

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Friday, June 06, 2014 8:14:59 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 1:58 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Friday, June 6, 2014 - 01:57

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Jon

Last Name: Luckstead

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

My brother lives at the Austin State Supported Living Center. My mother and I visit him regularly. This is manageable because of the ASSLC's proximity to where we live. In the event that the Austin State Supported Living Center is closed, a similar center should be opened in the vicinity of Austin for two reasons.

First, community homes are not up to the task of caring for most of the residents currently at the Austin SSLC.

People like my brother need to be in an institution that has a secure campus with facilities to accommodate their special needs. In general, the residents at the Austin State Supported

Living Center are far less capable than those at community homes. Community homes can not provide an appropriate level of security for people with my brother's level of development without locking them inside the community home. At the ASSLC, residents can be outdoors. They can be safely walked to different activities in a variety of facilities appropriate for them.

This is not the case at community homes. If my brother were moved to a community home, he would have less freedom than now, not more. If he had the same freedom of movement at a community home that he currently has at the ASSLC, he would be exposed to an extremely high risk of being hit by a motor vehicle. The speed limit for motor vehicles at the ASSLC is 10 miles per hour, which contributes to the safety there. Furthermore, people driving at the ASSLC understand that they need to be especially vigilant there.

Facilities for exercise, recreation, training, and medical care are all needed on a secure campus. A community home would have inadequate facilities and supervision to allow people who are as mentally retarded and physically challenged as my brother the safety, security, supervision, developmental activities, and freedom that a large, specialized center such as the Austin State Supported Living Center provides.

The second reason a center like the Austin State Supported Living Center should be opened in the vicinity of Austin is geographic. As the Austin metropolitan area continues to grow rapidly in population, more and more people will need a state supported living center nearby to provide for the needs of their special needs family members.

Proximity is especially important because family members are often older than the residents and have difficulty traveling long distances. Long distances would prevent many family members from visiting frequently enough to provide the continuity that the developmentally challenged often need. Finally, close proximity to Austin would allow the center to draw upon the many specialists available in Austin, such as social workers, psychologists, and therapists.

Community homes simply can not responsibly support the very different population for which the ASSLC cares. As the Austin grows, its need for specialized care grows. If the Austin State Supported Living Center is closed, Texas would be best served by opening a state supported living center in the Austin area.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: If the Austin State Supported Living Center is closed, a similar center should be opened in the Austin area.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 4:05:59 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]

Sent: Monday, June 23, 2014 10:35 PM

To: Sunset Advisory Commission

Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Monday, June 23, 2014 - 22:34

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Jon

Last Name: Luckstead

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

(I am a brother of Lee Luckstead, a resident of the Austin State Supported Living Center.)

Our great state of Texas has served its citizens well by offering the services that the Austin State Supported Living Center provides. Most if not all of the current residents there cannot be responsibly served by community homes. Community homes do not have the facilities and staff to responsibly care for people with developmental disabilities as profound as those that my brother Lee and others at the ASSLC have.

Let me give an example of this. Just this past Sunday as I was driving with my mother out of the ASSLC after visiting Lee, we came to a resident pedaling an adult sized tricycle in the road. We and two other cars patiently drove three or so miles per hour behind this resident until we reached our turn off. As visitors of the ASSLC, we were familiar with the unique traffic safety issues there. Furthermore, signs clearly indicate that the speed limit on the ASSLC campus is ten miles per hour. A community home could not offer a resident a similar opportunity to ride such a tricycle safely—it would be unthinkable in a residential neighborhood. Facilities like the ASSLC provide an environment for both safety and personal growth for people as developmentally disabled as my brother. Placing Lee in a community home would significantly reduce either his safety, quality of life, or both.

If the Austin State Supported Living Center is closed, then our state will be best served by establishing a new center in the Austin area. This new center would need to have the same capabilities for care that the ASSLC now offers.

Existing centers are too far away for family and friends living in the Austin area to visit easily. As it is now, many family members are elderly or have other circumstances that can make traveling long distances extremely difficult. Many family members are literally using walkers or have visual

disabilities. Sending the residents of the ASSLC to centers far away from family and friends will greatly reduce the quality of life that family relationships and friendships bring to these residents. Considering their special challenges in life, infrequent visits may well impact their development as well.

Austin is nationally recognized as an economic dynamo with the fastest growth rate among cities of a million or more. Austin contributes a lot of money to the State of Texas' coffers. Texas, in turn, should serve all of its citizens in all parts of the state responsibly. It should live up to its responsibility and provide a state supported living center in the rapidly growing Austin area. One possibility would be to adapt unused parts of the Austin State Hospital campus for use as a state supported living center. Another would be to build a campus on inexpensive land within close proximity to Austin.

As Texans, we can take pride in many great things. The care that Texas provides through a state supported living center in Austin is one of them.

As a state, let's continue to do the right thing for our less able citizens. Let's live up to our responsibilities by providing them with a state supported living center in the Austin area.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

If the Austin State Supported Living Center is closed, then a new center will need to be established in the Austin area. This new center would need to have the same capabilities for care that the ASSLC now offers.

One possibility would be to adapt unused parts of the Austin State Hospital campus for use as a state supported living center. Another would be to build a campus on inexpensive land within close proximity to Austin.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree