

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has an interest in improving the quality of life of all of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, in March 2011 the City Council adopted the City of Austin Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Strategy which identified a need for 1,889 additional units and a near-term plan for at least 350 PSH units by 2014 utilizing proven approaches that prioritized the chronically homeless and frequent users of public systems to achieve the greatest cost avoidance to taxpayers by reducing emergency room care, reducing jail time, and supporting re-entry into the work force; and

WHEREAS, national cost studies and objective evidence of intervention efficacy and metrics of self-sufficiency prepared for the City of Austin by the Corporation for Supportive Housing in September 2010 cited a 50% reduction in incarceration rates, 50% reduction in emergency room visits, an 85% reduction in detoxification services and a 50% increase in earned income by residents of PSH; and

WHEREAS, many of the most effective outcomes of PSH studied utilize the Housing First approach which is generally distinguished by its emphasis on moving people into stable housing first and then working to provide robust wrap-around services that address the medical, mental, or behavioral conditions and other needs of residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin worked with the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) to provide an evaluation and update of the PSH Strategy in August, 2014, and that evaluation highlighted both the success of PSH but also the need to focus more on 'Housing First' approaches; and

WHEREAS, the ECHO PSH evaluation also noted that for Austin there was a 44 percent reduction in the number of people with a jail booking for a new arrest, and more than a 50 percent reduction in bookings in the year following entry into supportive housing. Additionally jail bed days dropped by 68 percent in the two years following PSH entry and the number of Downtown Austin Community Court cases dropped by nearly 80 percent in the year after PSH entry; and

WHEREAS, the ECHO PSH evaluation goes on to note that for individuals who opted to share their healthcare data ER, inpatient, clinic and outpatient utilization and costs decreased in the year after entry into supportive housing; and

WHEREAS, using estimated average cost figures for nights in shelter, bookings, jail beds, emergency room, and inpatient hospital, the reported usage the year before housing for this study group totals \$2M and the first year after PSH, it only totals \$1.1M which is in line with reductions experienced in other communities and the desired outcomes for the Austin PSH Strategy; and

WHEREAS, the report recommends establishing PSH as the primary intervention to end chronic homelessness and to set a new target of 400 PSH units, with a minimum of 200 dedicated to Housing First PSH; and

WHEREAS, the report also recommends modifications to the 2010 PSH Strategy regarding coordinated assessment, more rigorous evaluation, and better data sharing to inform the PSH Leadership Finance Committee and the City in its efforts; **NOW THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

Permanent Supportive Housing will be the primary intervention to end chronic homelessness for the City of Austin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to set a community target of 400 PSH units, with a minimum of 200 dedicated to 'Housing First' PSH, to be delivered through coordinated, community-wide efforts in the next four years and to adopt the updates to the PSH strategy recommended in the August 2014 PSH Evaluation Report.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk