

5 STEPS TO KEEPING AUSTIN AFFORDABLE

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HousingWorks
AUSTIN

Five Steps to Keeping Austin Affordable

Changes are happening in Austin these days. We are growing, getting more congested, getting less affordable.

In the midst of all this change, our form of government is transitioning to 10-1, district representation. The new city council will be charged with thinking about their constituents and unique geographies, in addition to thinking about the city as a whole. It's a tall order.

As we try to tackle the multifaceted challenge of affordability, HousingWorks is working to simplify things. So we've laid out five basic steps to [Keeping Austin Affordable](#):

1. Preserve

The City of Austin is home to 18,500 subsidized housing units. But there are more than 65,000 unsubsidized housing units that are currently providing below market rent. We need to preserve affordable housing — both subsidized and unsubsidized — so that we have sufficient affordable housing stock today and into the future.

2. Invest

Austin voters care about affordability. In 2013, voters overwhelmingly approved \$65 million in affordable housing bonds. These local dollars are critical to increasing affordable housing stock. With the \$55 million 2006 housing bonds, we were able to create or preserve more than 3,400 affordable homes. We need to continue and expand the wise investments that our community makes into affordability.

3. Leverage

Every dollar from the 2006 affordable housing bonds was leveraged with an additional four dollars in outside funds. Affordable housing investment creates both stable housing and local jobs. The local economic impact of the 2006 housing bonds will be \$865+ million over the next 10 years. It's a great return on investment. We need to stretch our scarce housing dollars by continuing our impressive record on leveraging.



4. Partner

Housing impacts schools, jobs, transportation — just about every facet of life. Because of this, it's critical for Austin to foster partnerships between public and private entities. When we build schools, designate transit-oriented districts, offer economic incentives to private companies, we need to ensure that affordable housing is part of the equation.

5. Include

The Land Development Code rewrite — CodeNEXT — is our opportunity to shape what gets built, where it gets built, and how it gets built. HousingWorks recognizes that well-located density, streamlined development reviews, and a simple and predictable development process will increase affordability in a broad sense. But in order to achieve true affordability, it is imperative that onsite, inclusionary affordable housing policies are implemented across the city and in a range of housing types. In order to accomplish this, we need sound policies coupled with broad community support of the preservation and expansion of affordable housing in Austin.

Let's tackle the affordability challenge head on.

It's going to take leadership and vision. Step by step.

What is Affordable?

af·ford·a·ble /ə'fɔrdəbəl/

adjective: affordable

1. inexpensive; reasonably priced. “affordable housing”

It's a complicated topic. What is affordable to one person isn't necessarily affordable to another.

“Affordable housing,” “low income housing” and “public housing” are not the same thing. We all need housing that's affordable, but we may or may not be low-income or utilizing public assistance.

The federal government's general guideline is that a household should not pay more than 30% of their income toward housing. But more than 38% of Austin's households actually pay **more than 30% of their income** toward housing. That means there is little money left over to pay for essentials like food, healthcare, clothing, and transportation.

The City of Austin is home to a diverse range of nonprofit organizations, public entities, and for-profit entities that own and manage affordable housing. Typically, a household will have to qualify for housing, based on their income. This is to ensure that the housing is used for people who need it the most.

In Austin, we have more than 18,500 subsidized affordable housing units. But we need more. Many more. According to the 2014 Comprehensive Housing Market Study, we need more than 48,000 units that rent at \$500/month, serving households earning \$25,000/year or less.



Our Community at a Glance

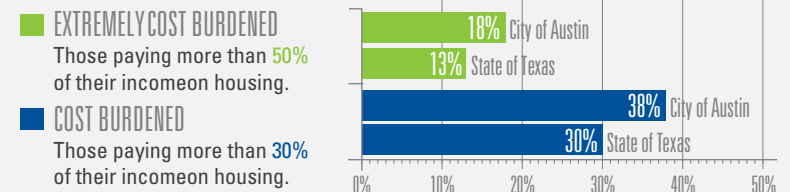
POVERTY



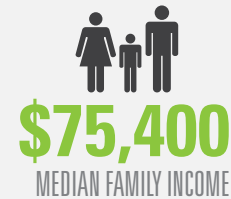
HOMELESSNESS



COST AND EXTREMELY COST BURDENED



INCOME ¹



RENT ²



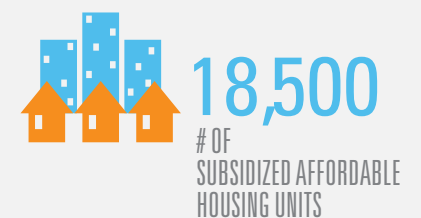
HOME PRICE ³



LOW WAGE JOBS ⁴



SUBSIDIZED HOUSING



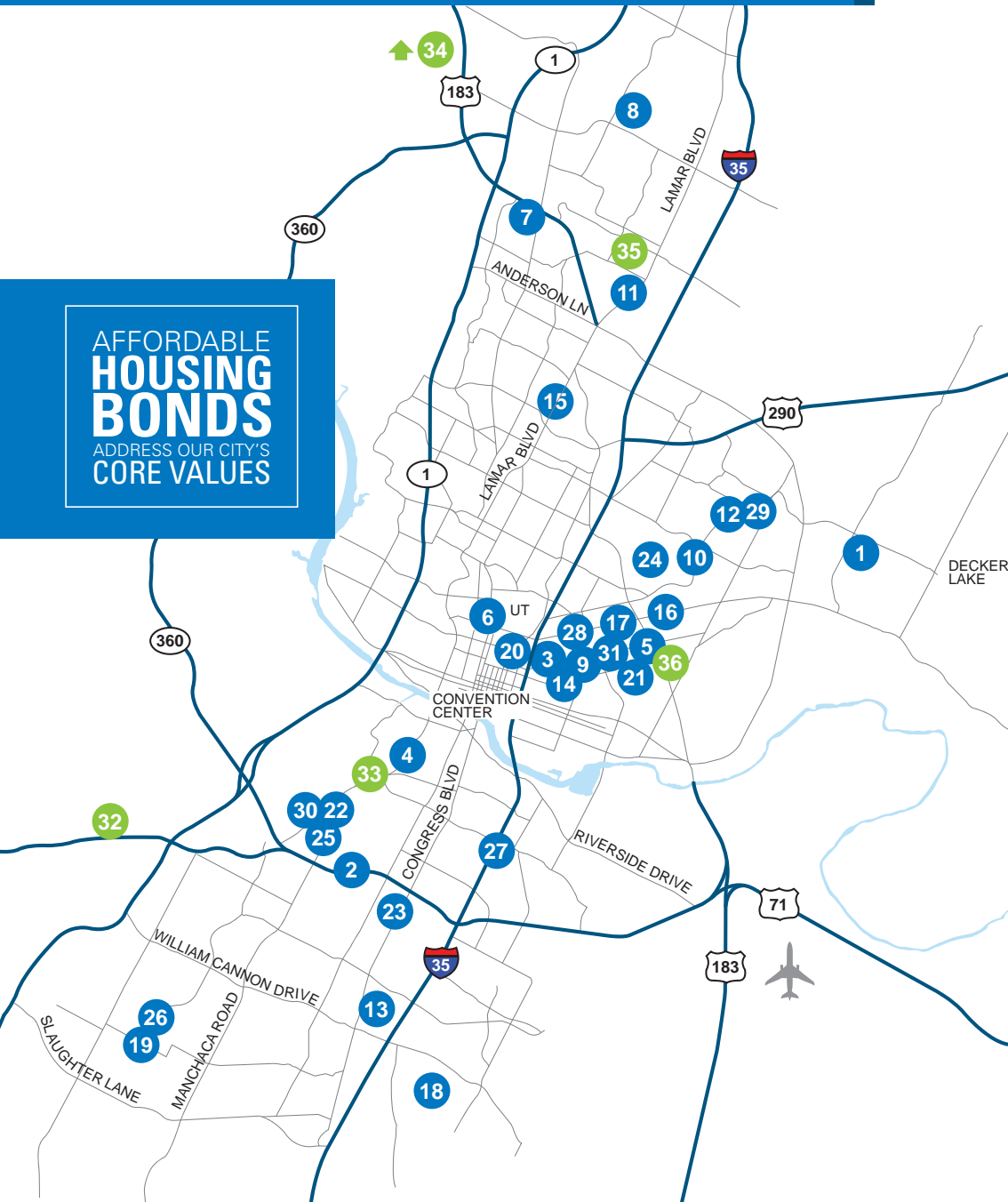
(1) U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, effective May 1, 2014.

(2) Austin Investor Interests, 2nd Quarter 2014.

(3) Austin Board of Realtors, 3rd Quarter (July 1, 2014 — September 30, 2014).

(4) Primary jobs earning \$1,250/month or less. U.S. Census, LEHD.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING BONDS
ADDRESS OUR CITY'S CORE VALUES



City of Austin's affordable housing bonds address the community's identified core values, namely, **longer term affordability, deeper affordability, and geographic dispersion.**

FACTS:

1. All bond-funded projects have affordability restrictions for at least 40 years (rental) or 99 years (ownership).
2. All bond-funded units are affordable to very low-income people, at or below 50% median family income (rental) or 80% median family income (ownership).
3. More than half of the bond-funded units are located west of Interstate 35.

2006 Housing Bond Investments

1. Sendero Hills, Phase IV
2. Skyline Terrace
3. GNDC-Lydia Alley Flat
4. The Willows
5. Guadalupe-Saldana Subdivision
6. St. Louise House I & II
7. Crossroads Apartments
8. Carol's House
9. Blackshear Infill Rental Project
10. Austin Children's Shelter
11. Malibu Apartments
12. Sweeney Circle Preservation/Revitalization
13. Village on Little Texas
14. 807 Waller St. Acquisition
15. Crisis Respite Center
16. Chestnut Corner Senior Housing
17. M Station
18. Meadow Lake Subdivision
19. Westgate Ownership Project

2013 Housing Bond Investments

20. E 15th Transitional Housing Facility
21. Elm Ridge Apartments
22. The Ivy Condominiums
23. Shady Oaks Apartments
24. Wildflower Terrace
25. Treaty Oaks
26. Westgate II Ownership Project
27. Suburban Lodge SRO
28. Marshall Apartments
29. Pecan Springs Common, Phase III
30. The Ivy Condominiums, Phase II
31. The Chicon
32. Southwest Trails (Phase II)
33. Bluebonnet Studios
34. Rutledge Spur Apartments
35. Cross Creek Apartments
36. Guadalupe-Jeremiah Housing

Home repair (city-wide)
Architectural barrier removal (city-wide)

Research and Accomplishments

It's been a busy year for HousingWorks. In Summer 2014, we released three comprehensive reports on diverse housing topics — preserving affordable housing, housing the chronically homeless, and creating a jobs-housing balance.



In *Taking Action: Preservation of Affordable Housing in the City of Austin*, HousingWorks makes the case that the preservation of existing affordable housing is important because it is cost efficient, environmentally responsible and aligns with the collective vision for Austin. The report includes detailed data analysis, proposed solutions, as well as case studies of select sites and multifamily properties across Austin.

In *Housing the Hardest to Serve: Addressing Chronic Homelessness in the City of Austin*, HousingWorks explores different types of permanent supportive housing and identifies “best practices” from across the country. Individuals who are chronically homeless — those with a disability and who have been homeless for a year or longer or who have experienced episodic homelessness over a three-year period — have multiple barriers to housing. For many, these individuals will require a different approach to end homelessness. HousingWorks makes multiple recommendations to house the hardest to serve.

In *Finding the Balance: Low-Wage Jobs and Affordable Housing in the City of Austin*, HousingWorks explores the relationship between low-wage workers and housing that is affordable to those workers across the entire City of Austin. With more than 90,000 low-wage jobs, the City of Austin would need to have nearly 65,000 deeply affordable rental units dispersed throughout the city, in proximity to jobs, in order to achieve a perfect balance. In this report, HousingWorks recommends multiple policies to better link low- and moderate-wage workers with housing that is affordable to them.

HousingWorks' policy research reports can be downloaded on our website: <http://housingworksaustin.org/policy-work/>

Let's Make Affordability a Community Value.

Who Needs Housing That's Affordable?

Seniors and People with Disabilities. In the City of Austin, there are more than 17,000 extremely low-income seniors and people with disabilities living on fixed incomes. Our fastest growing population segment is seniors. We need a broad range of housing types that allow people to age in place, with live-in care, or to live in affordable rentals, with service providers.

Low-Wage Workers. Childcare providers, nurses' aides, bus drivers, salespeople, cashiers, and custodians all provide critical services in the City of Austin, and their housing choices are limited. We have more than 90,000 low-wage jobs in the City of Austin but not nearly enough housing to support those workers. We must invest in a diverse housing stock that includes multifamily rental properties, well-designed apartments and condos with common areas, and Single Room Occupancy complexes (SROs) with special services.

Working Families. An affordable home provides a stable foundation for family success. All kinds of homes — including apartments, condos, townhomes, single-family detached homes — in all parts of town allow parents to live near their work while providing a stable home for kids to succeed in school. We must pursue strategies that deliver housing at diverse price points in all areas of town. By tackling complex challenges such as the Land Development Code Rewrite and streamlining the development review process, we can achieve greater affordability.



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Vision:

Austin is a community where everyone has the opportunity for a secure and affordable home.

Mission:

HousingWorks advocates a wide range of housing options so that all Austinites can afford a home that is close to jobs, family, schools, recreation, and places of worship.



Support us today at housingworksaustin.org





HousingWorks Austin is an affordable housing advocacy organization that aims to increase the supply of affordable housing in Austin by providing research, education, advocacy and thoughtful, workable affordable housing policy recommendations.

For more information, or to donate, visit:

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