

COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK 2001	<b>HOMELESSNESS</b> Urgent Issues and Recommended Actions	Prepared by the Homeless Task Force
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**Urgent Issue: Many families and individuals become homeless or cannot transition out of homelessness because of the shortage of affordable housing.**

**Data:**

- 3,625 families and individuals are homeless in Austin/Travis County on any given day.
- Housing costs have increased 70% since 1990, while wage levels have increased 40%.
- Full-time workers need to earn \$16 per hour (three times the minimum wage) to afford a 2-bedroom apartment (fair market rent = \$820 per month).

**Desired Result: More families and individuals will secure and maintain affordable housing.**

SOLUTIONS	ACTIONS	FINANCIAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	HUMAN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXAMPLES OF ONGOING EFFORTS
Permanent Housing:  Develop new resources and approaches to create an adequate supply of affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop 100 units of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing.</li> <li>• Create stronger linkages to home ownership opportunities.</li> <li>• Establish designated revenue sources for Austin Housing Trust Fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$3 million land acquisition and SRO facility renovation.</li> <li>• \$300,000/ year SRO facility maintenance and operations.</li> <li>• Invest \$10 million per year in Austin Housing Trust Fund to produce at least 200 new units of affordable rental and single family units.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance from private sector apartment associations and real estate groups to locate and broker affordable housing (to rent or to own) for the working poor and low-income households.</li> <li>• Educate neighborhoods to decrease NIMBY (i.e., “Not in my Backyard”, referring to opposition of neighborhoods to affordable housing programs) and increase affordable housing public awareness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community-based Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin Housing Opportunities Trust Coalition</li> <li>• Capitol Area Homeless Alliance</li> <li>• Caritas of Austin, Inc.</li> <li>• Central Texas Mutual Housing</li> <li>• Habitat for Humanity</li> <li>• Homeward Bound</li> <li>• TX Low Income Housing InfoSvc</li> </ul> <p><b>Governmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin Housing Finance Corp.</li> <li>• City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office</li> <li>• Housing Authorities of the City of Austin and of Travis County</li> <li>• Texas Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs</li> <li>• Travis Co. Housing Finance Corp.</li> </ul> <p><b>CAN Homeless Task Force</b> <b>CAN Housing Work Group</b></p>

**Urgent Issue:** Many families and individuals become homeless or cannot transition out of homelessness because of the shortage of transitional housing.

**Data:**

- Over 1,400 homeless families, individuals and youth need transitional housing on any given day, but only 605 beds (within 221 units) in Austin/Travis County exist.

**Desired Result:** More homeless people will have access to transitional housing programs and successfully transition to permanent housing with greater self-sufficiency.

SOLUTIONS	ACTIONS	FINANCIAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	HUMAN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXAMPLES OF ONGOING EFFORTS
<p>Transitional Housing:</p> <p>Expand transitional housing programs (which include support services) and improve access for families, single adults, and street youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop additional transitional housing units with case management and supportive services.</li> <li>• Eliminate barriers to transitional housing programs such as exclusions due to non-violent criminal history, poor credit, and addiction issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct new transitional housing apartments at \$60,000 per unit for families who need high security and/or on-site supportive services.</li> <li>• Sublease private rental apartments to provide transitional housing with case management support for 1 year at \$10,000 per family and \$6,000 per youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers to teach Life Skills classes related to employment, financial management, effective parenting, and other support services.</li> <li>• Network of landlords and real estate companies willing to sublease to community-based organizations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community-based Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American YouthWorks</li> <li>• Blacklands Community Development Corp.</li> <li>• Caritas of Austin, Inc.</li> <li>• Central Texas Mutual Housing Association</li> <li>• Community Partnership for the Homeless</li> <li>• LifeWorks</li> <li>• Marywood</li> <li>• Push-up Foundations, Inc.</li> <li>• SafePlace</li> <li>• Salvation Army--Tenant Based Rental Assistance</li> <li>• Sanctuary</li> </ul> <p><b>Governmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Dept.</li> <li>• City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office</li> <li>• Housing Authority of the City of Austin</li> </ul> <p><b>CAN Homeless Task Force</b></p>

**Urgent Issue:** Many people are turned away from shelters, put on a waiting list, or cannot utilize existing facilities due to lack of space and/or special needs (mental health, addiction status).

**Data:**

- Approximately 1,094 people need emergency shelter on any given day in Austin/Travis County, where only 440 total shelter beds exist.
- 25% of chronically homeless adults suffer from mental illness, and 50% of this population also has a substance abuse disorder.
- Families with children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, and at least half have experienced domestic violence.
- 36% of homeless youth have been sexually and/or physically abused at home or on the streets and are therefore fearful of utilizing traditional adult shelters.

**Desired Result:** More families with children, chronically homeless individuals, and street youth will have access to shelter in environments that are safe and that offer appropriate services.

SOLUTIONS	ACTIONS	FINANCIAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	HUMAN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXAMPLES OF ONGOING EFFORTS
<p>Emergency Shelter:</p> <p>Fully support existing shelter capacity and develop additional emergency shelter to address unmet needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop shelter designed to engage and serve chronically homeless single adults (100 beds).</li> <li>• Expand shelter beds available to single-parent and two-parent families with children (70 beds).</li> <li>• Develop shelter for street youth (40 beds @ \$70/youth/day).</li> <li>• Develop shelter beds designated for homeless persons discharged from hospitals and emergency rooms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$35 to provide one night of shelter for a single adult.</li> <li>• \$105 to provide one night of shelter for a family of three (\$35 per person).</li> <li>• \$70 to provide one night of shelter for one youth.</li> <li>• Land on which to build a shelter and/or building to use as a shelter</li> <li>• \$35 for expanded sick bay facilities for family, youth and adults in existing and new shelters.</li> <li>• \$ 34,000 annually for onsite counselor to connect clients with mental health and substance abuse treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer at shelters.</li> <li>• Volunteer at a Cold Weather Shelter.</li> <li>• Advocate for substance abuse treatment and mental health care programs that are available to everyone.</li> <li>• Educate people about the realities of homelessness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community-based Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitol Area Homeless Alliance</li> <li>• Foundation for the Homeless</li> <li>• LifeWorks</li> <li>• SafePlace</li> <li>• The Salvation Army</li> <li>• ATCMHMR Safe House</li> </ul> <p><b>Governmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Dept.</li> <li>• City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office</li> </ul> <p><b>CAN Homeless Task Force</b></p>

**Urgent Issue: Financial hardship and extremely high housing costs are leading to an increased number of people becoming homeless.**

**Data:**

- Between 1990 and 1998, average rental rates increased 68%.\*
- In 1998, 41% of renter households were unable to afford a two bedroom apartment at fair market rent.\*
- 48% of families earning less than 50% of MFI pay more than 50% of income for housing.\*\*

**Desired Result: More households will stabilize from financial crisis and maintain permanent housing.**

SOLUTIONS	ACTIONS	FINANCIAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	HUMAN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXAMPLES OF ONGOING EFFORTS
<p>Prevention of Homeless-ness:</p> <p>Fully support existing prevention infrastructure and expand prevention programs and initiatives related to housing affordability.</p>	<p>Provide assistance to people at immediate risk of homelessness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency financial assistance.</li> <li>• Landlord/tenant mediation.</li> <li>• Legal advocacy.</li> <li>• Employment training and opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>Create dedicated revenue sources to expand affordable housing units and programs for households below 50% of MFI (e.g. development fees, bonds, agreements w/ mortgage lenders).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50 per family for utilities bill assistance.</li> <li>• \$100 per family for rent assistance.</li> <li>• \$25 to help with transportation costs (gasoline, bus tickets, trolley tickets).</li> <li>• \$50 to help with medical costs.</li> <li>• Pay workers a living wage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer landlord/tenant mediation services</li> <li>• Volunteer legal advocacy services</li> <li>• Volunteer financial counseling/investment expertise</li> <li>• Volunteer computer classes</li> <li>• Volunteer employment skills training</li> <li>• Mentor families</li> <li>• Educate community and policy makers members about the need for affordable housing</li> <li>• Volunteer to renovate and repair substandard housing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community-based Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin Tenants Council</li> <li>• Capital Area Homeless Alliance</li> <li>• Caritas of Austin, Inc.</li> <li>• CEACO</li> <li>• Faith communities</li> <li>• Goodwill Industries</li> <li>• House the Homeless</li> <li>• Legal Aid of Central Texas</li> <li>• Passages</li> </ul> <p><b>Governmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travis County Human Services</li> </ul> <p><b>CAN Basic Needs Committee</b>  <b>CAN Homeless Task Force</b></p>