



Neighborhood Housing &
Community Development



RENT assistance

for Austin tenants affected by COVID-19

Housing & Planning Committee Briefing: RENT Assistance Program & Tenant Stabilization Services – September 8, 2020



Briefing Agenda

Budget

Program Structure & Eligibility

Tenant Stabilization Services

Marketing & Outreach Strategy

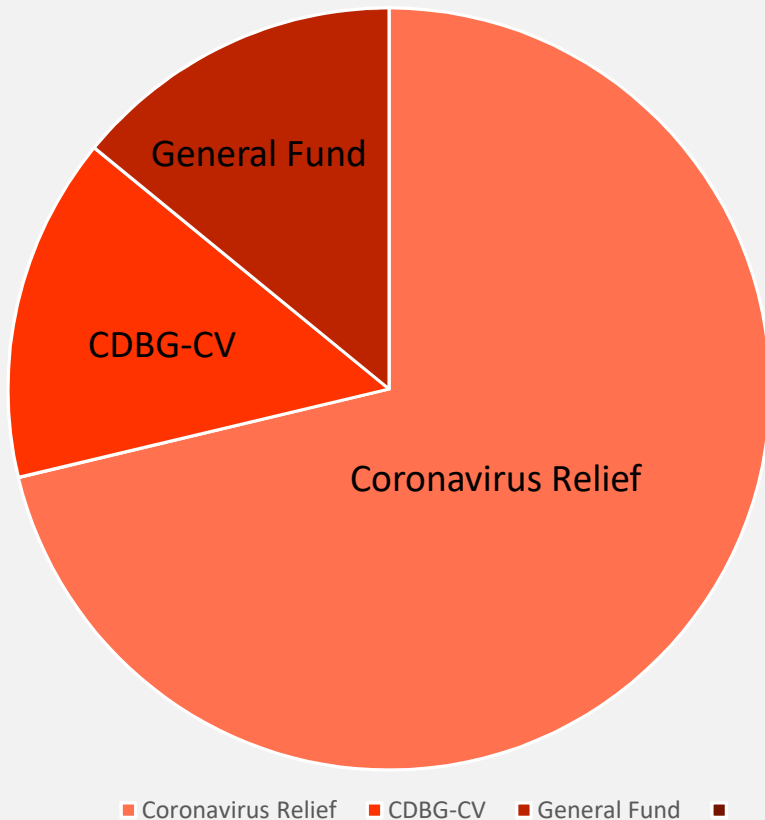
Applicant Data

Program Enhancements

Allocating Resources Directly to Vulnerable Households

RENT Budget

RENT Funding Sources



City of Austin \$17.75 Million Commitment to Austin Renters Impacted by Covid-19

- Nearly \$13 million Direct Rental Assistance
- \$1.28 million for Tenant Stabilization Services (including Legal Representation and Tenant/Landlord Mediation)
- Nearly \$500,000 for Targeted Community Outreach



Structure

- ✓ \$12.9M Direct Rental Assistance
- ✓ \$1.28M Tenant Stabilization Services
- ✓ CVRF + CDBG-CV + GF
- ✓ Partners: HACA, CVR, CBO's
- ✓ Goal: 2,000 paid rents monthly
- ✓ Randomized Selection



Eligibility

- ✓ < 80% MFI
- ✓ Traditional + Non-Traditional Leases
- ✓ No Duplication of Benefits
- ✓ COVID-19 Financial Impact
- ✓ Must reside within Austin's Full Purpose Jurisdiction



Benefit

- ✓ Full Contract Rent Payment
- ✓ 30% - 80% MFI = 1-month rent
- ✓ <30% MFI = 3-months rent



Eviction Defense Services & Tenant/Landlord Mediation Services

- ✓ \$400,000
- ✓ Highly rent burdened households are more likely to face eviction



RIGHT TO CURE FUNDS

- ✓ \$600,000 in funds for eligible households
- ✓ Fees owed to landlords*



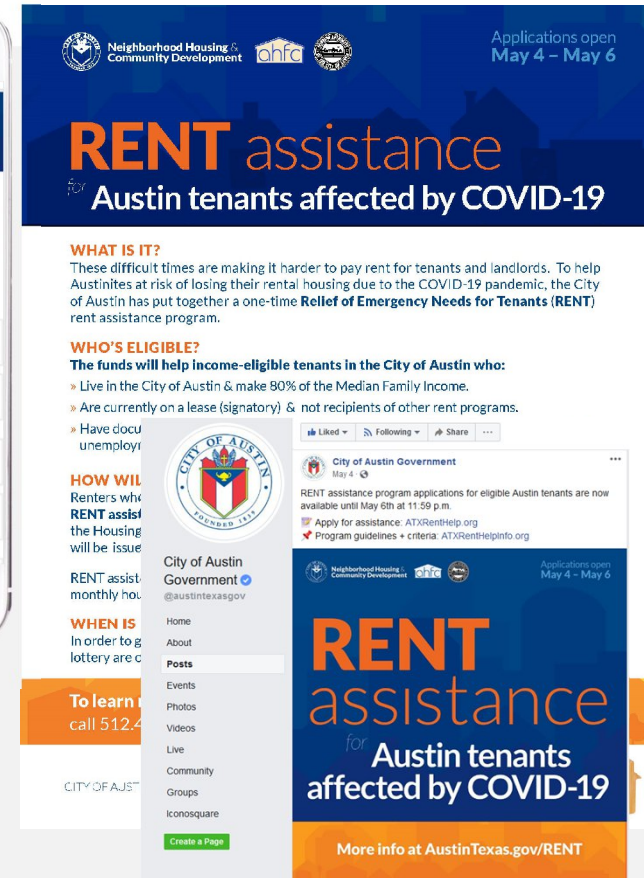
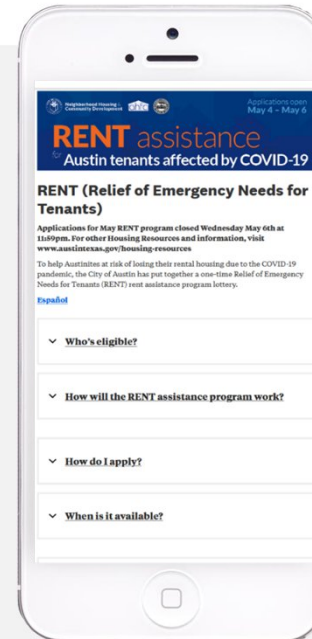
TENANT RELOCATION SERVICES

- ✓ \$280,000
- ✓ Moving
- ✓ Storage

Expanding our Outreach Strategy

Build upon RENT 1.0 partnerships & success

- ✓ Where people work and live
- ✓ In communities of color
- ✓ Where essential workers are
- ✓ Grassroots approach (flyers, door hangers/postering)
- ✓ Community Partners Social Channels (300+)
- ✓ Non-Profits (75+ organizations)
- ✓ Contractors Associations
- ✓ Direct email (10K+ individuals)
- ✓ AISD programs, PARD Rec Centers, Senior Centers, testing centers, community clinics, food access centers, convenience stores, places of faith, and direct to homes, safely
- ✓ RENT Webinars for community organizations and landlords



Working with Experienced Community Partners

\$400,000 in Funding to Partners Experienced to Maximize Impact

- INFORM the PUBLIC ABOUT RENT
 - Calls, emails, webinars, social media, newsletters
 - Flyers, door hangers
 - Pre-printed media kits are available
- ASSIST WITH RENT APPLICATION PREPARATION
 - Help applicants understand eligibility
 - Help applicants create an email address, or allow them to use your own
 - Help applicants obtain their required documents
- ASSIST WITH ONLINE APPLICATION
 - Make computers available for applicants
 - Help clients complete the application
 - Help applicants upload their documents

Applications

- 7,877 Applications Started
- 1,555 Denied based upon information provided
- 3,903 Applications Submitted
- 2,419 will receive reminder notifications

Support Services

- 42% Report Needing Utility Assistance
- 11% Report Needing Eviction Prevention Services or Legal Representation
- 4% Report Needing Tenant Relocation Services

Applicant Demographics

- Reported Pre-COVID Income \$27,998*
- Reported Current Income \$14,883*
- 77% of Applicants under 30% MFI
- 62% are Female Headed Households
- 21% Reported the Head of Household as African American/Black
- 36% Reported the Head of Household as Hispanic

Data as of 9/3/20

Building a Program Responsive to Community Needs

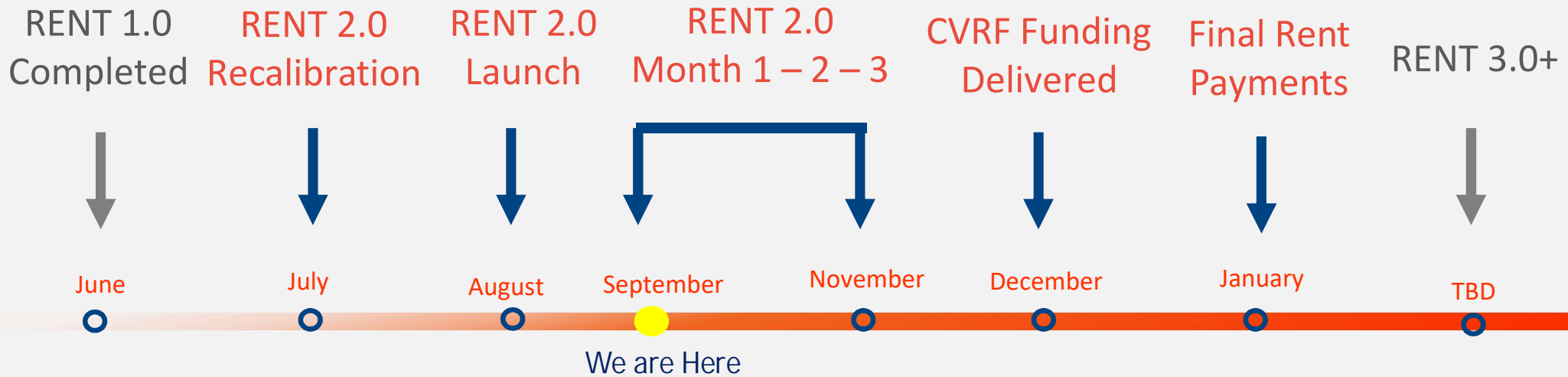
A Community and Data Informed Program



Designed to be Sensitive to the Needs of our Community

- Applicants are not required to have a social security number.
- Applicants can be in contractual relationships for rent (outside of a “traditional lease” agreement).
- Examining the program design to contemplate a “warm” hand-off for persons in need of services other than direct rent.

Keeping You Informed: Timeline & Next Steps



- Direct Rental Assistance distributed starting in September.
- Tenant Stabilization Services starting in September/October.
- Community Outreach contracts awarded in September.
- Final program applications will be received in December.*
- Ongoing data analysis to better serve Austinites.

Contact Information

RENT Assistance Program:

Website: www.austintexas.gov/RENT

Email: AustinRENT@cvrassociates.com

Call Center: 512-488-1397

Monday – Friday 8 AM – 6 PM

Questions?