



Social Services Framework

Joint Inclusion Committee - February 26, 2026

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Agenda

- Context and Drivers
- Approach
- Input and Feedback
- Next Steps and Timelines
- Q&A and Discussion

Context & Drivers

Background



- **Drivers:**

- The FY27 planned budget included \$16.8M reductions across social services contract portfolio to balance
- Rather than making across-the-board cuts, ABOE is taking a data-driven approach to understand what we fund, how it aligns with community needs, and where efficiencies may exist

- **What We're Asking of the JIC:**

- Help us understand which service areas are most critical to the communities you represent
- Inform the City's prioritization process within the social services portfolio
- Provide feedback on our engagement strategy

Definitions

- **Social Services**: Social services are coordinated programs and supports that help individuals and families meet essential needs and navigate social and economic challenges. These can include services related to education, healthcare access, workforce development, housing assistance, and income supports, and are intended to reduce disparities and promote stability and quality of life. A social service grant provides services to City residents or clients, rather than services to the City organization itself.
- **Social Services Contract**: Pays someone to do something on behalf of the City that we would otherwise have to do; contracts are more rigorous and subject to procurement policy / contract law (Example: funding to a vendor to operate a City-owned homeless shelter)
- **Social Services Grant**: Value-add with nonprofits, but not mandatory or obligated. Shorter terms, less formal authorization (Example: funding to a not-for-profit to provide workforce development programs directly to the community)

City of Austin's Social Services Landscape

Contracts and Grants



Service Category	Lead Department	FY26 Budget	Service Description
Homelessness Services	Homeless Strategy and Ops	\$34.9M	Emergency Shelter Ops, Marshaling Yard, Rapid Rehousing
Child & Youth	Public Health / Econ Dev.	\$9.2M	After-school (Prime Time), Early Childhood, Youth Development
Basic Needs	Public Health	\$5.8M	Food Access, Utility & Rent Assistance, Survivor Support
Crisis Response and Rehab	Community Court and Public Health	\$10.5M	Community Court Diversion, Homeless Case Management
Behavioral Health	Public Health	\$4.3M	Mental Health and Substance Misuse Support
Health Equity	Public Health	\$3.5M	Services prioritizing marginalized communities to address health disparities
Workforce Development	Economic Development	\$2.7M	Job Training, Apprenticeships, "Ready to Work" Programs
Violence Prevention	Public Health	\$2.4M	Gun Violence Prevention, Survivor Support
HIV Services	Public Health	\$580K	Ryan White Part A Match, HIV prevention
Community Planning	Public Health	\$359K	Stigma Index, Regional Planning contracts
TOTAL		\$74.2M	

Area Partners: Focus & Funding



Partner Agency	Primary Funding Focus	Key Social Service Line Items (Est. Annual)
<p>Travis County</p>	<p>Social Services & Capital Investment: Funds community-based service contracts, housing capital, and early childhood via dedicated tax</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Jail Diversion: \$86M (Capital / Ops) • Supportive Housing Capital: \$110M (SHIP Pipeline) • Child Care System: \$96M (Prop A Tax & Scholarships) • Community Centers: 7 Locations (Direct Rent/Food Ops) • Opioid Response Contracts: Harm Reduction & Recovery • General Fund Service Contracts: \$11.5M across 11 issue areas (Housing, Youth, Workforce, Early Childhood, Basic Supports, Safety Intervention, etc.) • Public Health ILA: \$7.9M Public Health ILA (healthcare services, excluded from social services totals)
<p>Central Health</p>	<p>Clinical Health & Medical Support: Focuses on healthcare delivery and medical respite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare Delivery System: \$434M (CommUnityCare / Seton) • Primary Care Access: \$103M (Clinics & Enrollment) • Specialty Care (Psych/SUD): \$30.1M (Integral Care) • ACA Premium Assistance: \$19.7M (Direct Insurance Aid) • Post-Acute & Respite: \$9.4M (Homelessness Contracts) • Patient Navigation: \$7.5M (Direct Staff)
<p>Integral Care</p>	<p>Mental Health Authority: The LMHA for Travis County; braided funding via Local / State / Federal contracts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless Housing (PSH): \$904K (HUD grants for "Fresh Start" & "Kensington") • Substance Use Treatment: \$405,000 (State HHSC grant) • Zero Suicide Initiative: \$400,000 (Federal SAMHSA grant) • System Operator: 988 Lifeline, Psych Emergency Services, EMCOT • Parallel Crisis Contracting: County ILA: \$17.4M, some overlaps with City (e.g. EMCOT, Respite)

Approach

Three Primary Optimization Levers

The City's strategy for optimizing our social services funding portfolio is focused on three approaches:

Partnership Reassessment

Ensuring the right organization is responsible for each service area

Funding Model Adjustment

Ensuring City funding approaches and timing build resilience and fiscal efficiency

Grant and Contract Evaluation

Ensuring City-funded social services are strategically aligned, achieving outcomes, and meeting high performance standards

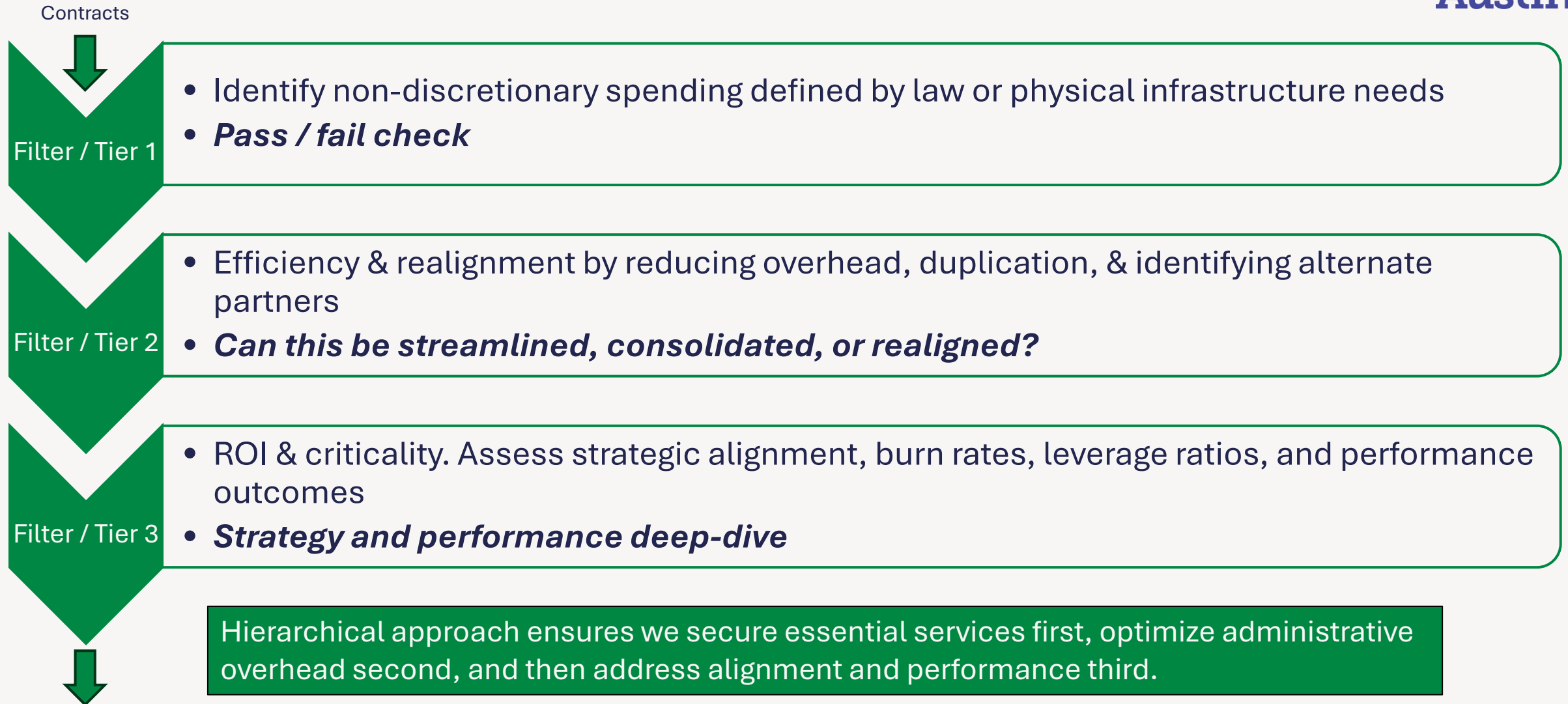
Benchmarking: Funding Model Comparison



Different municipalities employ varied funding cycles to manage social service contracts. The models have tradeoffs between administrative agility, federal alignment, and provider stability.

Entity	Cycle Model	Strategic Approach	Rationale
Austin	Annual Budget Cycle	Adjusted annually	Risks: funding inertia, instability, admin. burden
Travis County	Rolling Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) Cycles	Targeted NOFAs by sector	Sector-specific focus
San Antonio	4-Year Cycle	Year 1: 16-month contract to align w federal FY, Performance-based renewals Year 2-4	Administrative ease, stability
Denver	Federal (HUD Annual Action Plan)	Mirrors HUD cycle (Feb-May)	Federal cycle alignment, maximized drawdown potential
Houston	Rolling NOFA Cycles	Aligned w/Federal grant cycles, grants-first strategy, use grants for nearly all services	Federal cycle alignment, shovel-ready projects prioritized, non-city funding source
Dallas	2-Year Cycle	2-year award cycle	Balance of impact measurement & agility
Portland	Multi-Year (levy-aligned)	Multiple (but not all) service areas funded with multi-year levies.	Long funding horizons, operational stability

Contract Evaluation: A 3-Tiered Filtering Process



Engagement Strategy



- **Contract Partners (Vendors)**

- Service delivery models, reporting requirements, outcome measures, and operational efficiencies

- **City Leadership, Commissions & Committees**

- Policy priorities, focus areas, and strategic direction. Equity considerations, community impact, and service gaps. The JIC is a key voice in this group.

- **Department Partners**

- Operational efficiencies, cross-departmental dependencies, and contract criticality. Department meetings began the week of February 16, 2026.

Input & Feedback

Questions for the Committee

1

Priorities & Focus Areas: Which service categories are most critical to the communities you represent? What are the gaps in those critical service categories?

2

Safeguards & Controls: How can we avoid system risks, safeguard equity, and protect historically underserved populations?

3

Engagement: What feedback do you have for our engagement strategy?

Please discuss with your represented Boards & Commissions and return a JIC recommendation covering the three elements above by March 31st.

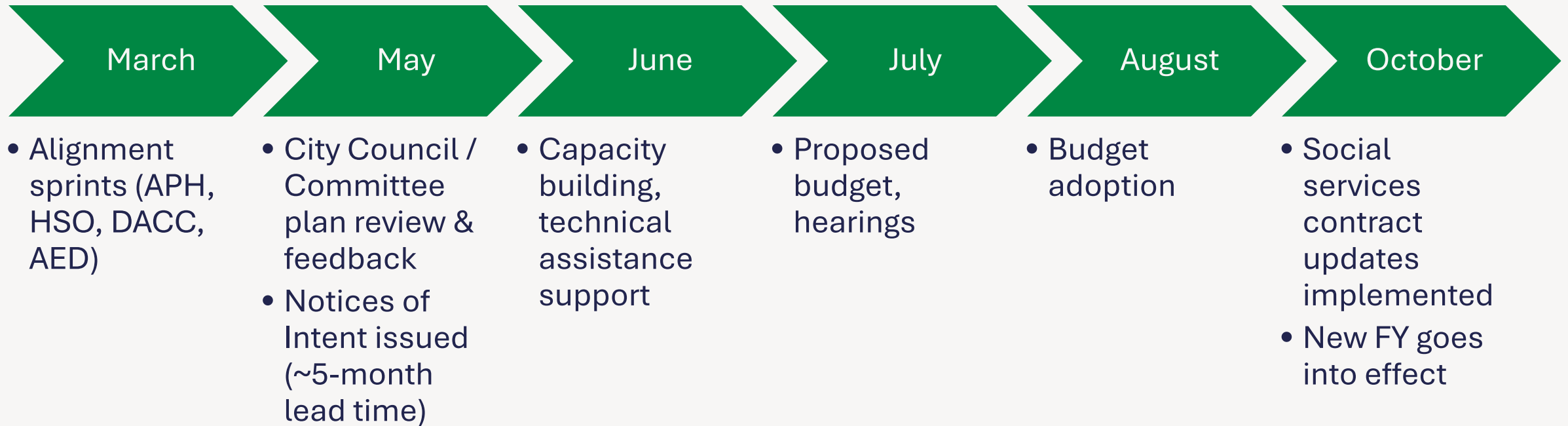
Service Categories

- Homelessness Services
- Child & Youth
- Basic Needs
- Crisis Response & Rehab
- Behavioral Health
- Health Equity
- Workforce Development
- Violence Prevention
- HIV Services
- Community Planning

Next Steps and Timelines

Roadmap to FY27

Public Health Committee briefed Feb 4. JIC briefing Feb 26.
Key milestones aligned to vendor budgeting cycles and City budget process.



Q&A + Discussion

THANK YOU