



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Committee

Recommendation for Budget Funding for Downtown Community Court and additionally, Austin Police Department and Front Steps: A three-pronged approach

WHEREAS, Community Court has an all-time high case load, and the Court needs additional funding to not only maintain the focus on the current caseload but to also better focus on moving people out of the criminal justice system ; and

WHEREAS, The City of Austin wisely increased the Court's budget in the past two fiscal cycles adding more case management and outreach management to great success in dealing with clients cycling through the system over a period of up to eleven years; and

WHEREAS, The Court has continued to achieve success in managing a greater caseload while also removing vulnerable, expensive repeat offenders from our justice system and in to housing; and

WHEREAS, The Court's work is part of a system of care, known as the 'continuum of care', that should not be considered as an isolated agency for change and good; and

WHEREAS, The Court has exhausted its fiscal year resources for rehabilitative services in June of the past two years; and

WHEREAS The Court has identified an unmet budget need of \$424,000 for additional staffing and rehabilitative services; and

WHEREAS, The Court has an all-time high caseload directly attributable to the Austin Police Department overtime initiative enforcing Class C Quality of Life Ordinance misdemeanors; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department has identified the unmet budget need of \$3.97 million for 36 new officer positions to continue to effectively manage the quality of life ordinances and violent crime in downtown; and

WHEREAS, The Court has found a partner in the Austin Resource for the Homeless (ARCH) managed for the City of Austin by Front Steps in helping pull offenders out of the justice system and in to stabilized housing and care; and

WHEREAS, Front Steps has identified and unmet need of \$931,000 for additional staffing, maintenance, repairs and improvements to the ARCH;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Committee encourages the Austin City Council to approve the unmet needs budget requests of the Downtown Austin Community Court, the Austin Police Department and Front Steps in a coordinated effort to help improve the quality of life for all persons downtown and to continue to care for and remove repeat offenders from our justice system and in to housing and stabilized care.

Date of Approval: July 19, 2013

Record of the vote: Unanimous vote

Attest:



T. Marshall Jones

Chair, Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Committee