over the next 5 years. This will be on the Council agenda for approval in November.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is an approach that combines long-term housing assistance with intensive and equally long-term housing case management and supportive services. PSH is typically the most appropriate housing intervention for chronically homeless individuals with disabilities and extensive barriers to housing stability. When providers perform coordinated assessments, individuals who score the highest are then prioritized for PSH programs as the ones most vulnerable in our community. The City has aided in the creation of dozens of PSH units, mostly through General Obligation bonds, and it has provided significant funding for the ongoing services for PSH clients. However, a primary challenge is that

⁵ <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=282348>

⁶ One example used by other cities is Sprung: <https://www.sprung.com/structures/municipal-buildings/homeless-shelters/>

it is very difficult to identify appropriate locations for developments with many PSH units onsite, which is why we use a mix of new dedicated units as well as subsidizing market rate units throughout the community. Through prior GO bond projects, the City has been able to insert a few to a dozen units at a time into larger affordable housing developments. Many other communities also follow a scattered site model, however with the new Housing First Oak Springs Project through Integral Care set to open in early 2019, our community will have its first property dedicated solely to Housing First PSH, with dedicated health resources available on-site.

The Pay for Success PSH initiative is designed to house 250 of the highest utilizers of the criminal justice system and the healthcare system in permanent supportive housing units over the course of the five year project. Interested end-payors include the City, Travis County, Central Health, the Community Care Collaborative, and the Episcopal Health Foundation. The St. David's Foundation is currently funding a pilot with ECHO and over a dozen people have been housed during the first few months.

Through recent conversations with our partners, staff recognized an opportunity to create a housing voucher program within the City at the DACC which could serve two purposes. One is to ensure people experiencing homelessness who are frequent offenders at the DACC and who are placed into a 90-day substance abuse treatment program will have a place to stay when they are out of the program. Secondly, this also allows frequent offenders who are not near the top of the coordinated assessment scoring to have an opportunity to be housed on a faster timeframe, alleviating some of the pressure downtown. Discussions on this concept will continue in the coming months.

Some Way to Grow into Self-Sufficiency

We know that it takes more than medical treatment and housing to make the pathway out of homelessness sustainable. During summer 2018, the City worked with Easter Seals and Front Steps on a Downtown Worker's Pilot, which addressed safety and sanitation in the area of 7th Street and Neches by hiring people to help with the maintenance of additional temporary restrooms outside the ARCH.

More recently, the "Workforce First" program, an alternatives to panhandling pilot, began in mid-October and has seen positive results to date. In just two weeks, crews removed 273 cubic yards of debris from parks, cleared 1,760 linear feet of heavily overgrown fence, and nearly a mile of trail has been cleared of overgrowth. Multiple people have been referred through rapid rehousing programs, five clients have enrolled in banking services and are saving money, yet another has entered addiction treatment, two have been hired by contractors connected through the program, and one is on the fast track to self-resolve using the money he's earned working with the program. Based on the success of the program so far, staff is likely to recommend expanding this program in coordination with our partners.



"I don't even know what to call you. You're kind of like a boss, but you're more like this little helper man who, like, pays me but then runs me all over getting me all kinds of help. Honestly, I was just looking for work, but you guys are doing so much more than that."

-Amber, WFF

The i-team has developed a prototype of a resource guide to enable people experiencing homelessness to self-resolve and independently access needed services. This resource guide is available on the ["Solve](#)

[for Homelessness” website](#)⁷ and will help inform new efforts starting with Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services. Through this project, the i-team recognized that an accessible, validated resource directory would provide significant value to people experiencing homelessness, but it will take dedicated resources to keep it current and provide a sufficient level of data governance.

Finally, donation meters will soon be installed at five to six locations across town, including City Hall, the airport, and the Convention Center. These will help fund the temporary work programs and other direct services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Other Updates on New FY2018-2019 Funding

The November 29, 2018, City Council agenda included multiple contracts related to the new funding allocated by Council. There will be an amendment with the contract with LifeWorks for the additional \$160,000 designated as match funding for the federal Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program. In addition, there will be a new contract with Integral Care to provide homeless rapid re-housing services specifically for users of the ARCH who have been experiencing homelessness or sleeping unsheltered for years.

The new APH homeless contract management positions have been posted and the hiring process has begun. The DACC plans to have three new clinical case managers on board in December. The new support service funds added in FY2018-19 should be contracted by early 2019 as well.

I have worked with Human Resources to create the new position of the Homeless Strategy Officer (job description attached) to report to the Economic Opportunity and Affordability Outcome Champion/ACM.⁸ This position is currently posted and we hope to have the individual on board shortly after the start of the new calendar year. This individual will continue to work with APH staff to analyze social service contracts and align our efforts with Strategic Direction 2023; this includes analyzing performance measures for outputs and outcomes, and being consistent in when measures are established and reported. This individual will also be the primary City staff person to work with key stakeholders to identify roles and responsibilities for the non-profit sector, faith-based community, foundations, private sector, and government in providing solutions.

NEXT STEPS

Council’s feedback on the TIRZ recommended approach is essential. Staff will set up a dedicated time for discussion with Council on the TIRZ recommendations in January or February 2019. With Council’s approval of the general TIRZ spending plan, we will create the Request for Interest to identify project partners for the first round of funding. With the results of that process, staff will come back to Council for the formal TIRZ amendment with the associated project and financing plans. We anticipate these steps to take anywhere from six to twelve months to complete after Council’s approval.

In addition, staff will continue working on solutions to achieve more capacity of emergency shelter and navigation services to address the immediate needs in our community as people wait for housing. This will also be a topic for discussion in early 2019 for Council’s feedback and input.

City staff are working collaboratively with our partners at the DAA and ECHO to analyze the homeless system holistically and identifying bottlenecks and opportunities for increasing system effectiveness. One

⁷ <https://austininnovation.wixsite.com/solveforhomelessness/resource-directory>

⁸ <https://www.austincityjobs.org/postings/71825>

example we already are aware of is that case management is done by multiple providers both with City staff and external partners, yet sharing this data is a critical challenge. Another long-standing goal is to better centralize the data so that we can better serve individuals who may be engaging with multiple entities. This work will continue into 2019.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
 Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager
 Joe Pantalion, Interim Assistant City Manager
 Stephanie Hayden, Director, Austin Public Health
 Rosie Truelove, Director, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development



City of Austin - JOB DESCRIPTION



Homeless Strategy Officer

FLSA:	Standard/Exempt	EEO Category:	(20) Professionals
Class Code:	10079	Salary Grade:	JB0
Approved:		Last Revised:	November 08, 2018

Purpose:

Under the general direction of the Assistant City Manager, responsible for the “Economic Opportunity and Affordability” Strategic Outcome and coordinates the City’s homeless response activities among multiple departments to ensure a seamless approach and response.

Duties, Functions and Responsibilities:

Essential duties and functions, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, may include the following. Other related duties may be assigned.

1. Bears responsibility for program policy development, planning, initiatives, and implementation with a lens of racial equity and understanding of the current political landscape, and in alignment with the City’s Strategic Direction.
2. Develops short-, mid-, and long-term prioritized implementation plans to address homelessness aligned with other non-profit efforts with roles and responsibilities defined for all community stakeholders.
3. Improves the identification of people experiencing homelessness, and collect and analyze information about their short-term needs.
4. Plans a continuum of service strategy leading to permanent outcomes from homelessness, by engaging and coordinating with internal and external partners, on both a local and regional level.
5. Develops and maintains collaborative partnerships with City departments, government entities, private sector agencies, community-based groups, human services advocacy groups, service providers, clients, and others to co-create program strategies and garner program support.
6. Leads external engagement activities and serves as the liaison to neighborhoods, civic associations, and Council offices.
7. Represents the City as the lead expert on the City’s homelessness strategy and investments.
8. Present programs, initiatives, and direction to the City Manager, Mayor, City Council, community groups, and department directors.
9. Develops and implements a results-based accountability model to support current and future program direction. Determines the metrics that define performance, the gaps that exist at individual program levels, and the collective impact of the services provided across homeless service systems.

Responsibilities - Supervisor and/or Leadership Exercised:

Responsible for the full range of supervisory activities, including selection, training, evaluation, counseling and recommendation for dismissal.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Must possess required knowledge, skills, abilities and experience and be able to explain and demonstrate, with or without reasonable accommodations, that the essential functions of the job can be performed.

- Knowledge of business case development, strategic business planning, reengineering, organizational change strategies, performance measurement, and project management.
- Knowledge of fiscal planning and budget preparation.
- Knowledge of Federal, State, and Local laws.
- Knowledge of City practices, policies, and procedures.
- Knowledge of supervisory and managerial techniques and principles.
- Skill in oral and written communication.
- Skill in handling multiple tasks and prioritizing.
- Skill in using computers and related software.
- Skill in data analysis and problem solving.
- Skill in planning and organizing.
- Skill in handling conflict and uncertain situations.
- Ability to analyze and resolve irregular events.
- Ability to give public presentations.
- Ability to work with frequent interruptions and changes in priorities.
- Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with City employees and the public.
- Ability to work in partnership with stakeholders and constituents.

This description is intended to indicate the kinds of tasks and levels of work difficulty required of the position given this title and shall not be construed as declaring what the specific duties and responsibilities of any particular position shall be. It is not intended to limit or in any way modify the right of management to assign, direct and control the work of employees under supervision. The listing of duties and responsibilities shall not be held to exclude other duties not mentioned that are of similar kind or level of difficulty.