

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 617  
By: Schwertner  
Intergovernmental Affairs  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

In February 2021, the Austin City Council announced its plan to purchase a hotel in southern Williamson County where the council planned to relocate homeless individuals from Austin's central business district. The bill sponsor has informed the committee that the plan was set in motion without notifying Williamson County officials or detailing how the City of Austin intended to provide necessary support and resources such as health care, transportation, mental health services, job training programs, or security. The bill sponsor has further informed the committee that while a regional approach is absolutely necessary to address the growing homelessness problem in Central Texas, it is impossible to ensure that adequate services and support will be available for at-risk populations without communication between city officials, county officials, and local residents. S.B. 617 seeks to address this issue by requiring a municipality's governing body, before the governing body converts property to provide housing to homeless individuals, to hold a public hearing not less than 90 days before the municipality begins the conversion.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

S.B. 617 amends the Local Government Code to condition the authority of a municipality's governing body to approve the conversion of a property under the municipality's control to provide housing to homeless individuals on the governing body holding a public hearing not less than 90 days before the municipality begins the conversion. The bill requires the governing body to hold the hearing at a location within a one-mile radius of the property and to provide notice of the hearing by mail to each residence and business located within that radius not later than 36 hours before the hearing is held.

S.B. 617 authorizes an individual who is entitled to be notified of the hearing to bring an action for injunctive relief in a district court in the county in which the property is located to prevent the conversion of the property if a municipality's governing body fails to comply with the hearing and notice requirements. The bill establishes that in the event of a conflict between the bill's provisions and a provision in a municipality's charter relating to the conversion or notice of the conversion of a property as described by the bill, the bill's provisions control.

S.B. 617 does not apply to the conversion of a property to provide temporary shelter or housing during a natural disaster, declared state of emergency, or other life-threatening public emergency. The bill's provisions apply only to the conversion of property described by the bill that is set to begin on or after the bill's effective date.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.