

May 24, 2024

RE: Support for May 30, 2024 Austin City Council item 112 – Implementation of the Downtown Austin Community Court’s Mobile Court program

Honorable Mayor Watson and Austin City Council Members,

The Downtown Austin Alliance supports the passage of item 112 on the May 30 Council agenda to implement Community Court’s Mobile Court program.

Community Court conducted a successful Mobile Court Pilot from October 2023 to January 2024 that demonstrated the need for its full implementation. The pilot included 18 events around the city that were held in social service centers, shelters, libraries and churches. The pilot engaged 383 people – 125 of whom had open cases with the Court. Of those, 69 cases were docketed, 48 arrest warrants were cleared, and hundreds of people without active cases were able to positively engage with case workers to access social, health and housing services provided by Community Court.

Because the majority of clients served by the Court are people experiencing homelessness with severe behavioral health issues, the rate at which people show up to a single, central downtown court location has historically been very low. With City Council’s 2023 approval to expand the Court’s jurisdiction citywide for certain class-C offenses, it is increasingly important to fully implement this forward-thinking model to take services to locations around the city where clients are located.

We respectfully ask that you support item 112 to fully implement Community Court’s Mobile Court program.

Sincerely,



Dewitt Peart
President & CEO

CC: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager

The Downtown Austin Alliance mission:
To create, preserve and enhance the vibe, value and vitality of downtown Austin for everyone.