



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023

Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Board

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:

The mission of the Downtown Austin Community Court Advisory Board ("Board"), according to article 2-1-130 of the City Code, is to "advise the Downtown Austin Community Court on policy and operational issues and advise the council on the policies and operations of the court." The purpose of the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) is to collaboratively address the quality of life all residents in the downtown Austin community through the swift, creative sentencing of public order offenders. The Court seeks to hold people responsible while also offering help to change behavior.

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

During the reporting period (7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023), the Board met five (5) times. Due to health and safety recommendations in the ongoing Public Health Emergency, meetings were held either virtually or a hybrid of virtually and in person. All meetings were posted and open to the public.

Our actions during this time were primarily educational, including:

- The board received feedback from individuals with first-hand lived experience being served in Austin's homelessness system.
- The Board received regular updates from DACC staff concerning homelessness efforts including the status of operations during COVID-19 and continuing

adjustments needed to address the changing needs of staff and clients during the pandemic. Updates were provided regarding staffing; Rapid Rehousing efforts, housing placements, and the waitlist for services; virtual hearings and warrant confirmation policies; facilities, including the transition from DACC's temporary Terrazas Library location to the longer-term space at One Texas; and the Violet Keep Safe Program.

- Liz Baker, Chief Strategy Officer of The Other Ones Foundation (TOOF), presented on the efforts of her organization.
- Ruth Ahearn of Austin Travis County Integral Care presented on the Homeless Health and Wellness Center program.
- Jaclyn Gerban, Assistant City Attorney, presented on a proposed ordinance codifying or expanding DACC's geographic service area and adjudicated offenses.
- Lauren Stott, DACC Business Process Specialist, presented further analysis on DACC's geographic service area and adjudicated offenses.

The Board also discussed the DACC budget, including items coming to an end in FY22 and needs for FY23, and formed a working group to plan recommendations to City Council. On March 11, 2022, the Board approved Memorandum No. 20220311-003A, recommending the following:

- For more than 7 years, DACC functioned without adequate space for its operation. Its current location at One Texas Center is more spacious, but only temporary and less proximate to other downtown services. It is vital that DACC be provided a permanent home and continued support for the fleet of vehicles its Case Management team uses to provide community-based services.
- By the end of this fiscal year, DACC will own nine case manager fleet vehicles in addition to renting eight vehicles. To maintain the status quo in a more cost-effective manner, the Court needs funding to purchase eight vehicles.
- Funds for up to twelve additional permanent Case Manager positions, along with an additional vehicle and corresponding social service dollars per case manager, to serve the 260 individuals experiencing homelessness on DACC's waiting list.
- Additional social service support dollars to include funding for rental assistance and intensive wraparound services for clients served by dollars associated with a DACC Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG).
- Funds to enhance the Violet KeepSafe Program.

- Ongoing funding for the Homeless Health and Wellness collaborative with Integral Care and the Downtown Austin Alliance to continue positively impacting DACC clientele and waiting individuals by treating individuals with complex medical needs.
- Funding to retain two community service crew leaders whose funding from Austin Resource Recovery is being discontinued.

2. Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.

The Board's actions during this reporting period comply with the Board's mission statement. All the educational aspects described above were designed to enable us to understand the policy and operational needs of the Court, so that we may give informed advice with respect to Court policies and operations. Our recommendations to staff and leadership were built upon the knowledge learned and offered in support of the policies and operations of DACC.

3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.

- Work with City Council and community stakeholders to establish a permanent DACC location reflective of the Court's value, operations, and needs.
- Continue to learn about, monitor, and support the implementation of evidence-based practices to address issues of race and equity, access to care, recidivism, and homelessness.
- Continue to work with DACC to assess and advocate for system redesign and funds to address the complex needs of people it serves.

Respectfully submitted,



Lea Downey Gallatin, Chair