

Public Hearing
Action Plan Needs Assessment
Community Development Commission (CDC) Meeting
March 10, 2010

The following represents a summary of the testimony during the public hearing summarized by NHCD staff. The following is not a complete transcript of public testimony.

Name	Statement	Staff Response
Jay Felderman - Salvation Army	Tenant Based Rental Assistance partnership between Housing Authority, City Of Austin, and Salvation Army has been in place since 1998. Funding provides services that have helped many recipients become self-sufficient. Recommended that funding be sustained or, if possible, increased to further serve those in need.	The City of Austin will continue to fund the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program in fiscal year 2010-11. TBRA provides rental housing subsidies and security deposits to eligible families who would otherwise be homeless.
Stuart Hersh - Speaker	Emphasized the need for more S.M.A.R.T. Housing™. Recommended to make the remaining General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds available for fiscal year 2010-11 so that all bond funding is used prior to the next issuance. S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ housing builders need comprehensive pre-submittal information and fast track review to be successful producers of housing. Housing developers, especially not-for-profits, run into difficulties in the building process due to an inadequate pre-submittal information process.	The City of Austin will continue to fund S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ development opportunities in fiscal year 2010-11 through the Developer Incentive Based Program. The S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ program provides fee waivers, fast-track reviews, problem-solving assistance, and regulatory reviews that facilitate the construction of rental and homeownership.
Enrique Rivera - Family Connection, ECHO	There is a significant need for housing for very low-income households. With respect to homelessness, supportive services are needed in addition to housing. Child care support services for households with children are very important. Recommended continuing support for child care for community and at-risk households and housing services for the very low-income.	Child care continues to be a high priority for the City and will be funded in fiscal year 2010-11 through Child Care Services.
Jody Williams- Austin Independent School District (AISD) Parenting and Teen Programs	Urged funding of AISD's Parenting and Teen Pregnancy Program which offers comprehensive teen pregnancy and parenting services at four locations. Funding in fiscal year 2009-10 for this program has been cut by Texas Education Agency.	The City of Austin does provide funding directly to AISD's Parenting and Teen Program for fiscal year 2009-10. Child care continues to be a high priority for the City and will be funded in fiscal year 2010-11 through Child Care Services.
Jennifer McPhail- ADAPT of Texas	Recommended concentrating remaining General Obligation (G.O.) Bond money for populations earning below thirty percent of MFI. Emphasized that it is exceedingly difficult for persons with disabilities to find adequate accessible housing with only Social Security Income; however, supports Architectural Barrier Removal as a means to accessibility. Housing linked to supportive services can create conflicts between service providers and residents.	The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects. The Architectural Barrier Removal program remains within the City's high priority for funding during fiscal year 2010-11.

Name	Statement	Staff Response
Mary Steele- ADAPT of Texas	Integrated communities are important, and funding is important to keep low-income people in mixed communities.	When allocating funding for the fiscal year 2010-11 Action Plan, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD) will continue focusing on its vision and mission: to provide housing, community development and economic development services to eligible residents so that they have access to liveable neighborhoods and increased opportunities for self-sufficiency. The City incorporates the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) goals when allocating these new funds.
Burrell Steele- ADAPT of Texas	Affordable housing allows residents to live in communities with increased independence and self-sufficiency. Rising rents are not matched with rising voucher funding. The need for more funding to keep communities integrated is important.	When allocating funding for the fiscal year 2010-11 Action Plan, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD) will continue focusing on its vision and mission and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) goals.
Nelson Peet- ADAPT of Texas	Institutional living has no privacy or independence. Affordable, accessible housing is rewarding for the residents living in them. Architectural Barrier Removal and technical assistance is important to make units more accessible.	The FY 2010-11 Action Plan continues funding the Architectural Barrier Removal program. The program modifies or retrofits the living quarters of eligible, low-income elderly and severely disabled renters to make their housing more accessible.
Joyce Pohlman- Family Eldercare	Supported independent, self-sufficient living. Aging with respect and dignity in housing of one's choice is important. Family Eldercare provides support for clients to help them stay in their homes and offer in-home support services. Thankful for financial support thus far and hoped funding will continue.	The Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department will continue contracting with Family Elder Care during fiscal year 2010-11 to provide guardianship and bill payer services to help prevent and protect seniors from becoming victims of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation.
Kyle Holder- Austin Early Childhood Council	Supported continued funding for child care and CDBG, especially for Bridge, Teen Parent, and Head Start programs. These are successful programs and should be supported.	Child care and youth services continue to be a high priorities for the City and will be funded in fiscal year 2010-11 through Child Care Services and Youth Services.
Jo Kathryn Quinn- Caritas of Austin, ECHO	Recommended supportive housing strategy as an effective means of combating chronic homelessness. Supportive housing does not have the time constraint that transitional housing does. Urged NHCD to make plans to produce units for supportive housing and to partner with agencies to provide services. Currently population of chronic homelessness outweighs supply of supportive housing.	The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects.
Kathy Stark- Austin Tenants' Council	Urged funding housing and housing-related services to combat homelessness and increase access to stable housing. Decreasing affordability in Austin pushes workforce and other shares of population outside the city. Recommended continued funding for rental repair assistance program.	Housing services continue to be a high priority for the City and will be funded in fiscal year 2010-11 through various programs, some of which directly focus on addressing homelessness. The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects.

Name	Statement	Staff Response
David Clauss- American Youthworks	Urged continued funding for G.O. Repair! Program. This program allows families to stay in their homes and helps maintain affordable housing across Austin. Furthermore, using community youth helps build service ethic and develops commitments to local communities.	The City of Austin NHCD G.O. Repair! Program will continue to receive funding in fiscal year 2010-11. The GO Repair! Program assists low- and moderate-income homeowners by using subrecipients to make eligible repairs that will eliminate health and safety hazards and/or provide improved accessibility. The Youth Support Services will also continue to be funded in fiscal year 2010-11.
Charles Cloutman- Meals on Wheels and More	Urged continued or increased General Obligation (G.O.) Bond funding. There is an extreme need for home repair for many residents earning less than 30 percent of MFI. Home repair can lengthen the lifespan of homes and vastly benefit residents in communities.	The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects.
Alan Washington- Project Transitions	Transitional and supportive housing is important, particularly for the HIV-positive population. Increased funding for such housing and services would be ideal.	The City of Austin will continue to fund housing opportunities and supportive services to individuals living with HIV/AIDS in fiscal year 2010-11 through activities: Homeless Essential Services; Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility; Tenant-Based Rental Assistance; Permanent Housing Placement; Short-Term Supportive Housing; Transitional Housing; and Support Services.

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Name	Statement	Staff Response
Frances Ferguson- HousingWorks Austin	Recommended more holistic accounting of all funds available for affordable housing. Three key points include: 1) identify the full resource package needed to combat homelessness; 2) service expansion of rental housing (specifically for preservation) to populations making below 30 percent of MFI; and 3) workforce homeownership (a market and strategic gap) and the need for a standardized set of documents for all involved.	When allocating funding for the fiscal year 2010-11 Action Plan, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD) will continue focusing on its vision and mission: to provide housing, community development and economic development services to eligible residents so that they have access to livable neighborhoods and increased opportunities for self-sufficiency. The City incorporates the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) goals when allocating these new funds.
Stuart Hersh- Speaker	Emphasized the need for more S.M.A.R.T. Housing™. Recommended the remaining G.O. Bonds in fiscal year 2010-11 assist low-income rental and S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ development opportunities. Also suggested reallocating various funding to Emergency Home Repair and that S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ partners need a fast-track review and more thorough information to increase production.	The City of Austin will continue to fund S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ development opportunities in fiscal year 2010-11 through the Developer Incentive Based Program. The S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ program provides fee waivers, fast-track reviews, problem-solving assistance, and regulatory reviews that facilitate the construction of rental and homeownership.
Helen Varty- Front Steps	FrontSteps conducted vulnerability assessments of the frequently homeless individuals (200+ visits annually) and of those, 100 percent had some form of disability. Most of this group's issues could be addressed with permanent supportive housing along with case management services.	The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects. The Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program will also continue to receive funding for services.
Jay Filderman- Salvation Army	Advocated that Tenant-Based Rental Assistance is a successful way to help formerly homeless individuals and others attain self-sufficiency. City of Austin should continue to support Tenant-Based Rental Assistance.	The City of Austin will continue to fund the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program in fiscal year 2010-11. TBRA provides rental housing subsidies and security deposits to eligible families who would otherwise be homeless.
Mary Steele- ADAPT of Texas	Stressed the need for stable housing placement in order to maintain a close community fabric. Recommended increasing resources (money, time, opportunities) for low-income individuals to achieve stable living arrangements.	When allocating funding for the fiscal year 2010-11 Action Plan, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD) will continue focusing on its vision and mission and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) goals.
Burrell Steele- ADAPT of Texas	Affordable housing promotes community integration and facilitates self-sufficiency. Recommended supporting accessible, integrated, and affordable housing.	Housing programs continue to be a high priorities for the City and will be funded in fiscal year 2010-11 through various housing activities.

Name	Statement	Staff Response
Nelson Peet- ADAPT of Texas	Funding should be targeted to affordable and accessible units servicing individuals earning below 30 percent of MFI. Nursing homes restrict personal freedoms and minimize privacy. Supports Architectural Barrier Removal and technical assistance to communities.	The FY 2010-11 Action Plan continues funding the Architectural Barrier Removal program. The program modifies or retrofits the living quarters of eligible, low-income elderly and severely disabled renters to make their housing more accessible. The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects.
Jennifer Mcphail- ADAPT of Texas	ADAPT is supportive of Architectural Barrier Removal, increasing units for individuals earning below 30 percent of MFI, and some supportive services. However, services-attached housing may, in some cases, be harmful for individuals with mental or physical disabilities. If caregivers are overbearing, they harm the overall quality of life for recipient tenants. Policies that segregate based on diagnoses create pseudo-institutional housing that limits autonomy of tenants.	The FY 2010-11 Action Plan continues funding the Architectural Barrier Removal program and assisting individuals earning below 30 percent of MFI. The Austin City Council provided policy direction in March 2010 that NHCD prioritize the creation of 350 units of permanent supportive housing targeting the most vulnerable, households earning below 30 percent MFI while continuing to fund affordable home ownership, home repair, and rental projects.
Jeri Jean Hutchison- Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable	Reentry Roundtable has worked to build a database for the homeless population. Proposed that mental illness and criminal backgrounds may harm chances for self-sufficiency. The City of Austin needs to better address issues for homeless and reentry populations.	Homeless/Special Needs continue to be a high priority for the City and will be funded in fiscal year 2010-11 through various activities. The City identified twelve groups for the fiscal years 2009-14 Consolidated Plan that are included in the Special Needs Population. Persons returning to the community from correctional institutions and/or with criminal histories was one of the twelve groups.
Spencer Duran- Accessible Housing Austin!	Stated the danger of linking supportive health services to housing. Cited the City of Allendale as an example of good bundling of services and housing via the Section 811 Program.	The City of Austin offers supportive health services that are not directly linked to housing services and will continue to offer these separate services in the upcoming fiscal year.
Kimberly Hernandez- Project Transition	Recommended expanding transitional housing for clients. Project Transition's services are at capacity given current resources. Need additional funding to expand capacity for clientele, who often have mental and substance abuse problems.	When allocating funding for the fiscal year 2010-11 Action Plan, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD) will continue focusing on its vision and mission. The City will continue funding transitional housing services in fiscal year 2010-11 through the Transitional Housing program. Transitional Housing provides eligible households with housing and supportive services to maintain stability and receive appropriate levels of care.
Katherine Stark- Austin Tenants' Council	Urged the City of Austin to use federal funds for households earning below 80 percent of MFI, the most underserved of all Austinites. The City needs accessible and integrated housing. In addition, there is a new need for services relating to new sub-population of recent evictees.	When allocating funding for the fiscal year 2010-11 Action Plan, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD) will continue focusing on its vision and mission and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) goals.

Name	Statement	Staff Response
Mathilde Hyams Flores- AIDS Services of Austin	Housing stability is important for the HIV-positive population. The City of Austin needs more affordable permanent and long-term supportive units, as well as transitional housing. Recommended relaxing eligibility criteria to service more individuals with criminal histories.	The City of Austin will continue funding housing opportunities and supportive services to individuals living with HIV/AIDS in fiscal year 2010-11 through activities: Homeless Essential Services; Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility; Tenant-Based Rental Assistance; Permanent Housing Placement; Short-Term Supportive Housing; Transitional Housing; and Support Services.
Catherine Cranston- Adaptive Texas	Recommended funding be directed towards more accessible, integrated, affordable housing. Supports Architectural Barrier Removal as the program benefits citizens and urged increasing funding for such programs.	The City of Austin will continue to fund the Architectural Barrier Removal (ABR) Program in fiscal year 2010-11. ABR modifies or retrofits the living quarters of eligibly, low- income elderly and severely disabled renters/homeowners to make their housing more accessible.