

RESOLUTION NO. 20190606-049

WHEREAS, people in a housing crisis need a safe and habitable place to go that is immediately available and accommodates their needs; and

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

WHEREAS, the “Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint” Key Actions include “Investing in Housing for Those Most in Need,” which calls for Austin to adopt a balanced approach to provide affordable housing resources for low-income workers, seniors, people with disabilities and the thousands of people experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Austin’s Action Plan to End Homelessness (“Action Plan”) states that outreach, shelter and transitional housing are the critical front line of our community’s efforts to ending homelessness, helping people meet basic survival needs while connecting them to housing resources and other services; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2019 Point-in-Time Count the number of persons experiencing homelessness rose 10% from 2017 to 2019, while the number of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness rose 23.2% from 2017 to 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Action Plan recognizes that there are not enough emergency shelter beds available to people who need them, resulting in people being turned away or not attempting to ask for a bed in shelters; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20170810-033 directed the City Manager to assess City-owned buildings and identify possibilities for one or more temporary, short-term emergency shelters and to provide the City Council with cost estimates for operation and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, an increasing number of Austin residents living unsheltered, experiencing exposure, malnutrition, and unhygienic conditions increases the likelihood of victimization, poor physical and mental health, and public health consequences; and

WHEREAS, the National Alliance to End Homelessness views shelter as a key component to our homeless response system; and

WHEREAS, the National Alliance recognizes the current availability of immediate family shelter resources and the overwhelming need for individual shelter resources; and

WHEREAS, the Action Plan proposes providing safe places for people to be during the day as well as overnight allowing consistent contact with service providers and the ability to more quickly move to stable housing; and

WHEREAS, the Action Plan recognizes that clients receiving shelter services must have access to affordable, low-barrier housing in order to end their homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20190131-078 directed the City Manager to provide a report on the best options for piloting immediate shelter and support services for those experiencing homelessness with the intent of providing a pathway to permanent housing;

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to begin negotiations to purchase a property identified or referenced in the Report prepared in response to Resolution No. 2019013-078 and present City Council with a property to purchase no later than June 20, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to include in the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Budget funds necessary and sufficient for piloting an immediate housing-focused shelter (Housing-Focused Shelter Pilot) with support services for those experiencing homelessness dedicated to providing a pathway to permanent housing. These funds shall include a Housing First Rapid Rehousing and/or Permanent Supportive Housing rental assistance and support services program for clients of the Housing Focused Shelter Pilot. These support services include housing location assistance, rehabilitation and life skills training.

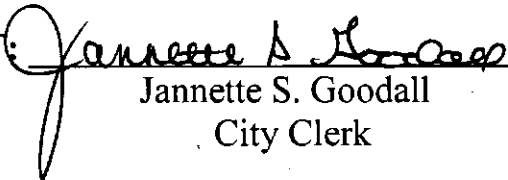
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council directs the City Manager to develop a scope of services and initiate a procurement process for piloting shelter operations and on-site housing and other support

services for a small Housing-Focused Shelter Pilot of 50-100 beds that utilize best practices identified by the National Alliance to End Homelessness including but not limited to:

- Focusing on housing individuals as quickly as possible,
- Treating each person's episode of homelessness as an urgent crisis that needs a quick permanent housing resolution,
- Serving people with typical barriers to shelter, for example, by providing innovative personal storage solutions, the option for allowing pets, accommodating special needs, and serving people using substances and/or with mental illness,
- Developing a housing exit strategy for the shelter, and
- Decreasing long-stays and returns to the shelter.

ADOPTED: June 6, 2019

ATTEST: 
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk