



# AUSTIN HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY COUNCIL (AHAC)

2022

# TEXAS CONFERENCE

ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS

A STATEWIDE CONFERENCE





# INTRODUCTIONS





# **DOWNTOWN AUSTIN COMMUNITY COURT (DACC) STAFF**



**ROBERT KINGHAM**

Operations Manager



**LAURA WILLIAMSON**

Business Process Consultant



# AUSTIN HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY COUNCIL (AHAC) MEMBERS



**ALEXANDER ZAPATA**

AHAC Member since 2019



**CHRISTOPHER CARR**

Founding AHAC Member



**DONNA WARE**

Founding AHAC Member



**SHARAE WALKER**

AHAC Member since 2019



# AHAC OVERVIEW

## **Initiated through City of Austin Innovation Office**

- Funded by Bloomberg Grant
- Transitioned to Downtown Austin Community Court in 2019

## **15 people with lived experience**

- Biweekly meetings
- Input on policies, programs, and practices impacting individuals experiencing homelessness

## **Broad benefits for City departments and the community**



AHAC PANEL DISCUSSION

# ***BENEFITS & IMPACT***

**WHAT IS AHAC'S BIGGEST  
BENEFIT FOR THE COMMUNITY?**

**DESCRIBE THE OVERALL  
IMPORTANCE OF AHAC.**





# SUPPORT & BUILDING TRUST

## Administrative Support

- Facilitation pre- and post- COVID
- Ensure departments & partners are aware of AHAC as a resource
- Encourage AHAC engagement with City and community leadership

## Building Trust with AHAC Members

- Work with members on peer basis
- Emphasize respect and be responsive
- AHAC recommendations directly from members without staff influence



AHAC PANEL DISCUSSION

# ***BUILDING TRUST***

**WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO  
BUILD TRUST WITH NEW  
MEMBERS OF A GROUP SIMILAR  
TO AHAC?**





# BYLAWS & SCOPE OF WORK

## AHAC Member-adopted bylaws

- Defines how meetings are run
- Outlines responsibilities of members & support staff

## Defined Jurisdiction for Expertise

- As City-facilitated group, AHAC's biggest influence is over City issues
- When AHAC requests non-City topics, make a good faith effort to reach out to entity to arrange collaboration
  - Set expectations as responsiveness will vary



*AHAC PANEL DISCUSSION*

# ***ADVICE FOR BUILDING NEW GROUPS***

**WHAT GENERAL ADVICE DO YOU  
HAVE FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES  
TRYING TO FORM A GROUP LIKE  
AHAC?**



# GENERAL ADVICE FOR GROUP SUPPORT

**Flexibility is key**

**Set structure so all voices can be heard**

**Think outside the box for topics of discussion**

- Solicit ideas from members
- Use a variety of types of activities
- Topics may not always be directly related to homelessness
  - Cast broad net to potential collaborators





AHAC PANEL DISCUSSION  
**HIGHLIGHTS**

**WHAT HAS BEEN  
A HIGHLIGHT FOR  
YOU?**

*YOUR HIGHLIGHTS  
COULD BE:*

**01**

—  
Favorite  
part of  
meetings

**02**

—  
Most  
impactful  
AHAC  
project

**03**

—  
Why you  
enjoy  
serving



# AHAC'S CONTRIBUTION TO HOMELESS RESPONSE SYSTEM

## ENHANCE

**Enhancing local response system by incorporating lived experience in decision making processes**

- AHAC identifies unique elements that could otherwise be overlooked

## INVEST

**AHAC helps with investment strategy decisions**

- Development of solicitations and scoring of applications
- Charting the course and setting the example



**THANK YOU.**





# QUESTIONS?