

Issues & Eggs

A Balanced Approach: Homelessness in Austin

The Downtown Austin Alliance's Issues & Eggs educational series is back and better than ever. We're bringing experts to the breakfast table to provide perspective on the challenges and unique opportunities downtown faces. Join us as we unscramble complex issues one community conversation at a time.

7:30 AM – 7:55 AM: Registration, Breakfast

7:55 AM – 8:00 AM: Introduction, Dewitt Peart

8:00 AM – 8:05 AM: Mayor Kirk Watson

8:05 AM – 8:55 AM: Panel Discussion

8:55 AM – 9:00 AM: Closing

Today's Speakers



Mayor Kirk Watson

Mayor Kirk Watson has immersed himself in state and local public policy for three decades. He served in the Texas Senate for over 13 years as a member and vice-chair of multiple standing and special committees and commissions. His peers elected him President Pro Tempore of the Senate in 2019. During his first term as mayor, he also won praise for bringing different political sides together around transformative environmental and economic development initiatives.

Sheryl Sculley is an award-winning city manager. She gained national attention for steering San Antonio from a financial crisis and invested billions of dollars into critical infrastructure updates and additions. Before serving in San Antonio, Sculley was the assistant city manager in Phoenix and city manager in Kalamazoo. After 45 years of public service, Sculley retired in 2019. She serves on several non-profit and corporate boards, including the Downtown Austin Alliance board and consults with cities and businesses and is an adjunct professor at the University of Texas.



Sheryl Sculley



Dewitt Peart

Dewitt “De” Peart became the President and CEO of the Downtown Austin Alliance in February 2015. The Downtown Alliance is engaged in dozens of projects and issues that contribute to the quality development, mobility, safety, cleanliness, and attractiveness of downtown Austin for investors, businesses, employees, residents, and visitors. He guides the Downtown Alliance’s vision and strategy, ensures the organization’s fiscal health, and represents a board of directors focused on creating, preserving and enhancing the vibe, value and vitality of downtown Austin.

Today's Panelists



Jo Kathryn Quinn

Jo Kathryn Quinn is the President and Chief Executive Officer at Caritas of Austin. She first joined Caritas in 2005 as Director of Housing Services before becoming CEO in 2012. With over 30 years of experience in various aspects of non-profit management, Quinn has served in the fields of education, mental health, substance abuse, international/domestic violence, child protection, child protection, international/domestic homelessness and housing. She is a leader in several community collaborations. In addition, she has volunteered on various non-profit boards.



**Caritas
of Austin**

Ending Homelessness Together.

Caritas of Austin believes that when every person has a stable place to call home, they can realize their full potential and contribute to our community. We build well-being by making sure that people have safe places to live, access to healthy groceries, jobs that provide a reliable living wage, and the opportunity to learn life skills. Together, our professional staff partners with clients to construct a strong foundation and a community of ongoing support so that they can withstand the life storms that affect all of us, such as an unexpected job loss or a family illness. Our innovative, personalized, proven approach to building well-being creates a more vibrant Austin for all.

www.caritasofaustin.org

Today's Panelists



Kirkpatrick Tyler

Kirkpatrick “KP” Tyler provides the highest levels of service, advocacy and community and civic engagement. Through his life experience, educational development and career achievements, Mr. Tyler is an emerging leader in the public service community. National, and local community arenas acknowledge Kirkpatrick for his diverse background, strong convictions for human rights, personal responsibility, strategic partnership building and talent for critical analysis and problem-solving.



Urban Alchemy is a Non-profit Social Enterprise with the goal of creating career pathways for formerly incarcerated long-term offenders (LTO). Urban Alchemy provides a safe supportive space for over 1,000 Formerly Incarcerated LTOs nationwide, building on their transferable skill sets, gift and talents of returning citizens, namely Emotional Intelligence, Personal Development, Situational Awareness and Empathy. Through these skill-sets and an intense training curriculum, UA Practitioners transform people and spaces through Love, Dignity and Respect. Over the past year, Urban Alchemy has served the city of Austin, providing outreach and engagement to unhoused citizens in North Austin and the Downtown Austin area and served as the operator of the ARCH Shelter in downtown Austin. In the coming months, UA will also serve as the operator for the Downtown Shelter Expansion, a former Salvation Army Shelter site.

Today's Panelists



Chris Baker

Chris Baker is the Executive Director of The Other Ones Foundation. Their mission is to make the world better for people affected by homelessness and poverty. Since graduating from the State University of New York at Oneonta in 2007, Chris has worked many jobs in homeless services and activism, but also as a musician, writer, and even paralegal. He started The Other Ones Foundation in the summer of 2017 to bring his innovative ideas for addressing homelessness to life.



The Other Ones Foundation (TOOF) is a nonprofit that offers emergency shelter, extremely low-barrier work opportunities, and supportive services to people experiencing homelessness in Austin. In 2017, TOOF was born out of a desire to find new and innovative approaches to serving Austin's homeless community. TOOF's inception began with a robust case study of the subjective needs of the population it was looking to serve. In its first year as an organization, TOOF engaged with hundreds of unhoused people, asking what they felt was missing from the homelessness response system. Their work is built on kinship, mutual respect, and collaboration – all of our programming and services are designed in partnership with the people they serve.

Last year, TOOF served 600 individual clients, helped 170 people find stable housing, and paid out \$950,000 in earned income to people experiencing homelessness who would otherwise not have had the chance to work.

www.toofound.org

About Downtown Austin Alliance

Since 1993, the Downtown Austin Alliance (Downtown Alliance) has been downtown Austin's full-time advocate and biggest champion. We are a nonprofit funded by commercial and non-homestead property owners in the Downtown Public Improvement District (PID).

Our mission is to create, preserve and enhance the vibe, vitality and value of downtown Austin for everyone. To fulfill this, our organization partners with businesses, civic organizations, cultural institutions and thought leaders to provide the downtown community with services, planning and advocacy.

Initiatives to Address Unsheltered Homelessness

For more than a decade, the Downtown Austin Alliance has led and participated in public and private partnerships focused on innovative, research-based solutions for addressing homelessness.

While the downtown homeless population has increased due to many factors, so have our efforts to drive positive, lasting change.

A few of our efforts include:

- Advocacy for improved policy and planning, including leading collaborative efforts to make our service system more cohesive and effective.
- Direct funding for housing initiatives such as Community First Village, and The Terrace at Oak Springs, Salvation Army Rathgeber Center, and others.
- Forming partnerships and founding programs to provide behavioral health services to people needed to transition out of homelessness.
- Providing gainful employment opportunities for people who are experiencing homelessness or have barriers to employment

To learn more about Downtown Austin Alliance and our initiatives to address unsheltered homelessness, visit

<https://downtownaustin.com/what-we-do/advocacy-support/homelessness-initiatives/>.

www.DowntownAustin.com

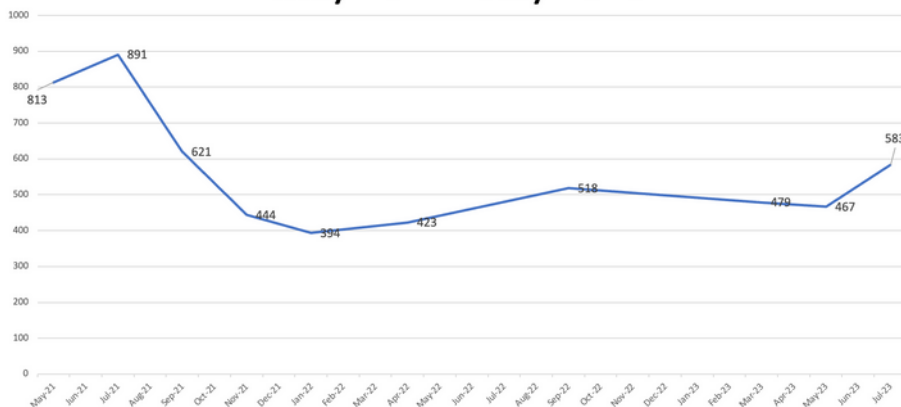
New Shelter Beds

A plan is being implemented that will add more than 700 shelter beds to the system, including:

- 300 beds at the Convention Center Marshalling Yard facility opened August 2023, 200 beds are currently full.
- 130 beds by doubling city-owned hotel/motel rooms, completed in August 2023.
- 150 beds at the former Salvation Army downtown shelter leased by the City of Austin. Opening in October 2023, managed by Urban Alchemy.
- Secured a \$65M state funding earmark to create more than 200 non-congregate shelter beds (est. completion 2025-26).

Downtown Unsheltered Homeless Count

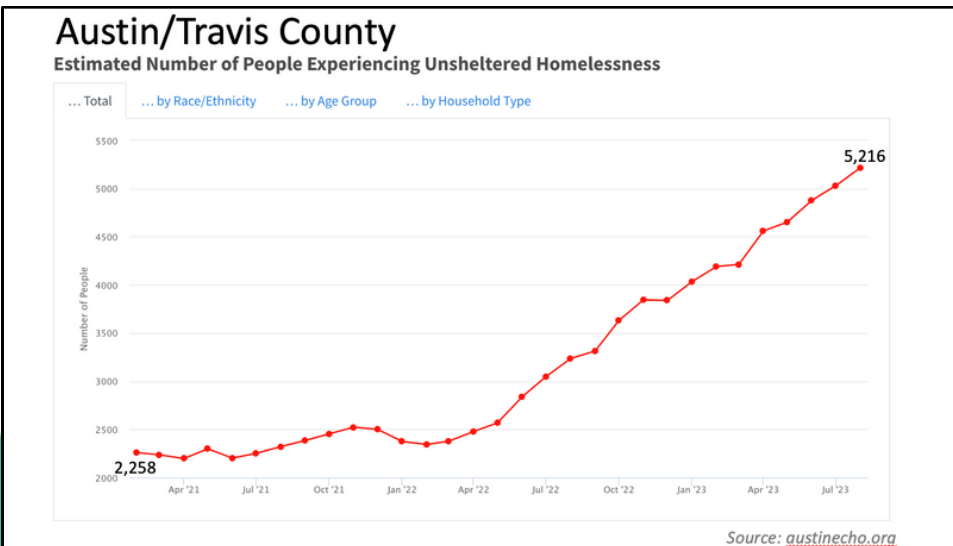
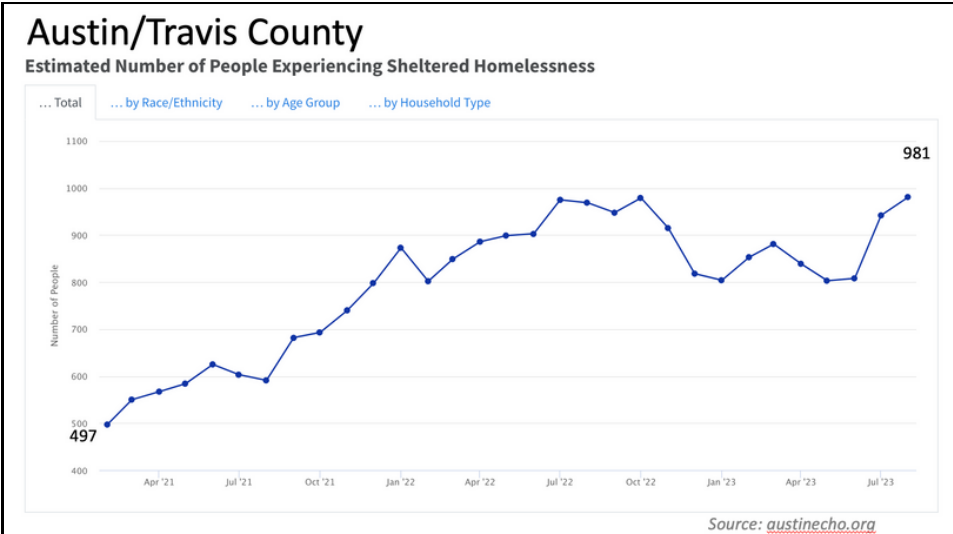
Downtown PID Unsheltered Homeless Trend
May 2021 - July 2023



Source: Downtown Austin Alliance

Source: Downtown Austin Alliance Monthly Unsheltered Count

Austin & Travis County Homelessness Data



Visit austinecho.org for to learn more about Austin and Travis County's Homeless service system, including the continuum of care and recent reports.

Source: Homelessness Response System Dashboard, Austinecho.org