

BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A STATEMENT OF COMMON PURPOSE AMONG CITIES  
IN EASTERN JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS.

WHEREAS, By Resolution No. 6376, approved on October 15, 2018 the City Council of the City of Independence adopted a Statement of Purpose to work with the cities of Blue Springs, Grandview, Independence, Lee's Summit and Raytown, Missouri (the "Cities") to explore and advance collaborative strategies to expand local government innovation that enhances public services, benefits employees, and optimizes customer services (the "Eastern Jackson County Shared Services Initiative"); and,

WHEREAS, the Eastern Jackson County Shared Services Initiative has resulted in enhanced collaboration and information sharing for services such as public procurement, employee training and mental health co-responders for law enforcement; and,

WHEREAS, in 2022, the Cities identified a common challenge of homelessness; and,

WHEREAS, the Cities cooperated with the Mid-America Regional Council ("MARC") to complete the Suburban Homelessness Action Plan for Eastern Jackson County, dated November 11, 2022, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference; and,

WHEREAS, the Cities desire to work collaboratively to prioritize and address recommendations in the Action Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Cities and MARC convened a strategy session with homelessness advocates and experts representing Eastern Jackson County on January 13, 2023; and,

WHEREAS, there was consensus during the January 13, 2023, strategy session to adopt a statement of common purpose to advance further collaborative work to address homelessness.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That the Independence City Council does hereby affirm that:

- a. Homelessness is a complex social issue that manifests itself in the Cities with people that are unhoused, doubled-up in housing units, sleeping in cars, or otherwise living in areas not fit for human habitation.
- b. People who are unhoused are members of the communities in which they reside. They often become unhoused in proximity to support systems that are important for the journey to housing and economic stability.
- c. Moving people who are unhoused toward permanent housing requires a broad response from many partners, including municipal services, social services, mental and physical health, and substance abuse disorder treatment.
- d. Homelessness is a regional problem that exists in every city. The only solutions that will work are regional solutions that have regional support.

- e. People should not be arrested simply for being unhoused, which is not a crime. An outreach-oriented response in partnership with police, emergency medical services, mental health co-responders and social service organizations can be effective in situations that do not warrant arrest. An arrest can delay the process of getting back into permanent housing and place an unnecessary burden on limited law enforcement resources. Arrests should occur when violent or criminal acts are occurring.
- f. With limited preventative housing services available, the Cities often choose costly city service-based responses to homelessness, including deploying police and fire services to deal with non-emergency situations. Other municipal services such as public works and parks & recreation are engaged to clean public areas where people who are unhoused have been living. Relying on city services to clean up homelessness drains limited time and funding that is needed for other city priorities.
- g. Suburban areas historically adopted planning and zoning policies focused on single-family dwellings that have severely limited other cost-effective housing options.
- h. In Eastern Jackson County, there are sixty-eight (68) emergency family shelter beds. There are no emergency shelter beds for single people. This is not sufficient to meet the community need. The Point-in-Time (PIT) count mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) identified 128 unsheltered people experiencing homelessness in January 2023.
- i. Aging homes are often energy inefficient, and high utility costs contribute to housing instability. Older homes also require more repairs and maintenance that may be unaffordable for owners or occupants with limited income.
- j. The Cities need to come together to develop creative and innovative solutions to address homelessness, including sharing resources to achieve the most efficient and effective solutions.

**SECTION 2.** That the Independence City Council hereby directs the City Manager to continue to collaborate with the Eastern Jackson County Shared Services Initiative to identify cooperative strategies to address homelessness including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Increasing the number of emergency shelter beds in Eastern Jackson County with an emphasis on supportive wrap-around services to help people experiencing homelessness achieve long-term housing, health and economic stability.
- b. Increasing proactive homeless outreach services to connect people experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness, to needed housing, health and social services.
- c. Increasing capacity and access to housing and treatment for mental health disorders and substance use disorders.
- d. Pursuing joint funding applications for state or federal grants or philanthropy to support regional solutions.
- e. Advocating for Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) that administer federal housing programs, including housing choice vouchers, to adopt a preference for moving unhoused persons quickly into permanent housing.
- f. Exploring or expanding rental licensing and inspections programs to hold landlords accountable for quality housing stock.
- g. Expanding programs to assist with minor home repairs to improve energy efficiency and preserve housing affordability.

- h. Updating municipal zoning codes to encourage and accommodate development of diverse housing stock.

PASSED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2023, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer of the City Council  
of the City of Independence, Missouri

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

APPROVED - FORM AND LEGALITY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Counselor

REVIEWED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager