

RESOLUTION NO. 20230608-083

WHEREAS, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) is a non-profit organization that is the lead agency that plans and implements community-wide strategies to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County, and

WHEREAS, ECHO estimated the number of people currently experiencing unsheltered homelessness is 4,561 Austinites; and

WHEREAS, this represents a 45 percent increase from the same time last year due in part to more street outreach teams that have registered individuals experiencing homelessness into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a database used to record and track client-level information on the characteristics and service-needs of people experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the Point in Time (PIT) Count is a bi-annual count of the Austin/Travis County population experiencing homelessness on a given night and required by Housing and Urban Development (HUD) of Continuums of Care (or CoC) in each community to receive HUD funding; and

WHEREAS, the PIT Count is well known to underreport given various factors and local city policies, and

WHEREAS, the PIT Count 2023 data released this month reported 2,374 Austinites experiencing homelessness, with 1,266 people sleeping unsheltered and 1,108 sleeping in shelters or transitional housing, and

WHEREAS, the PIT Count 2023 data revealed that people experiencing homelessness were more disbursed throughout the city and three times as many more people experiencing unsheltered homelessness were living in City-owned

parks, nature preserves, and greenbelts compared to 2020, at 13.6 percent versus 5.2 percent, and

WHEREAS, in April 2023, the Salvation Army Downtown Shelter closed and was the only shelter that offered beds to single women downtown and the largest shelter accepting single women in Austin; and

WHEREAS, the Salvation Army Downtown Shelter provided 100 beds and the closure resulted in a 10 percent decrease city-wide of overnight shelter capacity; and

WHEREAS, in August 2022, City Council approved a budget rider directing staff to undertake a shelter assessment process, which included a comprehensive assessment of the year-round general homeless shelter system, with additional planning for weather-based shelter, recommendations on bed capacity, service quality, City contracting, and creating a vision and priorities for the future of our shelter system, and

WHEREAS, in March 2023, the Homeless Strategy Division provided a briefing to the Public Health Committee, identifying emergency shelter as an unmet need and reporting that the Shelter Assessment Report will be released in June 2023; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Council directs the City Manager to identify shortages in shelter bed capacity and navigation services by population served and geographical location, including, but not limited to, City Council District and geographical region. Additionally, areas identified should include locations with fewer shelter

beds relative to other areas and/or fewer shelter beds relative to the unsheltered population in that area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to include cost scenarios with potential funding sources to increase shelter capacity and navigation services in areas with an identified need that include capital, ongoing operational, and service expenditures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to utilize the Homeless Strategy Division's Shelter Assessment Report findings and recommendations when identifying shortages and cost scenarios related to shelter capacity and navigation services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to provide a report to City Council by July 21, 2023 and a status briefing to City Council at the July 18, 2023 Work Session.

ADOPTED: June 8, 2023

ATTEST:



Myrna Rios
City Clerk