

INFORMATION ABOUT HOUSING FOR SENIORS

Prepared for June 11, 2014 Commission on Seniors Meeting

Information assembled by the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) and
Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (NHCD)

General Affordable Housing Information

The Austin Tenant's Council publishes a document called Guide to Affordable Housing in the Greater Austin Area. It specifies, by area of town, the various types of housing developments that are available to seniors, disabled, etc., and is available here: http://www.housing-rights.org/PDF/GAHGAA_2012.pdf.

Housing Options for Seniors *(Answers Questions 1 & 3)*

1. Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)

Currently the waiting list for the HCV program is closed at both the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) and the Housing Authority of Travis County (HATC). However, HATC just completed their waiting list opening earlier this year, taking 500 names onto their waiting list. HACA will re-open its HCV waiting list this fall, October 22nd – October 29th. This will be an online application – no need to stand in line or fight for position. It will not matter whether you apply the first day or the last day, as HACA will conduct a lottery to randomly select 2500 names to be placed on the waiting list. Watch HACA's website (www.hacanet.org) for updates as information becomes available.

2. HUD Multifamily, 202 and 236 Designated for Seniors

Name	Address	# of Units
The Flagship	1312 Lamar Square Austin, TX 78704	28
Franklin Garden Apts	3522 E MLK Jr Blvd Austin, TX 78721	21
Lyons Gardens Sr Housing	2720 Lyons Rd Austin, TX 78702	53
RBJ Towers	21 Waller St Austin, TX 78702	250
St George's Court	1443 Coronado Hills Austin, TX 78752	60
Village Christian Apts	7925 Rockwood Ln Austin, TX 78757	105
Charles Place Apartments	1339 Lamar Square Dr Austin, TX 78704	218
Eberhart Place	808 Eberhart Ln Austin, TX 78745	38

Western Trails Apartments	2422 Western Trails Austin, TX 78745	99
Oak Springs Villas	3001 Oak Springs Dr Austin, TX 78702	56
Cobblestone Court	2101 Davis Ln Austin, TX 78745	69

3. HOME Program Housing Designated for Seniors

Name	Address	# of Units
Ebenezer Village Apartments	1015 E 10th St Austin, TX 78702	12

4. Tax Credit Properties Designated for Seniors

Name	Address	# of Units
Heritage Point	1950 Webberville Rd Austin, TX 78721	240
The Village at Collinwood	1001 Collinwood W Dr Austin, TX 78753	174
Lodge At Merriltown	14745 Merriltown Dr Austin, TX 78728	204
City View at the Park	2000 Woodward St Austin, TX 78741	70
Cambridge Villas	15711 Dessau Rd Pflugerville TX 78660	200
Manor Town Apts	200 W Carrie Manor Manor, TX 78653	33
Wildflower Terrace	3801 Berkman Dr. Austin, TX 78723	201

5. Public Housing (HACA & HATC)

HACA Elderly & Disabled Properties

Name	Address	# of Units
Gaston Place	1941 Gaston Place Dr Austin, TX 78723	100
Lakeside	85 Trinity St Austin, TX 78701	164

North Loop	2300 W Northloop Austin, TX 78756	130
Salina	1143 Salina Austin, TX 78702	32

HACA Family Properties (Including Elderly & Disabled)

Name	Address	# of Units
Rosewood	1143 Salina Austin, TX 78702	124
Booker T Washington	905 Bedford St Austin, TX 78702	222
Chalmers Courts	1801 E 4th St Austin, TX 78702	158

Santa Rita Courts	2341 Corta St Austin, TX 78702	97
Thurmond Heights	8426 Goldfinch Ct Austin, TX 78758	144
Georgian Manor	110 Bolles Cir Austin, TX 78753	94
Northgate Apartments	9120 Northgate Austin, TX 78758	64
Coronado Hills	1438 Coronado Hills Austin, TX 78752	48
Meadowbrook	1201 W Live Oak Austin, TX 78704	160
Bouldin Oaks	1203 Cumberland Austin, TX 78704	144
Shadow Bend	6328 Shadow Bend Austin, TX 78745	52
Manchaca II	6328 Shadow Bend Austin, TX 78745	33
Goodrich Place	3628 Manchaca Austin, TX 78704	40
Manchaca Village	3628 Manchaca Austin, TX 78704	33

HATC Family Properties (Including Elderly & Disabled)

Name	Address	# of Units
Alexander Oaks	6119 Valiant Circle Austin, TX 78749	51
Eastern Oaks	4922 Nuckolls Crossing Austin, TX 78744	30
Summit Oaks	11607 Sierra Nevada Austin, TX 78759	24

Programs with Accommodations for Seniors with Disabilities *(Answers Question 2)*

HACA's four properties designated for Elderly and Disabled all have accessibility features allowing disabled Seniors to access this housing. All units are flat units with no stairs. Each property with the exception of Salina has elevators and is wheelchair accessible. Accessibility features such as grab bars and flashing doorbell / smoke detector are present in some units, but can be added to any unit as needed. HACA also has policies that allow for service animals and live-in aides as needed and verified by a medical professional.

At HACA's 14 family properties, not all apartments will be fully accessible for individuals with disabilities. However, at many of the properties there are fully accessible units and others that could be if needed. When feasible, HACA has installed ramps for wheelchair access, handrails, grab bars and flashing lights. HACA's policies for service animals and live-in aides also apply at the family properties.

Waiting Lists *(Answers Questions 4, 5 & 6)*

Currently, HACA has waiting lists for all of its programs. It is important to note that HACA does not have a separate waiting list for Seniors for either the Public Housing or the HCV program. Likewise, HACA does not have separate waiting lists for the Elderly and Disabled Public Housing properties. All families are placed on the HCV waiting list or the Public Housing waiting list for the bedroom size for which they qualify.

The waiting list for the HCV program (Section 8) is currently closed, however as mentioned above, the waiting list for the HCV program will re-open for 8 days this October (October 22-29). Seniors will be able to apply online anytime during those 8 days. For those without internet access at home, HACA will partner with agencies within the community to provide up to 150 locations within Travis County where computers will be available to complete applications. Families without internet access and for whom traveling to one of these locations would be a hardship due to disability, will be able to submit applications over the phone as a reasonable accommodation.

For Public Housing, each bedroom size has a separate waiting list. Currently the waiting list for efficiency and one bedroom apartments is closed. This is due to having almost 4,000 names on that waiting list. HACA continues to accept applications for all other bedroom sizes (2-5).

HACA gives priority (called preferences) to certain populations on its housing waiting lists. HACA has preferences for Elderly families (head of household, spouse or co-head is age 62 or over), disabled families (head, spouse or co-head is disabled by HUD definition) or families displaced by natural disaster or government action. Each family can receive only one preference, even if they qualify for more than one. Seniors that wish to apply for either program (when the waiting lists are open) will receive the elderly preference. If the head of household, spouse or co-head turns 62 while on the waiting list, they receive this preference at that time. With this preference, the family moves ahead of everyone on the list that does not have a preference.

Currently, the waiting list for the HCV program does not have any Seniors. Since we are near the end of this list (153 families), all Seniors that were on the list have received preferences, moved to the top of the list and if they were eligible, received a voucher.

On the Public Housing waiting lists, there are currently 423 Seniors. The majority of these Seniors are on the one bedroom waiting list. Since families can only receive one preference (elderly, or disabled or displaced), and since the disability preference is not fully verified until the time of eligibility determination, it is difficult to answer how many of those 423 Seniors are also disabled. Anecdotally, by the time verification is complete, the majority of Seniors coming through the waiting list also qualify as disabled.

The current average wait times vary depending on the waiting list. If any of the remaining families on the HCV waiting list turn 62 before we invite them in, they would have waited nearly 8 years to receive that preference and move to the top of the list.

On the Public Housing lists, since all Seniors qualify for a preference, the average waiting time would be as follows:

1 Bedroom	3 1/4 Years
2 Bedroom	Less than 3 Months
3 Bedroom	Less than 6 Months
4 Bedroom	Less than 9 Months
5 Bedroom	Undetermined*

*HACA only has seventeen 5 bedroom units in its inventory which have very little turnover. While an elderly family would jump to the top of the 5 bedroom waiting list, it is unknown how long they would wait before being invited to the eligibility determination. Currently, there are no Seniors on the 5 bedroom waiting list.

Who Accepts Vouchers? *(Answers Question 12)*

Through its subsidiary, Austin Affordable Housing Corporation (AAHC), HACA owns six properties on the private rental market. Of these, one (Leisure Time Village) is designated as an elderly property. All six properties accept vouchers.

Name	Address	# of Units
Bent Tree	8405 Bent Tree Rd Austin, TX 78759	126
Sterling Village	10401 N Lamar Blvd Austin, TX 78753	207

Sweetwater	2323 Wells Branch Pkwy Austin, TX 78728	152
Leisure Time	1920 Gaston Place Dr Austin, TX 78723	23
Park at Summers Grove	2900 Century Park Blvd. Austin, TX 78727	240
Lexington Hills	2430 Cromwell Cir Austin, TX 78741	238

Any properties that HACA, through AAHC, buys or builds in the future will accept vouchers.

The City requires that any development receiving City funding to accept Housing Choice Voucher holders, subject to normal screening criteria. However, there is no requirement that a certain number of units be reserved specifically for voucher holders.

Future Housing For Seniors *(Answers Questions 13-14)*

HACA is committed to providing quality affordable housing to the city of Austin, including Seniors. HACA is limited in its ability to expand the Public Housing and HCV programs. Funding for such expansion would have to come from the Federal government.

However, through its subsidiary AAHC, HACA is seeking to purchase and build more affordable housing in Austin. Currently, HACA is about to close on a deal to build 433 units of affordable housing at Ben White and Riverside Dr. The first 183 units of this project will be designated as a Senior site for people age 55+. AAHC expects to break ground in November of this year with initial leasing to begin in June of 2015.

HACA understands the importance of public transportation. Whenever possible, HACA will incorporate it into the planning and communication with stakeholders for all future proposed new housing.

During the planning for the Ben White project, AAHC and HACA worked with Capital Metro to discuss public transit options for this site. Currently, Capital Metro will not be making a stop on Ben White for this location. However, AAHC has included a carve out area for a bus stop in the site plans. Other bus stops are located within walking distance and shuttle transportation will be available to residents.

As part of the Rosewood Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, HACA collaborated with Capital Metro to discuss how transportation would look in a revitalized Rosewood neighborhood.

The City of Austin has and will continue to provide funding for the development of affordable senior housing. If more proposals to develop affordable senior housing were brought forth, the City could provide funding. In recent history, though, the number of proposals brought forth to develop affordable senior housing is about one proposal every 2-3 years.

Other Questions *(Questions 7-11)*

- The City does not have information to determine whether there are particular neighborhoods that are both desirable and affordable for seniors in Austin.
- In March of 2014, Austin City Council raised the property tax exemption it gives homeowners who are older than 65 or disabled, from \$51,000 to \$70,000. The change will save the typical elderly homeowner about \$100 a year. It may be feasible for the City to freeze the property tax amount until a home is sold, but that would have additional budget implications, so the budget office would need to analyze the potential impacts of such a change. Other information about property tax exemptions can be found at: http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/property_tax_exemptions/ and http://www.traviscad.org/faq_exemptions.html
- The Planning and Development Review Department may be able to provide information about add on permits and how can the process time for acquiring the permit be reduced.
- Neither HACA nor NHCD are familiar with the “shadow rule” or how it could increase affordable housing.
- City Council passed Resolution 20140417-048 on April 17, 2014 to “process an ordinance that amends Chapter 5-1 (Housing Discrimination) of the City Code to prohibit discrimination based on an individual's "source of income." Source of income shall be defined to include a variety of Housing Vouchers. The Code amendment should be presented to a group of stakeholders to include the HACA, the Austin Apartment Association, the Austin Tenants' Council, Housing Works, the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition, and the Austin Board of Realtors for further recommendations. The ordinance and associated recommendations should be presented to the CDC and

the Human Rights Commission and return to Council by August 1, 2014.” See the resolution here: <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=209153>