



The City asks for your input on a new 5 year plan to fund housing and public services!

2024 Needs Assessment Consultations

City staff met with community leaders from 57 groups and organizations throughout the 2024 Needs Assessment process. This included:

- 13 [Boards and Commissions](#)
- 18 [Service Providers](#)
- 10 [Coalitions and Conveners](#)
- 8 [Government & Regional Partners](#)
- 8 [City Departments](#)

For each meeting, staff gave a brief presentation that included an explanation of the needs assessment process, a summary of needs that the Housing Department has compiled from community input over the past several years, and an overview of the programs federal dollars have previously funded. Meeting participants had an opportunity to ask questions, provide ideas, and raise concerns about how the City's programs and engagement processes address the needs of low-to-moderate-income Austinites. Staff also promoted public outreach opportunities related to the Consolidated Plan.

Boards & Commissions

<i>Who we heard from</i>	<i>What we heard</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ African American Resource Advisory Commission▪ Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission▪ College Student Commission▪ Commission on Aging▪ Commission on Veteran Affairs▪ Community Development Commission▪ Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission▪ Early Childhood Council▪ Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission▪ HIV Planning Council▪ LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission▪ Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities▪ Urban Renewal Board	<p>Transparency What is the total funding for housing programs? What has changed since you came to us last?</p> <p>Outreach and Engagement How are you reaching our community?</p> <p>Data and Impact How great is the need? How are you serving our community?</p> <p>Funding Possibilities Programs and projects specific to each community</p> <p>Disappointment and Distrust More questions than input Calls for accountability</p>

Boards & Commissions

African American Resource Advisory Commission

The African American Resource Advisory Commission (AARAC) advises the City Council on issues relating to the quality of life for the City's African American community and recommends programs designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront African Americans in social, economic and vocational pursuits, including healthcare, housing, home ownership and homelessness; entertainment opportunities for professionals and students; employment and cultural venues, including museums, theaters, art galleries and music venues.

City staff sought guidance from the African American Resource Advisory Commission on the needs and priorities of Austin's African American community. The commissioners expressed interest in knowing more about the zip codes and other demographics of those served by federal funding, and staff agreed to bring more data back to the commission for future meetings. Staff asked for the commission's help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.

Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission

The Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission advises the City Council on issues related to the Asian American Resource Center and will provide on-going guidance and support for the City's Asian American quality of life initiatives.

City staff sought guidance from the Asian American Quality of Life Commission on the needs and priorities of Austin's Asian American community. Commissioners expressed how important language access is in reaching the Asian American community, which includes many immigrants. They provided helpful examples, such as a phone number that community members can call to request language access. They clarified that this was not only needed for services provided directly by the City, but also with contracted services provided by outside organizations. Commissioners were curious about how the Housing Department works with the Housing Authority and other housing organizations. The commission shared their desire to see demographic information for all programs and wanted to know how the Housing Department is reaching out to the Asian American community. They noted that last year they expressed the need for increased engagement for their community and wanted to know what changes have been made. With many seniors and youth in the Asian American community, the commissioners want to see more focused outreach. Commissioners inquired about specific uses for funding, sharing that many immigrants seek help from churches and other community organizations to get many of their basic needs met. Examples were given about how CDBG funds in other cities have been used for things like an Asian American Community Center and the commissioners wanted to see the Housing Department in conversation with the Asian American Cultural Center in Austin about their plans to build affordable housing with childcare facilities. Staff shared the department's commitment to continued improvements in targeted outreach as well as enhanced data collection and reporting. Staff also asked for the commission's help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.

<p>College Student Commission</p> <p>The College Student Commission represents this constituency of the City by serving as an advisory board to the city council concerning issues affecting the quality of life for higher education students in the Austin area. The commission advises the council on topics that affect college students in the Austin area including, but not limited to, issues relating to transportation, housing, affordability, immigration, and public safety. The commission evaluates and recommends programs, policies, and practices that could improve the quality of life of college students in the Austin area, and provides opportunities for college students to contribute to the City's culture, economy, and character, and promote such contributions.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the College Student Commission on the needs and priorities of Austin's College Student community. Commissioners wanted to ensure that people in school are being engaged in processes like this and had great questions about how the funding is used. They expressed concern for students who don't qualify for programs based on their family's income even though they do not receive any support from their family. Commissioners shared about how important mental health services are for college students, especially long-term care. They were curious how students could receive assistance paying rent and if funding is available for students who aren't full-time residents of Austin. Staff shared appreciation for the input and asked for the commission's help in spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Commission on Aging</p> <p>The Commission on Aging serves as an advisory board to the council concerning the quality of life for older adults in the Austin area and to help ensure they are productive, independent, and healthy. The commission advises the council on issues related to the older adult population in the Austin area; evaluates and recommends programs, policies, and practices that create a positive impact and reduce the burden on older adults; determines the needs of older adults in the Austin community, and advises council regarding these needs; and promotes the contributions of older adults to the cultural, economic, and historical value of Austin.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Commission on Aging about the needs and priorities of Austin's aging community. The commissioners expressed interest in knowing more about the number of seniors being served by all HUD and housing programs and the percentage of funding going toward seniors. Staff shared the department's commitment to enhancing data collection and reporting. Staff also asked for the commission's help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Commission on Veteran Affairs</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Commission on Veteran's Affairs about the needs and priorities of Austin's veteran community. The commissioners</p>

<p>The Commission on Veteran Affairs serves as an advisory body to the council concerning the wellbeing of military veterans in the Austin area. The commission shall evaluate and recommend programs, policies, and practices designed to alleviate veteran's difficulties in meeting basic needs, obtaining housing, employment, and comprehensive mental health assistance; and act as a central clearinghouse for information relating to the status of veterans in the Austin community.</p>	<p>wanted to know which veterans organizations the Housing Department has relationships with. They were curious about the number of veterans served as well as the barriers veterans face in accessing services. The commissioners discussed the potential benefits of housing specifically for homeless veterans. The commission followed up after the meeting with the following recommendations: Establish a comprehensive data collection system; research and collaborate with federal, state and nonprofit organizations; leverage dedicated programs and services for veterans; increase outreach and awareness efforts; and implement regular evaluation and continuous improvements. Staff shared appreciation for the input and asked for the commission's help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Community Development Commission</p> <p>The Community Development Commission advises the council in the development and implementation of programs designed to serve the poor and the community at large with emphasis on federally funded programs.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Community Development Commission on the needs and priorities of Austin's low-income communities. Commissioners asked for more detailed information about who has been served and emphasized wanting to see these details for homebuyer programs in particular. They wanted to know more about the needs assessment process, including who City staff would be meeting with and how the information would be reported back. They stressed the importance of the commissioners seeing all the comments and input. Commissioners questioned how their specific neighborhoods had been contacted about the needs assessment, with concern that not enough was being done to reach the voices of those most impacted. The commission was disappointed in the amount of surveys that had been completed so far. They suggested that the goal should be quantity and not limited to a certain amount of time. They asked about the ability to track how many surveys were submitted from specific areas of town. The topic of survey fatigue was also addressed, and a recommendation was made to spend time rethinking what the survey process should look like. Paper surveys in rec centers and health facilities were recommended as one way to increase outreach city-wide. Commissioners also expressed the desire to see funding sources for block walkers and canvassers in areas that haven't been targeted. They also wanted to see feedback between different needs assessments, specifically the CSBG assessment, shared between departments. Commissioners asked about the anticipated amount for CDBG funding and if there was a chance to see an increase in dollars. The commission shared the importance of Austin Public Health being well-funded and well-staffed with people who speak Spanish. Commissioners echoed community input about the funding needs for infrastructure. Monitoring and evaluation of current agencies was also discussed. Staff shared appreciation for the input and asked for the commissioners' help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Community Technology and Telecommunications Commission on the technology and communications needs and priorities in Austin. Commissions shared that they had recently submitted budget recommendations and were curious if the Community</p>

<p>The Community Technology and Telecommunication Commission advises the city council on community technology, telecommunications services, new sources of funding for access television projects, new sources of funding for community technology projects, allocation of annual financial support and evaluation of the performance of franchise holders, access television contractors, and other community technology contractors, including development of criteria to be used for evaluations. The commission promotes access to telecommunications services and community technologies.</p>	<p>Development Commission or any other commission was able to make recommendations to the Housing Department. When presented with the needs that the Housing Department has been hearing, commissioners asked why digital issues were not included and suggested those be added to the same category as support with utilities. A discussion about barriers to accessing programs led to a commissioner asking the question, “Is digital connectivity a means to an end? Wouldn’t that help people have more access to resources?” The conversation concluded with a commitment from Housing staff to be more vigilant about where digital connectivity and housing intersect.</p>
<p>Early Childhood Council</p> <p>The Early Childhood Council makes recommendations to Council for the creation, development, and implementation of programs that promote optimal development for young children; and programs and activities that contribute to the continued development of a system of high-quality early care and education and after-school programs for Austin's children.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Early Childhood Council on the needs and priorities of young children in Austin. The council members expressed concern about decreased funding and the impact on households. They stressed the need for a singular point of access and wanted to know what was being done to address this need. Council members asked if funds could be used to repair and enhance homes that serve as childcare facilities and encouraged policy change to make that possible. Staff shared appreciation for the input from the council and asked for their help in spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission</p> <p>The Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission advises the City Council on issues relating to the quality of life for the City's Hispanic/Latino community and recommends programs and policies designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront Hispanics and Latinos in social, economic, and vocational pursuits including education, youth</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission on the needs and priorities of Austin’s Hispanic and Latino community. The commissioners expressed a desire to understand more about the full budget for the Housing Department and all of its funding sources. They wanted to know how great the need is, what resources were available to address the needs, and what gaps exist for people applying for services and not being served. They expressed the importance of talking directly with recipients of services and not just the staff of service providers. Language access was discussed as an important element in connecting with community members. Staff shared the department’s commitment to incorporate more opportunities for community members to weigh in during the needs assessment period. Staff also asked for the commission’s help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>

<p>services, housing and community development, cultural arts, economic development, health, civic engagement, and transportation.</p>	
<p>HIV Planning Council</p> <p>The mission of the Ausitn Area HIV Planning Council is to develop and coordinate effective and comprehensive community-wise response to HIV. The Council works as a partner with governing bodies of member counties and the State in making decisions about how funds are used to address the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the HIV Planning Council on the needs of those living with HIV. The council shared frustration about the number of surveys from different City Departments and the lack of follow-up. They expressed how hard it is to find housing resources, especially for people who are already overworked and underpaid. “The greatest need is to give people the resources they need in the fastest way possible.” Council members shared their concern with income limits, explaining that some people with a higher income have struggled in the past and still need help. The council strongly advised staff to talk directly with people living with HIV and to meet them where they are. “Ask them: If you could create a process that works for you, what would that be?” They encouraged staff to look for places where trust has already been built and to become trusted sources within the City by listening to the trusted community leaders. Council members asked for a continuous needs assessment process that is always open and builds on the data from other surveys and initiatives. They wanted to see a “one-stop-shop” for someone about to become homeless and discussed the need for preventative services. The council asked for a follow-up meeting, which staff agreed to. Staff shared the department’s commitment to enhancing data collection and reporting. Staff also asked for the council’s help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission</p> <p>The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Quality of Life Advisory Commission serves as an advisory board to the City Council concerning the needs of the LGBTQ population. The commission is responsible for recommending policies and programs designed to enhance the health, safety, economic opportunity, affordability, mobility, cultural and learning opportunities, and government access and accountability for the LGBTQ community.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission on the needs and priorities of Austin’s LGBTQ community. The commissioners were curious about the Housing Department’s full budget and specific uses of different funding sources. They expressed the need for a designated source for rental assistance. Commissioners discussed demographic data that is crucial in understanding the housing needs of the LGBTQ community and asked about the ability to implement data collection if it became a requirement by City Council. Staff shared the department’s commitment to better data collection and reporting. Staff also asked for the commission’s help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities</p> <p>The Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities (MCPD) is an</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities on the needs and priorities of people in Austin living with a disability. The committee members wanted to see more data on people with disabilities and expressed frustration in not being able to find the information</p>

<p>advisory body to the City Council and City Manager regarding problems affecting persons with disabilities in the Austin area. Established to encourage, assist and enable persons with disabilities to participate in the social and economic life of the City, achieve maximum personal independence, become gainfully employed, and fully enjoy and use all public and private facilities available within the community.</p>	<p>anywhere. They encouraged staff to work more directly with the City demographer to understand the needs of this specific demographic and to track how many people applying for programs identified as having a disability. Committee members had questions about home repair programs and fees associated with the repairs if the homeowner passes away. They were curious about how the budget fluctuates depending on needs and what dollars are protected when budgetary priorities change. Committee members asked about the requirements of development partners, including how long the affordability of properties will remain and what terms developers agree to for accessibility. Staff shared the department's commitment to better data collection and reporting. Staff also asked for the commission's help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Urban Renewal Board</p> <p>The Urban Renewal Board oversees the implementation and compliance with Urban Renewal Plans that are adopted by the Austin City Council. An Urban Renewal Plan's primary purpose is to eliminate slum and blighting influence within a designated area of the City.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Urban Renewal Board on the needs and priorities that arise during urban renewal projects. Board members asked for more information about the total pool of funding the Housing Department has on a yearly basis and what percentage comes from federal sources. They were curious to hear about funding sources that have been used for urban renewal projects, knowing that they will need to solve for funding gaps and make affordable housing a priority with the current project for Block 16 and 18. Board members shared that there is tension heard in the community about the spectrum of needs. On one end, there is support needed for those experiencing homelessness or at serious risk of becoming unsheltered, while others are just trying to find something affordable so they can live in Austin near their jobs. They expressed the desire to see a depiction of the funding sources and which part of the continuum each pool of funding offers support. They were curious about changes in the balance between funding toward renters vs. homeowners, noting that there is a community priority to provide pathways to homeownership and wealth building. Board members were interested in the national conversion focused on using commercial space for housing and the feasibility of using that model locally. Furthering that line of discussion, the board sought answers to questions such as "How often do we explore creative options out of the norm? How often is funding allocated to trying new things? Is there a way to incentivize developers to create housing that can transition people from renting to owning?" These questions led to other comments about the use of city-owned land and the income levels eligible for housing assistance. The conversation concluded with the idea to recommend a feasibility study. Staff offered gratitude for the input and dialogue, with a commitment to update funding information for all funding sources. Staff also asked for the commission's help spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>

Service Providers

<i>Who we heard from</i>	<i>What we heard</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ADAPT & AHA ▪ Austin Area Urban League ▪ BASTA ▪ Caritas of Austin ▪ Catholic Charities of Central Texas ▪ Central Health ▪ Child Inc. ▪ Family Eldercare ▪ Google Fiber ▪ Integral Care ▪ JUST ▪ LifeWorks ▪ SAFE ▪ Shalom Austin ▪ TRLA ▪ Vivent Health ▪ Workforce Solutions 	<p>Commitment Focus on the most vulnerable</p> <p>Fear Increased need and decreased funding Service and funding gaps Affordability and housing needs for staff</p> <p>Discernment Prevention vs. Intervention</p> <p>Care Rental Assistance Childcare</p> <p>Gratitude and Hope Agreement on new engagement approaches</p>

Service Providers

ADAPT of Texas & Accessible Housing Austin!

ADAPT of Texas is a grassroots disability rights group that works for more accessible communities, including through transportation, housing, public accommodations and governmental buildings and programs.

The mission of Accessible Housing Austin! is to provide affordable, accessible, integrated housing for low-income people with disabilities. Accessible Housing Austin! serves a diverse range of Austinites with disabilities, including adults and children with mobility impairments, visual impairment, chronic illness, and other physical and emotional disabilities. AHA! is the only housing non-profit in Austin led by members of the disability community.

City staff sought guidance from ADAPT of Texas & Accessible Housing Austin! on the needs of people living with disabilities in Austin. The group of ADAPT and AHA! staff members and advocates addressed a multitude of issues facing the disability community.

The conversation addressed the lack of funding for homelessness prevention that used to be available and is now more focused on intervention and chronic homelessness.

They specifically addressed a missing priority of addressing the affordability needs of those with disabilities who are not homeless. “What we’ve been saying forever is consideration of people who are in living situations like nursing homes where the only reason they’re in there is because they can’t find affordable housing.” They spoke of a desperate need for integrated communities, where people with disabilities can live amongst the rest of the community. From their perspective, an important piece of this is to disconnect services from housing. “Do you want your doctor living in your garage?” they asked. “If things go awry, you lose your housing and your medical support.” They pleaded for a shift in approach, focused more on moving people out of the nursing homes and having supportive services in the integrated community.

Some of the group members are working to become housing providers but there is a lack of funding to implement density for the communities they serve. They fear relying on large developers to provide deeply affordable housing and want to see funds for nonprofits to help with options such as added accessible ADUs to single-family homes.

They urged for requirements of any properties that use City funding to accept Section 8 vouchers and to make more units accessible. “They will not be accessible unless we enforce it.” They spoke of the built-in discrimination with advocacy for more townhomes because those will never be accessible for many people with disabilities.

The group went on to discuss the City’s role further, noting the unique position the City has, with funding that developers will go after. They want to see more stipulations and more monitoring of developers who want to borrow money. They expressed a lack of trust in ensuring accessibility. “Accessibility is taking a back seat.” Looking at the last CAPER, they pointed out that no dollars were spent for Rental Housing Development Assistance, and shared the fear that no requirements are attached to development of rental units, further promoting discrimination. They urged that education for developers we work with about accessibility is crucial since we can’t trust them to know and really understand what is needed. Where the developments are is also crucial, and can’t be in food deserts, public transit deserts, or medical deserts.

They brought up the City’s architectural barrier removal programs for renters and its lack of performance. “There is something extremely wrong with that,” they insisted, pushing for better marketing and outreach for the program as well as an overhaul of the application process. “If programs are not meeting their goals, you need to take a look at this and ask why.”

	<p>The group made it clear how important it is to understand the income level of people living with disabilities, many of whom are at 13 percent of the median family income. 30 percent and below is usually focused on PSH, but there are people that don't need that. Living in this situation means that the person who controls your housing also controls your resources and there are plenty of people earning 30 percent of MFI and below who don't need that or don't want to get it from their houser.</p> <p>Other topics addressed included emergency preparedness for people with disabilities; notification for when housing vouchers are available; working with the City demographer to collect more statistics on people living with disabilities in Austin; wages for people who are working on this issue, including direct care workers, attendants, and caregivers; and addressing the gaps in support for people with cognitive needs.</p> <p>They pointed out that nothing about disabilities was included in our presentation about community and feedback themes. Other engagement concerns were addressed about the voices of the disability and low-income community. They reminded City staff that we won't hear from these people because they are busy surviving. "The people that work cleaning up our city, that work doing the really essential jobs, bus drivers, if they all move away we don't have anyone to do the things that need to happen." There is a deep sense of fear and frustration that Austin is not a place for people without a lot of money.</p> <p>The group shared frustration about having the same conversation with the City year after year and not seeing any change. City staff committed to meeting more regularly and coming back with updates, as well as developing a list for where to do outreach for accessible units.</p>
<p>Austin Area Urban League</p> <p>Austin Area Urban League (AAUL) serves the residents of Austin/Central Texas by creating Equitable Quality of Life opportunity for all, across all aspects of life, and providing tools to African American and underserved populations to build a foundation for social and economic equity and equality.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Austin Area Urban League on the needs of the African American and underserved populations they serve. Staff from AAUL said that the engagement feedback themes shared during the presentation resonated with what they are seeing. They emphasized the increased need for employment and job training. An increased need for communications equipment, such as cell phones, was also discussed, noting the barriers experienced when people don't have internet or cell service. AAUL was interested in opportunities to expand a partnership with the City beyond home repair programs as they explore entering the space of affordable housing development. City staff added AAUL to a monthly developer newsletter sent by the Housing Department as a way to keep them informed on such opportunities.</p>
<p>BASTA</p> <p>BASTA (Building and Strengthening Tenant Action) builds tenant power by bringing underrepresented Austin renters into a housing justice movement fueled by tenant-led organizing, community education, and</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from BASTA on the needs of the underrepresented renters they work with. BASTA staff addressed how we talk about long-term stability, and stressed the importance of not focusing completely on homeownership. When homeownership remains the only goal instead of focusing on a variety of ways to create long-term stability, "this keeps renters out of the conversation...and makes everyone who we work with feel less than." They discussed the need for better success measures for City programs, advocating for feedback from recipients and tenants about developers, property managers, and other services. BASTA staff wanted to see more City-owned senior properties with voucher programs. The intersection of housing and utility costs was</p>

<p>outreach. BASTA's work is centered on dismantling the systems that prevent tenants from living in dignified and healthy homes. BASTA envisions a future where the collective action of Austin renters has brought dignified, healthy and affordable housing to all.</p>	<p>discussed, especially in the context of climate change, and BASTA staff pointed out that there are no incentives for weatherization on multi-family properties.</p> <p>One of the largest concerns BASTA shared was the lack of good property management companies and encouraged City staff to think about what that ecosystem could look like. This conversation also addressed being able to track data from rental properties, which could include a registration system with contact information for individual units.</p> <p>Another concern addressed was fines and fees. In some cases, rent is going down but fees are going up, creating a false narrative about rental affordability. This includes things like fire hydrant fees, mandatory cable and internet fees, and eviction fees. BASTA suggested that RHDA guidelines could address this.</p> <p>They wanted to understand more of the City's commitment to fair housing and were curious about the status of the Office of Civil Rights hiring someone to focus on this.</p> <p>BASTA staff appreciated a shift from past years in intention from the City with this year's needs assessment, and they agreed to help spread the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Caritas of Austin</p> <p>The mission of Caritas is to prevent and end homelessness for people in Greater Austin. Caritas of Austin believes that when every person has a stable place to call home, they can realize their full potential and contribute to our community. Caritas builds wellbeing by making sure that people have a safe home, access to healthy groceries, jobs that provide a reliable living wage, and educational opportunities to learn life skills.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Caritas on the needs of the community members they serve.</p> <p>The staff talked about the lack of food security in our community and expected to see that as a higher need in the survey. The discussion focused on how the topic of homelessness has become so polarized and how we need to educate people in order to reduce fear and increase collaboration. Legislation and policy change is a need that Caritas is addressing by hiring a government affairs position. The desire to see more collaboration between providers was stressed. Needs for childcare, job training, support for domestic violence survivors, and support for young mothers were also discussed.</p> <p>City staff and Caritas staff agree to look for more opportunities to work together and spread knowledge about existing resources.</p>
<p>Catholic Charities of Central Texas (CCCTX)</p> <p>Catholic Charities of Central Texas is a faith-based social services organization serving individuals and families across 25 Central Texas counties. Catholic Charities of Central Texas provides a holistic set of programs and services to engage, educate, and</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from CCCTX regarding top needs of the community members they serve and how the City can more effectively serve those populations.</p> <p>CCCTX leadership expressed the importance of programs that offer direct, short-term assistance to low- and moderate-income individuals and families, in addition to programs that assist individuals and families in achieving long term stability. In addition, CCCTX highlighted the extremely motivating "power of hope" that they see among their clientele when able to achieve a path to stability and prosperity. The conversation led to agreement that there would be great benefit in partnering through events in which City staff present to CCCTX clientele about</p>

<p>empower Central Texans out of poverty now and into the future.</p>	<p>Housing Department programming, particularly regarding the Down Payment Assistance program. The City and CCCTX look forward to further collaboration.</p>
<p>Central Health</p> <p>Central Health is Travis County’s taxpayer-funded hospital district and works to close gaps in healthcare by offering more care to more people in more places. Central Health provides health and wellness services that make healthcare better for all of Travis County, including direct medical care in various specialties and lines of service that bridge the deepest gaps in Travis County’s safety-net system – from podiatry to pulmonology to palliative care. Central Health also administers the Medical Access Program (MAP), which covers healthcare costs for county residents with low income.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Central Health leaders on the needs of the community members they serve.</p> <p>Central Health staff wanted to understand more about how all parts of the housing ecosystem work together, including ECHO, HACA, AHFC, the Housing Department, and the Homeless Strategies Office. They observed the complicated system of how all the organizations work together. With significant housing needs for those they serve, especially medically complex individuals who are experiencing homelessness, Central Health staff were interested in exploring how to plug in.</p> <p>They were also very interested in learning about the City’s federally funded housing programs and saw obvious and immediate opportunities to help connect the people they serve with those resources. They asked for a resource guide for Central Health case managers and suggested hosting a quarterly update for partner organizations to learn about the programs and how they can help spread the word. They said their teams could help people apply for services.</p> <p>A follow-up meeting was scheduled to discuss more opportunities to partner at multiple levels.</p>
<p>Child Inc.</p> <p>Child Inc, founded in 1972, is a nonprofit organization providing low-income families with comprehensive early childhood education, mental health services, disabilities services, nutritional services, medical and dental services, social services and parent engagement activities.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Child Inc. on the needs of the low-income families they serve.</p> <p>Child Inc. staff talked about significant affordability challenges. “Affordable housing rates are still not affordable to our families,” the shared. Emergency childcare for essential works was discussed a high need. They voiced concerns about what will happen when funding sources run out. They were curious about the process for applying for services and were very interested in connecting their families with the opportunities, calling them “hidden jewels.”</p> <p>They were interested in support for their Teen Parent Program and how they might be able to partner with other agencies that receive federal funding from the City. Specifically, connecting Child Inc. with Integral Care was highlighted as a follow-up item.</p> <p>They talked about the mental health needs of children who experienced trauma and the special needs of children with conditions such as Autism.</p> <p>The asked for someone from the Housing Department to come talk to their employees about Down Payment Assistance and shared that they have staff members taking out of their retirement in order to buy a home.</p>

	<p>They explained that they do needs assessments with their families and can use that as an opportunity to learn more about their housing needs. They asked for materials that they could share with them.</p> <p>City staff committed to following up on all of the partnership opportunities.</p>
<p>Family Eldercare</p> <p>Family Eldercare provides services that promote dignity and stability for older adults and people with disabilities</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Family Eldercare on the needs of the older adults and people with disabilities they serve.</p> <p>Family Eldercare staff talking about the work they've been doing with the City's federal funds since 2009. They have been able to reshape services over the years to better meet the community needs for older adults and specifically mentioned the geriatric case management and billpayer programs. They shared anecdotal data on the needs that their case managers witness. Affordable housing is the biggest need. They talked about the need for homelessness prevention, and that while there is so much out there for true crisis (i.e. a notice to vacate or eviction) they have lost a lot of funding for people who are just low-income and struggling. "If you don't have a voucher or are in subsidized housing, you're one incident short of losing housing."</p> <p>Transportation is another significant need their staff sees, especially transportation to medical appointments. People don't know about PARD's Senior Transportation Program.</p> <p>Other medical needs they see are challenges navigating insurance and other medical opportunities or benefits, switching meds to find discounts and finding in-home care.</p> <p>For many of the people that Family Eldercare serves, it is hard to move around and things like yard work do not get done. While this need seems small, they shared that it is common for folks to get code violations. To further complicate the situation, their clients hear that seniors are getting scammed so they won't even ask their neighbors for help.</p> <p>Family Eldercare staff also shared their intake referral data. They received 2379 calls for assistance last year, roughly 200 per month. 31 percent called for housing and 65 percent were referred out for affordable housing. Unfortunately, they often have to tell people they need to wait until they get a notice to vacate before they can receive support. The zip code with the largest amount of calls was 78753.</p> <p>They talked about the need for funding that is not time-limited. They shared that a nice thing about CDBG funds is the light touch support they are able to provide for older adults, with some clients receiving funding for more than 20 years. Their goal is to be able to keep people housed and/or transition into more affordable housing.</p> <p>They talked about the needs of developmentally disabled adults who don't have anyone outside of Family Eldercare to support them. These individuals struggle with paying their rent and making it to appointments and would be at risk of being institutionalized.</p> <p>They discussed the different needs of rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing and the balance of funding for prevention versus</p>

	<p>intervention. “It is so much cheaper to prevent rather than to rehouse or intervene in other ways later!”</p> <p>Family Eldercare found the Rental assistance through El Buen to be helpful for their clients but expressed difficulties in accessing the funds. The need is so great that people are anxiously waiting on the lottery system, which misses the mark on trauma-informed care, creating another layer of anxiety and trauma.</p> <p>They also shared concerns about funding sources running out, and the limited amount of permanent supportive housing for older adults in the region.</p> <p>They mentioned a survey by UT focused on the Aging services in Austin as a good resource.</p> <p>City staff and Family Eldercare both look forward to continued partnership through both federal funding and other opportunities.</p>
<p>Google Fiber</p> <p>As a broadband service provider, Google Fiber believes everyone deserves access to fast, reliable internet, because access to fast, reliable internet means access to new opportunities, windows to curiosity, and resources beyond measure. Google Fiber works hand-in-hand with partners in the community to help close the digital divide.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from staff at Google Fiber to learn about community needs from the perspective of a broadband service provider working on digital divide issues.</p> <p>They talked about their partnerships with the Housing Authority to provide free internet, sharing that it is easier to build this into new construction than to retrofit older properties. They discussed the efforts to work with more Permanent Supportive Housing properties as well. They prefer to work with properties that are owned by the City. The federal Affordable Connections Program was discussed as a helpful tool, with the hope that funding could continue. Primary needs raised during the conversation focused on handholding and trust building in the community, which requires trusted ambassadors to walk people through the process. People also need devices, and Google Fiber works with some properties to provide grants for laptops. Funding for training on digital skills is needed to help bridge the divide for those who have not previously had access. Google Fiber staff recommended having people come to a free training and receive a free device.</p> <p>The need for a new mindset was discussed so that digital access is not an add on but core to what you do to help people thrive. “You cannot participate in the world fully without digital access and skills. Everyone needs to be in the digital inclusion business.”</p> <p>To solve for funding gaps the possibility for bulk deals was discussed for both city and non-city owned properties. If discounts could be offered, how could the lower price be covered by other funding?</p> <p>Google Fiber would like to see the expansion of robust digital inclusion programs through libraries. Other organizations working on this issue were discussed included Goodwill, Austin Freenet, Community Tech Net, El Buen Samaritano, Latinitas, Avance, Central Health, Integral Care and TARA . City staff committed to exploring conversations with these community partners.</p>
<p>Integral Care</p> <p>As the Local Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority, Integral</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Integral Care on the needs and priorities they see in the communities they serve. Integral care staff expressed how great the need is for emergency help with utilities food and rent, and their fear in meeting these needs with funding sources going away in 2025. “The community has not</p>

<p>Care strengthens our community by supporting our most important asset, our people, to achieve well-being. Integral Care provides individuals with high-quality mental health care, collaborates with community partners to strengthen programs and systems, and works to raise awareness of mental health issues in our community.</p>	<p>stabilized enough and the impact of not having those dollars will be a big gap with needs amplified and increased inflow into the homelessness system.”</p> <p>The staff talked about a housing wellness assessment that showed income as the number one reason for accessing funds, indicating that steady income is a huge need. They shared that Integral Care provides some employment services, but not enough, and that people living on \$900 of social security per month with \$1200 fair market rent will never be sustainable. They discussed barriers for people with criminal backgrounds.</p> <p>They talked about the use of prevention funding for intervention and a long list of referrals waiting in the queue. They are working on gathering more data on people being turned away to find out what needs aren’t being met.</p> <p>Integral Care staff talked about the need for rehabilitation of homes so that people can live in a safe environment. They were interested to know if repair funds could be used for PSH facilities as well.</p> <p>They discussed the need for more salary money in HOPWA funds. Equity, fair housing, and tenants’ rights are big issues for the people Integral Care serves, and they shared about the poor treatment their clients receive from property managers. They also see people with vouchers denied housing because of disabilities. “It is difficult to get people off the streets and into units because of lack of response from property managers.”</p> <p>Ongoing services for individuals with large high acuity needs were addressed, which includes things like pest control services.</p> <p>The varying challenges of building more housing included a lack of funding and difficulty finding sub-contractors to help with construction because of all the requirements to receive the funding.</p> <p>The lack of service providers to help people remain stable and the affordability for staff was addressed as a major concern.</p> <p>City staff and Integral Care staff agreed to remain in conversation about opportunities to collaborate, and City staff asked for help in spreading the word about the community needs assessment.</p>
<p>JUST</p> <p>JUST is a nonprofit organization that empowers Black and Brown women on their journey to financial success. JUST partners with nonprofits, funders, and banks to build new pathways to prosperity for under-resourced entrepreneurs in hard-to-reach and unbanked communities. JUST has provided loans to more than 12,200 visionary</p>	<p>City staff met with staff from JUST to learn about the needs of the clients JUST serves. JUST staff shared about the organization’s commitment to long-term stability and their interest in helping their clients achieve additional support through down payment assistance. They shared about the lessons they learned during COVID when funding for entrepreneurial endeavors was not enough to keep households stabilized. “We saw that stability isn’t about income, it’s about assets.” They also shared about how their work centers around creating peer support for their clients as well as lending based on trust.</p> <p>A follow up meeting was conducted to talk specifically about the City of Austin’s down payment assistance program, and further collaboration will follow.</p>

<p>female entrepreneurs, totaling more than \$22 million.</p>	
<p>LifeWorks</p> <p>LifeWorks provides services for youth and their families seeking housing, counseling, education and workforce programs. LifeWorks strives to break cycles of instability by providing support and services to youth experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Lifeworks on the needs and priorities they see in the communities they serve.</p> <p>The LifeWorks team and the Housing Department Team had an open and fruitful conversation, and LifeWorks shared gratitude for a shift in the approach to the community consultations. They followed up with formal recommendations in writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for services so we can better leverage vouchers. • CDBG grant should be procured competitively so that community providers can apply (current funds depts and services administered by the county through interagency agreements). This would fund RRH. • Funding for youth shelter. Youth-dedicated shelter is essential for the safety of young adults experiencing homelessness. • Less administrative burden for documenting client eligibility. • Less reporting requirements/more appropriate metrics. • Behavioral health workforce shortage is leaving a gap in providing mental health care; clinicians with lower-level licenses are not Medicaid billable and the higher license is impossible to hire since changes during Covid have made it easier for the advanced licensed folks to go into private practice. • The city should invest in multi-year contracts to allow for agencies to properly set up and ramp down services to ensure continuity in services and sustainability planning. 1-year RRH contracts do not work. • There needs to be an emphasis on diversion and prevention services if we ever want to stop the inflow of homelessness. • Street outreach is the first step into services for many folks experiencing homelessness and is an essential service for basic needs and rapport building. • There should be a set aside annual cold weather shelter fund. • Rapid Rehousing and PSH – again, emphasis on long-term contracts + wraparound services here • The city needs to be planning for supportive services for the affordable/supportive housing projects opening in 2026. Nonprofits have taken on a high risk building affordable housing complexes, the city needs to support these projects. • Childcare/babysitting will always be a high need, but if the city is exclusively funding licensed daycares, then they should divest in this, as it is virtually impossible to spend. • Also regarding unlicensed childcare- ideally this would cover not just unlicensed facilities, but also family members who provide childcare services or other forms of in-home care (e.g. “nanny shares”). • The guidelines for eligibility verification should be revisited and self-certifications should be more broadly allowed (not just for those experiencing homelessness). E.g. it’s difficult to secure residency verification for those who are doubled up with someone else (the client’s name won’t be on a bill). • Building in more flexibility for what constitutes “mental health” or “behavioral health” services, especially in light of the shortage of licensed clinicians willing to work in social service settings.

<p>SAFE</p> <p>The mission of SAFE is to stop abuse for everyone. The SAFE Alliance is a merger of Austin Children’s Shelter and SafePlace, both long-standing and respected human service agencies in Austin serving the survivors of child abuse, sexual assault and exploitation, and domestic violence.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from SAFE on the needs and priorities they see in the work they do to support survivors of domestic violence. SAFE staff shared about the increase they’ve seen in calls to their hotline. The top three needs people call for are shelter/housing, counseling and legal services. The need for housing/shelter is much more than is available, with more people waiting on shelter than are in shelter.</p> <p>They also see a high need for childcare and access to income, including income not related to jobs. Other needs include safe communication methods (e.g. cell phones) and help paying debt. SAFE staff discussed the difficulty of finding funding for positions to support resource advocacy.</p> <p>They explained that criminal justice and mental health are intertwined with housing and violence prevention. “Housing is violence prevention.” They stressed that nobody knows the needs better than a survivor, and that prevention to homelessness is anti-poverty work. “The minute housing is jeopardy, people go back to unsafe environments,” and there are cyclical/generational implications. A staff member shared that they hate that the person experiencing harm is the one who has to leave.</p> <p>SAFE staff expressed concern about how the coordinated entry system leaves lots of our folks vulnerable. “The question about violence doesn’t tell us who is in the most danger, and often folks who are really in danger don’t score high enough on the coordinated entry to get immediate help.” The way the question is asked about violence does not capture what we need to know, and someone might not even answer yes because it is phrased more toward experiencing violence while on the streets/homeless.</p>
<p>Shalom Austin</p> <p>Shalom Austin provides services and resources to connect, empower and impact the community locally, nationally and around the world.</p>	<p>Shalom Austin requested a meeting to understand more about federal funding and City staff asked for Shalom Austin’s input for the needs assessment as part of the meeting. Shalom Austin staff shared about the clients they serve, many of whom have chronic issues with no solutions. They require their clients to be working with a case manager, but many don’t want to do that. They discussed using Best Single Source Plus and appreciated its intent to help clients from being bounced around. They expressed concern with some funding sources moving toward support of shelters and leaving rental assistance challenging to find. They wish to see a balance of prevention and intervention. Shalom Austin shared that they are one of the few organizations that take insurance for mental health services, but they need more therapists. Their transportation program filled up right away, they struggle to keep up with the growing need for rental assistance and the needs just keep growing. They also talked about the great need to identify the ecosystem with all the providers and convene in a way so that staff members know each other. Everyone shared appreciation for the insight and agreed to remain in touch.</p>
<p>Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA)</p> <p>TRLA’s mission is to provide exceptional legal advice and representation to impoverished people. Founded in 1970 to represent Texas farmworkers, TRLA has grown into the nation’s second</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from TRLA on the needs and priorities they see in the work they do to support tenants. TRLA staff shared that affordability is the biggest problem they see. Many of the people who come to them don’t need legal advice, so TRLA refers them to organizations like El Buen Samaritano, but it is hard to fill all the gaps. They expressed a desire to see a source for rental assistance that comes with protections and doesn’t require a lawyer to go back and forth. This would offer protection for tenants without dissuading landlords from taking the money. They expressed concern with the lottery system for rental assistance, noting that it is not a trauma-informed practice and causes a lot of</p>

<p>largest legal aid provider and the largest in Texas. TRLA provides free civil legal services to residents in 68 Southwest Texas counties, and represents migrant and seasonal farm workers throughout the state and in six other southern states.</p>	<p>anxiety for people as they wait for a response. They discussed the need for a simple, easy-to-administer assessment that could help prioritize folks who can make the best use of the money – those who are most likely to stabilize and not need to keep coming back for more financial support. In addition, TRLA staff talked about the need for evidence-based documentation that would show how much money should be distributed to avoid eviction. The need for an eviction diversion program was addressed to keep people from the courts. This discussion included the importance of helping policymakers understand the difference between eviction diversion, representation, and tenant education. TRLA staff wanted more information on Austin Public Health programs for their clients, specifically childcare, senior services, and hotel services. They explained the great need for childcare for unemployed people. City and TLRA staff committed to continued communication to enhance collaboration.</p>
<p>Vivent Health</p> <p>Vivent Health envisions a world without AIDS and strives to ensure everyone with HIV lives a long and healthy life. Vivent Health’s mission is to be a relentless champion for people affected by HIV and do all we can to help them thrive, because we believe every person has value and should be treated with respect.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Vivent Health on the needs and priorities they see in serving people living with HIV. Vivent Health staff shared about the challenges of rental support. The increasing cost of rent requires more support through the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program. They discussed both an inability to expand the program as well as a lack of resources to transition people out of TBRA. People receiving short-term assistance max out on assistance for one year and then come back when they can get more the next year. “We end up spending short-term assistance, meant to prevent homelessness, on people with long-term challenges.” They asked about available funding sources for people transitioning out of homelessness. Vivent staff expressed concern about funding at the City being used for specialized staffing positions that are not front-facing, with more people analyzing and coordinating and not as much support for clients. While they are glad to see expansion, they worry about a dramatic shortage in staff with clients. Appreciation for the input was shared and City staff asked for Vivent’s help spreading the word about the needs assessment.</p>
<p>Workforce Solutions Capital Area</p> <p>Workforce Solutions is a private, publicly-funded 501(c)(3) nonprofit responsible for the data-driven planning, oversight, and evaluation of workforce development activities in Austin-Travis County. Workforce Solutions connects local people to the most in-demand industries with quality jobs.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Workforce Solutions on the needs and priorities they see in the communities they serve. Workforce Solutions staff expressed difficulties with CDBG funding, explaining that it is often restrictive and hard to use with lots of required documentation. They shared about the increased need for childcare and expected that we would see that in survey results as well. WFS staff noted that the people they serve at least have a place to sleep and can attend trainings and other workforce development activities. The challenges from the perspective of WFS focus on the skills gaps for available jobs. “What keeps me up at night is the amount of jobs available and not enough training to get people into those jobs.” They spoke of healthcare and manufacturing jobs in particular. They also addressed transportation as a huge barrier, especially for those with trade skills. “The people needed for the types of jobs available now live too far away and can’t get to jobs in Austin.” Both City of Austin and Workforce Solutions staff shared appreciation for the conversation and WFS staff agreed to help spread the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>

Coalitions & Conveners

<i>Who we heard from</i>	<i>What we heard</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Austin Area Research Organization▪ Austin Home Repair Coalition▪ Austin Housing Coalition▪ Dove Springs Proud▪ ECHO Leadership Council▪ Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce▪ Housing Works▪ Leadership Austin▪ One Voice Central Texas▪ Reentry Roundtable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A call for more collaboration• New approaches for addressing policy and process• Emphasis on innovation and thinking outside the box• Importance of leverage to maximize impact of dollars

Coalitions & Conveners

<p>Austin Area Research Organization (AARO)</p> <p>AARO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan network of preeminent Central Texas leaders. Members from Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties work together to shape the future of the region through research and relationships.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from AARO on the needs and priorities they see in systems level work they do with community leaders. A presentation was given to AARO’s transportation committee as part of a conversation about the intersection of transportation and affordability. Participants were curious to know specifically about local Project Connect funding investments, which the City agreed to address during another presentation. They were curious about triggers for federal dollars and if they get pulled back if we don’t use them. They were also interested in the impact of HOME 2 on housing affordability. Housing staff will look for more dialogue opportunities with more committees for AARO.</p>
<p>Austin Home Repair Coalition</p> <p>The Austin Home Repair Coalition provides low-income families, the disabled, and the elderly with services that restore feelings of security, health, and well-being, and independent living.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Austin Home Repair Coalition on the needs and priorities they see across the home repair ecosystem.</p> <p>Members of the coalition were curious about whether the goal for repairs in the coming years would remain the same, noting that the Strategic Housing Blueprint calls for 600 repairs per year.</p> <p>The County’s septic tank repair and replacement programs were brought up, noting that lots of property owners need that, and members were curious if that was part of the conversation this year.</p> <p>The coalition agreed that the needs presented during the presentation were a “good pulse” on what organizations are seeing, specifically the needs under the categories of immediate help, maintaining stability, and trust.</p> <p>They were curious about what changes City staff expected to see in the needs and to consider what deeper needs might exist that the survey doesn’t capture. They wondered what affordable might mean to different people and asked if it was possible to see the survey data broken down by income level.</p> <p>Staff shared appreciation for the input and committed to following up with the data later in the year.</p>
<p>Austin Housing Coalition</p> <p>Founded in 2003, the Austin Housing Coalition represents the community of “housers” across Austin and Central Texas. AHC is comprised of nonprofits, affordable housing developers, housing and policy experts, and other interested organizations, businesses, and residents who support the development of safe, affordable housing for Austin residents. AHC members work to house people experiencing homelessness, repair the</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Austin Housing Coalition on the needs and priorities they see across the housing ecosystem.</p> <p>The decline in downpayment assistance funding through federal dollars was discussed, with some organizations making note to inform their teams and talk through implications. Members of the coalition were curious if home sales went back up over the next few years, would there be an opportunity to increase the downpayment assistance? Overall there was a surprise to hear about a decrease in funding and they wondered if other metros were losing funding as well.</p> <p>Some members advocated for funding of services at Permanent Supportive Housing facilities.</p> <p>Housing staff committed to ongoing dialogue with the coalition about the community’s needs.</p>

<p>houses of low-income homeowners, provide quality affordable rental housing, and empower low-income households to become successful, first-time homebuyers.</p>	
<p>Dove Springs Proud</p> <p>Dove Springs Proud (DSP) founded Oct 9, 2013 is a private member-only volunteer civic group of those who have lived, grew up, work, advocate or currently live in 78744. The Dove Springs Proud mission is to support all youth and residents in 78744, by raising money, and hosting annual events in.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from Dove Springs Proud on the needs and priorities they see in their community.</p> <p>They shared that the most pressing issue in Dove Springs is affordable housing for households at 50 percent of median family income and below. They stressed the need to focus on deeper affordability than HUD requires, with 80 percent of MFI being way too high for this neighborhood. There is a desire for more ownership opportunities. Current residents would like to have a community land trust. It is important to them that people living in the neighborhood have the first pick and be the first to know about the new units coming online. They shared a need for a mix of housing types – rental and ownership, different sizes, etc. Without affordable housing options, many people who grew up in the neighborhood cannot afford to live here anymore. They were hopeful about a new Housing Authority development that is bringing new housing to the neighborhood.</p> <p>They discussed the fact that Dove Springs is a food dessert. They're proud of the work they've done to improve the areas and have seen drops in crime as well as improved green spaces and parks. They're also looking forward to a new health facility coming to Dove Springs this year that will hopefully address a lot the issues the community is seeing. There are a lot of in-home childcare facilities in the area and childcare will also be provided at the new health facility.</p> <p>City staff and Dove Springs Proud leadership agreed upon a few follow-up items and continued dialogue. The City will share data collection and Dove Springs Proud will help spread the word about housing programs. The teams also discussed a customized survey they could both use.</p>
<p>ECHO Leadership Council</p> <p>Communities across the U.S. that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Continuum of Care (CoC) program are required to create and facilitate a governing CoC Board to ensure the community works together toward solutions to end homelessness.</p> <p>ECHO is the backbone organization for Austin/Travis County's Homelessness Response System. The</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the Echo Leadership Council on the needs and priorities they see across the homeless response system.</p> <p>The Council shared uncertainty about their involvement with the needs assessment in previous years and were not sure what impact their feedback had. They shared their desire to see more collaboration and find meaningful ways to involve the diverse representation on the Leadership council. They wanted to understand more about how the plan is written and who is responsible for making decisions. They also wanted to know how other City departments were involved in the conversation, noting the need to think about transportation and other infrastructure needs.</p> <p>The council wanted to know more about how households served are tracked and how that data is used, especially in assessing who is coming back for funding more than once. They also wanted to know how the data informs the way programs are described. They talked about programs like Affordability Unlocked and the limitations in serving people with non-time-limited income</p>

<p>Leadership Council is Austin's CoC Board and centers firsthand experience of homelessness and racial equity in both the composition and the guiding charge of the group. Leadership Council is responsible for developing, approving, and enforcing policies, procedures, and written standards for projects that are funded through our local Continuum of Care (CoC).</p>	<p>sources. There were questions about how funding is distributed and if funds went directly to the people.</p> <p>The council helped expand the inventory of needs by noting that helping clients deal with building management was missing from the stability category. They shared that while TRLA has special programs for that, it's hard for people experiencing homelessness to access those services.</p> <p>City staff committed to more collaborative dialogue and asked for the council's help in spreading the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce provides leadership that facilitates the creation of a prosperous regional economy. In partnership with chamber members, GACC provides leadership that strengthens the Austin economy, convenes the community, and promotes collaboration so people can live, work, and thrive in Austin.</p>	<p>City staff met with leadership of the Austin Area Chamber of Commerce to share about the City's housing programs and seek guidance from the perspective of the business community. The chamber was interested to learn more about the Family Business Loan program. They were surprised they hadn't heard about it before and noted that it was a good example of a resource they would want to share with their members. There were also curious about tenants' rights assistance. They wanted to understand more about the City's dependence on federal funding, and what would be missing if that funding went away.</p> <p>Leverage and collaboration were of great interest to Chamber leadership and they asked if the funds were amplifying efforts or creating competition. They encouraged City staff to consider where there is an opportunity to leverage funds where they are already working best, especially in consideration of increasing funding from foundations.</p> <p>Childcare and affordability were discussed as major priorities for the chamber.</p> <p>Federal advocacy from the chamber for the year had already been completed so the teams discussed engaging the chamber earlier on in the process next time. The Chamber's leadership also wanted to ensure other cross-organization communication was happening and gave the example of Housing Works as a needed voice in the conversation. They echoed the need for collaboration and want to see the City as the center of the dialogue.</p>
<p>Housing Works - housing advocacy committee</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Housing staff sought guidance from the Housing Works housing advocacy committee on the needs of the communities they advocate for. The committee shared the desire from the community for programs that would assist existing, long-tenured, low to moderate-income homeowners. This would include technical assistance to take advantage of opportunities for property owners, such as subdividing lots and building ADUs. This would help generate additional income or bring in multiple generations to family properties. Low-income homeowners would need both technical support and access to capital. This would also require addressing Predatory Real Estate practices.</p> <p>The committee expressed an increased need for rental assistance and tenant stabilization.</p> <p>They wanted to understand more about the full set of funding sources for City housing program. They also wanted to know how communities were being engaged in the process and how language access was being addressed.</p>

	<p>The committee agreed to help spread the word about the needs assessment survey.</p>
<p>Leadership Austin</p> <p>The mission of Leadership Austin is to connect and develop leaders to courageously engage and transform our communities. Leadership Austin believes in a future where all people and communities contribute to a better Central Texas.</p>	<p>City staff joined a dialogue with Leadership Austin alumni who play roles across the housing system. The group was interested in how the city leverages funding sources to help fill funding gaps for affordable housing developers. They also wanted to understand how other funding sources, such as the HOT tax impact affordability in Austin. They expressed the need for innovative thinking which included estate planning as well as changes in taxes so that small landlords can provide affordability more easily for their tenants.</p>
<p>One Voice Central Texas</p> <p>One Voice Central Texas is a coalition of the leadership of over one hundred nonprofit health and human service organizations working to make sure that everyone can contribute to our community and thrive. One Voice represents the integrated network of human services that connects everyone of all ages and circumstances to social resources, opportunities, and support so that each person can reach their highest potential. One Voice is the voice for those in the community who may have difficulty weathering the life storms that affect all of us.</p>	<p>City staff sought guidance from the members of One Voice Central Texas on the needs their organizations are working to address together.</p> <p>Mental health for clients was addressed as a primary need. The group also discussed affordability issues for nonprofit staff. “Those taking the biggest burden to serve our community are often the ones that need services.” They talked about how these staff members are the key to diversity in our community and expanded this to include caregivers and childcare staff. In addition, teachers and government employees also often fail to make a livable wage. “The fact that we are building affordable housing campuses for teachers to live on is ridiculous. We should be paying them more money to live where they want to live.” They suggested a cost of living analysis for Austin as a complement to the next salary survey would be helpful. The responsibility of nonprofit boards was also addressed as a component of the conversation. Furthering the housing conversation, the cost to both own land and build on it was discussed as a barrier.</p> <p>The members shared about barriers for those re-entering society from prison as well as the caregivers/families of the incarcerated. “Folks who have served their time deserve a chance to be housed.”</p> <p>They talked about the availability of transitional housing as well help identifying affordable housing for clients who need it. Some of the organizations shared about the needs of their clients relating to technology access and transportation access. Language access was discussed as a barrier for people applying for programs.</p> <p>Siloed work was brought up and the need to take a more holistic approach to solving the issues. This requires addressing the root problems and not just the symptoms</p> <p>They expressed gratitude for City-funded programs and the ability to layer multiple funding sources on one project, but the biggest challenge is the bureaucracy of getting money out the door. There is so much paperwork and organizations end up having to front the money and get reimbursed later.</p> <p>City staff shared gratitude for the input and encouraged further dialogue.</p>

Reentry Roundtable

The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable is a community coalition of individuals directly impacted by the criminal legal system, academics, service providers, practitioners, community leaders, policymakers, and advocates working to address the challenges to effective reentry and reintegration. The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable works to promote a community that values and supports equity for formerly incarcerated persons and individuals with justice involvement.

City staff sought guidance from the Reentry Roundtable on the needs of community members who have been incarcerated.

The coalition expressed how important it is to understand the needs of this community and how forgotten these community members often feel.

Partnership between all levels of government is needed to address these challenges.

Income levels were discussed as a primary area of concern. They shared concerns that the state has made it clear they will not be meaningfully addressing the issue of pay for this population, so the City and the County need to partner to build out that continuum of care for some of our most vulnerable community members. Other priorities included:

increasing the availability and affordability of culturally competent and trauma-informed mental health services in the community; implementing alternatives to incarceration, such as diversion programs, that connect people with mental illness to treatment and support instead of jail or prison; providing adequate training and education for criminal justice professionals on how to recognize and respond to mental health issues among people of color; and reducing the stigma and discrimination that people of color with mental illness face in both the mental health and criminal justice systems.

Government & Regional Partners

<i>Who we heard from</i>	<i>What we heard</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CAMPO▪ CAPCOG/ Area Agency on Aging/Capital Area Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)▪ City of Round Rock▪ Housing Authority of the City of Austin▪ Housing Authority of Travis County▪ Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation▪ Travis County▪ Williamson County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growth challenges• Land acquisition• Neighborhood planning• Infrastructure• Austin’s reach and resources

Government & Regional Partners

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties. MPOs are federally required throughout the country in areas with a population of 50,000 or more and are required to produce a 20+ year transportation plan, called a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and a four-year planning document called the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

City Staff met with CAMPO staff as part of the community needs assessment to understand shared challenges in addressing community needs and create a broader understanding of regional needs and priorities.

CAMPO staff shared about long-range transportation planning, developing and maintaining regional plans and specifically the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan. They discussed the component of the plan focused on housing coordination planning on a regional level. This process is leading staff to explore where CAMPO fits in the process for regional housing approaches. While specific goals remain undefined, it has become clear that there is a need to be coordinating with entities that are working in housing. One staff member shared about the research they were working on about the HOME acts with City of Austin. As an agency that is primarily federally funded, CAMPO staff was interested in continuing dialogue with the City about the federally funded programs. They explained their use of the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) which supports their work with things like walk and biking programs and the carbon reduction program. They also talked about the federal funding they administer to cities and counties through CAMPO's long-range plan. Projects are prioritized through a series of goals and objectives established by members of the board. Equity is one of those primary goals. They look at demographics through census tracts for identifiers such as low income, people over 65, and households with no access to a car. In looking at households that receive services from the Housing Department, any information on the tract level about how the money is distributed can help CAMPO understand where there is need and could help evaluate equity measures for projects that get funded in those zones. CAMPO staff shared about a white paper they are working on looking at senior centers and other things that would provide services plus the transportation to get there. They've found that many people have to go far to reach critical services. Many folks who need federal programs need transportation, and the staff was curious if HUD funding could be used for things such as pick-up services.

They talked about the work they're doing with the transportation department on transportation-demand modeling, and a regional TDM program. One of the inputs for this model is how jobs and housing are dispersed.

They wanted to know who they could talk to at affordable housing facilities so that they could explore the transportation access issues people living there are experiencing.

They asserted that we cannot silo feedback. "Transportation issues can't be separated from housing issues." They expressed interest in seeing the components of the needs assessment survey related to transportation.

Staff agreed to stay in touch and look for opportunities to collaborate in the future.

CAPCOG/ Area Agency on Aging/Capital Area Aging and

City Staff met with CAPCOG staff as part of the community needs assessment to understand shared challenges in addressing community needs with a specific focus on their work with older adults.

<p>Disability Resource Center (ADRC)</p> <p>From emergency communications to economic development, some things just make sense for collaboration at the regional level, and the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) helps make that happen every day. Formed in 1970 and one of 24 councils of governments in Texas, CAPCOG for more than 50 years has served as an advocate, planner and coordinator on important regional issues in the 10-county Austin metropolitan area.</p> <p>Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area (AAACAP) serves older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers with a variety of services and supports throughout the region. It works to ensure people can maintain their best quality of life in the environment of their choosing. It also operates the Aging and Disability Resource Center of the Capital Area (ADRC-CAP), which connects people with the support programs that can assist them.</p>	<p>CAPCOG staff shared about their Housing Navigators program, which promotes accessible and inclusive housing. There are only 2 navigators, and they get approximately 30 calls per day. They use an interactive map on their website of affordable housing. CAPCOG staff were curious if ESG funds could be used for things such as fires. They shared that weatherization is needed for the homes of the people they work with, emphasizing the danger in this area if the air conditioning breaks. They talked about the data they collect and City staff agreed that this information would be very helpful to share. CAPCOG administers money from Austin Energy for utility service and they shared that the program’s accessibility makes it very successful. When people call, they get taken care of immediately, as long as there is still money. It’s an accessible and simple process.</p> <p>They shared that they are good about tracking what people call in about but have room for improvement on collecting unmet needs. They have seen requests for rental assistance go up.</p> <p>CAPCOG staff also noted that the percentage of money/income that goes to healthcare is high for older adults. A lot of people are moving their parents to this area, and the needs are increasing.</p> <p>They recommended putting needs assessment surveys in senior centers and agreed to help spread the word.</p>
<p>City of Round Rock, TX Office of Community and Neighborhood Services CDBG Division</p>	<p>City of Austin Housing Department staff met with staff of the adjacent jurisdiction of the City of Round Rock, specifically the Office Community and Neighborhood Services CDBG Division. City staff of the respective jurisdictions shared with each other about their Consolidated Plan processes and how they go about executing various housing and public services programming. City staff were glad to have connected and have continued to communicate on various topics when one jurisdiction may be of assistance to the other.</p>
<p>Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA)</p> <p>The Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) envisions neighborhoods where poverty is alleviated, residents are healthy and safe, and all people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. HACA’s mission is</p>	<p>City staff met with staff from the Housing Authority to discuss the needs of the community members that are housed at their properties. HACA staff shared that their biggest hurdle is the redevelopment of the housing that dates back to 1937. Financing is a challenge and they expressed a need for the tax credit program needs to be reevaluated so that the most pressing issues can be targeted.</p> <p>To avoid homelessness, they emphasized the importance of serving people with the most need, while also prioritizing the maintenance and rehabilitation of their current facilities.</p>

<p>to cultivate sustainable affordable housing communities and partnerships that inspire self-reliance, growth, and optimism.</p>	<p>They talked about their current undertaking of developing homeownership units at Rosewood, which includes 12 units in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. Needs for this project include Ownership Housing Development Assistance funds to fill gaps.</p> <p>They shared about their partnership with service providers to address a variety of needs including healthcare, job training, digital inclusion, and youth mentorship. They consider these needs to be well supported by other funding sources, and they stressed the importance of federal funding going to the very poorest of the poor. This includes more funding for things like TBRA. They talked about the rapid response system and the lack of funding for immediate intervention needs. They shared concern that people get more points if they are homeless for more than a year, but we don't want people to be homeless for more than a year.</p> <p>They shared the desire to have support from partners like Google Fiber with private activity bonds, wanting to see corporate entities become investors in the creation of affordable housing rather than covering the cost of services like internet services. Corporate investors could work with major foundations and encourage them to come to the table with deeper investments in workforce solutions and other programs targeted at those most in need. Local tax credits were also discussed as a solution that could help create more affordability.</p> <p>They shared about other programs they are part of, including Mayfest (Women's Conference) and the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program: https://vimeo.com/730140183</p> <p>A HACA Citywide advisory group with residents who represent each property was discussed as another opportunity for engagement, and a follow-up meeting was scheduled to meet with them. Staff agreed to stay in touch and look for opportunities to collaborate in the future.</p>
<p>Housing Authority of Travis County</p> <p>The Housing Authority of Travis County provides stable, quality, affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate-income families throughout the local community.</p>	<p>City staff presented to HATC leadership about the Consolidated Plan process and Housing Department programming. HATC leadership expressed the view that the City should use local dollars to replace federal dollars that were lost year-over-year, such as experienced with the City's HOME allocation for FY 24-25.</p>
<p>The Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)</p> <p>The Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was incorporated in 1994. TSAHC was created at the direction of the Texas Legislature to serve as a self-sustaining, statewide affordable housing provider. TSAHC believes that every Texan</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from TSAHC as part of the needs assessment to discuss shared challenges and explore community needs from a collaborative perspective. TSACH's multi-family bond program, the Texas Family Impact fund, and land banking were discussed.</p> <p>TSACH staff shared some criticism of the City's approach to accessing land and wanted to see the City take a look at how to support developers with targeting acquisition of land and properties. They recommended looking at areas where growth is driving change in density and considering land sitting vacant, such as small older strip centers and storage facilities. "The opportunities are there and the City could be a bigger driver of capturing those opportunities." The topic of density was addressed as one of the tools for affordability while recognizing that we cannot densify our way out of affordable housing needs. The tradeoffs for smaller buildings with fewer units, which</p>

<p>deserves the opportunity to live in safe, decent and affordable housing.</p>	<p>require less subsidy and less borrowing need, were discussed as a way to moderately increase density. This includes consideration of ADU opportunities to preserve older neighborhoods, specifically in BIPOC neighborhoods. A recommendation was made for the City to look at public land trusts that could help with ADUs. Energy assistance through federal programs was also mentioned as a way that could help people reduce their costs. While new construction is where we mostly see these energy programs, low-income households could really benefit from bringing down that cost.</p> <p>TSHAC suggested that the city revisit the neighborhood planning process again. From a strategy standpoint, this approach allowed the city to push more density and broad-based goals at the neighborhood level. Neighborhoods felt like their voices were heard and reincorporating this approach could help bring more neighborhoods along in the process.</p> <p>TSAHC and the Housing Department will remain in touch for continued collaborative opportunities.</p>
<p>Travis County</p>	<p>City staff met with staff from Travis County who also oversee federal funding to discuss common challenges and opportunities to learn from one another.</p> <p>Travis County staff shared about their engagement process that started in October. They expressed disappointment in the lack of willingness on the City's part to partner on the Con Plan. They reached 42,000 households through a mailing and have had 2300 survey responses. Their focus is to touch people not often heard from in unincorporated areas. They were able to use HUD funding to help cover the cost. One need in particular they hear from these areas is the need for septic system repair.</p> <p>The City of Austin and Travis County staff agreed to stay in touch and look for opportunities to collaborate in the future.</p>
<p>Williamson County</p>	<p>City staff met with staff from Williamson County who also oversee federal funding to discuss common challenges and opportunities to learn from one another.</p> <p>Williamson County staff shared that they don't have the capacity for ESG and HOME funds and only work with CDBG funding. This funding goes primarily to infrastructure projects. Some cities in Williamson County have their own CDBG funding and the County supports smaller jurisdictions that don't have these resources, primarily rural small towns. A couple of large cities, Georgetown and Cedar Park, could have their own entitlement programs but they opt out. The 10 participating cities apply for funds, and Williamson County staff work directly with the recipients to understand their ongoing needs. The goal is to make them feel comfortable to reach out and ask for help. A consultant helps with the needs assessment and hosts stakeholder meetings. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity use the funding, but they have had a hard time finding affordable land. Williamson County has begun encouraging rehabilitation programs instead of land purchases. Primary needs include water, wastewater, and drainage. Some cities have crumbling pipes. William Count is also seeing an increase in their homeless population. Addressing this will require programs and social services beyond the infrastructure dollars. The lack of affordable housing is a priority for the commissioners' court.</p> <p>The City of Austin and Williamson County staff agreed to stay in touch and look for opportunities to collaborate in the future.</p>

City Departments	
Who we heard from	What we heard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin Public Health* • Development Services Department (Code Compliance) • Economic Development Department • Equity Office • Home Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) • Homeless Strategy Office • Office of Civil Rights • Watershed Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDBG funding possibilities • Collective understanding of full landscape of available services • Intersections with housing needs • Train and provide resources to other departments on housing resources available through the City • City staff in need of affordable housing • Equity and accessibility

City Departments	
<p>Austin Public Health</p> <p>Everyday in every part of our community, public health protects Austin and Travis County residents from infectious diseases and environmental threats and educates us about the benefits of healthful behaviors in avoiding chronic diseases.</p>	<p>Austin Public Health administers many of the programs that are supported by federal funds. APH staff participated in the majority of our consultations as partners on this project. Throughout the process, our departments noted ways to enhance collaboration moving forward.</p>
<p>Development Services Department (Code Compliance)</p> <p>Development Services Department Code Compliance makes sure city codes and ordinances are met so Austin continues to be a safe and livable city. We do this by educating and collaborating with neighborhoods, businesses, nonprofits, and other City of Austin departments.</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from the Development Services Department to inform them about the needs assessment and discuss areas of overlap when assessing community needs.</p> <p>Housing staff learned about a new social worker position with the Code Compliance team who is responsible for addressing the needs of people who face code violations. Housing and DSD staff discussed housing resources available to these people, specifically home repair, and the best ways to connect them with those resources. This new position will help better understand the needs and advocate through stories and data.</p>
<p>Economic Development Department</p> <p>The City of Austin's Economic Development Department supports</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from the Economic Development Department to inform them about the needs assessment and discuss specific areas of federal funding administered by their team.</p>

<p>and recruits business to Austin through all divisions. Our mission is to promote a competitive, sustainable and equitable economy for all.</p>	<p>The teams discussed the Family Loan Program and the challenges the program is experiencing. To receive the loans, businesses must employ low- and moderate-income individuals. However, the target market, set by City Council, has a hard time qualifying for the loans. There is a 120 percent collateral required, and this creates a significant barrier. EDD staff was curious to see if it would be possible to take some CDBG funds to have a collateral backup assistance fund. While the program was designed to make loan fund more accessible, FDA loans are much easier to obtain.</p>
<p>Equity Office</p> <p>The City of Austin’s Equity Office provides leadership, guidance, and insight on equity to improve the quality of life for Austinites. The Office strives to achieve the vision of making Austin the most livable city in the nation for all while building and sustaining a culture of equity across the city. This requires tackling tough issues such as institutional racism and implicit bias. Creating a culture of equity will ensure we are meeting the needs of all residents.</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from the Equity Office to inform them about the needs assessment and ask for their input from an equity perspective.</p> <p>The equity team addressed many areas of concern. These included questionable practices of landlords, protection of immigrant communities, program evaluation, language access, and the City’s role in continuing to cause harm to low-income communities of color. They were curious about how funds were dispersed. They emphasized how important it is to focus funds on those who need help the most and to truly distinguish affordable from deeply affordable. They asked how things like “affirmatively affirming fair housing” are playing a role? The wanted to know how programs are evaluated, what type of feedback is collected and how that feedback is used. They wanted to see accountability in data analysis, with a true understanding if funding is making a difference in racial equity. “What’s missing is a historical narrative for federal funding and how the department has engaged with the community over time. Outline when it began and how it has involved overtime.” They want to see the process address and not perpetuate historical harm, looking honestly at how these funds have been used to the detriment of certain communities. Telling the story in a way that is understandable for the community is an important piece of engagement that they want to see incorporated. Thinking about harm and history is imperative. The Equity staff pointed out that it’s not a part of City narrative that housing units produced for people with low-income has been decreasing over the years. They shared the needs assessment with Living Cities and were curious why the data points are not being shared by the City of Austin? How is this connected to the legacy of displacement? The team talked about the importance of correlating who is saying what when collecting data. Paid engagement was discussed as a necessary element, and the team wanted to know if community advisory boards have been considered. There was a desire to talk more about how we can we work together on a family stabilization program, which needs a dedicated funding source. The majority of people use this type of funding on housing.</p> <p>The team was happy to see a shift in engagement from past years, noting that it “can be demoralizing to hear things like ‘that’s not what this meeting is about’” when participating in the past.</p> <p>The Housing and Equity teams agreed to meet regularly to follow up on items discusses and create more equitable engagement for the Housing department moving forward.</p>

<p>Home Security and Emergency Management (HSEM)</p> <p>The City of Austin Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) plans and prepares for emergencies, educates the public about preparedness, develops volunteers, manages grant funding to improve homeland security and public safety capabilities, coordinates emergency response and recovery, supports planned events, and works with public and partner organizations to protect our whole community when it needs us the most.</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from HSEM to inform them about the needs assessment and discuss areas of overlap when assessing community needs.</p> <p>The team talked about instances in which something can happen in the community that doesn't rise to the level of a disaster, such as a hail event. Emergency management doesn't have an active role in situations like this, so when it comes to recovery there is no federal funding. However, that doesn't mean that people aren't in need of help. People with means have insurance, but those who may be uninsured or underinsured might have damage they can't afford to fix. Some households end up with multiple cars damaged and can't get to work. This is a major gap and HSEM staff is not always able to connect folks with the right resources. ReadyCentralTexas.org is a one-stop shop for response and recovery. HSEM staff wants to see more collaboration on a city-wide level so that we can point people to the right resources when they are experiencing emergencies. This would lead to a collective understanding of what all the resources are and HSEM can say "Here's where EOC can meet needs; here's who can help otherwise."</p> <p>Challenges with HACA properties were discussed, noting a gap in communication with property owners during an emergency, ie water gets cut off. HACA doesn't have the capacity to knock on doors and check on people or check on them in any way. Those facilities don't often have what they need for people to stay in place and folks end up in shelters. How can we work in advance to help educate people on what they will need or where they can go for shelter? HSEM is often looked at as the problem solvers for the City, and they need to share the responsibility across departments and agencies.</p> <p>Housing and HSEM discussed a follow-up meeting to continue the conversation about the landscape of service providers available during emergency situations. This conversation could also include the Sustainability Office who is working on resiliency hubs and has a vendor looking into community perceptions and needs. They are exploring what people need during disasters and what organizations they trust. Sharing survey results was also discussed as another follow-up item.</p>
<p>Homeless Strategy Office</p> <p>The Homeless Strategy Office (HSO) serves as a focal point for addressing homelessness comprehensively, strategically, and compassionately.</p>	<p>The Home Strategy Office will begin to administer some of the programs funded by federal dollars. Housing staff met with HSO during the needs assessment process as a way to begin structuring collaborative dialogue. The team discussed anticipated changes in funding and how gaps may be addressed. Staff agreed to continue open communication about community needs and how to address them together.</p>
<p>Office of Civil Rights</p> <p>The mission of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is to advance civil rights through thoughtful community and business engagement, strategic enforcement, and innovative policy development, with a commitment to race and social justice. The Office of</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from the Office of Civil Rights to inform them about the needs assessment and discuss areas of overlap when assessing community needs.</p> <p>The team was curious about guidance from HUD on the new equity plan. They were interested to hear about lessons learned from the program where people were given \$1000, knowing that most people spent the money on housing. They discussed the big gap where Austin Tenants Council used to be and the need for more advertising and outreach for</p>

<p>Civil Rights' (OCR) primary goal is promoting the fair treatment of all individuals in the areas of Employment, Housing, Fair Chance, Title VI, Title II, Veteran Services and Public Accommodations.</p>	<p>TRLA. They shared that their department has been getting lots of calls about ADA violations and asked what requirements for accessibility existed for the homes the Housing Department builds. They asked if positions could be funded through CDBG and if there would be an increase in funding.</p> <p>Housing staff committed to sending more information about the Architectural Barrier Removal program and connecting the OCR staff with the housing development program team to further discuss accessibility requirements for development partners.</p>
<p>Watershed Protection</p> <p>Watershed Protection protects lives, property and the environment of our community by reducing the impact of flooding, erosion and water pollution.</p>	<p>Housing Department staff met with staff from the Watershed Protection Department to inform them about the needs assessment and discuss areas of overlap when assessing community needs.</p> <p>The Watershed Protection team was curious about who the Housing Department serves and how Median Family Income numbers are calculated. In the work they do Watershed staff often see the needs of seniors, who may be above MFI levels but still unable to afford their home in a gentrifying neighborhood. When looking at income and wages as a major community need, they discussed staffing needed at the City, which makes a livable wage. The team shared findings from their department's engagement process for their strategic plan, Rain to River, noting that housing issues came up frequently. These challenges included the rising cost of homes, renting, and taxes due to our unstable economy, all leading to the displacement of many residents. People who are being pushed out of their community are not able to visit waterways and natural spaces in Austin because now it's too far to travel. Most people they talked to said that they love Austin. However, they don't see themselves in the future of Austin. They feel as if Austin isn't built with them in mind or that it is changing in a way that prioritizes other people and excludes people like them.</p> <p>They heard a lot from renters, including that they weren't aware that they may be renting in a location that is flood-prone. In addition, immigrant tenants felt taken advantage of and had little to no resources available to them after major flooding events. Lots of interviewees also expressed concerns with flooding of buildings, driveways, and parking areas within apartment complexes. People were also concerned about dumpsters overflowing at apartment complexes, and when it rains, there is trash everywhere. This shows the intersection of tenants' rights with Watershed Protection and the need for training on what the law says. The team discussed putting the Watershed Protection team in touch with TRLA.</p> <p>The staff talked about the need to prioritize services for people in floodplains and updated guidance on home repair when in a floodplain to avoid immediately disqualifying people. "One thing that we run into often are residents that call 311 regarding a drainage issue, but then they have other home repair needs. It feels a little helpless to just send them to a website to apply. I've known of at least one occasion where WPD staff actually filled out the application for the resident." Just the thought of applying for something that isn't a sure thing seems to be a major deterrent. But, even a handout with a consolidated list of resources that the Watershed Projection drainage investigators and engineers could keep on hand could be helpful.</p>

	<p>The Watershed Team shared about the Rain Catcher Program, which could provide resources for rainwater collection as part of home repair and can help address local water issues. They discussed the ease and mental release for people in knowing they have extra water sources during emergency situations. They are collaborating with Austin Water and the Development Services Department and would like to bring the Housing Department into that.</p> <p>The teams agreed to continue discussing cross-department partnerships to educate staff who are out in the field about services that are available to the community and look for other collaborative opportunities.</p>
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