

ONE VOICE CENTRAL TEXAS

Austin Area Human Services Association

A Community for Education
 AIDS Services of Austin
 American YouthWorks
 Any Baby Can
 ASCEND Center for Learning
 Austin Area Urban League
 Austin Child Guidance Center
 Austin Children's Shelter
 Austin Clubhouse
 Austin Free-Net
 Austin Groups for the Elderly
 Austin Partners in Education
 Austin Travis County Integral Care
 AVANCE
 Blackland CDC
 BookSpring
 Boys and Girls Club of Austin
 Camp Fire USA Balcones Council
 Capital Area Food Bank
 Capital IDEA
 Caritas of Austin
 Casa Marianella
 CASA of Travis County
 Catholic Charities of Central TX
 Center for Child Protection
 Child Inc.
 Communities In Schools
 Council on At-Risk Youth
 Easter Seals Central TX
 Eastside Community Connection
 ECHO
 El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission
 Extend-A-Care for Kids
 Faith In Action Caregivers
 Family Eldercare
 Foundation Communities
 Foundation for the Homeless
 Front Steps
 Goodwill Industries of Central TX
 HAND
 Lance Armstrong Foundation
 Leadership Austin
 LifeWorks
 Literacy Coalition of Central TX
 Lone Star Association of Charitable Clinics
 Meals on Wheels and More
 Open Door Preschool
 Partnerships for Children
 People's Community Clinic
 Project Transitions
 SafePlace
 Southwest Key Programs, Inc.
 Sustainable Food Center
 The Arc of the Capital Area
 The Austin Project
 The Care Communities
 The Settlement Home for Children
 Trinity Center
 United Way Capital Area
 Vaughn House
 Volunteer Healthcare Clinic
 Waterloo Counseling Center
 Wonders & Worries

Late Backup

July 23, 2012

Re: Affordable Housing in Bond Package

Dear Mayor Leffingwell and City Council Members

As you begin the difficult decision regarding the size of the bond package, One Voice Central Texas and its members urge you to support the inclusion of a **minimum of \$100 million for affordable housing**.

Part of the Imagine Austin vision is that Austin is a city where "the necessities of life are affordable and accessible to all." Safe and affordable housing is a critical necessity that is becoming increasingly out of reach to many residents, particularly the working poor. An article in the July 15th 2012 Austin American-Statesman cited:

- 97.8% rental occupancy rate in the Austin area
- Average rental rates for a one bedroom apartment reaching an all-time high of \$819, and
- Experts forecasting that tight rental conditions will continue for the foreseeable future.

The challenge for obtaining affordable housing is not going to get easier:

- The Austin area continues rapid growth
- The Texas Workforce Commission estimates that education, health care, and food services will gain the most jobs in the next six years. The Commission also projects that these will be the largest areas of employment in Travis County by 2012 and will supply over 265,000 jobs. Nearly 30% of those jobs have a median wage of less than \$10 per hour (WorkSource)
- The City's 'Comprehensive Housing Market Study' in 2009, showed a gap of 37,600 units of affordable housing for households making less than \$20,000 a year
- The Corporation for Supportive Housing identified the need for 1,889 units of permanent supportive housing
- Low income individuals often require housing that is close to public transportation, which generally means being close to the city core

The community has a history of effectively using housing bonds. Following the 2006 approval of \$55 million in housing bonds:


- 2,242 units were developed or rehabilitated to provide deeply affordable housing units (HousingWorks)

- The units were geographically dispersed in Austin
- An additional \$177 million in development expenditure from additional federal, state, and private funding has been leveraged (City of Austin NHCD)
- Repaired the homes of over 500 low income homeowners, 80% of them seniors or disabled.

When One Voice Central Texas members were asked the most pressing needs impacting their clients, they identified affordable and safe housing that is close to transportation as critical.

The City of Austin's Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department's Action Plan states that "to assist in closing that gap the City will continue to prioritize resources to affordable housing projects that serve very-low income households." **One Voice Central Texas urges the City to continue this commitment to prioritizing affordable housing and include a minimum of \$100 million in housing bonds in the proposal that is presented to voters this November.**

On behalf of our members and clients, we thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance or if you have any questions.

R, 

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CC: City Manager, Mr. Marc Ott

