

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, according to the 2018 Point-in-Time Count the number of persons experiencing homelessness rose 5% from 2017 to 2018, while the number of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness rose 21.6% from 2017 to 2018; and

WHEREAS, homelessness was identified as a strategic outcome indicator in and was identified by the City Council as the top priority for the s Austin Strategic Direction 2023 plan; and

WHEREAS, the City is actively responding to the crisis for all individuals experiencing homelessness, including adding shelter capacity, improving shelter operations, and expanding a wide range of affordable housing options; and

WHEREAS, the City continues to enforce ordinances and statutes that protect against public health risks and public safety threats where they exist; and

WHEREAS, the City needs more and better ways to assist homeless individuals that address personal and community needs without involving the criminal justice system in instances when homeless individuals do not present a public safety threat or a public health risk; and

WHEREAS, the City has received numerous recommendations for addressing homelessness, including, but not limited to the City of Austin Audit series on homelessness, the National Alliance to End Homelessness report on shelter operations, the Bloomberg I-Team research report on homelessness, the ECHO Action Plan to End Homelessness, and the on-going work of the homelessness Community Brain Trust; and

WHEREAS, the focus and priority on homelessness by the Council, Community, and City staff has resulted in the City currently engaging in a large number of initiatives to address the varied individual and social impacts of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the City is in the process of hiring its first Homeless Strategy Officer and establishing an office dedicated to the interdepartmental coordination of responses; and

WHEREAS, the ideas below may or may not have the support of all of the sponsors or those council members who might vote affirmatively for this resolution, but there is at least one council member who would like each idea at least vetted by the City Manager through his Homeless Strategy Office recognizing that, even if a particular idea is not recommended, if it might lead to a good idea that might not otherwise be identified or vetted; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed to, as a first step, analyze and recommend additional options for assisting individuals experiencing homelessness who are living unsheltered, including the potential for identifying safe and clean camping and parking areas, storage lockers, bathrooms, showers, and laundry facilities. Options, as may be identified, should be reported back to Council in August 2019 and should include additions to the housing and shelter initiatives already directed by Council. The City Manager shall consider ideas such as the following:

- Propose reasonable time and place opportunities and limitations on camping, sitting and lying;

- Provide possible options for non-criminal remedies or tools related to time and place limitations on camping, sitting, and lying;
- Provide possible options for locations across the city for Council and community consideration that specifically allows for temporary shelter, including camping, and receipt of wrap-around services;
- Provide possible options for parking areas across the city that would allow for people to sleep in cars and receive wrap around services, perhaps in association with parking lots of volunteer places of worship or larger retail locations;
- Provide possible options for safe storage lockers across the city for people experiencing homelessness;
- Plan for periodic updates on public health and safety conditions and to make recommendations needed to improve the effectiveness of City efforts that address behaviors that diminish public health and safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create a prioritized, actionable plan that delineates public, non-profit and private sector roles and capital, ongoing operational service needs, and costs across the homeless response system, recognizing that previous direction has been provided by Council that would contribute to this plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed thereafter to analyze opportunities for promoting the general public welfare and engaging and assisting individuals experiencing homelessness, even when and where they might not be engaging in

conduct that presents a public health risk or a public safety threat, including, but not limited to:

- Identify private sector leaders and philanthropic donors to strengthen community support, fund, and carry out the City's plans;
- Develop an emergency service fund for the homeless that is non-agency specific, but that may be utilized for individual crises;
- Identify funding for pilot projects that can incubate innovative solutions to sustainable programs;
- Implement a crisis center model for interdepartmental operations, similar to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC);
- Expand the Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) program and related re-training of APD, EMS and Integral Care employees;
- Create new, geographically dispersed, temporary, housing-focused homeless navigation centers and shelters across the City;
- Provide shelter options for individuals experiencing homelessness that allow for pets;
- Expand programs that keep City parks and waterways clean and well maintained;
- Expand existing models, such as the Sobering Center and Downtown Austin Community Court, of non-criminalized connection to services by first responders;

- Explore use of Houston's mental health jail diversion models of non-criminalized connection to services by first responders;
- Explore Citywide 24/7 or on-call operation of the Downtown Austin Community Court system that provides alternative to jail for Failure to Appear warrant violations;
- Explore options with the University of Texas and surrounding areas for opportunities for collaboration including additional safety measures including improved street lighting;
- Expand the functions and uses of the 2-1-1 hotline;
- Develop a plan to effectively prevent the flow of people entering the condition of homelessness;
- Create a real-time database of available services for people experiencing homelessness and service providers;
- Engage with the Austin State Hospital (ASH) regarding increased collaboration on the infrastructure and service redesign of their Austin operations and systems to provide more localized care and alternatives to in-patient mental-health care at ASH;
- Recruit new organizations to Austin that are national leaders in shelter, housing, and service provision focused on the homeless; and
- Expand the use of the cold weather shelter model for homelessness, including both private and public facilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to develop recommendations for public information strategies that provide the general public with access to data, resources, and educational materials on assisting the homeless and relevant City policies and efforts. These strategies should include opportunities for private individuals or organizations to participate in Austin's efforts to address homelessness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to develop recommendations for convening City staff, community stakeholders, national experts, and leaders in peer cities to collaborate on best practices for addressing homelessness. The City Manager is directed to recommend methods for regularly determining the needs and soliciting the input of individuals directly experiencing homelessness. The City Manager is also directed to recommend issues for further study including, but not limited to, the root causes of homelessness and what causes homeless individuals in Austin to take a path that relapses or deteriorates.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to provide periodic status updates on the topics raised by this resolution, and any related recommendations, beginning on or before August 30, 2019.

ADOPTED: _____, 2019 **ATTEST:** _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk