



CONSOLIDATED PLAN NEEDS ASSESSMENT TALKING POINTS

For ADAPT of Texas

3/27/14

Affordability is biggest barrier in housing in Austin.

- People on disability incomes are below 30% Median Family Income (MFI), more like 14 – 18%
- Same is true for the direct care workers/attendants who assist us.
- Focus must be on DEEP AFFORDABILITY, ie. 30% AND BELOW of MFI (Median Family Income)
- Affordable housing needs to be near the middle of town – public transit trips take all day from non-central areas
- City needs to make more aggressive requirements for downtown developers to help provide affordable housing, and deeply affordable housing. Downtown should not just be playground for the rich.
- The Housing Authority of the City of Austin, HACA's, Section 8 list last opened in 2006. These funds drying up; new vouchers delayed because of this. We shouldn't just look to HACA to serve lowest income people's housing needs.
- Funding for housing needs to be better distributed: tax credit projects should not get first shot and then permanent supportive housing gets the rest. Other important affordable housing is needed.
- Con plan should look at funding selection processes generally, what gets points, what doesn't. This is where true priorities are made.
- Austin should pass ordinance banning housing discrimination based on source of income

Integrated housing is critical.

- NURSING HOMES ARE NOT HOUSING, just as JAILS, HOSPITALS, MILITARY BARRACKS and SHELTERS aren't housing and shouldn't be listed as such in our plans, reports, etc.
- We should not support Visitability and then turn around and build segregated housing ghettos.
- ADAPT WANTS & SUPPORTS services and supports for people who need them.
- HOWEVER, services should not be tied to housing.
- Services should be optional.
- Scarce housing funds should not be funding services. Service money should fund services.
- Housers should not have to learn service provision & service providers should not have to build housing.
 - There is enough work in each of these areas without having to learn the other, and work is important enough not be left to people whose expertise is in other areas.
- Permanent supportive housing too easily becomes institutional.
- Accessible, affordable, integrated housing is usable by anyone (people with and without disabilities, people who do and do not use services, etc.)
- City of Austin should pass an integration mandate for housing it funds.

Accessible housing is greatly needed.

- People in our group with Section 8 vouchers have had to get multiple extensions to find a place that was accessible to them. People must wait for people to die to get housing that is accessible and affordable.
- The Architectural Barrier Removal Program (ABRP) needs to be upgraded. The drop in usage is due to other agencies providing the same services using scarce state dollars. Other areas don't have local funding. Better coordination is needed. In addition, application process needs to be streamlined.
- Funding for architectural barrier removal should be for access, not for home improvements – be honest about how dollars are spent. This is a slippery slope we have seen in other kinds of funding and we need to fix it now. Home improvement money should pay for home improvements.
- City needs to tie income levels for ABRP to household instead of neighborhood where housing is located. Linking income limits for ABRP to the neighborhood leads to barriers for integration or lack of service for people in non-traditional areas. Policies (and if necessary funding) for ABRP need to continue to support integration. City should bring this up with HUD!
- We believe there should be preferences in housing vouchers for people getting out of nursing homes and other institutions; also the city should provide vouchers for people in institutions/nursing homes, just as you do with other oppressed populations.

FAIR HOUSING is vital in Austin

Housing discrimination continues in Austin today. People with disabilities are often discriminated against. In addition, they often need help with landlord tenant issues. ADAPT strongly supports funding for the Austin Tenants Council.

Thank you for passing the Visitability standards in the Single Family Building Code.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today!