

FY 2026-2027 BUDGET QUESTION
Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Housing; Austin Development Services

CBQ NO.: 130

REQUESTED BY: (District 1) Natasha Harper-Madison

DATE REQUESTED: Monday, August 3, 2026 2:41 PM

DATE POSTED: Tuesday, August 11, 2026

REQUEST:

Please identify the staffing, program, and funding needs required to receive, screen, and respond to new and existing referrals concerning Housing and Code's development of an early-notification process for vulnerable homeowners facing serious code violations. How many additional households could existing home-repair programs realistically serve, and what eligibility or funding gaps would prevent assistance? Please also identify potential City cost savings from earlier interventions and how those savings could be measured.

RESPONSE:

DSD-Code Compliance and the Housing Department have been working with D1 staff on conversations related to providing references to Housing when a code violation case involves a homeowner that may face hardships in getting necessary repairs complete. These discussions are still on-going and the referral and screening criteria have not been finalized.

Staffing and Program Needs

DSD-Code Compliance currently provides references to Housing programs that provide financial assistance and/or low-interest loans to homeowners in these situations. Discussions are underway regarding making these references more direct, either through a technological solution or by utilizing DSD's Social Worker, in addition to the education and awareness currently provided.

If an early-notification program is established, additional staffing needs for DSD have not yet been determined. DSD would evaluate whether additional staffing is needed for the Social Worker program based on the referral process and screening criteria that are ultimately established.

Existing Program Capacity and Funding Gaps

The Housing Department would need to determine how much funding is currently available through its home-repair assistance programs and how many additional households those programs could serve. DSD would also evaluate referral data to determine how many referrals relate to homeowners who are unable to afford necessary repairs and whether DSD is currently receiving referrals from Housing.

Potential Cost Savings

Earlier intervention could potentially prevent conditions from deteriorating to an extreme point, which could result in increased repair costs and/or potential demolition conditions. For example, repairing a leaking roof before ongoing water damage occurs could prevent further damage to walls, subflooring, and other building systems.

DSD does not currently track cost savings associated with earlier intervention; therefore, a specific dollar amount cannot be quantified at this time.