

FY 2026-2027 BUDGET QUESTION

Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Human Resources

CBQ NO.: 139

REQUESTED BY: (District 5) Ryan Alter

DATE REQUESTED: Tuesday, August 4, 2026 11:11 AM

DATE POSTED: Thursday, August 6, 2026

REQUEST: CM Alter would like to better understand the operational implications of the budget prioritization AHR-01. Can you provide any more background or information that the council member should know regarding this action? "Austin Human Resources - 01 - Reduce funding by consolidating the Employment Services Center into an existing City facility, eliminating the need for leased office space - \$205,800".

RESPONSE:

The Austin Human Resources Employment Service Center has operated in leased space at the Snell Building, 1050 E. 11th St., Suite 200, since January 2025. Prior to that relocation, the Center was housed for over 30 years in shared space at the Austin Parks and Recreation–owned DeWitty Center at 2209 Rosewood Ave. The Employment Service Center has maintained a long-standing presence in East Austin since its establishment in the early 1990s. Its origins lie in providing workforce assistance to marginalized community members seeking employment opportunities with the City of Austin.

City Financial Obligation

Human Resources assumed responsibility for the Snell Building lease from another City department. The City has maintained a major tenant relationship with the Austin Revitalization Authority, owner of both the Snell and Street-Jones Buildings, since their redevelopment in the early 2000s. The current Human Resources lease at the Snell Building does not expire until August 31, 2028. As a result, even if the department vacates the facility early, the City remains financially obligated for the full duration of the lease term.

Community Impact

Moving these services to a City-owned facility would establish savings in FY29. However, it would relocate the Employment Service Center from Central-East Austin on

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11th Street to Southeast Austin at 5202 E. Ben White Boulevard. This would significantly affect public access to the Center. Presently, the walk from the nearest bus stop to the Snell Building is approximately three minutes. In contrast, the nearest bus stop to 5202 E. Ben White requires an approximately 14 minute indirect walk through a mixed-use campus of office and industrial users. This poses a potential barrier for community members who rely on public transit.

Additionally, relocating this community resource outside East Austin may impact public trust, as the new site could be perceived as disconnected from the area where the Center was founded and where it has historically served residents.