AUSTIN’S HOMELESS SHELTER SYSTEM
A COMMUNITY-WIDE ASSESSMENT

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HOMELESS SHELTER SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

BACKGROUND

August 2022 Council direction:

• Broad assessment of community’s year-round homeless shelter system
• Recommend vision and priorities for system, with focus on bed capacity, service quality, and city contracting
• Complete assessment before re-soliciting emergency contracts for Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH) and Southbridge Shelter

Related direction:
Resolution 20230209-40: City sheltering in all extreme weather events
   HSEM update June 28, next update November
Resolution 20230608-83: Shelter geographic analysis and cost estimates
   Geographic analysis incorporated shelter assessment, costs estimates forthcoming
People Experiencing Homelessness
- 9 focus groups, 55 participants
- 34 1:1 interviews

Shelter Service Providers
- 7 engagement events
  - Small team conversations and 1:1 interviews

Other Providers & Advocates
- 5 feedback sessions
- Feedback surveys and 1:1

U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)
National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC)
National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)

Investing for Results: Priorities and Recommendations for a Systems Approach to End Homelessness (2020) Barbara Poppe and Associates

Recommendations for the Re-Design of Emergency Shelters in Austin (2020) National Alliance to End Homelessness

Dallas
Houston
San Antonio
Fort Worth
Nashville
San Diego
Seattle
Philadelphia
District of Columbia
Los Angeles

Shelter inventory
Facility types
Access and intake
Performance data
Policies & procedures
Services offered
Operational costs
Funding sources

Provider & Participant Engagement

SHELTER SYSTEM ASSESSMENT
RESEARCH & REVIEW ELEMENTS
RESEARCH INSIGHTS

- On any given night, Austin has approximately 1 shelter bed for every 5 persons experiencing homelessness.
- 2,915 individuals used shelter services in FY22.
- 92% shelter bed utilization rate.
- Average stay in shelter is 115 days, regardless of exit type.
- 41% of shelter participants in FY22 were chronically homeless.
RESEARCH INSIGHTS: SHELTER EXITS
57% OF THOSE EXITING SHELTER HAD CONFIRMED HOUSING (FY22)

Households Exiting Austin Homeless Shelters in FY22
(n=1,857)
### AUSTIN’S SHELTER SYSTEM CAPACITY

**MAY 2023**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH)* - Urban Alchemy</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin Shelter for Women and Children* – The Salvation Army</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northbridge* – APH Homeless Strategy Division</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southbridge* – Austin Area Urban League</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A New Entry</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa Marianella &amp; Posada Esperanza – Casa Marianella</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esperanza Community – The Other Ones Foundation</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation for the Homeless</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeworks Shelter</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rathgeber Center – The Salvation Army</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAFE Family Shelter</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>880</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*denotes City – owned facility

#### Shelter Capacity by Population Served

- In May 2023, City-owned facilities accounted for 333 beds, or 38% of the shelter system’s capacity
- 47% beds set aside for households with children
- 53% for Single Adults
  - Only 14% regardless of gender or program
  - 1% adult women only
  - 13% adult men only
- 12% Domestic Violence
- 9% Other Special Populations (youth, veteran, immigrants, refugee, medical respite)
PROJECTED SHELTER BEDS NEEDED
~1,000 BEDS NEEDED BY 2025

- By 2025 Austin will need shelter beds for 1,519 households:
  - 1,428 single individuals
  - 91 families with children
  - Based on modeling from Investing for Results report by Barbara Poppe and Associates, June 2020, adjusted for average population growth

- Indicates gap for single individuals: 962 beds

- ‘Right-sized' shelter capacity assumes an optimized system that scales all components of the Homeless Response System, including permanent housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shelter Beds for Single Individuals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected Need (YE2025)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minus Current Capacity (May 2023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Beds Needed (YE2025)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SHELTER EXPANSION UNDERWAY
ADDING BOTH PERMANENT & TEMPORARY BEDS

Permanent Shelter Beds in Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shelter</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esperanza Community</td>
<td>The Other Ones Foundation</td>
<td>Ongoing build-out to 200 beds</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southbridge</td>
<td>Austin Area Urban League</td>
<td>Expansion to double occupancy underway</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northbridge</td>
<td>APH Homeless Strategy Division</td>
<td>Expansion to double occupancy (complete)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Permanent Beds 245

Temporary Shelter Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marshalling Yard</td>
<td>Endeavors</td>
<td>Temporary use, pending council approval</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501 East 8th Street</td>
<td>Urban Alchemy</td>
<td>Temporary use, Fall 2023</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Temporary Beds 450

Total New Beds Needed 245 + 450 = 717
GEOGRAPHIC REVIEW

- Austin’s shelters generally clustered near downtown and in eastern crescent
- Recent loss of beds downtown
- Since 2020, shift of location of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness from central business district to other areas of the city
- Significant concentrations of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in south Austin and N/NW Austin, where there is no shelter
- Future shelter investment considerations should include geographic need as one of multiple site selection criteria

Source: Ending Community Homeless Coalition (ECHO)
TOP 10 RECOMMENDATIONS

Community-Wide Goals

1. Strive to add at 1,000 beds for single individuals by year-end 2025, including at least 80% general population and up to 20% beds for underserved populations (complex health needs, transgender)
2. Establish Diversion/Rapid Exit programming at all shelters to facilitate quick returns to housing
3. Diversify funding within shelter system and align funders on policy priorities
4. Prioritize development of shared room models, which are preferred by persons experiencing homelessness, as well as non-congregate models for special needs.

Continuum of Care / ECHO

5. Establish baseline written program standards for shelter, as well as best practice recommendations
6. Develop a system-wide policy and process for client termination, grievance, & appeal
7. Increase opportunities for collaboration and joint training among shelter providers, especially front-line staff
8. Enhance use of standardized performance metrics for active system monitoring and management

APH Homeless Strategy Division

9. Establish coordinated shelter referral & access process, bed management tool, and a common intake assessment for City-funded shelters
10. Identify opportunities to align City of Austin contracts with Continuum of Care policies/standards, as developed