

# HOUSING FIRST OAK SPRINGS

A NEW LIFE STARTS WITH HOUSING FIRST.

Housing First is a whole health treatment approach that moves homeless individuals and families immediately from the streets into their own homes.

## INTEGRAL CARE



A new Housing First initiative will add 50 units of permanent supported housing in our community.

*“It felt like I finally had something to call my own.” - Marvin*

## MARVIN



By early adulthood, Marvin, 54, found himself sleeping on park benches. After many years living on the streets, he got into a program that helped him find his own apartment — and a new life. A decade later he’s thriving. Marvin’s incredible journey began with housing first.

Housing First Oak Springs is a whole health treatment approach to ending chronic homelessness for people living with mental illness and/or substance use disorder, moving homeless individuals and families immediately from the streets into their own apartments.

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## INTEGRAL CARE

### HEALTHY COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE

#### *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*

We created this document to answer your questions about the Healthy Community Collaborative and the Housing First Oak Springs facility.

#### WHAT IS THE HEALTHY COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE?

The Healthy Community Collaborative is a group of local partners who are working together to improve our community's health by providing housing and integrated supportive services for individuals who are homeless. This initiative is funded in part by a Healthy Community Collaborative grant from the Texas Department of State Health Services. As part of the grant, Housing First Oak Springs, LP, a subsidiary of Integral Care, is developing 50 units of permanent supportive housing. Integral Care, in partnership with other organizations, will provide the supportive services.

#### WHAT IS HOUSING FIRST?

Housing First is an evidence-based health intervention that offers permanent supportive housing to address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, who also live with mental illness, substance use disorder and/or other chronic conditions. Through this model, individuals and families move immediately, with little preconditions, from the streets or shelters into housing. Once housed, individuals receive rehabilitation services and recovery support to help them regain their health and well-being. Housing First is a proven solution that has been used successfully across the United States.

#### WHAT IS HOUSING FIRST OAK SPRINGS AND WHERE WILL IT BE LOCATED?

Modeled on other successful Housing First programs across the country, the Housing First Oak Springs community will be the first of its kind in Travis County. Located at 3000 Oak Springs Drive, Austin, TX, the community will include 50 fully furnished efficiency apartments, a community room, a clinic, and onsite services to support individual recovery and housing stability. Services offered will include: case management and peer support, integrated mental health services, substance use treatment and primary care (these services will also be available to the surrounding community).

#### WHY DO WE NEED THIS PROJECT?

Austin and Travis County are experiencing a significant increase in homelessness – a recent report from the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) identified over 2,000 individuals in need of housing, 36% are chronically homeless and especially vulnerable. These men and women:

- experiencing long-term homelessness,

- living with multiple health conditions including mental illness, substance use issues and chronic disease,
- not able to access traditional housing.

Rapid population growth and rising housing costs make it difficult for many people in our community to access affordable housing. For individuals who are also struggling with significant physical and behavioral health conditions, it can be impossible to secure a safe, stable place to live. These challenges cause many people experiencing chronic homelessness to over utilize costly public resources, including emergency services, hospitals, and shelters. This population also often has increased criminal justice system involvement and jail usage.

## HOW DOES HOUSING FIRST OAK SPRINGS IMPACT OUR PUBLIC RESOURCES?

Communities across the United States – including Seattle, New York, Salt Lake City, and Portland, ME – have seen impressive results using the Housing First model. In New York and Los Angeles, analysis of Housing First showed that housing and supporting people experiencing chronic homelessness resulted in savings of approximately \$20,000 per year, per individual. Other communities have seen similar results. Since 2013, Integral Care has used the Housing First model in a variety of sites throughout Austin. Experience has shown that it works in our community to increase housing stability and reduce overutilization of public resources. Eighty-five percent of individuals stay housed for 12 months or more. An analysis of 39 people housed for 12 months and provided with wraparound services showed significant reductions in encounters with law enforcement and decreased utilization of health services such as EMS transport and hospital stays. These included:

- 71% fewer inpatient psychiatric hospital stays
- 29% fewer inpatient medical hospital stays
- 51% fewer days spent incarcerated

These and other dramatic decreases in service utilization translate into real savings for our community. Based on the results achieved through our current Housing First efforts, we estimate that housing 50 more of the most vulnerable people in our *community* will result in *savings of at least \$1 million per year*.

## HOW IS THE PROJECT FUNDED?

Integral Care is combining a number of funding sources to support the development of this new housing community. Sources include: The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (\$4.4 million), City of Austin affordable housing bond funds (\$3.6 million), low income housing tax credits (\$6 million) and private philanthropy (\$3.5 million). The total cost of construction of Housing First Oak Springs is approximately \$17.5 million. The apartments and parking garage are estimated to total \$12.5 million, while the onsite clinic and wellness areas will be approximately \$5 million.

## WHAT IS THE TIME FRAME FOR THE PROJECT?

Construction starts in the Fall of 2017. Housing First Oak Springs is expected to open in late 2018.

## WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

Integral Care is partnering with multiple local agencies.

Austin Emergency Medical Services, Austin Police Department, Austin Recovery, Caritas, Children's Optimal Health, City and County HHS, City of Austin, Communities for Recovery, Community Advancement Network, County Judge Sarah Eckhardt, Downtown Austin Alliance, ECHO, Front Steps, Goodwill, Green Doors, Homeless Outreach Team (HOST), Mayor Steve Adler, Mobile Loaves and Fishes, One Voice Central Texas, Permanent Supportive Housing Finance Committee, Psychiatric Services Stakeholder Group, Rice University, Salvation Army, Seton, Healthcare, Sheriff Gregg Hamilton, The Dell Medical School at the University of Texas at Austin, The University of Houston, Travis County Criminal Justice Department

## WHO WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE SERVICES AT THE HOUSING FIRST OAKS SPRINGS COMPLEX?

The housing units will be for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and who also live with mental illness or substance use disorder. The on-site health clinic will provide care to individuals living in the apartment complex and will also be available to the community.

## WHAT IS INTEGRATED CARE?

Integrated care is the coordination of primary care and behavioral health care. Integrating services for mental health, substance use disorder, and primary care produces the best outcomes and is the most effective approach to caring for people with multiple healthcare needs.

## DOES INTEGRAL CARE HAVE OTHER SIMILAR PROPERTIES? WHAT ARE ADDRESSES/LOCATIONS OF OTHER INTEGRAL CARE SERVICES THAT ARE SIMILAR TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT?

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) provides federal protections for individually identifiable health information. To maintain compliance with this law, Integral Care is not able to disclose residential addresses or provide tours of residential facilities.

However, the Dove Springs Integrated Care Clinic (5015 IH-35) follows an integrated care model, with both mental and physical health services available at the same location. This will be the same model used for the Housing First Oaks Springs integrated clinic.

**ARE THERE SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN THE AREA THAT ARE MANAGED BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS?** There are housing programs and facilities in the Travis County community that are somewhat similar, but they do not follow the Housing First model. The Housing First Oaks Springs complex will be the first of its kind in Travis County. Integral Care has used the Housing First model since 2013 with much success. Since then, over 400 people have been housed in apartments across Austin, with 85% remaining housed after 12 months or more. An analysis of these individuals indicates that, on average, they have reduced their use of clinical and emergency services by more than 70%.

## WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY PROCESS FOR ACCESSING CLINIC AND HOUSING SERVICES?

Any community member will be able to access services at the clinic through the same intake and assessment process that Integral Care currently uses for all of its services. Housing units will be made available to individuals experiencing homelessness and who have a diagnosis of mental illness. Individuals needing housing will be screened and prioritized through a coordinated assessment process that is being used across the community by multiple housing providers. The Housing First Oaks Springs care team will use a nationally standardized assessment called the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool.

## WILL INDIVIDUALS NEED APPOINTMENTS TO ACCESS THE OAKS SPRINGS HOUSING FIRST CLINIC?

The clinic will have a system for accommodating both scheduled and walk-in appointments.

## HOW MANY INDIVIDUALS PER DAY WILL ACCESS THE SITE THROUGH APPOINTMENTS?

The Housing First Oaks Springs healthcare team will consist of a medical doctor and a psychiatrist, a psychiatric nurse practitioner, and several nurses, medical assistants and case managers. Typically, clinic staff will see 20 to 40 individuals per day.

## WILL PROGRAMMING BE AVAILABLE TO HELP INDIVIDUALS TRANSITION INTO THE WORKFORCE?

Supported employment services will be available to our residents, in addition to services that will assist individuals through the process of finding a job.

## WHAT IS THE PARKING CAPACITY AT THE HOUSING FIRST OAKS SPRINGS FACILITY?

The parking garage will be located on the ground level and will have 52 parking spaces.

## WILL CONSUMERS LOITER AFTER APPOINTMENTS OR WHILE WAITING TO ACCESS HOUSING SERVICES?

Individuals will be able to access clinic services during their scheduled appointment or on a walk-in basis but will not loiter around the clinic or the premises. Individuals who reside in the apartments will follow good neighbor policies and abide by rules enumerated in a signed residential lease agreement.

## WHAT WILL THE LEASE LOOK LIKE?

Residents will sign and must abide by the standard Texas Apartment Lease Agreement required by any rental property.

## WILL NEIGHBORS BE SAFE?

Individuals with mental illness are not typically violent and are actually 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than are individuals in the general population. Integral Care has extensive experience providing housing and supportive services to individuals who are homeless and experiencing behavioral health challenges. Integral Care already provides such services to more than 400 individuals across the community. Individuals considered for housing are interviewed and selected based on certain eligibility criteria, including criminal history. Staff will provide on-site support and monitoring 24 hours a day and security cameras will monitor the facility and surrounding neighborhood. All individuals visiting the apartment units will check in and out with staff. Visitors must be escorted upstairs by the resident they are visiting.

## WHO WILL NOT QUALIFY FOR HOUSING AT THE HOUSING FIRST OAKS SPRINGS FACILITY?

To ensure the safety of our consumers, staff and neighbors, registered sex offenders and individuals with a history of arson or methamphetamine production will not qualify for services at the facility.

## HOW WILL THIS PROJECT IMPACT PROPERTY VALUES? WHAT DOES RESEARCH SHOW?

In a review of seventeen studies examining the impact of affordable housing projects on property values, author Mai Thi Nguyen found that current research does not conclusively find a relationship between affordable housing and a decrease in property values. Research also shows that a well-maintained affordable housing development does not detrimentally affect property values and may raise property values in neighborhoods.

*Nguyen, Mai Thi, "Does Affordable Housing Detrimently Affect Property Values? A Review of the Literature." Journal of Planning Literature, Vol. 20, Number 1 (2005).*

## ARE THERE BUS STOPS IN THE AREA?

There are 19 bus stops within a quarter of a mile of Housing First Oaks Springs

Learn More. Visit the Housing First Oak Springs website at [HOUSINGFIRSTATX.ORG](https://HOUSINGFIRSTATX.ORG).

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Sarah Wauters, Community Engagement Manager, at [sarah.wauters@integralcare.org](mailto:sarah.wauters@integralcare.org).

To make a significant donation or explore a Housing First Oak Springs naming opportunity, please contact Jodie Eldridge at [jodie.eldridge@integralcare.org](mailto:jodie.eldridge@integralcare.org) or 512-440-4037.

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