



Recommendation for Action

File #: 21-2947, **Agenda Item #:** 19.

9/30/2021

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of Amendment No. 7 to the interlocal agreement with Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center d/b/a Integral Care for the Homeless Outreach Street Team, which connects homeless individuals and families with the initial services necessary to achieve stability and recovery, to increase funding in the amount of \$289,625, effective October 1, 2021 for additional licensed mental health professionals, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$3,671,457.

Lead Department

Community Court.

Fiscal Note

Funding for this amendment in the amount of \$289,625 is available in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Operating Budget for Downtown Austin Community Court.

Prior Council Action:

On August 12, 2021, Council approved Ordinance 20210811-001 adopting the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 City Budget, which included additional funding for the interlocal agreement. On May, 20, 2021, Council approved agenda item 20210520-007 adding funds and extension options to the interlocal agreement. On October 1, 2020, Council approved agenda item 20201001-09 adding funds to the interlocal agreement. On August 8, 2019, Council approved agenda item 20190808-020 adding funds to the interlocal agreement. On August 30, 2018, Council approved agenda item 20170830-010 adding funds to the interlocal agreement. On October 5, 2017, Council approved agenda item 20171005-008 adding renewal options and funding to the interlocal agreement. On May 18, 2017, Council approved agenda item 20170518-016 approving negotiation and execution of a 12-month interlocal agreement with Integral Care.

For More Information:

Peter Valdez, Court Administrator, Downtown Austin Community Court (512) 974-4873; Robert Kingham, Operations Manager, Downtown Austin Community Court (512) 974-1394.

Additional Backup Information:

The Homeless Outreach Street Team, known as HOST, is a partnership between the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC), Austin Police Department (APD), Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Integral Care (IC), and the Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA). Together, these organizations are proactively reaching out to individuals living on the streets to help them connect to the services they need to successfully transition from homelessness to housing.

Integral Care (IC) provides five (5) full time employees to the HOST team: one (1) Program Lead, three (3) Qualified Mental Health Professionals, and one (1) Peer Recovery Support Specialist. IC also provides access to one (1) relief Advance Practice Psychiatric Clinical Nurse.

HOST is one piece of the larger effort to move individuals from homelessness to improved well-being and housing stability. The purpose and goal of HOST is to identify individuals who are experiencing homelessness,

learn what challenges they face and work to connect them to services such as medical and behavioral health care, case management, and housing.

EMS has a team of approximately eighteen Community Health Paramedics (CHPs) with different specializations to meet the greatest needs in the community. This includes several CHPs who support individuals experiencing homelessness and can co-respond to 911 calls where they may be able to address non-emergent needs and free up ambulance units. As noted in the [April 16, 2021 memo](#) (<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=358409>) (<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=358409>) to Mayor and Council regarding HOST and DACC resources, “there are three CHPs that serve as part of HOST including one within HOST’s formal jurisdiction (primarily downtown), one serving north Austin, and one serving south Austin. These staff have expertise in medical needs, but would be able to serve individuals they engage more effectively and meet a broader set of needs more quickly by partnering with another team member with expertise in mental health. One possibility to achieve this goal would be to add funding to DACC’s interlocal agreement with Integral Care to fund three additional licensed mental health professionals to accompany these CHPs. These staff would have masters level training to ensure they have the skills needed to connect with and meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable in our community. In addition, by teaming them with CHPs already serving in the community, this would expand service capacity downtown as well as the areas served in north and south Austin.”

Approval of this item will authorize the addition of \$289,625 in one-time funding for three additional licensed mental health professionals for HOST to accompany CHPs and associated costs such as computers, program supplies, and expenses related to client services. Additional staff will enhance services for those engaged by CHPs and expand HOST’s capacity for the total people that can be served.

Amendment #6 authorized negotiation and execution of the interlocal agreement with Integral Care for two actions. First, to add additional funding beginning June 1, 2021 to increase staffing in support of intensive outreach and engagement to the individuals living in the encampments targeted through the HEAL initiative. Second, to add three renewal options beginning October 1, 2021 to ensure continuation of services at the same level as the previous year, as well as necessary costs associated with direct assistance to clients and programmatic expenses.

Amendment #5 exercised the fourth 12-month renewal option beginning October 1, 2020 for \$399,354, which included \$137,000 additional funding to ensure continuation of services at the same level as the previous year, as well as necessary costs associated with direct assistance to clients and programmatic expenses.

Amendment #4 exercised the third 12-month renewal option beginning October 1, 2019 for \$262,354, which included \$20,000 additional funding for expenses related to an increase to a staffing licensure and client transportation costs.

Amendment #3 exercised the second 12-month renewal option beginning October 1, 2018 for \$242,354. Amendment #2 added funding for a Peer Recovery Support Specialist through the end of all remaining renewal options for \$195,000. Amendment #1 exercised the first 12-month renewal option beginning October 1, 2017 for \$242,354. The original 12-month agreement was approved by Council for \$242,354 beginning October 1, 2016.

Outcomes expected from HOST include reduced EMS transports, emergency room visits, and jail bookings, generating significant savings for the community. Austin Travis County Integral Care will work on increasing connection to case management, social services, medical care, behavioral health services, and housing, which will help individuals improve their well-being and work toward reaching their full potential.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Economic Opportunity and Affordability.