



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Board

Recommendation Number: 20201119-1a

Recommendation for Relocation of Downtown Austin Community Court

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) is to collaboratively address the quality of life issues of all residents in the downtown Austin community through swift creating sentencing on public orders citations, creative sentencing of public order offenders. The Court seeks to hold people responsible while also offering help to change behavior; and

WHEREAS, the DACC Case Management team aims to end homelessness by providing comprehensive, long term services to individuals experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, DACC services are meaningful alternatives and operate in a less adversarial environment than a more traditional court; and

WHEREAS, the DACC is an integral part of the continuum of care provided by an array of local non-profits, and substance abuse and mental health providers and provides much-needed services to individuals experiencing homelessness through stakeholder referrals, HOST referrals, judicial referrals, and peer referrals; and

WHEREAS, homelessness is identified as a strategic outcome indicator in Austin's strategic direction, and was identified by City Council the top priority for the city strategic plan; and

WHEREAS, On February 15, 2018, Austin City Council endorsed Resolution 20180215-048 regarding the relocation of DACC, and requested staff identify options for the relocation of the Downtown Austin Community Court; and

WHEREAS, the location currently recommended is a new facility to be leased at 1719 E2nd street; and

WHEREAS, the DACC must be located on or near a transit line, within the geographic boundaries specified by City Code Section 2-10-32(A), include parking options for employees and jurors as well as storage space for vehicles and equipment use for community service, and include in space-planning the possibility of co-locating Austin Municipal Court windows and additional services for the populations served; and

WHEREAS, the DACC offers interventions and access to opportunities for individuals to give back to neighborhoods and communities; and

WHEREAS, data shows that community programs addressing the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness are running at capacity—demand for these services exceeds the supply; and

WHEREAS, due to case management capacity, since FY 2017, the DACC has maintained a waitlist for individuals experiencing homelessness seeking case management services; that list currently includes 233 individuals; and

WHEREAS, the DACC has requested additional resources and space in order to meet the increasing demand for programs and services to assist Austin’s most vulnerable citizens in stabilizing their lives to the benefit of the entire Austin community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Board wholeheartedly and enthusiastically supports the DACC request for additional space and relocation to lease a new facility located at 1719 E. 2nd St. This facility will support the need to increase the DACC’s capacity including its case management capacity and housing resources to continue providing needed services to its clients. The Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Board encourages the Austin City Council to allocate funds and explore all available means to support this relocation in order increase solutions to address homelessness in Austin.

Date of Approval: November 19, 2020

Record of the vote: For:7, Against:0, Abstain:1, Absent:2

Attest:



Darilynn Cardona-Beiler, Board Chair