



**HOUSING &  
PLANNING**

**AUSTIN HOUSING  
FINANCE CORPORATION**

# COMMUNITY INNOVATION

## **Project Connect Community Initiated Solutions Notice of Funding Availability NOFA Addendum #1**

**Applications Due Prior to:** 4:00 PM Monday **June 27, 2022**  
**Issuing Department:** Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)  
1000 East 11th Street, Suite 200  
Austin, Texas 78702

A pre-submittal meeting will be held on Wednesday April 20, 2022 on zoom. [Click here to register in advance for this meeting](#)

### **Primary Points of Contact (POCs)**

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All communications concerning this solicitation shall be directed to the POCs named above. Any communication other than with the POCs will be considered unofficial and non-binding.

# Notice of Funding Availability

## Addendum #1



The following is a summary of the changes made to the NOFA as a result of this addendum. Changes have also been noted in yellow highlighted text throughout the document.

- On page 7, the definition of Partnerships has been expanded to include the following sentence “Partnerships with local organizations are encouraged.”
- On page 10, the deadline has been extended to June 27, 2022. 4:00 PM
- On page 10. the deadline for vendor questions extended to June 10, 2022
- On page 10, two additional virtual technical assistance meetings have been added:
  - June 3 ,2022: 11:00 – 12:00pm: Zoom
  - June 10, 2022: 11:00 – 12:00pm: Zoom
- On page 14, the reporting requirements have been ammended to add that the final report must include proof that investment beneficiaries are existing residents living within one mile of a transit line or station in areas in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk, as evidenced by Project Connect Anti-Displacement [maps and dashboard](#).

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# Background and Purpose



Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) in coordination with The City of Austin Housing and Planning Department (HPD) seeks solicitations to reduce residential displacement and create economic mobility opportunities for people most vulnerable to displacement along Project Connect corridors. Nonprofit organizations and partnerships are invited to propose applications for a range of investments that stabilize tenants and homeowners and build economic mobility within 1 mile of Project Connect stations and lines in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk. Funds cannot be used for land acquisition, land development, and direct homeless services. AHFC and Austin Public Health (APH) have other programs specifically for these purposes.

Project Connect is a citywide comprehensive rapid transit system that will connect people to opportunities. It will consist of expanded light rail and bus service, new Park & Ride facilities, and new neighborhood circulators. Find more information at [projectconnect.com](https://projectconnect.com).

In November 2020, Austin voters approved an increase in the City's property tax rate to fund a portion of the \$7.1 billion investment needed to expand mobility and access for all Austinites. Over the next 13 years, federal and local funds will be utilized to build Project Connect. For the first time in the history of the City of Austin, \$300 million of the \$7.1 billion Project Connect investment will be dedicated to anti-displacement initiatives. In addition, the Contract with the Voters stipulated the creation of an equity framework that ensures investments are rooted in equity and anti-displacement. Furthermore, to maintain accountability to community, the City of Austin, Capital Metro, and Austin Transit Partnership created the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), a body of community members responsible for recommending investments and providing guidance on embedding equity in Project Connect investments, including efforts to curb displacement along the Project Connect lines. A working group of the CAC will help review proposals and make recommendations of awardees to the AHFC Board for approval.



# 2022 Funding Available and Priorities

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The current funding round includes up to \$20 million for nonprofit organizations and partnerships for the following priorities:



## **Renter/tenant stabilization**

These investments may include tenant protections, eviction prevention, emergency rental assistance, education on fair housing laws and tenant rights, and other programs, services, and investments that prevent displacement by stabilizing tenants.



## **Expansion and preservation of home ownership opportunities**

These investments may include down payment and closing cost assistance programs, mortgage assistance, foreclosure prevention assistance, HUD-approved housing counseling, home rehabilitation and repair loans, community land trusts and housing cooperatives, and other programs, services, and investments that prevent displacement by expanding and preserving home ownership opportunities.



## **Other anti-displacement strategies**

Innovative housing-focused investments that support economic mobility within the impacted area of Project Connect and help prepare the affected communities to survive and even thrive in crisis. Asset building strategies that facilitate access to capital, estate planning, financial capability (education and literacy), leveraging affordable housing to create good paying jobs and skill building labs, as well as other models that preserve and expand the community's assets and increase economic mobility.

# Nothing About Us Without Us Report and Equity Tool



Illustration created by Jasmine Willis

Much research has been done about transit policies and investments that have unintended or intended negative impacts on historically marginalized communities if equity is not intentionally centered from conception to completion.<sup>1</sup> Transit improvements generally spark new development focused on attracting new higher-income residents and businesses. These changes can increase property taxes, rents, consumer goods, and business costs. This can result in displacement for struggling working families, small business owners, and other groups that are left out of the progress resulting from the investments.

In 2020, thirty community members were selected from 117 applications through a process that centered people most affected by displacement. Catalysts participated in two training sessions and five policy workshops to co-create the Tool over four months, contributing a total of nearly 950 hours. The [Nothing About Us Without Us](#) report and tool was developed to help reduce potential negative impacts associated with Project Connect. It will be used to prioritize investments in anti-displacement strategies that stabilize homeowners, renters, small businesses, and community-based organizations along Project Connect corridors.

Evaluation Criteria have been informed by the [Nothing About Us Without Us](#) report and tool. It is highly recommended that applicants thoroughly read the report before preparing an application.

<sup>1</sup> [The Kinder Institute for Urban Research](#)

# Funding Term and Amount



AHFC anticipates awarding up to 15 applications for the \$20,000,000 and will select the applications that offer the best value to AHFC based on the published evaluation criteria and on final rankings. Evaluation criteria are described in the solicitation documents. The estimated program budget for the one-year initial term with two additional one-year optional renewals, renewable at the sole discretion of AHFC, is \$20,000,000 to be distributed among the selected applications. Minimum amount will be \$250,000. While it is anticipated that this amount will be distributed on a roughly proportionate basis among the selected Applicant, there is no guarantee of the number or the dollar value assigned to each Applicant, if any.

You may apply for up to three (3) years of funding understanding that if your application is selected, the initial contract term will be for one (1) year. Second and third years are extended based on outcomes, performance, and an updated budget.

# Eligibility

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## Priority Area

All applications must benefit existing residents who live within 1 mile of Project Connect stations and lines in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk.



## Applicant Types

**Nonprofit organizations:** 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 non-profit organization and a registered vendor with the City of Austin; or

**Partnerships:** Partnerships between nonprofits and for-profits, or community-based organizations. Partnerships must identify a lead organization responsible for coordinating the group's activities, including fiscal administration, reporting, quality control, and deliverable management. The lead organization must be a registered vendor with the City of Austin. The application must demonstrate how each partner organizations will contribute to the goals and outcomes set forth in the proposal. **Partnerships with local organizations are encouraged.**

## Other Requirements

- Applicants must not be on the City's debarment list. The City of Austin is prohibited from contracting with or making prime or sub-awards to parties that are suspended or debarred or whose principals are suspended or debarred from Federal, State, or City of Austin Contracts.
- To be considered for funding, application must be complete and signed.
- Technical Assistance provided by the City is required for all vendors accepting contract awards.
- The selected recipient shall carry insurance for the duration of the Agreement and furnish a Certificates of Insurance, including all policy endorsements as evidence thereof to AHFC. Listed below are examples of insurance coverages the selected recipient may be required to obtain:
  - Statutory Workers' Compensation and Employers Liability ( If Recipient's employees are working on AHFC property)
  - Commercial General Liability Insurance with a minimum bodily injury and property damage
  - Business Automobile Liability Insurance (for all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles if the recipient uses any vehicles to perform its scope of work)
  - Directors and Officers coverage
  - Blanket Crime Policy
  - Cyber Liability Insurance



# Application



This application is for nonprofit organizations and partnerships seeking funding from the Project Connect Anti-Displacement Investments. All applications must benefit existing residents who live within 1 mile of Project Connect stations and lines in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk. See definitions and view maps [here](#).

**To apply for funding visit:**

**[https://cityofaustin.formstack.com/forms/pc\\_funding\\_app](https://cityofaustin.formstack.com/forms/pc_funding_app)**

Application evaluation criteria have been informed by the [Nothing About Us Without Us](#) report and tool. It is recommended that applicants thoroughly read the report before preparing an application.

All materials submitted as part of your proposal become public property and are subject to the requirements of the Texas Open Records Act. Any material submitted that you deem as confidential, or that which you would like to be redacted prior to public release shall be marked as such, and addressed in a statement describing why the request for redaction was made. AHFC shall endeavor to protect such information from disclosure to the extent allowed by law (Texas Government Code Chapter 552). AHFC shall not make public any certified or compiled financial documents submitted with the Proposal.

Applicants may withdraw their proposal from consideration at any time. Requests to withdraw a previously submitted Proposal must be made to the POCs of this solicitation.

AHFC reserves the right to cancel this solicitation at any time prior to proposer selection should it deem appropriate. All costs directly or indirectly related to preparation of an application shall be the sole responsibility of the Applicant.

# Review Process



The application review process involves multiple evaluations by different groups. All reviewers will sign a non-disclosure agreement and disclose and/or recuse themselves of any conflicts of interest.



## Completeness Check

Applications will be pre-screened by staff to ensure minimum requirements are met.



## Community Evaluation Panel

Applications will be reviewed by a community evaluation panel composed of practitioners, academics, and stakeholders from communities most impacted by displacement. The panels will review and score proposals using evaluation criteria informed by the [Nothing About Us Without Us](#) report and tool. The review panels will provide a list of scored, ranked proposals to a working group of the Community Advisory Committee.



## Review Panel

A working group of the Community Advisory Committee will consider balances between funding categories and recommend proposals for funding to AHFC Board for final approval.

# Timeline

## Notice of Funding Released April 11, 2022

## Optional Pre-Submittal Meeting April 20, 2022, 5:30 – 7:00 PM on Zoom [Register Here](#)

A recording will be available for potential applicants unable to attend

## Technical Assistance Workshops In Person and Online [Sign Up Here](#)

- April 27, 2022: 5:30 – 7:00pm: Zoom
- May 5, 2022: 10 – 11:30am: Street-Jones Building: 1000 E 11th St, Room 400A
- May 11, 2022: 10 – 11:30am: Zoom
- May 19, 2022: 5:30 – 7:00pm: Street-Jones Building: 1000 E 11th St, Room 400A
- June 3, 2022: 11:00 – 12:00pm: Zoom
- June 10, 2022: 11:00 – 12:00pm: Zoom

## Deadline for Vendor Questions June 10, 2022

Clarification and/or addendum will be posted 7 days prior to deadline

## Applications Due June 27, 2022, 4:00 PM

## Application Review Summer 2022

## Award Recommendations Fall 2022

## Notice of Funding Released



**April 20, 2022**

Optional Pre-Submittal Meeting, 5:30 – 7:00 PM on Zoom



**April 27-June 10, 2022**

Technical Assistance Workshops In Person and on Zoom [Sign Up Here](#)



**June 10, 2022**

Deadline for Vendor Questions



**June 27, 2022**

Applications Due



**Summer 2022**

Application Review



**Fall 2022**

Award Recommendations

# Additional Resources



- [Project Connect Anti-Displacement Maps and Dashboard \(2022\)](#)  
City of Austin Housing and Planning Department's dashboard that illustrates demographic characteristics of areas within 1 mile of Project Connect stations in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk.
  - [Community Investment and Wealth-Building Strategies report \(2022\)](#)  
Information on community wealth-building strategies that could benefit populations vulnerable to displacement in areas impacted by Project Connect. The report includes scopes of work for priority strategies that may inform anti-displacement proposals.
  - [City of Austin Displacement Mitigation Strategy \(2019\)](#)  
An implementation plan for the Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint that incorporates recommendations from the Anti-Displacement Task Force, Uprooted, and the People's Plan, as called for in City Council Resolutions 20170413-024 and 20170413-025.
  - [Anti-Displacement Task Force Report \(2018\)](#)  
Recommendations from a community task force created by City Council.
  - [Uprooted: Residential Displacement in Austin's Gentrifying Neighborhoods and What Can Be Done About It \(2018\)](#)  
A joint initiative of faculty with The University of Texas School of Law and the Community and Regional Planning Program at The University of Texas at Austin.
  - [The People's Plan \(2018\)](#)  
A series of resolutions drafted by community members aimed at preventing displacement.
- [Austin Strategic Housing Blueprint \(2017\)](#)  
The City's Strategic Housing Blueprint helps align resources and facilitate community partnerships around a single strategic vision to ensure that there is affordable housing throughout the city.

# Evaluation Criteria



Applications that best meet the evaluation criteria will be prioritized. Applicable criteria and awarded points for each scored section are noted below.

	Max Points
<p><b>1. Community Needs and Root Causes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal use disaggregated demographic data for transparency and decision-making and accountability to those most impacted by displacement?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal explicitly specify what demographic, location, quantitative, and qualitative data informs this proposal?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal explain how it aligns with the characteristics of the displacement risk to either address whether people are vulnerable to displacement, actively experiencing displacement, experiencing chronic historic displacement, or are excluded from an area?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>2. Proposed Solution(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal advance multiple Priority Purposes for use of anti-displacement funds?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal explicitly describe how it decreases displacement pressures for those most at risk of displacement?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal specify which inequities it aims to narrow or close?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal address a historic injustice (e.g., invest in communities who experienced historic disinvestment or were displaced, etc.)?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal explicitly describe how it has a beneficial impact for communities at risk of displacement?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal address an existing need or leverage an amenity identified by the community?</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<p><b>3. Experience, Qualifications, and Project Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the applicant, factoring in proposed capacity-building efforts including formal partnerships, have the ability to deliver on the proposal?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the applicant have a clear idea of how to deliver on the programming aspects of the proposal demonstrated with previous examples?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has the applicant adequately identified potential setbacks and how they will address them?</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>
<p><b>4. Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal advance the Vision of the Nothing About Us Without Us report?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal use a collaborative or deferential model of community partnership between the institutions and those most at risk of displacement to make future decisions?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal reflect the result of previously established and inclusive community efforts that included those most impacted by displacement?</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>

# Evaluation Criteria



	Max Points
<b>5. Equity Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal represent a substantial effort to address a minimum of 3 Equity Goals, equally?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal identify measurable outcomes to advance the Equity Goals?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal show a clear connection between the project and the Equity Goals?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>6. Duration, Impact, and Scale</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal address displacement at a root cause level by explicitly removing displacement pressures (e.g., protecting from future real estate speculation)?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal benefit existing residents who live within 1-mile of any Project Connect station in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk to leverage transit investments and mitigate their displacement pressures?</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal address the needs of communities at risk of displacement at a sufficient scale to create real benefit for communities at risk of displacement?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>7. Guardrails</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are potential unintended burdens (such as time commitments or financial costs) for communities at risk of displacement clearly identified, and are meaningful measures to mitigate harm proposed?</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>8. Equity and Inclusion Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has the applicant taken significant steps to address institutional racism in their organization (i.e. requiring all decision makers to attend trainings like the Undoing Racism® Community Organizing Workshop and reading material like the Uprooted report) and are they effectively using those materials to transform how they do their work as well as shape the goals and outcomes of their proposal?</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>9. Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does the proposal reflect realistic costs and adequately and equitably resources all community partners and participants and supports community coalition building?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

# Reporting Requirements



City staff will review progress made towards the contract at quarterly intervals with a final report at the end of the funding period. The lead organization will be required to keep a comprehensive file (digital) tracking budget and key performance and accountability measures.

The final report must meet the objectives outlined in the Background and Purpose section of this Notice of Funding Availability. The final report must include:

- A description of how funds supported the organization in meeting the purpose of the contract.
- Proof that investment beneficiaries are existing residents living within one mile of a transit line or station in areas in communities with vulnerable, active, and chronic displacement risk, as evidenced by Project Connect Anti-Displacement [maps and dashboard](#).
- Qualitative narrative of key performance and accountability measures as outlined in the contract.
- A final contract budget synopsis that shows how grant dollars were expended.
- A budget synopsis for the close out of the contract.

All reports will be evaluated by City staff.

# Rejection of Proposals



AHFC reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and to waive any minor informality in any Proposal procedure (a minor informality is one that does not affect the competitiveness of the Applicants).

**a. The following will be cause to reject a Proposal:**

1. Submission of Proposal, which is not signed by an individual empowered to bind the Applicant.
2. Applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria.
3. Evidence of collusion among Applicants.
4. Sworn testimony or discovery in pending litigation with City which discloses misconduct or willful refusal by Applicant to comply with subject contract or instructions of Housing and Planning.
5. Proposals received from an Applicant who has been debarred or suspended by City's Purchasing Officer.
6. Proposals received from an Applicant when its Principals are currently debarred or suspended by Federal, State or City governmental agencies. (Applicable for Proposal amounts equal to or in excess of \$25,000.00).

**b. The following may be cause to reject a Proposal:**

1. Poor performance in execution of work under a previous City contract.
2. Evidence of poor performance on an existing or previous project as documented in the City's project performance evaluations.
3. Failure to achieve reasonable progress on an existing or previous City contract.
4. Default on previous contracts or failure to execute a previous contract after award.
5. Evidence of failure to pay subcontractors, suppliers, or employees in accordance with previous contract requirements.
6. Proposals containing omissions, alterations of form, additions, qualifications or conditions not called for by AHFC, or incomplete Proposals, AHFC reserves the right to determine the interpretation or to reject the Proposal.
7. Failure to submit any of the items specified in the Proposal.
8. Failure to timely execute this Contract after award.
9. Previous safety or environmental violations resulting in fines or citations by a governmental entity (e.g., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, etc.).
10. Failure of Applicant to demonstrate its experience with projects of similar size, scope, and complexity.
11. Evidence of Applicant's lack of sufficient resources, workforce, equipment, bonding capability, or supervision.



# Protest Procedures



The AHFC's Treasurer has the authority to settle or resolve any claim of an alleged deficiency or protest. The procedures for notifying AHFC of an alleged deficiency or filing a protest are listed below. If you fail to comply with any of these requirements, the AHFC Treasurer may dismiss your complaint or protest.

**Prior to Proposal Solicitation opening:** If you are a prospective Applicant and you become aware of facts leading you to believe there is a deficiency in the Proposal process before the proposal is due, you must notify AHFC in writing, at the below address, of the alleged deficiency before that date, giving AHFC an opportunity to resolve the situation prior to the proposal due date.

**After Proposal Solicitation opening:** If you submit a Proposal to AHFC and you believe that there has been a deficiency in the process or the award, you have the opportunity to protest the process or the recommended award as follows:

1. You must file written notice of your intent to protest within four (4) calendar days of the date that you know or should have known of the facts relating to the protest. If you do not file a written notice of intent within this time, you have waived all rights to protest the Proposal process or the award.
2. You must file your written protest within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date that you know or should have known of the facts relating to the protest unless you know of the facts before the proposal due date. If you know of the facts before that date, you must notify AHFC as stated above.
3. You must submit your protest in writing and must include the following information:
  - a. your name, address, telephone, and email address;
  - b. the solicitation name and number, if applicable;
  - c. a detailed statement of the factual grounds for the protest, including copies of any relevant documents.
4. Your protest must be concise and presented logically and factually to help with AHFC'S review.
5. When AHFC receives a timely written protest, the AHFC Treasurer will determine whether the grounds for your protest are sufficient. If the AHFC Treasurer decides that the grounds are sufficient, AHFC will schedule a protest hearing, usually within five (5) working days. If the AHFC Treasurer determines that your grounds are insufficient, you will be notified of that decision in writing.
6. (6) The protest hearing is informal and is not subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act. The purpose of the hearing is to give you a chance to present your case; it is not an adversarial proceeding. Those who may attend from AHFC are: representatives from the department that requested the purchase, the Law Department, the AHFC and other appropriate City staff. You may bring a representative or anyone else that will present information to support the factual grounds for your protest with you to the hearing.
7. A decision will usually be made within fifteen (15) calendar days after the hearing.
8. The AHFC Treasurer will send you a copy of the hearing decision after the appropriate AHFC staff have reviewed the decision.
9. When a protest is filed, AHFC usually will not make an award until a decision on the protest is made. However, AHFC will not delay an award if the Treasurer determines that:
10. AHFC urgently requires the supplies or services to be purchased, or
11. Failure to make an award promptly will unduly delay delivery or performance.
12. Note: In the above instances, AHFC will notify you and make every effort to resolve your protest before the award.
13. The protest and notice of intent to protest shall be submitted in writing to the following address:

Austin Housing Finance Corporation  
Attention: AHFC Treasurer  
1000 East 11th Street  
Austin, Texas 78702