

2023

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADVANCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE ATLANTA REGION



Complete Recommendations
Updated November 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
Process and Timeline.....	6
Overview.....	8
Prioritization.....	9
Recommendations Overview.....	10
Priority Recommendations.....	12
Dedicate Revenue Sources for Affordable Housing Development.....	12
Enhance and Protect Renters’ Rights.....	15
Create Sustainable Funding Sources for Under 50% AMI Housing.....	18
Prioritize Publicly Owned Assets for Affordable Housing.....	21
Provide Resources to Encourage Starter/Affordable Homes by Homebuilders.....	23
Secure Property Tax Exemptions for Affordable Rental Housing.....	26
Recommendations.....	28
Strengthen the Coordination of Public, Private and Philanthropic Funding.....	28
Reduce Low-income Homeowners’ Property Tax Burden.....	31
Support Modifications and Repairs for Homeowners Who Are Low-Income, Senior, or Disabled.....	34
Expand and Coordinate Eviction Prevention Services.....	37
Encourage Regulatory Reforms.....	40
Increase Real Estate Professionals’ Knowledge of Affordable Homebuying Resources.....	41
Improve Homebuyer Education Quality and Outreach.....	43
Preserve Expiring Subsidized Properties.....	45
Support Expansion of Developer Capacity.....	47
Address Heirs Property.....	49
Invest in a Government Affairs Strategy and Advocate for a State Legislative Committee for Housing.....	51
Invest in Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing.....	53
Incentivize the Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH).....	55
Encourage a Diversity of Prospective Homebuyers.....	57
Intervene to Ensure Safe and Secure Housing.....	59
Encourage Resilient Design, Construction and Renovation.....	61
Support Energy Efficiency Improvements for the Most Climate-Vulnerable Residents.....	63

Appendix.....	65
Problem Statements.....	66
Overall Problem Statement	66
Homebuyers	68
Homeownership Preservation	71
Multifamily Housing Preservation	74
Public Resources.....	77
Community Retention	79
Private Resources	82
Under 50% AMI	84
Resilience of Affordable Housing	86
Gratitude	88



INTRODUCTION

The 2023 Recommendations represent the best collective thinking of more than 200 HouseATL members on the issue of housing affordability in our region. Together, our membership is comprised of community members and professionals working in community development, supportive housing, public housing authorities, real estate, property management, building and development, eviction prevention and tenants' rights, public policy, and public office. Their lived and professional experiences and wisdom form the foundation on which this document was created.

In 2018, HouseATL was born out of a recognition that housing affordability was a central issue in city elections and would undoubtedly be an area of focus for the new administration. Five years later, we came together again to update our original recommendations for a new housing reality, and to better reflect the regional nature of our housing affordability challenges.

Over the course of our strategic planning process, our membership identified much that has changed in the intervening years:

- ▶ Market forces have significantly impacted housing affordability in our rapidly growing region. Inflation has decreased residents' buying power, while rising rents, taxes, and mortgages cost a larger share of income. Increasing interest rates and high home prices affect both homebuying and the development of affordable housing.
- ▶ The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated our region's historic disparities in homeownership and housing security, while increasing gentrification, displacement, and racial wealth gaps.
- ▶ The region's growth is outstripping our ability to supply adequate housing, resulting in decreased affordability and increased housing costs both within the City of Atlanta and the region's surrounding counties. Some of the fastest increases in housing costs are occurring outside Fulton and DeKalb in Henry, Gwinnett, and Cobb counties.

Addressing these issues is a regional challenge that will require better coordination and access to robust local and state funding, among other solutions that are outlined throughout this document. We will need to work together to put these solutions into practice. In 2018, we wrote, "Now - more than ever - a compelling and unified voice is needed to inform future policy and chart a path to a "One Atlanta." In 2023, this statement takes on even more urgency.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Housing is a complex subject matter that affects and is affected by many related issues from interest rates and wage growth to education, community development, and our sense of belonging. In the same vein, addressing issues of housing affordability in our region will require care and cooperation from people and organizations with equally diverse perspectives, expertise, and roles.

We created this set of recommendations to serve as a very informed starting point for projects of all kinds throughout our region:

If you are an elected official, we recommend using these recommendations as a reference to guide your jurisdiction's housing policies. Many of our policy recommendations come with details on how to reduce barriers to affordable housing.

If you are a builder or developer, please consider how your voice can be heard in support of policies that address challenges you face in building more affordable housing.

If you are part of a nonprofit organization, use the recommendations to help you build your programs and policy agenda, and join our collective efforts.

If you are a community member, these recommendations can help you talk to your elected and governmental officials about what steps they are taking to address affordability in your community. Public will is an essential part of increasing affordable housing in our region.

If you undertake a project or program based on these recommendations, please let us know so we can support you with the full weight of our membership!

At its core, HouseATL is a membership coalition driven by the efforts of our members. If you aren't sure where to start, we welcome you to join us! Our Working Groups will continue to forward their recommendations, and we expect that there will be plenty of opportunities to pitch in over the coming months and years. Consider becoming a member, join us for a member convening to meet like-minded housing advocates across the region, and find your place in a Working Group that aligns with your interests. We would be overjoyed to have your support.

HOUSEATL

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

HouseATL's members and our strategic recommendations adhere to these guiding principles:

- Housing is a means to an end for a more sustainable, inclusive, healthy Atlanta. Recommendations should advance racial and socioeconomic equity in our communities.
- Cross-sector collaboration is critical to actionable solutions. We seek to engage civic and community leadership at all levels, recognizing that sustainable change only happens with authentic resident support.
- We recognize that there are many related issues (wage growth, quality schools, and transportation access, among others) that are inextricably linked to affordability and community retention and are supportive of these efforts that are outside of the scope of this particular coalition.
- We believe housing strategies should be incorporated across Atlanta, balancing opportunities in neighborhoods with high quality of life factors with comprehensive community development.
- We are committed to serving all of the affordability needs of Atlantans, with an emphasis on those most in need.
- Regional planning with our neighbors, particularly around the link between regional transportation and housing affordability, must be part of our long-term affordability solutions.
- Strategies must harness the power of the marketplace – capital and development – to meaningfully increase housing production and preservation.
- We acknowledge that some recommendations may require policy alignment and/or state law change and there will be a need for ongoing advocacy and collaboration with various state agencies and legislative partner

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Creation of the 2023 Recommendations followed the same convention as the 2018 Recommendations, beginning by defining the problems affecting affordable housing, and then crafting recommendations in direct response to the issues outlined. One of the primary mandates for our 2023 strategic planning process that differed from the development of the 2018 Recommendations is a shift in focus to the broader five county core Atlanta region (Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett) from the City of Atlanta only.

As with the 2018 Recommendations process, all stages of creating the 2023 Recommendations were participatory by design: Working Groups led on the creation of the problem statements and recommendations, which were further refined and approved by the wider House^{ATL} membership.

FEBRUARY 10, 2023 MEMBER CONVENING

House^{ATL}'s Strategic Planning Process kicked off at the February 10 Member Convening, where members had an opportunity to review House^{ATL}'s Overall Problem Statement from 2018. **More than 100 attendees discussed how barriers to affordable housing issues had changed since 2018, identifying challenges in the political climate, market forces, funding, and messaging, among others.**

70 Participants also took a poll to provide further nuance on the same topic. This process formed the foundation for the creation of the new House^{ATL} Problem Statement, which can be found on pages 66-67

MARCH AND APRIL 2023

Following the February Member Convening, Working Groups began updating and developing problem statements that outline the most pressing issues affecting affordable housing in our region.

All four working groups spent time on this process between March and April, with an average of 40 attendees per meeting across 6 meetings.

APRIL 6, 2023 FOCUS GROUP

To provide additional context on the current environment for affordable housing in the region, House^{ATL} also convened a focus group.

Participants spent time identifying trends affecting affordable housing to support the problem statement development but also weighed in on geographic expansion and the roles House^{ATL} plays in the work of increasing affordability in the region.

APRIL 28, 2023 MEMBER CONVENING

House^{ATL} membership attended a "science fair" for the drafted problem statements. Posters were put up around the meeting space at the Gathering Spot for members to review and provide final feedback on. **Over 100 attendees helped refine and validate the Working Groups' problem statements.** We also evaluated the need to create an ad hoc working group to address issues of resilience, which ultimately led to the Resilience Problem Statement on pages 86-87 and its corresponding recommendations.

MAY AND JUNE 2023

Following the Member Convening, we synthesized feedback to finalize the problem statements and began moving on to recommendations. Recommendations are designed to directly respond to issues identified in the problem statements. Development of the recommendations followed a two part process, Expansion and Prioritization.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

PRIORITIZATION, JUNE 2023

What are our highest potential outcomes? During this stage, Working Groups filled out prioritization surveys and met to discuss and evaluate proposed recommendations, with the goal of selecting and ranking proposed recommendations based on potential for impact, feasibility, and capacity requirements.

Across six working group meetings in May and June, an average of 36 participants joined for each to help weigh in on this process, and we received more than 160 responses to our prioritization surveys.

AUGUST 23, 2023 MEMBER CONVENING

The HouseATL membership gathered for their third quarter meeting on August 23. Together, they received an update on the prioritization process and provided a final review of the 23 recommendations. After the meeting, membership was invited to participate in a final vote to approve the recommendations, vote on which recommendations were highest priority for HouseATL to address, and register any last feedback. **Of 92 participating members, 91 voted to approve the recommendations.**

NOVEMBER 2023

In November, the collective work of the Working Groups, Co-Chairs, Strategic Plan Committee, Advisory Board, and HouseATL Membership was collected and published as the 2023 Recommendations to Advance Affordable Housing.

EXPANSION, MAY 2023

What is possible? Working from the problem statements and their associated barriers and causes, Working Groups brainstormed recommendations designed to impact each problem statement and the specific barriers and causes contributing to the identified problem. **Between all working groups, 48 draft recommendations were created.**

JULY AND AUGUST 2023

With feedback from the working groups on prioritization, the 48 draft recommendations were narrowed down to 23, which were presented at the HouseATL Advisory Board meeting on August 2, and then to the full Membership Convening.

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2023

As a result of the member vote, **6 recommendations emerged as highest priority, each receiving at least 25 of the 92 votes.** With this prioritization laid out, HouseATL moved to focus on implementation. HouseATL's Advisory Board and Working Group Co-Chairs met on September 26 for an implementation session to further discuss timeline, budget, and key metrics for the 6 priority recommendations. Additionally, HouseATL facilitated a Builder and Developer Feedback Session on October 30 to ensure adequate engagement with members working on the supply side of housing.

OVERVIEW

The following recommendations were developed by HouseATL's membership, Working Groups and Advisory Board across numerous meetings, brainstorming sessions, surveys, and collaborative editing and feedback, with more than 200 people weighing in over 9 months. Through this process, HouseATL's membership has developed a set of nine problem statements and 23 recommendations as a call to action for the five-county core Atlanta region on housing affordability. The below final set of recommendations was selected from among 48 solutions based on the following criteria:

- Impact - Highest potential for significant positive impact on affordable housing in our region
- Interest - Level of interest and energy from the working groups participants to contribute
- Feasibility - Confidence in the HouseATL coalition's ability to implement directly or advocate for others to implement

Homebuyers

1. Encourage a Diversity of Prospective Homebuyers
2. Increase Real Estate Industry Professionals' Knowledge of Affordable Homebuying Resources
3. Provide Resources to Encourage Starter/Affordable Homes by Homebuilders
4. Improve Homebuyer Education Quality and Outreach

Homeownership Preservation

5. Address Heirs Property
6. Reduce Low-income Homeowners' Property Tax Burden
7. Support Modification and Repairs for Homeowners Who Are Low-income, Senior, or Disabled

Community Retention

8. Expand and Coordinate Eviction Prevention Services
9. Enhance and Protect Renters' Rights

Public Resources

10. Prioritize Publicly Owned Assets for Affordable Housing
11. Dedicate Revenue Sources for Affordable Housing Development
12. Invest in a Government Affairs Strategy and Advocate for a Designated State Legislative Committee for Housing
13. Encourage Regulatory Reforms

Multifamily Housing Preservation

14. Incentivize the Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)
15. Secure Property Tax Exemptions for Affordable Rental Housing
16. Preserve Expiring Subsidized Properties
17. Intervene to Ensure Safe and Secure Housing

Under 50% AMI

18. Create Sustainable Funding Sources for Under 50% AMI Housing

Private Resources

19. Strengthen the Coordination of Public, Private and Philanthropic Funding
20. Support Expansion of Developer Capacity

Resilience

21. Support Energy Efficiency Improvements for the Most Climate-Vulnerable Residents
22. Invest in Transit-oriented Affordable Housing
23. Encourage Resilient Design, Construction and Renovation

PRIORITIZATION

HouseATL's 23 Recommendations were further prioritized by a member poll, asking members to select which recommendations they felt were most important for HouseATL to focus on implementing and advocating for as we kick off the first phase of our new strategy. 6 Recommendations emerged as top priority, and will be HouseATL's primary focus for implementation.

Recommendations List	Percentage of Votes
11. Dedicate Revenue Sources for Affordable Housing Development	47.3%
9. Enhance and Protect Renters' Rights	34.1%
18. Create Sustainable Funding Sources for Under 50% AMI Housing	34.1%
10. Prioritize Publicly Owned Assets for Affordable Housing	33.0%
3. Provide Resources to Encourage Starter/Affordable Homes by Homebuilders	31.9%
15. Secure Property Tax Exemptions for Affordable Rental Housing	27.5%
19. Strengthen the Coordination of Public, Private and Philanthropic Funding	26.4%
6. Reduce Low Income Homeowners' Property Tax Burden	23.1%
7. Support Modifications and Repairs for Homeowners who are Low-Income, Senior, or Disabled	23.1%
8. Expand and Coordinate Eviction Prevention Services	20.9%
13. Encourage Regulatory Reforms	19.8%
2. Increase Real Estate Industry Professionals' Understanding of Affordable Homebuying Resources	18.7%
4. Improve Homebuyer Education Quality and Outreach	18.7%
16. Preserve Expiring Subsidized Properties	16.5%
20. Support Expansion of Developer Capacity	15.4%
5. Address Heirs Property	14.3%
12. Invest in a Government Affairs Strategy and Advocate for a Designated State Legislative Committee for Housing	14.3%
22. Invest in Transit-oriented Affordable Housing	13.2%
14. Incentivize the Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Preservation	12.1%
1. Encourage a Diversity of Prospective Homebuyers	9.9%
17. Intervene to Ensure Safe and Secure Housing	6.6%
23. Encourage Resilient Design and Construction	5.5%
21. Support Energy Efficiency Improvements for the Most Climate-Vulnerable Residents	3.3%

RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

The six recommendations prioritized by HouseATL's membership **are written in bold**.

	What we're working toward	Our plan to get there
To support homebuyers	<p>Prepared with adequate knowledge, homebuyers across the Atlanta metro area are supported by informed industry professionals who assist them with the identification and purchase of affordable homes in conditions and at price points that are sustainable for their budgets and in locations that enable them to thrive and build equity. These efforts will be supported by mortgage, down payment, and closing cost assistance necessary to provide financing and address affordability gaps for homebuyers in our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage a Diversity of Prospective Homebuyers • Increase Real Estate Industry Professionals' Understanding of Affordable Homebuying Resources • Provide Resources to Encourage Starter/Affordable Homes by Homebuilders • Improve Homebuyer Education Quality and Outreach
To preserve homeownership	<p>Homeowners across the Atlanta metro area will have the knowledge, access to financing and resources necessary to support their efforts to maintain, improve, and retain their homes. Homeowners will be able to utilize and/or leverage increased equity in their homes and access the wealth to thrive and support their long-term stability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address Heirs Property • Reduce Low Income Homeowners' Property Tax Burden • Support Maintenance and Repairs for Low Income Homeowners
To increase and coordinate capital	<p>Users and providers of capital who are creating and preserving affordable housing in metro Atlanta have sufficient flexible, lower-priced capital to meet the increasing need for affordable housing units in the face of escalating acquisition and constructions costs, as well as population growth, and that capital is equitably available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the Coordination of Public, Private and Philanthropic Funding • Support Expansion of Developer Capacity
To align and mobilize public resources	<p>Public sector agencies in the Atlanta region have sufficient and sustainable resources, leadership, and a shared vision for coordinating revenue, land, and regulatory reforms to address increasing affordable housing need in a rapidly growing region with significant investor buyer activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize Publicly Owned Assets for Affordable Housing • Dedicate Revenue Sources for Affordable Housing Development • Invest in a Government Affairs Strategy and Advocate for a Designated State Legislative Committee for Housing • Encourage Regulatory Reforms

	What we're working toward	Our plan to get there
To support our residents under 50% AMI	Families and individuals whose income is less than half of the region's median income have safe, abundant housing options in locations that maximize their access to resources and wraparound services designed to promote stability and economic mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Sustainable Funding Sources for Under 50% AMI Housing
To preserve affordable multifamily housing	Preservation tools to address the crisis of decreasing affordable multifamily housing are abundant and flexible, and thus residents, both owners and renters, find that existing affordable housing stock is available, well-maintained, safe, and preserved as affordable long-term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivize the Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) • Secure Property Tax Exemptions for Affordable Rental Housing • Preserve Expiring Subsidized Properties • Intervene to Ensure Safe and Secure Housing
To support community retention	Residents who are low-to-moderate income in the Atlanta region's communities of color are able to prosper in place, enabling them to flourish, access the benefits of local investment and development activity, build intergenerational wealth, and preserve the unique character and social fabric of their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and Coordinate Eviction Prevention Services • Enhance and Protect Renters' Rights
To ensure affordable housing is resilient	Residents who are low income will live in quality, energy efficient housing that is that has affordable utilities and is resilient to climate change and natural disasters. Additionally, they will live in communities that are prepared to survive disasters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Energy Efficiency Improvements for Climate-Vulnerable Residents • Invest in Transit-oriented Affordable Housing • Encourage Resilient Design and Construction

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

PUBLIC RESOURCES

Dedicate Revenue Sources for Affordable Housing Development

SUMMARY

Establish state and local dedicated sources of revenue for housing trust funds that promote affordable housing development and preservation, so that there is not a need to continually request annual allocations, recognizing that this will likely require state enabling legislation.

Recommendation in Depth

Establish and expand state and local housing trust funds.

- ▶ Identify current Georgia housing trust funds, their allocations and allowable uses (as well as past recipients, if possible).
- ▶ Analyze costs/benefits of starting new vs. working with what exists.
- ▶ Explore legal authority for various dedicated revenue sources and advocate for appropriate policies for the most effective dedicated revenue source.
- ▶ Explore the types of funding that would produce the highest volume/most deeply affordable units and would be the most sustainable in the long run fiscally.
- ▶ Advocate for one-time funding (e.g., \$100 M) from the current state budget surplus for the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless. These funds would not sunset and could fund broader affordable housing purposes under existing legislation for the Housing Trust Fund.
- ▶ Local housing trust funds with dedicated revenue sources could be piloted in one jurisdiction and serve as a model to other cities/counties in the region. This will likely require state enabling legislation first

Ensure transparent guidelines for the distribution and use of the funds.

- ▶ Designate uses for the state housing trust fund that are distinct from the uses of State Low Income

Housing Tax Credits.

- ▶ Ensure that nonprofits receive prioritization and set asides for publicly funded subsidies, especially nonprofits focused on long term and permanent affordability.
- ▶ Ensure that public housing trust funds leverage and coordinate with private funds.
- ▶ Consider inclusion of developments on Housing Authority land as an allowable use.

Support co-learning and best practices exploration across the region for the effective use of housing trust funds.

Work with partners to advocate for continuation of the State Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

Research/Advocacy roles

- ▶ Enterprise, Georgia ACT, Center for Community Progress and other partners have been researching a 'menu' of options for dedicated revenue sources, with support from KB Advisory Group, and are developing advocacy materials/strategy.
- ▶ Explore potential partners such as GA Watch, Georgia Healthy Futures, Georgia Appleseed, Abundant Housing Atlanta, Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement (ARCHI), Georgia Affordable Housing Coalition, Atlanta Apartment Association, Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

Local Leadership who may support

- ▶ The City of Atlanta now allocates 1.5 - 2% from its

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Utilize the research of, and collaborate on advocacy with, Enterprise, Georgia ACT, Center for Community Progress and partners
- ▶ Develop messaging, collateral material and an educational plan that clarifies the funding gap - the need as compared to the existing funding sources. Include information on what the dedicated revenue could accomplish and how other states/localities are doing this work. Provide education on the best practices in the operations of housing trust funds.
- ▶ Retain a lobbyist, as well as convene other lobbyists and advocacy organizations with an interest in this issue to develop a concerted advocacy strategy (local and state level)
 - Have conversations with key decision makers
 - Expand supportive base: For example, Florida got housing trust fund support from home builders and realtors

Key Metrics

- ▶ State level legislation is passed enabling local jurisdictions to dedicate revenue for local housing trust funds.
- ▶ State level legislation is passed that dedicates \$250M annually in state-level revenue to the State Housing Trust Fund, to leverage, not replace, existing state funding. The State Housing Trust Fund guidelines include allocations for the 5 county core area (not just a rural fund) and a percentage allocation focused on low- and very low-income populations.
- ▶ Five local level housing trust funds are established in the 5 county core area that have dedicated revenue sources and include a percentage allocation focused on low- and very low-income populations.

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ \$30,000 annually for policy research and analysis to support advocacy work
- ▶ \$50,000 annually for strategic communications and communications materials
- ▶ \$75,000 annually for lobbying, coalition building, policy advocacy, and education

general fund for affordable housing, but in any funding cycle the mayor can decide not to include it based on overall budget challenges.

- ▶ City of Decatur and the City of Savannah have Trust Funds.
- ▶ Georgia Municipal Association and Association of County Commissioners of Georgia could potentially assist with sharing information with their membership.

State Leadership

- ▶ The GA Dept. of Community Affairs administers the State Housing Trust Fund (\$3M/year) and will be an important partner.

Timeline for Implementation

2024	2025	2026
<p>Q4, 2023 - Convene partners and begin establishing messaging and an initial advocacy strategy to lay the groundwork for future state enabling legislation. The first goal is allocating state budget surplus to the existing State Housing Trust Fund.</p> <p>Q1, 2024 - Advocacy paper completed and initial advocacy strategy developed. Sponsor Georgia ACT's Affordable Housing Day at the Capitol during the 3rd week of February and mobilize advocates for that date.</p> <p>Q2-Q3, 2024 - Continue coalition development and refine messaging. Broaden partnerships.</p> <p>Q4, 2024 - Strategic communications and meetings with key decision makers prior to the 2025 State legislative session. Draft enabling legislation for local jurisdictions and develop co-sponsors for the bill.</p>	<p>Q1, 2025 - Bill introduced to enable local jurisdictions to dedicate revenue sources. Sponsor Georgia ACT's Affordable Housing Day at the Capitol and mobilize advocates for that date.</p> <p>Q2-Q3, 2025 - Continue coalition development, refine messaging, and continue advocacy. If state level enabling legislation passed, then begin local level education and advocacy to create housing trust funds.</p> <p>Q4, 2025 - Draft legislation for a state dedicated revenue source and develop co-sponsors for the bill.</p>	<p>Q1, 2026 - Bill introduced to dedicate revenue at the state level for a housing trust fund. Sponsor Georgia ACT's Affordable Housing Day at the Capitol and mobilize advocates for that date.</p> <p>Q2-Q3, 2026 - Continue coalition development, refine messaging, and continue advocacy.</p> <p>Q4, 2026 - Prepare for mobilization for the state legislative session on bills that have not passed.</p>

COMMUNITY RETENTION

Enhance and Protect Renters' Rights

SUMMARY

Develop and support policies, programs and educational campaigns that protect renters' rights, which will reduce displacement and school mobility.

Recommendation in Depth

Policy Changes

- ▶ **Transparency for Tenants:** Support legislation to have landlords required to explain in writing each step of the eviction process when serving a late notice, warrant, or any documents related to delinquent rent.
- ▶ **Legal Counsel:** Support policies that ensure tenants with low incomes have access to free legal counsel when facing an eviction.
- ▶ **Right to Cure:** Support state legislation to require that landlords provide a written notice of lease default and seven days for the tenant to cure the default prior to the landlord being eligible to file for an eviction.
- ▶ **Property Conditions/Repairs:** Strengthen the Georgia anti-retaliation law to prevent evictions from being filed when tenants complain about property conditions. It's currently too easy for a landlord to file for eviction with the justification of nonpayment of rent, and there is not an easy path for tenants to get landlords to fulfill their obligations of repairs being made without fear of retaliation.
- ▶ Support state policy that allows tenants to withhold rent in the amount they paid out-of-pocket for repairs when a landlord fails to take action in a reasonable time period, with written notice to landlord. Tenants should have a way to have repairs addressed outside of complaining directly to a negligent owner.
- ▶ State law needs to include a landlord's responsibility to keep a housing unit habitable, as well as a meaningful definition of habitability.
- ▶ **Fees:** Support policies to better protect tenants from unreasonable fees and increase fee transparency. Upfront information about monthly rental costs should include a disclosure of fees, prior to the prospective renter submitting an application and paying an application fee. Landlords are increasingly evicting for unpaid "fees" - not just unpaid rent. (i.e. pet rent, pest control fee, activity fees).
- ▶ Support legislation to regulate fees landlords can impose on those delinquent or under eviction.
- ▶ Collectively work towards state legislation to standardize fees for landlords and tenants.
- ▶ **Security Deposits:** Support standardizing security deposits equal to one month's rent.
- ▶ **Background Checks:** Address the role that criminal history checks play as an obstacle for tenants. In particular, address the potential displacement of legacy residents when apartment complexes are renovated and tenants are blocked from returning by new levels of background checks. Support advocacy with landlords, expungement assistance and policy change.
- ▶ **Source of Income:** Support policies to prevent landlords from discriminating against tenants based on their source of income, whether that be a voucher, disability payments, etc.
- ▶ **Rental Registries:** To increase transparency about who is the benefitting owner of rental properties, advocate that local jurisdictions be allowed to create rental registries and inspection programs (requires local removal of state ordinance limiting this).
- ▶ **Rent Stabilization:** Support reasonable rent stabilization policies that cap the percentage that rents can increase annually across a jurisdiction. Striking the state law 447-19, which preempts local jurisdictions from enacting any type of rent stabilization, would be a key part of helping local communities regulate rents and prevent price gouging of tenants.¹

¹ Some type of additional rent regulation may also be needed in subsidized affordable housing developments. As area median incomes (AMI) increase dramatically, owners of subsidized properties can increase their rents accordingly. This has been a challenge for the lowest-income tenants in these properties, particularly seniors on fixed incomes. Having some sort of additional limitations around rent increases (even if they are in proportion with AMI increases) in compliance and requirement policies would be helpful.

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

Education Support

- ▶ Launch a comprehensive, wide-ranging tenants' rights educational campaign to equip vulnerable tenants with working knowledge of their rights, in particular as it relates to eviction, and how to advocate for their rights. Provide tenants with information about resources that can assist with protecting their rights, such as how to activate the code enforcement process and where to get legal assistance.
- ▶ Educate and inform landlords that, per US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, federal law prohibits blanket "no felony" or "no criminal record" policies.

Funding Support

- ▶ Support funding for nonprofit organizations that are working on renters' rights policy issues.

Enforcement support

- ▶ Explore enforcement of City of Atlanta Housing Code Article I, Section 8(b)(2) which requires that the City create inspection plans for the City's rental housing stock every five years. See if this can be a tool for information-gathering, landlord education, and centralized compilation of data.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Atlanta Legal Aid and Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation have staff with extensive knowledge on these issues from their representation of tenants and can provide information on the legal obstacles that need to be addressed to support safe, stable housing for tenants.
- ▶ Enterprise Community Partners has national and regional policy connections and can provide useful examples and resources from other locations, as well as having dedicated local policy staff that can be an ally on state policy agenda items.
- ▶ Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta is a resource for eviction data and research.
- ▶ For the City of Atlanta specifically, Atlanta Housing and Invest Atlanta work with many landlords and have some regulatory authority to affect issues such as source of income protections and improvements to criminal background checks. Additionally, the Atlanta Housing Commission has made recommendations on tenants' rights and could be a partner in moving items to City Council.
- ▶ Housing Justice League educates tenants on their rights and organizes tenants and community residents on renters' rights policies.
- ▶ Georgia ACT and Georgia Appleseed conduct statewide housing policy advocacy and can be a partner on policy change.
- ▶ Mission-aligned landlords can provide useful information about landlord best practices and obstacles for landlords to maintaining stable housing, which can inform policy platforms.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Establish a policy agenda, educational materials and advocate at the state and local level, including retaining a lobbyist
- ▶ Convene and partner with other advocates
- ▶ Ensure ongoing coordination between service providers, community-based organizations and policy advocates such that policy is informed by on-the-ground realities.

Key Metrics

- ▶ The state preemption ordinances that prevent local jurisdictions from acting on tenants' rights are struck down (GA Code 44-7-19 related to rent control, GA Code § 36-74-30 related to rental registries and inspections)
- ▶ # of additional favorable state policy changes
- ▶ # of favorable local policy changes

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ \$30,000 annually for policy research and analysis to support advocacy work
- ▶ \$50,000 annually for strategic communications and communications materials, some of which might be led by other partners
- ▶ \$75,000 annually for lobbying, coalition building, policy advocacy, and education (lobbyist could be shared across recommendations)
- ▶ Funding for current nonprofits active on these policy issues to strengthen their advocacy work and to conduct tenants’ rights educational campaigns and ongoing outreach

Timeline for Implementation

2024	2025	2026
<p>Q1, 2024 - Support others advocacy on tenants' rights during the state legislative session.</p> <p>Q2, 2024 - Convene or join key partners to develop a long-term education and advocacy strategy.</p> <p>Q3, 2024 - Develop or circulate existing, key educational tools on renters’ rights to begin to inform key constituents on the obstacles and changes needed. Work on strategic messaging and audiences, for example a message around the need to remove discrimination (background checks, source of income) and increase transparency (property ownership, fees).</p> <p>Q4, 2024 - Escalate advocacy and meet with key decision makers prior to the 2025 State legislative session. Identify sponsors for legislation to strike preemption ordinances.</p>	<p>2025 - Bill introduced to strike preemption ordinances. Sponsor Georgia ACT's Affordable Housing Day at the Capitol and mobilize advocates for that date. Continue coalition development, refining messaging, and advocacy as needed on bills related to preemption or on the next priority policy/ordinance. Prepare for 2026 legislative session.</p>	<p>2026 - Continue to refine messaging, expand coalition and advocate.</p>

UNDER 50% AMI

Create Sustainable Funding Sources for Under 50% AMI Housing

SUMMARY

Create sustainable philanthropic, private and public funding sources with specific carve outs for the production and preservation of affordable and permanent supportive housing serving households with less than 50% of the area median income (AMI). Include consideration for the related services and supports that these households need.

Recommendation in Depth

New and Targeted Resources

- ▶ Bring new philanthropic and private sources to the table who are willing to invest resources in the capital stack to target units to below 50% of AMI, as significant subsidy is required to develop housing for these income levels.
- ▶ Reach out to foundations and the health care sector to educate them regarding the need and the way their support can leverage other funds. Educate them about the type of funding provided by the public sector and the gaps that remain. Ensure that they are familiar with the opportunity to invest in a shared pool through GoATL/TogetherATL, as well as the opportunity to invest directly via the Funders Collective's Pipeline Review Committee.
- ▶ Share location-specific data on the demand for various unit configurations based on projected household sizes to align funding with the types of housing needed below 50% AMI. Potential funding uses include:
 - Operating capital - For mission-based housing owners and/or service providers devoted to funding wrap-around services, particularly in permanent supportive housing developments.
 - Acquisition/rehab capital - Flexible, nimble for preserving Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing and at-risk subsidized properties. Could be in the form of a revolving loan fund.
 - Predevelopment capital
 - Development incentives

Policy

- ▶ Support related policy efforts, such as expanding project based rental assistance and property tax reductions to help cover the operating costs gap.
- ▶ Recognizing the connections between health, hunger and housing, support the expansion of Medicaid, as it can cover supportive services that are needed by some under 50% AMI residents, and support the availability of SNAP (food stamp) benefits.
- ▶ With the City of Atlanta specifically, seek to reform the Supportive Housing Ordinance that severely limits where permanent supportive housing can be built.

Communications and Education

Increase the public will to provide resources for housing for people who are low- and very low-income, focus on public messaging, communications and education.

- ▶ Collaborate with national organizations who are already campaigning on this and may have tools and framing.
- ▶ Research the most effective frames and messages. Consider connecting to the federal affirmatively furthering fair housing plans - encouraging each community and jurisdiction to take on their fair share of housing affordability.
- ▶ Utilize existing and new research on the gap between the availability and production of deeply affordable housing and the need.

Affordable Housing Search Resources

Develop or enhance centralized resources that invert the burden for people who are low-income and

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

seeking affordable housing and related services.

- ▶ Explore with United Way whether 211 can be upgraded, so there is less of a burden on the individual looking for housing and the individual receives navigation assistance, follow up, and coaching if needed. Determine if there are opportunities for the United Way 211 web-based portal to indicate actual real time availability for housing and rental assistance in particular. There may be an opportunity for private philanthropy and the tech sector to assist.
- ▶ Explore whether GA Dept. of Community Affairs' Georgia Housing Search can be upgraded, for example to include actual availability, up-to-date contact information, school zones, type of public subsidy, demographic served (disabled, veterans, seniors), and accommodate more types of affordable housing. It should be co-designed with feedback from tenants. It should also eventually include a web-based common rental application for all publicly subsidized properties, with a shared application fee. Determine methods to incentivize/require more participation by landlords.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Partners for Home has identified communications about people who are very low-income to be a key component of their new strategic plan
- ▶ Georgia Department of Community Affairs operates Georgia Housing Search and could be a partner on modernizing and upgrading this resource
- ▶ US Dept of Housing and Urban Development might be a partner on improving the affordable housing search technology/process - examples from other states, financial supports or incentives for properties to keep their information updated, etc.
- ▶ United Way 211 and/or other partners for increased housing navigation assistance/invert the burden for people seeking affordable housing
- ▶ Corporation for Supportive Housing is a national nonprofit working in Atlanta that is willing to inform local and state policy proposals related to permanent supportive housing, as well as help to define standards for quality supportive housing
- ▶ Nonprofit public policy advocacy organizations who can advance state and local policy goals outlined above
- ▶ Atlanta Regional Commission for assistance with a regional dashboard

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Continue education of funders and identification of new flexible funding sources
- ▶ Provide policy advocacy and lobbying to ensure there are requirements to set aside funding for very low-income families and longer term affordability, as well around supplementary issues like Medicaid
- ▶ Invest in public messaging and public education on why it is critical to finance and subsidize housing for very low-income households
- ▶ Increase visibility and coordination of existing resources, in particular across geographic jurisdictions

Key Metrics

- ▶ A new funding source is created, due to HouseATL's advocacy, specifically for housing units restricted to households below 50% AMI and below 30% AMI.
- ▶ # of new public, private or philanthropic funding sources include the dedication of a specific percentage of funds to below 50% AMI housing
- ▶ Existence of a regional dashboard that has geographic information about the # of units versus the need for below 50% AMI
- ▶ Completion of an improved affordable housing search platform

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Strategic communications
- ▶ Staff support for convening partners
- ▶ Funding for data development, mapping and a technology platform
- ▶ Policy advocacy/lobbying

Timeline for Implementation

2024	2025	2026
<p>Explore strategic messaging and education plans on why it is critical to finance and subsidize housing for very low-income households.</p> <p>Articulate the need for an improved affordable housing search platform, convene partners and advocate for change.</p>	<p>Launch of an improved affordable housing search platform.</p> <p>Explore options for a dashboard of affordable housing unit development.</p> <p>Convene partners and consider a path forward. Develop an advocacy strategy with partners for a new funding source or for set asides for below 50% AMI housing.</p> <p>Launch advocacy efforts.</p>	<p>Dashboard piloted with new jurisdictions.</p> <p>Continue advocacy efforts for funding sources focused on below 50% AMI housing.</p>

Prioritize Publicly Owned Assets for Affordable Housing

SUMMARY

Focus across jurisdictions to prioritize publicly owned land and buildings for affordable housing development and encourage public acquisition of additional land for this purpose

Recommendation in Depth

Create a publicly accessible map of all publicly owned land suitable for affordable housing development. Work to include multiple jurisdictions across the region.

- ▶ Encourage replication of the type of work being done by the Mayor's Strike Force in other jurisdictions.
- ▶ The Atlanta Public Schools Housing Task Force several years ago made housing recommendations for school owned land. This is being revisited through the Mayor's Strike Force. Other school systems in the region could do similar work.
- ▶ Work with public agencies on the front end, during the Request for Proposals (RFP) development for publicly owned land, to include capital commitments from funders to strengthen the RFP offering and ensure community benefits are maximized for those redevelopment opportunities.

Provide education for elected officials on the benefits and feasibility of using public assets for affordable housing.

- ▶ Educate public jurisdictions on how to utilize ground leases or other legal protections to ensure community benefits are maintained.
- ▶ Build capacity for a public wealth approach to public assets.¹
- ▶ Prioritize public land for deep affordability and protect against increasing gentrification.

Encourage the allocation of public funds for the public sector to acquire land for future affordable housing development in priority areas that may be targeted by investors.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ City of Atlanta Housing Strike Force - The public wealth approach, as described by Detter and Folster in *Public Wealth of Cities*, was the framework for launching the City of Atlanta's Public Land Advisory Council (see Administrative Order 2021-14) which is now the Housing Strike Force. The City can be a partner in sharing this model with other jurisdictions.²
- ▶ Government Finance Officers Association has launched cohorts to advance this important work as part of their Rethinking Revenue strategy. <https://www.gfoa.org/paw>.
- ▶ Atlanta Regional Commission can assist with the mapping and analysis of public land.
- ▶ The Atlanta Land Bank and the Atlanta Land Trust, as well as Land Banks and Land Trusts in other jurisdictions are potential partners on acquisition, asset management and long-term affordability.
- ▶ Gideons Elementary School Housing Task Force as a model of how affordable housing can improve public education opportunities and other public benefits.

1 "The Public Wealth of Cities" Dag Detter & Stephen Folster, 2017. (<https://www.brookings.edu/books/the-public-wealth-of-cities/>)

2 "Game-Changing Potential: Urban Wealth Funds and the City of Atlanta," (<https://www.gfoa.org/materials/gfr1222-uwf-atlanta>)

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Partner with the Atlanta Regional Commission to identify and map available public land for jurisdictions with a willingness to advance this work
- ▶ Share information on the current status of the City of Atlanta’s Strike Force and make connections with other jurisdictions as helpful. Elevate successes by jurisdictions as they occur.
- ▶ Advocate for a jurisdiction to participate in the Georgia Finance Officers Association cohort
- ▶ Provide public agencies with recommendations on dispossession plans (i.e. deep affordability, ground lease/permanent affordability, community benefits, etc.)

Key Metrics

- ▶ 3 jurisdictions beyond the City of Atlanta are actively using publicly owned assets, that were not originally designated for affordable housing, for affordable housing development
- ▶ # of affordable units created from publicly owned assets at different AMI levels and for what length of affordability period
- ▶ Amount of new funding identified to assist with converting publicly owned assets to affordable housing.

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Research and analysis
- ▶ Property hub creation
- ▶ Communication and outreach
- ▶ Coalition-building
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Cost for a jurisdiction to participate in the Georgia Finance Officers Association \$125,000 - \$190,000

Timeline for Implementation

2024	2025	2026
<p>Create a high level map of publicly owned land in specific jurisdictions and conduct outreach to public officials in those jurisdictions to explore their interest.</p> <p>Provide education and conduct relationship building. Once a willing jurisdiction is identified, assist with convening and connecting the jurisdiction to technical assistance as needed.</p> <p>Assess what supports are needed and advocate for those supports.</p>	<p>Continue supporting willing jurisdictions and elevating their progress.</p> <p>Advocate for financing sources and incentives to accompany public land development plans to ensure deep and long-term affordability.</p>	<p>Encourage public sector acquisitions for future affordable housing development in priority areas that may be targeted by investors</p>

Provide Resources to Encourage Starter/Affordable Homes by Homebuilders

SUMMARY

Encourage the development of flexible financing sources and the provision of other resources, such as public land, to incentivize homebuilders in developing affordable, for-sale, starter homes.

Recommendation in Depth

Partner and Understand Barriers

- ▶ Build relationships with large and small homebuilders to encourage and incentivize them to develop more starter and affordable, for-sale homes. Assess the obstacles and tools needed.
- ▶ Provide homebuilders with a directory of the financing opportunities available for affordable for-sale development, including information about how down payment assistance works (connects to the recommendation “Strengthen the Coordination of Resources”).
- ▶ Establish a baseline understanding of the types of affordable for-sale homes that are currently being built, e.g. breakdown by size, bedrooms, building style, attached/detached, materials used.
- ▶ Encourage innovation in the types of affordable for-sale homes that are developed to accommodate different types of household needs and explore cost savings, for example modular housing, prefabrications and 3D printed homes. Explore innovation with the use of adaptive reuse of various types of vacant properties.
- ▶ Partner with property owners, investors and independent owners to encourage affordable for-sale housing development.

Financing Support

- ▶ Consider improvements to financing affordable for-sale homes, such as reduction of development fees, providing subsidies, creating an inexpensive financing source.
- ▶ Encourage a new financing source of low cost, longer-term, early strike funding for land acquisition, so that builders of affordable for-sale homes can compete with the market for vacant properties.

Public Land

- ▶ Call on cities and counties to assess the publicly owned land in their jurisdictions and consider what land might be available for affordable, for-sale home development (see priority recommendation, “Prioritize Publicly Owned Assets” pp. 19-20).
- ▶ Encourage the transfer of public land at low cost to nonprofit developers and mission-aligned developers for affordable, for-sale development. With public land there is the opportunity to promote permanent affordability through a land trust or long-term ground lease model.

Policy Support

- ▶ Support local and state policy and regulatory changes that would eliminate exclusionary zoning obstacles, such as minimum lot sizes and minimum home sizes.
 - Develop a HouseATL position on state pre-emption laws regarding local zoning standards or on what localities should consider in zoning reform.
- ▶ Assess policy and program steps that can be taken to ensure that homebuilders who build for-rent, as well as the conversion of for-sale homes to rental, does not hamper the supply for homebuyers who are first time or low-to-moderate income.
 - Increased tenant protections are important for ensuring that institutional investors in single family rentals do not view our market as prime for extracting from tenants (connects to the recommendation “Expand and Enhance Renters’ Rights”).
 - Support local control over build/buy to rent.

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

- Advocate for rental registration and inspection programs (connects to “Safe and Secure Housing” recommendation).
- ▶ Support policies that incentivize the sale/development of vacant properties/land by investors that could be developed as affordable housing.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

Builders and Developers

- ▶ Many nonprofit developers are already working to add to the inventory of for-sale affordable housing.
- ▶ HomeAid Atlanta is the nonprofit charitable organization of the Atlanta Homebuilders Association and can assist with convening and connecting with homebuilders.
- ▶ For-profit builders that are producing for-sale affordable homes and could use more support to expand: Examples: Sovereign Construction - Home Builders/Developer; Van Hardimon - Home Builder/Developer

Local Governments and their Associations

To improve regulatory processes

- ▶ Governments who have/are engaging in zoning reform such as the City of Decatur, City of Chamblee and City of Atlanta; Georgia Municipal Association, Association County Commissions of Georgia.
- ▶ Aerotropolis Atlanta Community Development Collective convenes local community development directors, city planners and professionals in S. Fulton/Clayton County and includes a housing focus

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Outreach and partnerships with homebuilders
- ▶ Supporting research to develop baselines and track metrics
- ▶ Development of informational and educational tools and directories
- ▶ Policy advocacy and lobbying
- ▶ Educational workshops, webinars, and events that support the recommendations

Key Metrics

- ▶ A new low cost, long term financing source is created for land acquisition for affordable for-sale development
- ▶ Increase in the # of for-sale homes available in various geographies at lower price points
- ▶ Increase in the # of affordable for-sale homes built that are permanently affordable (i.e. land trust homes)
- ▶ # of policy changes recommended and # of policy changes passed to support building of affordable, for-sale homes at state and local level

Financing Sources

To better coordinate and incentivize for-sale development

- ▶ CDFIs (Community Development Finance Institutions), including The Reinvestment Fund, LISC, the Low Income Investment Fund, and Enterprise; Invest Atlanta; The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta; Investors (GA Real Estate Investors Association and Atlanta Real Estate Investors Alliance)
- ▶ The company Home Starter has a technology platform that might be helpful for coordinating incentives
- ▶ Georgia ACT and Georgia Appleseed conduct statewide housing policy advocacy and can be a partner on policy change.

Policy

- ▶ Georgia REALTORS and the Atlanta REALTORS have lobbyists who could potentially collaborate on issues related to homeownership, development, inventory, and zoning

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Research/consulting services to assist with data baseline and tracking of SMART metrics
- ▶ Research and technology assistance to develop a centralized source of information of financing opportunities for homebuilders
- ▶ Events budget for marketing/outreach/events to share information with homebuilders and build relationships
- ▶ Strategic communications/policy advocacy/lobbying costs on related policy topics such as zoning reform, tenant protections, build-to-rent oversight, development of vacant land. This would be in coordination with the HouseATL Policy Working Group

Timeline for Implementation

2024	2025	2026
<p>Build relationships with homebuilders. Assess the tools needed.</p> <p>Provide homebuilders with a financing sources and downpayment assistance directory.</p> <p>Research and identify a baseline on current inventory of affordable for-sale homes by jurisdiction.</p> <p>Begin to develop an advocacy strategy for financing sources, incentives and the elimination of exclusionary zoning.</p> <p>Ensure that the publicly owned asset strategy includes opportunities for for-sale development.</p>	<p>Continue to build relationships with homebuilders and develop needed tools.</p> <p>Support the establishment of an interactive map of affordable for sale inventory (potentially via the HUB).</p> <p>Elevate and encourage innovative for-sale development through educational forums and public communications.</p> <p>Conduct strategic communications and advocacy for a new financing source, incentives and the elimination of exclusionary zoning for affordable for-sale development, while also supporting the publicly owned assets and tenant protections advocacy work.</p>	<p>Continue to elevate innovative models of development.</p> <p>Continue to conduct advocacy as needed.</p>

MULTIFAMILY HOUSING PRESERVATION

Secure Property Tax Exemptions for Affordable Rental Housing

SUMMARY

Secure property tax exemptions on parcels owned by non-profits and rented affordably in furtherance of their charitable purpose which may require litigation or state legislative action. Explore the possibility of longer-term property tax incentives that would support affordability regardless of owner type.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Affordable housing properties in Georgia do not typically receive property tax reductions or exemptions, which is different from many other states. Even when properties receive federal or state subsidies or are managed by nonprofits, they usually do not receive exemptions or reductions. Often the Limited Partnership structures that are used for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) are cited as the obstacle. Property taxes create a significant burden on operating expenses and makes it more difficult to maintain long term affordability.
- ▶ Support efforts to secure a nonprofit property tax exemption within existing law, particularly for non-profits providing affordable rental properties not supported by LIHTC resources.
 - May range from supporting exemption application processes and appeals of any denials, to securing passage of clarifying state legislation.
- ▶ Develop a coalition around securing the ability to offer property tax exemption in exchange for long term affordability for a multiplicity of ownership entities (LIHTC developers and others), which will likely require state legislative action.
- ▶ Support efforts to assess Low Income Housing Tax Credit properties as affordable
- ▶ Encourage the equitable assessment of commercial properties to compensate for the loss of taxes from affordable housing properties.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Center for Community Progress has been researching this issue and convening discussions. Has laid the groundwork for policy action.
- ▶ Atlanta Apartment Association, Georgia Affordable Housing Coalition, Georgia Municipal Association - potential policy advocacy partners
- ▶ Invest Atlanta - potential implementation partner for some types of tax relief
- ▶ Nonprofit policy advocacy groups out of respective jurisdictions to assist with advocacy
- ▶ Tax Assessors - education
- ▶ Lawrenceville and Gwinnett Housing Authorities use a legal instrument that allows housing authorities to enter into a Private Enterprise Agreement where they can remove properties from tax rolls in exchange for long term affordability.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Work with partners to support the research needed to target solutions.
- ▶ Work with partners to develop policy framework, messaging, collateral material and an educational plan that clarifies the issue - how it will make a difference for affordable housing and who needs to do what to address the issue.
- ▶ Conduct outreach and advocacy on the solutions - or support partners' outreach and advocacy

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of affordable units created/preserved with property tax exemptions

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Cost of research to support recommendation
- ▶ Cost of strategic communications and communications materials
- ▶ Cost of lobbying, advocacy and education
- ▶ Cost of litigation partners (if appropriate pro bono resources are not accessible)

Timeline for Implementation

2024	2025	2026
<p>Q1, 2024 - Convene partners and determine any additional research needed to target solutions.</p> <p>Q2, 2024 - Identify researcher and obtain analysis.</p> <p>Q3-Q4, 2024 - Begin developing the policy framework, messaging, collateral material and an educational plan that clarifies the issue.</p>	<p>2025 - Conduct outreach and advocacy on the solutions - or support partners' outreach and advocacy.</p> <p>Continue coalition development and refine messaging. If a state policy solution is the path forward, finalize draft legislation, obtain sponsors and conduct meetings with key decision makers prior to the 2026 State legislative session.</p>	<p>2026 - Continue coalition building, advocacy and lobbying as needed.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

PRIVATE RESOURCES

Strengthen the Coordination of Public, Private and Philanthropic Funding

SUMMARY

Strengthen HouseATL's Funders Collective into a transparent, coordinated public, private and philanthropic funding system aligning shared priorities and leveraging resources to create and preserve affordable and mixed income housing. A coordinated and braided (public, private and philanthropic) investment system is essential to success.

Recommendation in Depth

Strengthen HouseATL's Funders Collective

- ▶ The goal is to create a fully transparent, coordinated public, private and philanthropic funding system aligning shared priorities and affordable housing goals. Improve the braiding of various funding sources to achieve housing development projects.

Public Inventory of Funding Resources

- ▶ This should operate as a mechanism/hub providing information on all public, private (CDFIs, banks, etc.) and philanthropic resources and a shared access point for as many resources as possible (i.e.: Acquisition fund, Social Impact Fund below market debt, preservation equity funds, State and City funding, a catalytic Philanthropic fund and Opportunity Fund).
- ▶ There should be a description of each resource, its criteria, terms, etc. This is even more crucial now that there are more resources available - it's an opportune time to increase efficiencies and ensure that sources are appropriately leveraged.
- ▶ This inventory/database will need to be regularly updated¹

Common Application and Feasibility Tool

- ▶ This one-stop shop mechanism should try to integrate application processes for various fund-

ing resources.

- ▶ A common application should be created for as many resources as possible. For sources that need a separate application, try to create opportunities for one centralized location for uploading documents.
- ▶ Additionally, consideration should be given for aligning compliance requirements when possible and the timing of funding cycles - different funding cycles can make it challenging to apply for various affordable housing funds.
- ▶ Engage developers in the design of the common application and centralized process. Consider piloting with a few sources or in one jurisdiction and then expanding.²
- ▶ Develop and use a common feasibility tool to determine project readiness and to evaluate the public benefit being realized.

Raise New Types of Financing

- ▶ Through the coordinated platform, identify and assist in raising capital for new financing tools needed to support remaining funding gaps for the pipeline of housing development. For example, subordinate financing, very low interest loans, credit enhancement and guarantees.

Provide Technical Assistance

¹ This study by the Turner Center includes in its recommendations some details on creating such an inventory. (<https://turnercenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/LIHTC-Complexity-Final.pdf>)

² The same Turner Center study referenced above also has recommendations around a common application.

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

- ▶ Assist developers of affordable housing with preparing their applications for funding and improving their borrowing capacity (i.e.: joint venture, guarantees or credit enhancements).

Pipeline tracker

- ▶ Assess current affordable housing ecosystem to create a comprehensive pipeline tracker and road map that all funders can use for decision making on investments.

Dashboard

- ▶ Create an impact dashboard for the public to be able to view the progress being made.
- ▶ Dashboard could include applications received and reviewed, applications funded from various sources, affordable units completed annually.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Philanthropic Partners, with a focus on those who are not at the table and those who fund beyond the City of Atlanta
- ▶ Public Partners, with a focus on bringing in partners from the 5-county area who are not currently at the table: public housing authorities (Roswell Housing Authority, and those in Lawrenceville/Marietta/Decatur/DeKalb), development authorities, county and city staff
- ▶ Private Partners with resources who are not currently at the table
- ▶ Faith-based organizations - exploring expansion of faith-based development initiative beyond the City of Atlanta
- ▶ Banking and Corporate Partners such as Georgia Power, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, PNC, JPMorgan, Truist, Health care sector
- ▶ Minnesota's Consolidated RFP and Massachusetts MassDocs are examples of consolidated application processes that could be examined for their lessons learned. ARCHI has developed an interesting one stop shop for health care to share resources: <https://myhealthatl.com/>.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Elevate the process of developing a common application system and encourage public agencies to participate.
- ▶ Create a directory of funding resources, promote it, and encourage funders to assist in keeping it up to date.
- ▶ Encourage focus from public agencies and developers with funding.
- ▶ Continually invite new funders to the table, ensuring that no funding source is overlooked.

- ▶ Include mapping where the dollars are being invested geographically.
- ▶ Over time, determine if there are methods to go deeper on measurement to determine impacts on people such as health, income, education, etc.

Policies Supporting Resource Alignment

- ▶ Advocating for changes to policies that are preventing alignment of resources. One major item could be creating more equitable and reparative approaches for underwriting.

Continuous Evaluation and Improvement

- ▶ Assess the coordinated process periodically to determine areas of needed improvement. Survey the providers of resources as well as the applicants/developers.

Key Metrics

- ▶ An affordable housing development financial resource guide is completed and available on the HouseATL website by 1Q24
- ▶ A common application support structure is implemented by 3Q24
- ▶ Quarterly funder convenings are implemented to raise awareness on the affordable housing challenges and opportunities to invest
- ▶ The number of Philanthropic partners at the Funders Collective table and investing have increased by 50% by 4Q24
- ▶ Representation by public partners in Cobb, Gwinnett, Clayton and DeKalb are participating in the Funders Collective by 2Q24
- ▶ Developers are closing construction on affordable housing deals in 2024 that had funding gaps stemming from COVID and market impact related delays.

Budget Estimate Line Items

Next 12 month budget estimate \$ 160,000

- ▶ Staff time for the Funders Collective related activity and Funders Collective pipeline committee \$100,000
 - quarterly convening coordination and facilitation, and monthly pipeline outreach, preparation, reporting and neighborly software management
 - HouseATL Resource Guide development and maintenance
- ▶ Public, Private and Philanthropic coordination support on affordable housing solutions
- ▶ Neighborly Software for Funders Collective annual maintenance and updates contract \$15,000
- ▶ Software consultant for common application \$45,000

HOMEOWNERSHIP PRESERVATION

Reduce Low-income Homeowners' Property Tax Burden

SUMMARY

Ensure the prioritization of equitable tax policies, effective tax revenues for communities and resources to support low-income and senior homeowners to meet tax obligations and retain their homes.

Recommendation in Depth

Policy

New or modified homestead exemptions at the local level require state legislation¹

- ▶ Encourage continuous review and refinement of tax collection policies, procedures and resources. Provide examples of City -County win-win partnerships - what are examples of great partnerships and policies that include meeting tax collection goals and ensure preservation of homeownership.
- ▶ Enact more effective and uniform state and local tax policies to protect long-term homeowners who are low-income from losing their homes due to taxes.
 - Consider tools such as more use of freezes or floating exemptions to offset rising values for long-time homeowners, income-based options, more universal inclusion of people with disabilities in exemptions, and full exemption from school taxes for low-income seniors.
 - Encourage tax commissioners to consider establishing payment plans with reasonable timelines based on people's incomes for people who are behind on their taxes.
- ▶ Increase the breadth and effectiveness of educating our tax assessors and tax commissioners about existing homestead exemptions and encourage the broad interpretation of those exemptions to allow legacy homeowners be able to afford the taxes while they deal with Heirs Property issues.² Unfortunately, many homeowners without a deed in their name are turned away at the door to the tax office without any inquiry into whether they may fall into one of the legally allowable exemption categories while those who do submit an application are often denied. Educating the tax officials to take and approve these applications would avoid putting the burden on the people already dealing with the ownership issues to appeal. Many homes are lost to tax foreclosures due to the loss of homestead exemptions or inability to get homestead exemptions to keep the taxes affordable.
- ▶ Prevent retroactive removal of homestead exemptions (except when intentional misinformation leads to continuing to receive exemptions the household is not qualified to receive)³. Retroactive removal of the exemption means that a

1 Per GMA "Municipal Revenues" 2/27/2018" the [GA] Constitution allows local homestead exemptions to be enacted through local acts of the General Assembly. Local homestead exemptions may not be enacted unless they are enacted as local legislation by the General Assembly. A local bill may create a homestead exemption for county, municipality or school district, but a bill creating a homestead exemption for county or school district tax purposes does not create a homestead exemption for municipal tax purposes. A local homestead exemption may be tailored to the needs of the local government and may create an exemption in a specific dollar amount or, as has been the recent trend, may enact a "floating homestead exemption" in which the dollar value of the homestead exemption increases along with the increase in the assessed value of the home. Local homestead exemptions may apply to all homeowners or may be tied to age or income restrictions.

2 State law provides support for some people who do not have a deed in their name to get homestead exemptions, but most are told they must have a deed in their name when they try to apply. Existing law allows for exemptions for children of deceased or incapacitated homeowners regardless of whether the property has been distributed, heirs/beneficiaries where property is vested in the administrator or executor (probate is on-going), spouses where the home is in the name of the other spouse (unless the other spouse gets an exemption somewhere else), people with a contract for deed where the end result will be ownership of the property, and other narrow categories. If these are broadly interpreted, many people dealing with heirs property could get exemptions while they work through the process.

3 Fulton County is retroactively removing homestead exemptions when they find exemptions in the name of deceased homeowners and people who have moved or are receiving homestead exemptions on more than one property. Homestead exemptions are waived if not applied for by April 1 of the year in which the exemption is sought.

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

qualified homeowner cannot go back in time to get an exemption for years prior to the annual application date even if they would have been qualified had they known they needed to apply to get the exemption. If exemptions can only be removed prospectively, the homeowners would be able to apply for exemptions to keep the taxes more affordable without a sudden increase. As it is, retroactive removal of the exemptions creates revised bills for the year(s) affected and creates delinquent taxes where there were none.

- Advocate for a Fulton County grace period for heirs property, remove retroactive and timeline for accepting exemption applications from heirs.
- Educate probate attorneys on process and provide communication document that informs heirs of steps to apply for exemption.

Homeowners Education and Technical Assistance

- ▶ Increase breadth and effectiveness of homeowner education and technical assistance on how to access existing tax exemptions.
- ▶ Create “Did you know” communications, PSA’s, etc., for homeowners on exemption rules we want to elevate.

Funding Support

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Atlanta Beltline Partnership. has a Legacy Resident Retention fund and also provides in-person homeowner education in various communities, including one-on-one assistance with tax exemption applications and property tax appeals.
- ▶ Westside Future Fund also has a fund to help legacy residents pay for property taxes.
- ▶ The City of Atlanta has received funds as well as a promise of additional funds in the future from Tyler Perry to help pay property taxes for at least seniors, to be administered by Invest Atlanta. It seems these funds are using the homestead exemptions to determine who qualifies and some seniors are being denied exemptions due to heirs property issues.
- ▶ Atlanta Legal Aid is interested in the issue of preventing retroactive removal of homestead exemp-

- ▶ Identify public, private and philanthropic funding that can be provided to help seniors and low-moderate income homebuyers cover costs to remove tax liens and deal with tax delinquencies, using the examples of the existing Legacy Resident Retention funds by the Beltline and the Blank Foundation.
- ▶ Nonprofit partnerships will be necessary to provide guidance to homeowners on the process.
 - Partner with CDFIs to provide small dollar loans at reasonable rates and terms to help pay for delinquent taxes- may be an emergency home loan program (taxes, code, etc).
 - Share national examples of programs and funding for tax and home preservation.

Community Education

- ▶ Create “Did you know” communications for city councils, county commissioners, NPIs, neighborhood and homeowners associations, and community stakeholders on exemption rules we want to elevate.
- ▶ Provide graphics that benchmark taxes: partner with WABE to take the data and communicate the “small” changes that could be made to create a more equitable tax distribution and also have high tax collection rates.

tions and in the issue of exemptions for people who are dealing with heirs properties. They can also provide input on pending legislation when invited by a legislator.

- ▶ Realtors, realtists, and real estate closing professionals can be partners on educating homebuyers about homestead exemptions at closings.
- ▶ Georgia Heirs Property Law Center, State Bar Association’s heirs/probate committees, and Atlanta Bar Association can work on solving heir property issues to make people eligible for exemptions and can educate homebuyers or homeowners about applying for exemptions, as well as assist with applications and represent people in denials of applications where they should be eligible.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Policy advocacy
- ▶ Work with partners to encourage more tax offices to implement broader application of the homestead exemptions.
- ▶ Identifying data and research partners on homestead exemptions across 5-county region
- ▶ Communication/marketing material development
- ▶ Bridge building within city and county and with stakeholders
- ▶ Convening stakeholders and tax assessors and commissioners

Key Metrics

- ▶ Reduction in tax foreclosures
- ▶ Decrease in delinquent tax payments
- ▶ # of Proposed and Passed Legislation/Ordinances/Policy changes

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Research on property tax homestead exemptions across 5-county region
- ▶ Development of homestead communication materials

Support Modifications and Repairs for Homeowners Who Are Low-Income, Senior, or Disabled

SUMMARY

Provide a coordinated system of education and resources to homebuyers and homeowners who are low-income, senior, or disabled to ensure that they can maintain the useful life of their home.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Provide education to homebuyers and homeowners who are low-income on the importance of preventative maintenance to reduce large expenditures and extend the useful life of all systems, appliances and structures. Ensure that the options for assistance are shared via multiple avenues such as power and water bill inserts, neighborhood associations, etc. Be attentive to reaching elderly homeowners in particular who may not have the financial support or the family support to address repairs in the home.¹
- ▶ Partner with realtors and realists who assisted homebuyers with their purchase to email those homeowners offering home preservation information and tips.
 - Create a list of maintenance items that can be provided to the client at closing or as a communication from the agent after closing.
- ▶ Support nonprofits that provide homeowner repairs for homeowners who are low-income (not just senior homeowners) or need modifications due to a disability:
 - Quantify the level of funding needed.
 - Encourage consistent and unrestricted (geographic and target population constraints create service delivery challenges) government, corporate, and private funding, as well as volunteer support, in-kind donations, and discounted labor. Additionally, support capacity building for nonprofits to ensure sufficient trained staff for programs to serve homeowner needs across the region.
 - Increase collaboration between elected officials, government agencies, companies (e.g., insurance companies that refer homeowners to home preservation organizations), and home preservation nonprofits to maximize resources to benefit homeowners.
- ▶ Create a better system of coordination between those who provide assistance and those who need assistance, such as a common application. There is a need for tracking current/prospective clients across service areas/jurisdictions and coordinating various waitlists/inquiries from multiple organizations to aid in maximizing home preservation resources.
 - Create a working group to help coordinate agencies.
 - Create a central database (master list) of homeowners needing repairs (there is duplication across waiting lists). A central entity would need to manage the common application and database, such as ARCHI is currently doing for emergency rental assistance.
- ▶ Different types of funding sources have different requirements, which will complicate planning a common process.
- ▶ Explore the potential of a cooperatively owned maintenance and repair company to help homeowners who are low- to moderate- income with maintenance to reduce the burden of homeownership.
- ▶ Explore the issue of homes needing to be lead-free prior to being eligible for other home repairs by some programs. Work with home preservation providers and public agencies to coordinate on

¹ There is a need to overcome homeowner distrust. If the funding for home repairs comes from US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development in the form of Community Development Block Grants, there is a requirement that a lien in the amount of the provided funds be placed on the property for a period of time (usually 5-10 yrs) in order to discourage the homeowner from immediately selling the repaired property. If an owner wants to sell prior to the lien expiration, they will have to pay back the repair funds from the sale proceeds. Some homeowners distrust the home repair programs or find the financing documents confusing due to requirements like these.

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

lead abatement issues and needs.

- ▶ Educate homeowners about mortgage assistance to prevent foreclosure. GA Dept. of Community Affairs administers \$354 M in American Rescue Plan Act funds until the earlier of funds spent or September 30, 2026. Homeowners up to 100%

AMI with financial hardship due to COVID can apply for mortgage reinstatement, principal reduction and housing expenses (max \$50,000). As of 4/30/23 \$227.3 M remains.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

Home Preservation Service Providers

- ▶ House Proud, Meals on Wheels, and Rebuilding Together provide home repairs
- ▶ Nehemiah Project CDC provides owner-occupied home repairs for low- to moderate- income homeowners, including the Watershed Management Care and Concern program for utility repairs
- ▶ Habitat for Humanity Atlanta, Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity, Habitat for Humanity Dekalb, and Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Georgia all provide home repairs
- ▶ Gwinnett Housing Corporation provides home repairs and operates a healthy home program
- ▶ Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF) provides non-traditional loans to help reduce energy burdens and increase health and safety for low-income homeowners and landlords.
- ▶ The company Home Starter has a technology platform that can assist with programs such as this
- ▶ HopeWorks organizes volunteers to provide landscaping and repairs for seniors
- ▶ Neighbor In Need provides home repairs using volunteers and donations primarily in the City of Atlanta's eastside neighborhoods
- ▶ Kirkwood Cares organizes volunteers to assist legacy residents in the Kirkwood neighborhood of Atlanta
- ▶ Home Depot, Lowes, Ace - for in-kind and financial donations, incentives/discounts for home systems
- ▶ CDFI's and other funders with innovative funding and solutions
- ▶ Trades and workforce training programs (electricians, plumbers, etc) are potential partners for lower cost services
- ▶ AgeWell Atlanta Neighborhood Services (available in Toco Hills and Roswell) offers assistance to senior adults in the Jewish community and provides home safety improvements and enrichment opportunities

- ▶ Atlanta Legal Aid, State Bar of Georgia, and other bar organizations can provide pro bono assistance to resolving title issues or other impediments to qualifying for home repair programs (see heirs property above)

Local Governments and Policymakers

Local governments, policy makers and housing authorities can work to promote partnerships, allocate public resources and incentivize coordination to advance efficiencies in the home preservation ecosystem.

- ▶ The City of Atlanta funds a Roof Replacement Program (currently delivered by Rebuilding Together)
- ▶ Invest Atlanta utilizes funding sources like the Housing Opportunity Bond and Community Development Block Grants to fund home repairs
- ▶ Fulton County funds a Repair Program (currently delivered via Meals on Wheels)
- ▶ Dekalb County funds a Repair Program
- ▶ Local watershed management agencies are potential partners for disseminating information about repair programs
- ▶ GA Dept of Community Affairs administers CHIP funds, which can be used for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation for homeowners at 80% AMI or below. Also administers Georgia Mortgage Assistance Funds

Advocates and Coalitions

- ▶ Georgia Advancing Communities Together is a statewide membership organization of nonprofits that advocates on affordable housing
- ▶ Housing Justice League is a coalition that organizes tenants and homeowners to advocate for affordable housing.
- ▶ National Aging in Place Council (Greater Atlanta Chapter) is a senior support network that connects service providers with older homeowners, their families, and caretakers.
- ▶ AARP Georgia advocates on policy issues that affect seniors.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Assist in the coordination efforts and information dissemination to the main stakeholders
- ▶ Encourage funders to assist the organizations with funding for repair work
- ▶ Develop and create the narrative around the issues / public engagement
- ▶ Assist in identifying general contractors and trade organizations looking to give back to the community and for project opportunities to mitigate cost of repairs
- ▶ Outreach to home preservation service providers and resource providers to converge around solutions, initiatives and resources for home maintenance and repair

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of homeowners served
- ▶ # of qualified homeowners who are waitlisted for repairs
- ▶ % of qualified homeowners who are served in various geographic areas (ensuring equitable coverage of need)

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Cost of developing a central database to coordinate programs/waitlists (if not able to identify an existing platform to take this on such as the Urban League for Greater Atlanta's HUB)
- ▶ Creation and dissemination of information to homeowners, nonprofits and other stakeholders
- ▶ Fundraising costs for efforts to secure resources for home repairs - private funding, pro bono services, solutions from businesses (e.g., Home Depot, Lowes)
- ▶ \$12.6 million to directly fund repairs at an average repair cost of \$14,000 per unit with current waiting lists across repair agencies of about 900 people (per recent survey by Atlanta Habitat for Humanity). This doesn't include additional staffing costs that would likely be needed to administer the repairs.

Expand and Coordinate Eviction Prevention Services

SUMMARY

Expand the availability and coordination of short-term/emergency solutions and longer-term prevention services to combat the high rate of evictions in Atlanta and prevent families from entering homelessness.

This recommendation is an update to the original 2018 version, reflecting changes in our political environment and market conditions.

Recommendation in Depth

Increased and coordinated emergency housing assistance

- ▶ Expand the pilot underway by ARCHI (Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement) for a common application and coordinated process for Rent, Utility, and Mortgage Relief. Engage all agencies currently providing these services to join the common application and streamline access for people in need. Analyze the resulting data to understand the gaps between needs and resources. Expand the process over time, when resources are obtained, to incorporate other types of emergency assistance.
- ▶ Advocate for additional low-barrier emergency assistance funds to target the gaps and use within the coordinated system. Also advocate for funds for the administrative and case management costs necessary for effectively providing the assistance.
- ▶ Maintain a network of regular communications among all the different agencies involved in emergency assistance, so continuous opportunities for improvement within the system can be identified. Regular communication can also help with a formal/informal system of ‘warm handoffs’ to other agencies - reducing the time/energy that people facing housing instability may be spending to get connected with services they need.
- ▶ Collectively provide feedback and suggest solutions to government and private funders to reduce barriers in qualifications and documentation.

Preemptive services and supports for eviction prevention

- ▶ Tenant support agencies should offer more information on, and opportunities for, financial education and coaching, as well as credit and debt counseling. Mitigation strategies should also ensure at-risk households are connected to other

services that are tailored to their situation (medical assistance, social services, workforce development programs, etc.).

- ▶ Support better connections between emergency assistance providers and landlords/property managers to improve communications and common understanding of the tenants’ challenges.
- ▶ Explore opportunities to engage landlords on alternatives to evictions; conduct listening sessions with “worst offender” landlords to better identify solutions to decreasing eviction filing rates in Atlanta.
- ▶ Work broadly with property owners and managers on flexibility on rent due dates to align with pay schedules.
- ▶ Additionally, for more long-term prevention, encourage matched savings programs or universal basic income programs to encourage tenants to build up emergency reserves.

Coordinated and accessible legal resources, diversion programs, and housing alternatives

- ▶ Advocate for the expansion of the City of Atlanta/ Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation Access to Counsel neighborhood pilot and the Housing Court Assistance Center at the Fulton County Courthouse to provide pre- and post-filing eviction resolution assistance and full legal representation to reduce the occurrence and impact of evictions.
 - Fully fund and staff the Housing Court Assistance Center to ensure individuals facing eviction are connected to legal resources so that evictions can be prevented, delayed and/or mitigated. And, such that the Center can be open during all hours that the court is operating.

Recommendation in Depth, Continued

- Explore what needs to be done to make the current Housing Court Assistance Center permanent.
- Explore whether similar arrangements are a fit for other local courthouses and in other metro area counties.
- ▶ Support eviction diversion programs that combine legal services and negotiated emergency rental assistance, as well as integrate financial education to help stabilize the home. Additionally, support funding for the Continuum of Care to fully staff and provide diversion services for families verging on homelessness.
- ▶ Work with court leadership to make dispossession summons language more accessible to all literacy levels AND to include a list of resources on where tenants can get help (similar to DFCS notices about reductions/terminations to SNAP and other benefits, which include lists of assistance sources).
- ▶ Leverage existing and emerging technologies that can easily track evictions as soon as they are filed to ensure prompt notifications of affected parties and pairing of available legal resources.
- ▶ Identify real-time monitoring and analyzing of prevalence of evictions by neighborhood to inform targeted anti-displacement efforts.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

Invert the Burden and Common Application

- ▶ ARCHI (Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement)
- ▶ Unite Us Referrals
- ▶ Agency Provider Slack Channel
- ▶ United Way 211 - enhance the current system to operate with more real time data and to use new technologies for user-friendliness

Legal Assistance

- ▶ City of Atlanta/Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation Access to Counsel Pilot
- ▶ Housing Court Assistance Center at Fulton County Courthouse
 - Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF)
 - Courts and judges
- ▶ Los Vecinos de Buford Highway
- ▶ Atlanta Legal Aid

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Encourage funders to support agencies participating in the ARCHI common application and emergency assistance network.
- ▶ Bring municipalities from the 5 county core area together to discuss barriers and gaps in their funding programs.
- ▶ Connect to landlords and identify landlords willing to assist with reducing evictions.
- ▶ Elevate ARCHI's data on assistance requests in the metro area and waiting lists, as well as United Way 211 data on request volumes for emergency housing assistance by jurisdiction
- ▶ Advocate for improved Magistrate Court data on evictions by geography in order to better target eviction prevention services

Diversion

- ▶ Partners for HOME/HomeFirst
- ▶ Administrative Office of the Courts

Financial Education

- ▶ On the Rise Financial Center
- ▶ BCM Georgia
- ▶ N.O.W. Financial Capability Program of the Grove Park Foundation

Landlords

- ▶ Atlanta Apartment Association can help with connections to landlords and sharing information from landlords.
- ▶ Star-C has landlord relationships and might be able to assist with convening landlords and engaging them in these efforts.
- ▶ Open Doors works regularly with landlords on housing placements.

Key Metrics

- ▶ Homelessness and/or transiency rates do not increase, mitigating increased poverty and often a multigenerational poverty cycle.
- ▶ Eviction filing rates decrease.

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Private funding pool that is flexible to address emergency assistance for situations that do not fit the criteria of public sources, with a focus on ARCHI's common application network
- ▶ Private funding for nonprofits to deliver targeted financial education and coaching, accessible at the property level in cooperation with landlords
- ▶ Funding to support advocacy to achieve: 1) dedicated, long-term public sector emergency assistance resources; 2) access to legal counsel for those facing eviction; and 3) eviction diversion programs across jurisdictions
- ▶ Support for the cost of staffing to regularly convene and coordinate service providers, the courts and funders

Encourage Regulatory Reforms

SUMMARY

Encourage reforms in the state and local housing regulatory systems to create cost savings and boost affordable housing production.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Use regulatory processes to provide incentives for affordability and to increase the diversity of housing types and sizes. For example,
 - Obtain state legislative approval for local jurisdictions to allow for impact fee waivers when housing will be income restricted.
 - Local jurisdictions can provide density bonuses to encourage affordability.
- ▶ Create a process for holding public agencies accountable for their effective investments in affordable housing over time.
- ▶ Monitor the affordable housing component of various jurisdictions' Comprehensive Development Plans to hold local jurisdictions accountable for progress. And, work to encourage strong affordable housing recommendations when comprehensive plans are being updated across the region.
- ▶ Advocate for equitable property tax assessments between residential and commercial properties, particularly in Fulton County. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/03/opinion/sunday/property-taxes-housing-assessment-inequality.html>)
- ▶ Explore policies and procedures that will motivate investors to develop or sell vacant property rather than holding it longterm.
- ▶ Provide community education on the need to reduce exclusionary zoning and implement inclusionary zoning.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Abundant Housing Atlanta is a nonprofit organizing Atlanta residents to advocate for more housing and regulatory reform is a key part of their work.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Still in development

Key Metrics

- ▶ Still in development

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Still in development

Increase Real Estate Professionals' Knowledge of Affordable Homebuying Resources

SUMMARY

Educate industry professionals (realtors, lenders, banks, contractors, attorneys, insurance agents, etc.) that interface with would-be buyers about products and support options so that they can demystify the process for homebuyers who are low- to moderate-income.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Provide outreach and education to realtors, lenders, home inspectors, insurance agents, financial planners, et/al. about the importance and process of affordable homeownership, especially the benefits and processes for utilizing down payment assistance and pathways such as community land trusts.
- ▶ Ensure that mortgage lenders have established effective and efficient processes and systems, and have trained industry professionals, on all aspects of pairing downpayment assistance (DPA) and other support programs with their mortgage loan products. This will help ensure ease of origination, process, underwriting and closing mortgage loans coupled with DPA funding.
- ▶ Increase real estate professionals understanding about the causes of the racial gap in homeownership and their potential role in helping to close that gap.
- ▶ Elevate and recognize industry professionals who have helped diverse homebuyers achieve successful homeownership and/or utilized DPA for their home purchase.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Realtors and Realtists and their associations to help ensure that their colleagues are aware of the importance of working with clients who are using down payment assistance and helping them to navigate the process
- ▶ Home Builders and Home Builders Associations to ensure that the appropriate staff are aware of downpayment assistance processes and other resources
- ▶ Public Officials to support and resource homeownership programs and down payment assistance programs for targeted markets. Public officials institute streamlined processes to ensure ease of access, timely processing and closings on home purchases.
- ▶ Utilities & City Services support, market and resource homeownership programs and initiatives in the region.
- ▶ Insurance companies can encourage their staff to support, market and resource homeownership programs and initiatives in the region.
- ▶ Invest Atlanta, as an administrator of down payment assistance programs, can provide content for educating real estate professionals, as well as share their expertise on outreach to real estate professionals
- ▶ Mortgage Lenders can institute requirements for consistent training and education of their staff and support efforts with equitable compensations, rewards and acknowledgement.
- ▶ Housing Counselors could assist with educating other real estate professionals
- ▶ Grounded Solutions Network could assist with information to educate people on community land trusts
- ▶ Urban League of Greater Atlanta operates the HUB which has the capacity to connect real estate professionals to down payment assistance resources and other homebuyer supports
- ▶ Georgia Housing Finance Authority within GA Dept. of Community Affairs operates the Georgia Dream downpayment assistance program and can likely provide content for outreach materials as well as connections to real estate professionals

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Provide the content/packet to engage and inform real estate professionals about down payment assistance and other supports for homebuyers
- ▶ Facilitate collaboration among potential partners on this effort to educate the real estate industry
- ▶ Consistent outreach and support to connect real estate professionals to information and training

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of outreach/educational events to industry professionals
- ▶ Increase # of real estate industry professionals who utilize the Urban League of Greater Atlanta HUB
- ▶ # of loan officers who choose for the first time to work with down payment assistance
- ▶ # of realtors who choose for the first time to work with down payment assistance

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Development of communications content in multiple formats for real estate industry professionals on resources for low- to moderate- income homebuyers
- ▶ Funding an organization to facilitate collaboration among partners for outreach efforts to real estate industry professionals
- ▶ Funding an organization to maintain ongoing communications campaign targeted to real estate industry professionals

COMMUNITY RETENTION

Improve Homebuyer Education Quality and Outreach

SUMMARY

In order to better prepare homebuyers for the expectations and realities of the homebuying process, homebuyer education must be more accessible, with better capacity for outreach and better learning outcomes.

Recommendation in Depth

Accessible Education

- ▶ Meet future home owners “where they are” both from a preparation standpoint and an accessibility standpoint. Understand the needs of the current market of home buyers and shape education to meet those needs. Partner with colleges, school districts and employers.
- ▶ Provide more education classes for would-be homebuyers about purchasing from within their communities to overcome transportation barriers.
- ▶ Provide education classes at a variety of times of day and week to give access to residents who work long hours and partner with employers to provide education on-site at people’s places of employment
- ▶ Create an outreach and education strategy to counter influential misinformation about renting vs buying. Identify sources of misinformation. Conduct outreach through cable stations, radio, and social media. Consider an overarching theme focused on “owning a piece of the pie”, for example

Quality Education

- ▶ Provide education for potential buyers on the value of homeownership and implications for wealth-building... WHY You Should BUY A Home /

Value of Buying vs Renting in Developing Long-Term Wealth.

- ▶ Ensure that homebuyer education providers cover in their classes: credit, savings, budgeting, maintenance, repairs, lending institutions, interest rates, loan products, title company, homestead exemptions, having an agent, types of homes, detached vs. attached, HOA’s.
- ▶ Increase referrals from mortgage lenders and real estate agents to US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development qualified housing counseling agencies.

Education on Alternative Homeownership Pathways

- ▶ Provide training and education on Community Land Trust
- ▶ Promote Cooperative Living Communities

Post-Purchase Education

- ▶ There needs to be greater/better follow-up education for borrowers after they have purchased their homes. Post-purchase sustainability.
- ▶ Have support groups of recent buyers come in to help other new home buyers to understand the expectations.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development certified homebuyer education providers and the professional associations they are involved with - partnering with them to improve accessibility, quality, etc.
- ▶ NAACP Branches’ Housing Committees: advocacy, outreach, and community engagement
- ▶ REALTORS and REALTISTS: expertise, outreach, advocacy and guidance to members to understand what’s needed so they can educate their clients better, Ignite Others Program (<https://www.nar.realtor/ignite-others> and <https://www.nar.realtor/ignite-others/realtors-light-the-way>)
- ▶ Churches: advocacy, community support and outreach

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles, Continued

- ▶ Mortgage Brokers: advocacy, financial guidance and assistance; educate buyers/potential buyers on available programming; partner with schools to help teachers buy homes
- ▶ Credit Unions: financial guidance and education; advocating for credit unions to learn about programs in the community
- ▶ Neighborhood Planning Units and neighborhood associations: local advocacy and community development; community programs; community engagement for diverse populations; resource integration and education; DEI training added to NPU University and other education programs for neighborhood leadership.
- ▶ Utility companies: can include information about homebuyer education in their communications to customers, sustainability, and energy efficiency, working with the utilities companies to suggest changes to include townhomes to include all city services
- ▶ School Districts: advocacy, youth and family outreach; curriculum integration; informational events; financial literacy and future homeownership, including outreach for the teachers and faculty as well for the same financial literacy; keeping teachers close to the schools as homeowners; advocate for a partnership with developers for affordable housing, homebuying liaison for teachers/school workers
- ▶ Employers: promote homebuyer education through internal communication channels and offer incentives or benefits to employees who participate in such programs. This can include flexible work arrangements or financial assistance for housing-related costs. Create employee assisted housing programs to keep their workers residing close to work, such as a matched savings program or incentive for downpayment assistance.
- ▶ The Georgia Chamber of Commerce: Advocate for workforce housing and homebuyer education

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Convene, or work with convenors of, US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development certified counseling agencies to see what supports can be provided to achieve the recommendations
- ▶ Provide, or work with a partner to provide, education content on alternative pathways to ownership to homebuyer education counselors
- ▶ Provide or work with a partner to provide, outreach information to homebuyers about homebuyer education opportunities
- ▶ Facilitate collaboration among partners to achieve the recommendations
- ▶ Consistent outreach

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of homebuyer education events, # of attendees, attendee demographics, conversion to homeowner (i.e. 4 events, 100 attendees, BIPOC local attendees, # of BIPOC homeownership > last year)
- ▶ Increased number of homebuyer education providers', and related stakeholders', membership in HouseATL

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ \$100-150k for development of homebuyer education campaign, related events and data tracking

MULTIFAMILY HOUSING PRESERVATION

Preserve Expiring Subsidized Properties

SUMMARY

Proactively engage owners of properties within 5 years of upcoming subsidy expirations (or Year 15) to identify plans, challenges, and areas of potential support. This engagement should be a collaborative effort across funding agencies.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Utilize and expand the HouseATL Preservation Database (<https://houseatl.org/resources/affordable-housing-preservation-map-and-toolkit/>). Use the database to advance information sharing on where expiring deals are located and how this information can translate into preservation opportunities. Expand the database eventually to include the 5-county metro area. This will allow for layering of local funding sources with state and federal that are currently available via the National Housing Preservation Database, as well as with other applicable data to inform risk of loss and prioritization.
- ▶ Establish technical assistance staffing to proactively engage owners of properties within 5 years of upcoming subsidy expirations (or Year 15) to identify plans, challenges, and areas of potential support. This engagement should be a collaborative effort across funding agencies.
- Depending on results of engagement, actions may include funding, support in identifying financing opportunities, other technical assistance, or identification of a mission aligned buyer.
- ▶ Convene public agencies regularly to troubleshoot preservation priorities based upon inventory analysis and owner engagement, with a focus on subsidized properties.
- ▶ Announce and provide legal services for tenants to ensure that properties that do undergo the Qualified Contract process are being monitored during the 3-year no eviction period.
- ▶ Advocate with public funding sources for extending the length of required affordability.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ City of Atlanta Housing Innovation Lab which is monitoring how to prevent the loss of properties that are entering the Qualified Contract process. The City is looking at what resources can be mobilized. It may eventually be a model to use with other jurisdictions.
- ▶ Georgia Department of Community Affairs - share data on Low Income Housing Tax Credit properties; participate in collaborative efforts to engage with owners; consider preservation focused funding sources, including Qualified Contract gap fillers.
- ▶ Atlanta Regional Commission - Data partner for the HouseATL Preservation Database expansion; partner in Metro Public Sector staff and elected leader engagement.
- ▶ Banking and CDFI community - Engagement in development of financing solutions for expiring properties.
- ▶ US Dept of Housing and Urban Development - Share data on US Department of Housing and Urban Development financed properties and participate in collaborative efforts to identify at risk properties and engage owners.
- ▶ Cities and counties -Share data on locally funded properties and local priority properties, consider local funding sources or other incentives to preserve affordability.
- ▶ Existing owners of these properties are critical partners in problem-solving. Columbia Residential and National Church Residences have engaged in seeking solutions.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Access to data to understand opportunities
- ▶ Encouraging financial resources to invest in preserving targeted properties
- ▶ Monitor models, like City of Atlanta Housing Innovation Lab, to connect to other jurisdictions

Key Metrics

- ▶ Preservation Database is expanded to the five county metro
- ▶ A priority list of preservation properties is created among public and private partners for engagement and strategy development
- ▶ # of affordable properties preserved annually which have been identified as priorities through this work.
- ▶ The Qualified Contract process at DCA is adjusted to disallow or significantly disincentivize QC requests.

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Data - \$100,000 for data expansion; \$35,000-\$50,000 annual maintenance
- ▶ Technical assistance and convening staffing/consultants
- ▶ Advocacy staffing

Support Expansion of Developer Capacity

SUMMARY

Expand support for non-profit and mission-aligned for-profit developers who are focused on long-term affordability, mixed-income communities, sustainability, and quality affordable housing for very low-income families. Include a specific focus on developers of color. Increase capacity through tools such as multi-year operating support, dedicated development funding, partnerships, and talent development.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Invest resources that could aid in the capacity / agility of nonprofit and for-profit mission-aligned developers to acquire affordable land and/or properties (e.g. creation of a database of the inventory/pipeline available).
- ▶ Build a high capacity network of non-profit and mission-aligned for-profit developers interested in purchasing at-risk affordable housing (naturally occurring affordable housing and properties with expiring subsidies - e.g. LIHTC expiring affordability periods) to preserve that housing as affordable. Build an infrastructure to facilitate such transactions.
- ▶ Support developers of color to have the capacity to develop efficient and healthy homes by simplifying resource applications and limiting risk assessments when deploying capital resources.
- ▶ Invest resources that could enable non-profit housing organizations to invest in talent retention/recruitment efforts of key housing development personnel. Consider cooperative efforts to improve talent development and recruitment. Asset management talent is particularly needed. Assist by helping talent and new staff to network and learn the “tricks of the trade”.
- ▶ Consider supporting efforts to create partnerships between emerging affordable housing developers and experienced developers as a way to expand the pool of developers with capacity. Support partnerships that can increase emerging developers’ access to capital.
- ▶ Explore state and local policies that would improve opportunities for nonprofit developers in particular to acquire and develop affordable housing.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Enterprise Community Partners through their Preservation Academy, the Faith Based Development Initiative and the Equitable Path Forward program
- ▶ NeighborWorks America’s training institutes
- ▶ ULI Atlanta Center for Leadership support emerging leaders in real estate, and ULI Atlanta offers training workshops
- ▶ Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) offers training courses. (Dr. Debbie Phillips, provides property management courses and training for organizations.)
- ▶ Certified Housing Apartment Management (CHAM) trains asset management staff
- ▶ The Incremental Development Alliance’s training program for start-up developers
- ▶ Atlanta Housing is working on supporting developers of color in relation to their investments in housing development
- ▶ Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership has a new initiative around supporting developers of color
- ▶ Partnership for Southern Equity’s Just Energy initiative could be a potential partner on working with developers on energy efficiency and sustainability

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Advocate to public and philanthropic members for funding resources necessary to support capacity building programming
- ▶ Advocate for investment in nonprofits to strengthen organizational infrastructure
- ▶ Survey the HouseATL nonprofit membership to provide insight into areas of need and support
- ▶ Host an affordable housing real estate trade networking conference to increase business opportunities for BIPOC vendors and subcontractors
- ▶ Advocate for its private and philanthropic members to create a nonprofit organizational line of credit to bridge service contracts with public agencies
- ▶ Create, or encourage the creation of, an affordable housing development Fellow program

Key Metrics

- ▶ Survey of members to identify areas of capacity needs is completed by 1Q24
- ▶ Preservation of affordable housing training is available to developers of affordable housing 2Q24
- ▶ # of BIPOC developers submitting Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and other funding applications has increased
- ▶ An organizational line of credit is created and available by 2Q24 to nonprofits to bridge reimbursable service contracts executed with public partners.
- ▶ A resource guide of membership capacity building programs is completed and available on the HouseATL website by 2Q24
- ▶ Asset management training is offered and available for operators of affordable housing in the 5 county core area by 2025

Budget Estimate Line Items

Next 12 month estimated budget \$150,000

- ▶ Staff time \$100,000
 - To develop a coordinated capacity building platform leveraging membership programs
 - To support the creation of an organizational line of credit bridging reimbursable contracts
- ▶ Consulting/Training support \$25,000
- ▶ HouseATL Affordable Housing Real Estate Trade Network event \$25,000

HOMEOWNERSHIP PRESERVATION

Address Heirs Property

SUMMARY

Improve the intergenerational inheritance of homes among families with low-incomes and/or of diverse populations.

Recommendation in Depth

Educate Homebuyers

- ▶ Identify opportunities to educate and equip homebuyers at the time of purchase about the importance of estate planning and how tools such as wills, joint tenancy and trusts work.
 - Education should also include information regarding maintenance and repairs, tax increases, and homestead exemptions.
 - Encourage homebuyer education courses and information sharing by professionals involved in home sales.
 - These tools could include examples of legal documents, checklists, etc. to assist homebuyers with the preparation and/or communication of their desires and needs.

Educate Legacy Homebuyers

- ▶ Increase education for legacy homeowners regarding heirs property and the importance of estate planning and how tools such as wills, joint tenancy and trusts work. Ensure that there is understanding about the probate process and what will need to occur with a will once the person passes away, so a fractured title will not prevent re-financing for upkeep and repairs.
 - Collaborate with Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) in the City of Atlanta, neighborhood associations and civic groups in other jurisdictions, senior citizens organizations and elected officials to highlight and disseminate information.
 - Add information about estate planning to the annual tax bill or utility bill
 - LIHEAP and weatherization services providers could also share information
 - Create a comprehensive list of stakeholders

and partners that can inform and support heirs property efforts

- Host annual property owners information and training sessions.
- ▶ Ensure broad dissemination of a consumer education tool on the steps to prevent challenges with heirs property and how to address the challenges if they arise.
 - Leverage the Urban League's HUB to ensure that pro-bono estate planning attorneys are included.

Support Direct Assistance for Legacy Homeowners

- ▶ Provide resources and funding to support individual pro-bono legal and other services to legacy homeowners with heirs property challenges in each county. These probate assistance clinics/centers/nonprofits should provide assistance choosing and filling out probate forms as well as free advice/representation on more complicated probate issues such as missing heirs or contested actions to encourage probate to end the fractured title.
 - Engage existing closing attorney partners to engage in additional pro-bono work for estate planning and assistance with probate forms.
 - Providing funding to support these agencies in this effort. (Community Foundation and other funders)

Policy Support

- ▶ In coordination with the HouseATL Policy Working Group, advocate for a state-sponsored initiative facilitating the execution of wills, state to lessen restrictions or reduce the burdens for descendants to create valid wills as Georgia rarely permits oral wills, etc.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Wells Fargo as they are focusing on this issue state-wide
- ▶ GA Heirs Property Law Center is a nonprofit focused on this state-wide, which needs resource development support to increase its capacity, especially with the ability to help the most vulnerable communities. With support, they could potentially provide training across the region to increase awareness and encourage more focus on addressing this issue.
- ▶ Grandmama’s House and other entities supporting senior homeowners can engage, inform and assist seniors with information necessary to access supports to age in place with dignity, retain their homes and avoid displacement. Advocacy for resources and support for senior homeowners. Increase partnership with HouseATL members and partners to ensure effective community outreach and access to information and support for potential expansion or elevation of efforts throughout 5 county region.
- ▶ Habitat for Humanity affiliates provide education on this topic to their homeowners and could be a partner on an educational tool kit
- ▶ Atlanta Legal Aid can provide direct representation and legal services and referrals to homeowners assistance with issue and documentation (probate, wills, title clearance, etc.). Provide community engagement to provide information and resources. Partner with state, local and mortgage entities who are providing funding to homeowners to assist them with overcoming any legal barriers to obtaining assistance. Partner with other entities to increase information, tools and training to homebuyers and homeowners regarding addressing legal needs and issues.
- ▶ Bar Associations can provide pro bono services and workshops and partner with Atlanta Legal Aid and other heir property service providers who are engaging with homebuyers and/or homeowners to increase provision of information, tools and training as well as direct representation and legal services related to navigating heirs property planning or issues.
- ▶ Utility companies, Home Depot, Lowes any other partners can increase information and engagement with homeowners and/or persons inheriting heirs property regarding free assessment of properties, rebates discounts on products and services, connection to contractors, and funding to improve homes.
- ▶ Georgia Department of Family & Children Services, which could provide educational information to their Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) clients
- ▶ Urban League for Greater Atlanta can include information about heirs property resources on the HUB
- ▶ The City of Chamblee is working on this challenge and could be a partner on how to engage other jurisdictions in the region
- ▶ City of Atlanta NPUs and neighborhood associations in other local jurisdictions could be sources of information dissemination

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Policy advocacy and strategic communications
- ▶ Development and dissemination of a Home Preservation Toolkit

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of partners who agree to disseminate information
- ▶ # of legacy homeowners who receive information about estate planning
- ▶ # of new homeowners who receive information about estate planning

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Cost to develop Home Preservation Tool Kit
 - New homebuyers - Information regarding maintenance and repairs, increase in taxes, homestead exemptions, estate planning and the creation of a will, joint tenancy and trusts
 - Legacy Residents - information about estate planning and how tools such as wills, joint tenancy and trusts work. Plus information about the probate process
- ▶ Dissemination of kit through partners named above and data tracking of impact of kit
- ▶ Research, policy and advocacy in coordination with the Policy Working Group

Invest in a Government Affairs Strategy and Advocate for a State Legislative Committee for Housing

SUMMARY

Invest in a government affairs strategy targeting state and local housing policy reform, in alignment with HouseATL recommendations and priorities. As part of this recommendation, advocate for the GA General Assembly to designate a committee focused on housing to provide a consistent forum at the state level for affordable housing issues.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Advocate for a Georgia General Assembly to establish a committee focused on housing to provide a consistent forum for considering affordable housing issues at the state level. Determine if the best structure is a joint committee or a committee for each chamber.
- ▶ Engage a lobbyist or lobbyists with: expertise in housing and finance; experience at the Georgia General Assembly; bipartisan ability/connections; and connections with legislators from rural districts. The primary focus will be to elevate and advocate for policy and fund recommendations (from HouseATL and otherwise) that may require a change in state law.
 - It might also be helpful to engage with a lobbyist with expertise in the policies of local jurisdictions across the region.
- ▶ Identify policy recommendations at the local and state level to optimize the alignment and coordination of resources across various agencies and jurisdictions to support families and individuals, with a priority on households at or below 50% of area median income, such as:
 - GA Dept. of Community Affairs (LIHTC, State Housing Trust Fund, National Housing Trust Fund, CDBG, etc.)
 - City (CDBG, HOME funds, 4% tax credits, etc.)
 - Inclusionary Zoning In-Lieu of Payments
 - Work to coordinate and create consistency among public funding deadlines
 - Encourage alternatives to LIHTC funding to spur more private development of affordable housing.
 - Look for pathways to convert unused commercial buildings and underutilized parcels such as parking lots into residential.
- ▶ Identify policy goals from HouseATL's other Working Groups, developing the related full policy agenda after the recommendations are released

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Greater Atlanta Homebuilders Association has lobbyists actively working with legislators interested in housing. HomeAid is the nonprofit charity of the Homebuilders Association and can make introductions.
- ▶ Georgia ACT and Enterprise engage lobbyists. Georgia ACT hosts Housing Day during the Georgia General Assembly each year.
- ▶ Georgia Affordable Housing Coalition has engaged a lobbyist to defend the state LIHTC.
- ▶ Georgia Healthy Homes Coalition (coordinated by Georgia Appleseed) is a potential state policy advocacy partner.
- ▶ Georgians for a Healthy Future has strong relationships with policymakers and advocacy stakeholders and would be help build relationships and provide guidance on legislative and advocacy strategies.
- ▶ Georgia REALTORS and the Atlanta REALTORS have lobbyists who could potentially collaborate on issues related to homeownership, development, inventory, zoning and landlord/tenant concerns.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Serve as a clearinghouse for understanding policy advocacy efforts by various groups at the state and local levels
- ▶ Establish a rapid response team to engage in policy discussions early
- ▶ Raise funds to invest in lobbying and advocacy

Key Metrics

- ▶ Number of successful policy changes

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Funds for policy research, advocacy, and lobbying

Invest in Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing

SUMMARY

Invest in affordable housing near transit to reduce climate impacts and increase long term environmental sustainability, as well prevent displacement of residents who are low-income.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Support MARTA's expansion so that more of Atlanta's available land and developable sites (and jobs) are near efficient public transit (ie, rail).¹
- ▶ Partner with MARTA as a critical property owner to support the development of land for affordable housing near transit.
- ▶ Land prices near MARTA are among the city's fastest appreciating values, so financing for acquisition for housing development is important, especially in projected transit expansion areas. This might also be an important place to partner with land trusts to retain affordability permanently.
- ▶ Create incentives and funding sources that drive for-profit and nonprofit developers to create or preserve affordable housing near transit and near future transit expansion areas.
- ▶ Support MARTA's need for infrastructure funding to support transit-oriented affordable housing.
- ▶ As MARTA needs increased flexibility to partner with third party developers or to do direct development, support policy changes that will address that need. There are examples of transit agencies who have created separate development companies in order to develop transit-oriented projects with separate capital. Additionally, support policy changes that would allow MARTA or a partner entity to acquire land for transit-oriented development, as current state law only allows MARTA to acquire land for transit.
- ▶ Support high-rise residential development next to heavy rail stations, in order to maximize the opportunity for reduced car dependency and increased transit ridership. And, support increased developer capacity for producing high-rise, mixed-income residential in cooperation with a transit agency.
- ▶ Gather and socialize transit user feedback regarding how important access to transit options are to residents, especially low-income residents who are more dependent on public transit. Use this information for public education to create the public will to support affordable housing near transit.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ MARTA - work with City and other entities to obtain gap funding to assist in deploying the remaining \$52 million in the MARTA/Morgan Stanley/NEF TOD Affordable Housing Preservation Fund and the remaining \$110 million in the MARTA/Goldman Sachs TOD Initiative for ground up development and heavy redevelopment of affordable housing units near transit. Research and build case for MARTA to create a non-profit property company similar to Transport for London's newly created (2023) TTPL entity (which has 75 real estate professionals, its own credit rating and bonding capacity and is charged with developing 20,000 units).
- ▶ Atlanta Land Trust - a prospective partner for acquiring land for TOD in transit expansion corridors.
- ▶ Atlanta Beltline Inc - continue to engage public on transit planning, coordinate with private developers along the Beltline
- ▶ Design and engineering firms - encourage site plans that make the most of potential connections to public transit accessibility and options, share best practices with peers
- ▶ Funders - give higher priority to affordability adjacent to public transit
- ▶ Local transit departments - continue to prioritize

¹ This Urban Institute article provides connections to research and recommendations (<https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/how-transit-oriented-housing-can-advance-access-opportunity-while-curbing-climate-change>).

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles, Continued

- ▶ working with public transit authorities to increase safe accessibility to transit stations (open up new entries facing development sites) and bus routes (add shelters, widen sidewalks, etc)
- ▶ Atlanta Regional Commission - leverage ability to swap funds in support of transit, support various community development planning processes that include transit planning, and support commute options programs
- ▶ Atlanta Region Transit Link Authority - <https://atltransit.ga.gov/about/>
- ▶ MARTA Army - could be a partner on advocacy; these are transit users that advocate for better transit experiences and conduct community engagement and research

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Showcase best practices
- ▶ Host feedback sessions - troubleshooting specific areas of concern, celebrate successes, publicize ridership data overall and in local areas, etc
- ▶ Policy advocacy for more equitable transit funding at state level
- ▶ Encourage funders to provide funding for non-profit developers to create affordable housing near transit

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of funders who are supporting/incentivizing affordable housing near transit
- ▶ Increase in the number of affordable housing units near transit

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Funding for policy research, advocacy and lobbying efforts to 1) encourage more public sector resources for affordable housing near transit in particular for acquisition financing, infrastructure and gap financing; 2) address needed flexibility in the state MARTA Act for MARTA to appropriately staff and operate this work
- ▶ Cost of convening and coordinating partners
- ▶ Cost of events, communications materials and staffing to showcase best practices and communicate the value of affordable housing near transit to build public will

MULTIFAMILY HOUSING PRESERVATION

Incentivize the Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)

SUMMARY

Understand and create resources to incentivize the preservation of existing affordable housing stock as affordable long term, in the face of market pressures to incentivize redevelopment as market rate. Support Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) preservation of larger properties as well as those below 100 units, focusing both on engaging and supporting existing owners, as well as supporting those seeking to acquire, rehabilitate and preserve affordability.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Understanding the need and creating new resources to incentivize the preservation of existing affordable housing stock as affordable long term, when there are many market pressures to incentivize redevelopment as market rate:
- ▶ Identifying inventory - working with brokers and through relationships to identify opportunities across the region. Prioritize geographies based on an analysis of the inventory - where are the affordable, at-risk properties and where can resources be deployed.
- ▶ Capacity
 - Identifying mission aligned developers with capacity to acquire - nonprofit and for profit
 - Capacity grants for mission aligned developers with potential to acquire
 - Training and technical assistance for mom and pop and small developers to support efforts to keep properties affordable, while also offering a wealth building pathway, paired with grant funding.
- ▶ Resources
 - Fast-acting capital that enables mission-aligned partners to acquire properties which might otherwise remain on the speculative market.
 - Substantial public/philanthropic capital that may move more slowly but is in a position to replace the fast-acting capital in investments so the fast-acting pool can revolve and get real efficiencies from deal flow (See SFHAF example)
 - To explore further - some developers have utilized HOME and CDBG grants that are targeted towards preserving the Class B and C properties to prevent them from being renovated as Class A (luxury) properties.
- ▶ Support Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing preservation of larger properties as well as those below 100 units - Small Medium Multi-Family (SMMF) efforts will focus both on engaging and supporting existing owners, as well as supporting those seeking to acquire, rehab and preserve affordability.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Local city and county governments - setting this as a policy priority and committing funding
- ▶ Georgia Municipal Association - a potential educational partner with its local government members
- ▶ Local Development Authorities and Housing Authorities are critical for financial and other resources
- ▶ Enterprise Community Partners has prioritized this work and is a critical partner for strategies, resources and data
- ▶ Expand the number of property owners interested in preservation such as non-profit community de-

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles, Continued

development corporations as well as mission-minded for-profit developers who do workforce housing and may keep below-market units as a way to serve the community - may have access to private equity willing to take lower rate of return

- ▶ Smaller properties/mom and pop owners - support them to keep properties affordable
- ▶ Small scale private equity/family foundations/ social impact investing for financial resources for acquisition and rehab
- ▶ Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta's

GoATL Fund and TogetherATL Fund for impact capital and grant funding prioritizing preservation

- ▶ Land Banks and Land Trusts to assist with acquisition and long term affordability
- ▶ Engage residents themselves who are the most directly impacted by preservation
- ▶ Atlanta Regional Commission's Metro Housing Task Force - Opportunity to engage with local public sector staff from around the metro on the enabling environment in support of NOAH preservation (policy, regulation, funding)

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Work with potential data partners to improve data: Enterprise is conducting continued inventory work on property locations and ownership in Small to Medium Multifamily properties. Data on code compliance, condition, general inventory for Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing is needed.
- ▶ Engagement with local governments
- ▶ Repository of resources for policy makers and stakeholders concerned about this issue:
 - Case study development and hosting
 - Best practices - what others are doing in region or other locations to help inform
- ▶ Repository and resources for property owners and developers
 - Enterprise is working on a preservation focused resource list now - this can be shared for crowdsourcing more information
- ▶ Campaign to encourage properties to take tenants with Housing Choice Vouchers

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of properties and units preserved
- ▶ # of families who remain in their homes

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Capital - grant and social Impact dollars focus on preservation
- ▶ Developer Capacity Grants - \$200,000 annually

HOMEBUYERS

Encourage a Diversity of Prospective Homebuyers

SUMMARY

Target culturally informed educational outreach about homeownership opportunities to specific audiences who may not be aware of pathways to homeownership or who may have negative perceptions of homeownership.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Ensure homeownership marketing/promotion efforts include diverse representations of homeownership and are multi-faceted, including stories from varied racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, ability, etc.
 - In particular, find ways to educate homebuyers on the history of predatory and racist practices in home financing, to enable prospective homebuyers to avoid these practices while still knowing that there are pathways to, and benefits from, homeownership.
- ▶ Explore opportunities for public service announcements and online campaigns to inform and encourage renters to consider pathways to sustainable homeownership.
- ▶ Share success stories of purchases, home retention, heirs property transitions and/or restoration.
- ▶ Provide culturally competent materials for different groups such as Black, Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI), Latinx, young adults, etc.
- ▶ Provide information on clearly defined pathways and resources for home purchase, including unique ones, such as purchasing a community land trust home or a Habitat for Humanity home.
 - Encourage decision makers in the education arena to include financial and homeowner-ship literacy courses in education curriculum beginning in early education and continuing through college.
- ▶ Market a periodic “Book of Dreams” (profiles of affordable for-sale homes) that describes homeownership purchase opportunities for the target market.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development certified housing counseling agencies who work with prospective homebuyers on a regular basis to inform the most effective outreach efforts
- ▶ Universities/Colleges/Community Colleges/Trade Schools/Public School Systems that have staff in need of affordable homeownership opportunities, as well as students/families who also need the information
- ▶ Policy makers and public agencies that have contact with diverse constituents
- ▶ Community-based small businesses to serve as outreach points to local prospective homebuyers
- ▶ Artists/Influencers who understand the need for affordable homeownership to assist with outreach
- ▶ Nonprofit Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) such as Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, which finance affordable for-sale homes and could assist with content for outreach
- ▶ Invest Atlanta which coordinates homebuyer outreach and education events, in addition to the provision of down payment assistance
- ▶ Atlanta Housing and other housing authorities that provide downpayment assistance can potentially assist with outreach
- ▶ Religious institutions/Non-Profits that may have trusted relationships within the target audience of potential homebuyers, for example: The Urban League of Atlanta’s HUB (a key partner), Habitat for Humanity, Noonday Association, Buddhist Temples, etc.
- ▶ Builders/Non-profit Developers/Community Development Corporations to support marketing their homes to diverse homeowners
- ▶ Land Trusts/Cooperatives to incorporate informa-

tion about unique types of housing opportunities into the coordinated outreach efforts, for example: Atlanta Land Trust, Georgia Cooperative Development Council

- ▶ Realtors/Realists, Brokers, Licensed Sales Agents, Multicultural Real Estate Organizations (NAHREP, AREAA) who have contact with potential homebuyers and can help inform outreach content, as well as disseminate materials
- ▶ Media outlets, including social media to disseminate homebuying information

- ▶ Chambers of commerce and other associations comprised of diverse members and/or who provide services to diverse populations to be avenues for dissemination of information

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Establish budget for implementation of outreach efforts
- ▶ Produce multilingual marketing pieces promoting homeownership
- ▶ Conduct outreach to key stakeholders serving diverse populations to solidify partnerships - regional roadshow
- ▶ Conduct social media marketing to promote realtors to work with potential sellers
- ▶ Encourage the listing of all affordable homebuying opportunities on the Urban League's HUB.

- ▶ Use Urban League HUB to centralize sellers/buyers to circulate homes within the group (should include land trust homes and other unique pathways)
- ▶ Recognize and find ways to incentivize realtors who work with linguistically isolated/ lower socioeconomic groups
- ▶ Support Working Group to coordinate, or work with others to coordinate, four large, regional, expo events aimed toward diverse perspective homebuyers

Key Metrics

- ▶ Change in the % of homeowners, by various subpopulations
- ▶ Online campaign: # of views, # of hits, # of videos,

of pieces of collateral, length of time viewed, clicks, completion of website or landing page, full tailored production, # of targeted commercials/ads/story-telling.

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Communications consultant to work with partner organizations to help with marketing/outreach and to effectively utilize marketing materials
- ▶ Production of multilingual marketing pieces promoting homeownership
 - Material creation (Print, video, digital, PSA, social media etc.)
 - Translation
 - Distribution
 - Data analysis and tracking
- ▶ \$100k - 4 Large Home Buyer events per year - Expo Style, education, partners, public

MULTIFAMILY HOUSING PRESERVATION

Intervene to Ensure Safe and Secure Housing

SUMMARY

Create a coordinated effort among public agencies and private partners to identify unhealthy and unsafe properties and properties experiencing operating challenges, and work with property owners to assess operational realities and impact not only on the property, but also the organization. Provide technical assistance, financing or other types of support to ensure the preservation and improvement of deteriorated properties to prevent tenants from being displaced when landlords are being pressured to make changes.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Coordinated effort is needed to identify troubled assets across public agencies, and to work with owners to assess operational realities and impact not only on the property, but also the organization. An opportunity to provide technical assistance through consultants, as well as potentially to provide funding to address one-time budget gaps. (Be cautious that funding to landlords for maintenance could inadvertently incentivize a lack of maintenance versus providing subsidies to renters.)
- ▶ The City of Atlanta and the Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs have already started an effort to intervene with troubled assets. Explore the opportunities for regional coordination. The City of Atlanta's Safe and Secure Housing Initiative (fka "Problem Properties") can potentially be a replicable model once it is refined.
- ▶ A feedback loop needs to be created with residents of affordable housing who know the challenging conditions in their homes. Right now, there is no outside reporting structure to receive complaints of housing conditions.
 - Enabling interested parties outside of just the developer to understand what is going on with troubled assets can be important.
 - The residents know the challenging conditions, and they don't have the ability to give feedback to prevent what's happening.
 - Figure out how to incentivize residents to make complaints about deferred maintenance.
- ▶ Seek out opportunities to expand reporting and addressing these challenges within the compliance processes for public subsidies such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits.
- ▶ Increase communication and coordination among public agencies that provide subsidies and conduct code compliance.
- ▶ Support increased staff capacity for code enforcement.
- ▶ Demystify who owns troubled properties in order to intervene earlier in the process of deferred maintenance.
- ▶ Support the education of landlords and property managers. Ensure that they know the rules related to property maintenance and tenant protections. Ensure that they are aware of resources and incentives available for owners willing to provide reputable affordable housing.
- ▶ Explore receivership models where the local jurisdiction has a right of first refusal to acquire affordable properties where the landlord refuses to make improvements and transfer the properties for renovations and long-term affordability.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ City of Atlanta - identifying troubled assets, working with code compliance. Coordinate with the City's Safe and Secure Initiative and include programmatic resources for residents like after-school, healthcare, and workforce training. Star-C's new program could be a good model and partner.
- ▶ Solicitor's office and district attorney's office are

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles, Continued

important partners in identifying properties with continuous criminal activity and figuring out how to address that.

- ▶ US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development has compliance and monitoring responsibilities of some affordable housing properties and is an important partner to coordinate with.
- ▶ Atlanta Housing's Energy Efficiency Rent Boost Program (<https://www.atlantahousing.org/sustainability-initiative-wins-2023-doe-better-practice-award/>) provides property owners with access to low-cost or no-cost funds to make unit improvements, and as a result, they also get a rent boost. Could be a model for other jurisdictions.
- ▶ GA Dept. of Community Affairs is responsible for compliance and monitoring of many affordable housing properties and is an important partner in figuring out how to improve property safety and security across the region.
- ▶ Solar and Energy Loan Fund provides financing for sustainable energy efficient property improvements and accessibility modifications.

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Help develop criteria for what is considered a troubled or dangerous asset and how lists of properties are developed for monitoring.
- ▶ Help expand the work of listing and monitoring properties to the five-county metro in partnership with local jurisdictions.
- ▶ Support City of Atlanta departments working on enforcement - ask how HouseATL can help.
- ▶ Help advocate for compliance procedures that prevent this issue, including the coordination of compliance across agencies
- ▶ Encourage transparency in identifying properties that are considered troubled assets and providing public access to records such as code violations that underly the criteria

Key Metrics

- ▶ Code compliance
 - # of units fined over time
 - # of repeat offenders
 - # of code violations
- ▶ Level of criminal activity
 - # of service calls
 - # of fires
- ▶ Records of noncompliance with contracts eg. LIHTC
- ▶ # of properties improved/preserved/stabilized through intervention

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Funding for staffing to help convene and coordinate across multiple agencies and jurisdictions
- ▶ Funding for policy advocacy to improve compliance and monitoring as well as improve public sector tracking and transparency on property information (rental registries, code violations)
- ▶ Funding to elevate what is working/best practices - panels, communications materials, etc.
- ▶ Funding for education materials for property owners and outreach to property owners

RESILIENCE

Encourage Resilient Design, Construction and Renovation

SUMMARY

Incentivize resilient design for affordable housing via improved building codes and funding resources, as improved design can improve energy efficiency and resilience, as well as reduce long-term operating and maintenance costs.

Recommendation in Depth

- ▶ Support efforts to improve the state building and energy codes for new construction and for renovation of single and multi-family housing. The codes should include energy and water efficiency, higher resistance to wind and extreme heat events, as well as considerations for external impacts on flooding and erosion control.
- ▶ Establish funding sources dedicated to incentivizing resilient design and construction. There should be some minimum standard for the housing to receive funds. A model for this can be the Georgia Qualified Allocation Plan - Georgia along with dozens of other states, requires green building certification for housing funded through Low Income Housing Tax Credits via the Qualified Allocation Plan. A resilient residence would include:
 - Energy efficiency
 - Water efficiency
 - Aging in place
 - Storm water control/site drainage
 - Severe wind protection
 - Indoor air quality (humidity control, ventilation, removal of natural gas/combustion sources)
 - Existing onsite renewables, or infrastructure for future renewables
- ▶ Strengthen quality assurance practices in certifications of green units, focusing on continuously improving and updating building and certification standards. Adopt a mentoring approach rather than a “gotcha” approach to inspections and certifications as many times, the developer is paying for the quality but not getting it. This ensures better stewardship of public and philanthropic funds and ensures greater affordability and better health outcomes.
- ▶ Support community resilience hubs that can provide important support in communities that lag in energy efficiency and resilience upgrades, providing cooling stations, power during outages, water and other supplies, during high heat days, flooding, tornadoes, and other climate-related events.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ City of Atlanta Office of Resilience is interested in building code improvements.
- ▶ Enterprise Community Partners has a resiliency evaluation tool that they are developing with US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development that might be useful
- ▶ Atlanta Housing has worked with Enterprise’s assessment tool to pinpoint local climate risk and prioritize mitigations in development plans (specifically flooding and tornado risks).
- ▶ Local developers, design and engineering firms, landscape architects, etc.
- ▶ Cooper Carry, a national architecture firm based in Atlanta, has expertise in resilient design and is interested in assisting
- ▶ The Sustainability Division of the Fulton County Department of Real Estate and Asset Management (DREAM) has an initiative to turn public libraries into resilience hubs, especially during climate events (high heat days, heavy flooding, power outages, etc.)

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Convene a small working group to help flesh out what a resilient building/home is
- ▶ Support policy advocacy related to the recommendation

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of changes in the building and energy codes
- ▶ # of funding sources considering resilient design and construction in their funding awards

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Cost of policy advocacy/lobbying
- ▶ Resources for incentives and the cost of administering the incentives
- ▶ Resources to convene and coordinate potential partners

Support Energy Efficiency Improvements for the Most Climate-Vulnerable Residents

SUMMARY

Lower the cost of housing through greater energy and transit efficiency, utilizing incentives and funding for energy efficiency, energy independence and weatherization home improvements for low-income homeowners and for owners of affordable rental properties to protect people who are especially vulnerable to disasters, climate change and utility increases.

Recommendation in Depth

Support for Homeowners

Support energy efficiency, energy independence and weatherization home improvements for low-income homeowners who are especially vulnerable to disasters, climate change and utility increases.

- ▶ Support greater access to home assessment services for homeowners who are low-income to identify issues related to energy efficiency, moisture, air sealing, combustion safety, and ventilation.
- ▶ Support greater access to energy efficiency, energy independence and weatherization programs for homeowners and for renters who are low-income.
- ▶ Combat displacement of legacy residents through weatherization and home repairs, to keep older residents in their homes.

Support for Landlords and Developers

Create incentives and funding sources for owners and developers to upgrade the energy efficiency of existing affordable rental properties quickly and efficiently.

- ▶ Encourage preservation and energy efficient rehabilitation of existing affordable rental housing as a way to reduce higher climate impacts of new construction and to lower the energy utilization of existing housing.

- ▶ Encourage early interventions in existing affordable housing developments for building systems maintenance and addressing resident concerns about their utility costs.
- ▶ Support owners in accessing resources which will flow through federal Infrastructure Reinvestment Act funds, such as HUD’s Green and Resilient Retrofit Program (GRRP), and Department of Energy (DOE) programs.
- ▶ Property owners are going to need help to improve their properties from a resiliency and insurance standpoint. Property insurance costs are increasing in areas threatened by climate disasters. However, in some markets, there are significant insurance discounts for buildings that are certified under the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety’s FORTIFIED program, which addresses some resiliency issues. (It will be important to gather feedback from developers on the costs and practicalities of the new Fortified program, as there seem to be limited professionals who are qualified to verify Fortified projects.)
- ▶ Remind and encourage City of Atlanta property owners to comply with the City of Atlanta’s Clean Energy Ordinance, which eases the ability of potential residents to find healthy, energy efficient units more readily, and increases marketability and lowers turnover for owners.

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles

- ▶ Gwinnett Housing Development’s Healthy Homes Initiative assists homeowners with improvements
- ▶ Atlanta Housing is focused on this for the properties they have invested in. One potential model from their work: They are assisting their tenant-based voucher landlords to make it easier to install energy efficient upgrades by offering higher rents to energy efficient units and providing discounts and rebate programs.
- ▶ Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future (SAHF) has a number of tools for multifamily owners

Key Partners and Potential (or Existing) Roles, Continued

- ▶ US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development's Green and Resilient Retrofit Program (GRRP) Funds and the Public Housing Energy Branch for funding supports
- ▶ Department of Energy - Better Climate Initiative Multi-family Sector (<https://betterbuildingsolutioncenter.energy.gov/sectors/multifamily>)
- ▶ CDFIs, green banks and other funding collaborators for incentives and funding
- ▶ US EPA - Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
- ▶ Solar service providers interested in assisting with an affordable housing focus
- ▶ Southface Energy Institute and Enterprise Green Communities Initiative for expertise and industry education; providing certifications of energy efficiency; helping teach industry professionals about the weatherization and certification process (in particular existing units); assist or partner on fundraising efforts; co-host convenings on the topic; and highlight resources
- ▶ City of Atlanta's Office of Resilience
- ▶ State of Georgia's Environmental Finance Authority (as a key applicant for federal funding under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act)
- ▶ Georgia Dept of Community Affairs can continue to incentivize energy efficiency upgrades in new and existing tax credit projects, HOME and Community Development Block Grant programs, and collaborate with the GA Environmental Finance Authority to expedite resources

HouseATL Roles

- ▶ Advocate for better enforcement of the City of Atlanta's Clean Energy Ordinance.
- ▶ Support information sharing and education about new federal funding available for sustainability and coordinate with local governments to encourage applications as needed.
- ▶ Host a study or a convening on the return on investment of various weatherization and upgrade investments
- ▶ Provide communications that remind developers, funders, investors, and owners that sustainability is affordability, that investments in lower utility costs and carrying costs makes housing more affordable; greater affordability leads to lower turnover and better property performance
- ▶ Provide communications that highlight resources to guide property owners and developers to federal and local programs that fund weatherization upgrades, resilience and sustainability
- ▶ Identifying a data partner who can track units that receive green certifications in the 5 county core area (Southface and Enterprise)

Key Metrics

- ▶ # of new funding sources or an increase in the overall amount of resources allocated towards energy efficiency upgrades, weatherization and resilience
- ▶ Increases in the number of green-certified units in the 5 county core area

Budget Estimate Line Items

- ▶ Advocate for better enforcement of the City of Atlanta's Clean Energy Ordinance.
- ▶ Support information sharing and education about new federal funding available for sustainability and coordinate with local governments to encourage applications as needed.
- ▶ Host a study or a convening on the return on investment of various weatherization and upgrade investments
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APPENDIX

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

GRATITUDE

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

HOUSEATL

Overall Problem Statement

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The metro Atlanta region lacks a coordinated, comprehensive set of policies, tools, measurement, and adequate funding to address housing affordability in our rapidly growing region.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1** Market forces have significantly impacted housing affordability in the Atlanta region. Inflation has decreased residents' buying power¹, while rising rents cost a larger share of tenants' income.² Increasing interest rates and high home prices put homebuying out of reach for many, while homeowners, tenants, and landlords face rising tax, utility, and repair costs that can quickly outpace limited and fixed incomes. Wages have not kept pace with these increasing costs.³
- 2** Due to historic housing segregation, systemic racism, and economic disinvestment, our region's communities of color are especially vulnerable to the after effects of COVID-19 and changing market forces, which further exacerbate disparities in homeownership and housing security, while increasing gentrification, displacement, and wealth gaps.
- 3** High prices have also impacted the costs of building and maintaining housing. Increased construction costs mean larger budgets and bigger funding gaps for affordable housing development. Similarly, insurance, tax, and repair and maintenance costs have affected preservation.
- 4** The overall supply of housing and affordable housing is inadequate to meet demand in our growing region, due to a combination of market, political, and regulatory forces. High building and preservation costs, perception of higher risk and lower returns, neighborhood-level mistrust of affordable housing development, and zoning ordinances all contribute.
- 5** With no policies in place to level the playing field, institutional investors bought 19% of the single-family homes in metro Atlanta in 2022, more than in any other metro area.⁴ Four large corporations dominated those purchases.⁵ In the face of high tax bills and ongoing repair costs and little relief, homeowners are inclined to take below-market cash offers.⁶
- 6** Decision-making around affordable housing primarily occurs with little to no community engagement and legacy resident involvement, from policy design to development and preservation.
- 7** Housing is a complex subject matter, with a lack of consensus, measurement, and adequate communication around what works, and scattered data sources that can be hard to synthesize, especially on a regional level.
- 8** While urgency and awareness around the issue of housing affordability has increased dramatically in

1 "Inflation Pressures Are Stressing Renter Households", Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard, April, 2023. (<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/inflation-pressures-are-stressing-renter-households>)

2 148,000 metro Atlanta renters are considered extremely cost-burdened, Atlanta Regional Commission, 2022.

3 As an illustration, from 2017 - 2021 annual wage growth was 3-4% across the 5 county metro area, while annual for-sale housing costs for new and resale homes rose from 6-31%. The 31% was for resale homes in in Cobb County. Similarly, between 2017 and 2021, the costs of renting increased 23% while the median household income rose 21%. "ULI Atlanta Housing Study Update DRAFT", KB Advisory Group, 5.2.2023

4 Attom, Jan. 26, 2023 (<https://www.attomdata.com/news/market-trends/home-sales-prices/attom-year-end-2022-u-s-home-sales-report/>)

5 "Corporate Landlords and Market Power, April, 2022 (<https://escholarship.org/content/qt07d6445s/qt07d6445s.pdf?t=raduym>)

6 Metro Atlanta leads the country in I-Buyer transactions, Atlanta Business Chronicle, June 29, 2022.

What Are the Barriers? Continued

recent years, community consensus, funding, and political will for necessary legislative, policy, and practice changes are not keeping pace from the neighborhood to the state level.

- ▶ Lack of public understanding around affordable housing leads to fears of impact on neighborhoods, resistance to creation of housing, and stigmatization from landlords and other services providers, ultimately slowing or halting efforts to increase availability of affordable housing.
- ▶ Our region's multiple layers of governance

across cities, counties, and state adds further complexity to efforts to preserve and develop more affordable housing, especially as it pertains to funding, land use, and service coordination.

- 9 **We lack flexible, robust local and state funding that is coordinated across funding sources, agencies, and jurisdictions. To date, that funding can be difficult to access and coordinate, with slow timelines and non-transparent decision-making.**

As A Result

- ▶ Atlanta remains among the worst cities in the US for economic mobility and income disparity .
- ▶ Atlantans with low incomes have harder lives across indicators including well-being, health, education, housing stability, transportation access, making wealth building and intergenerational wealth difficult to attain.
- ▶ Our children and youth suffer from housing instability and unhealthy housing, affecting their education and future life outcomes.
- ▶ We are at risk of losing our 'affordable' economic competitive advantage , and employers are struggling to find employees with reasonable proximity to their places of work.
- ▶ While we have seen encouraging growth in the availability of workforce housing, we have a flat or declining amount of affordable housing stock in more deeply affordable categories.
- ▶ We are losing the 'social mosaic' of the city. Residents are being permanently displaced from their homes, often to lower-cost areas and sometimes unhealthy housing with less access to jobs, transportation, and support services.
- ▶ Our senior residents, many with fixed incomes, are unable to age in place and may be displaced or forced into more expensive institutional housing.

OUR VISION

The metro Atlanta region has a coordinated, comprehensive set of policies, tools, measurement, and adequate funding to address housing affordability in our growing region.

7 "The City of Atlanta has the largest gap between the poor and wealthy among cities with more than 100,000 residents with a Gini coefficient of 0.5786, according to Census data", Atlanta Journal Constitution, Nov. 28, 2022

8 Metro Atlanta is one of the 7 least affordable metro areas, when you consider the cost burden of housing and transportation, Atlanta Regional Commission, 2022.

Homebuyers

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Facing a highly competitive environment and rising costs in the for-sale housing market, many would-be homebuyers in the Atlanta metro area are without adequate financing and homebuying knowledge necessary to purchase quality, affordable homes that are within a price point sustainable for their budgets in locations that would enable them to retain value and build equity. Additionally, wealth disparities are reflected in homeownership rates, where large racial homeownership gaps persist; Black households in metro Atlanta are 26.5 percentage points behind white households in homeownership, with Latino households 25.9 percentage points behind¹

What Are the Barriers?

1 The inventory of homes at a range of price points accessible to would-be homebuyers has decreased due to a number of factors:

- ▶ Competition of buyers with cash offers has narrowed the supply of quality, affordable homes, in particular the rapid growth of institutional investor purchases of existing homes and converting them to single-family rental.
- ▶ Individual would-be buyers do not have the availability, access, capacity, or resources to compete on equal footing with institutional investors, whose size and buying power allows them to act quickly and purchase at volume.²
- ▶ Atlanta-area builders are not building homes at the price points nor the quantity needed to address the inventory demand from would-be homebuyers seeking affordable homeownership opportunities.
- ▶ Shifts in the market and profit incentives have increased builders' prioritization of single-family homes for rent and exacerbated the deficit of single family homes for purchase.
- ▶ Existing homeowners are deciding not to sell their homes due to rising interest rates, the increased cost of purchasing a new home, and the increased value of their existing homes.

2 Market forces including inflation, rising interest rates, and rising construction supply and labor

costs and shortages have caused housing prices to increase significantly since 2018, resulting in a much higher price point to build and buy homes.

- ▶ As prices increase, programs for downpayment and closing cost assistance have not been able to address the gap in financing caused by these rising costs and are depleted faster.
- ▶ Increased land acquisition cost and fluctuating supply costs are both additional barriers for builders to provide affordable housing products,
- ▶ Increase in interest rates has equated to increased mortgage payments, decreasing the ability of would-be homebuyers to afford the purchase of homes.
- ▶ High costs beyond homebuilding also affect the creation of more affordable housing: building roads is expensive for developers and paying for core government services result in prohibitively high HOA fees.

3 Zoning rules and re-zoning processes slow building timelines for affordable housing and restrict options for increasing density and creating new housing.

- ▶ Permitting and (re-)zoning processes extend build times and project lifecycle which increases overhead costs associated with building that are passed on to buyers.

¹ Atlanta Regional Commission, Nov. 2021 (<https://33n.atlantaregional.com/friday-factday/hispanic-homeownership-hikes>)

² "The Influence of Institutional Single-Family Investors on Homeownership", Brian An, Georgia Tech, March 2023. (https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4156851)

What Are the Barriers? Continued

- ▶ Exclusionary zoning (e.g. minimum lot sizes, square footage) increases the costs of homes for buyers and decreases area density. Additionally, government subsidies often favor multifamily housing but not single-family homes for sale.

4 Aging housing stock throughout the region requires upkeep that is often cost-prohibitive for existing owners to repair prior to sale, creating barriers for would-be buyers and limiting the housing stock that meets the guidelines for financing programs.

- ▶ BIPOC, low- and moderate-income, and first-time homebuyers utilizing federal, state and/or local government financing programs are not able to find homebuying opportunities that meet or accept these program requirements.
- ▶ Borrowers seeking to purchase and rehabilitate aging housing stock often can't obtain the financing for the acquisition and renovations needed for these homes.
- ▶ Managing and paying for major renovations is a daunting task for homebuyers.

5 Growth in home prices has outpaced growth of wages and income, a situation which has been further exacerbated by inflation and leaves would-be homebuyers unable to enter the housing market at an accessible price point.

- ▶ Would-be homebuyers have not amassed the savings and assets necessary to meet down payment and closing cost requirements that would make the existing for-sale housing affordable and attainable to them.³
- ▶ The cost of housing close to jobs, high-performing schools, and economic centers is significantly higher than many BIPOC, low- and moderate-income, and first-time homebuyers can afford to pay.

6 Shortage of labor and affordable developers has resulted in limited houses being built at affordable price points to low- and moderate-income buyers.

- ▶ Decrease in training and development of labor-ready housing development workforce

has created a critical shortage in availability and increase in labor rates.

- ▶ There is an overall shortage of builders focused on affordable housing.

7 Would-be homebuyers often come into the housing market without the full picture of the requirements to purchase and maintain their first home.

- ▶ Some homebuyer courses offer basic homebuying information that does not adequately provide or reinforce the information and skills required to purchase a home, especially for first time homebuyers.
- ▶ Homebuyers are unclear on the requirements of credit, income, and assets necessary to qualify for a mortgage and may have misconceptions about what it takes to purchase a home.
- ▶ Homebuyer education designed to bridge the knowledge gap is often accessed too late in the purchase process, especially for homebuyers utilizing programs designed to address credit issues. Homebuyers need time and support to build credit over the longer term.
- ▶ Purchasing a home in the current highly competitive market can result in depletion of retirement assets, overspending on the home itself and/or acceptance of terms that may leave new buyers with less equity and higher vulnerability to unforeseen cost of maintenance and repair for existing homes.⁴
- ▶ While an array of mortgage products now exists to allow first-time buyers to enter the housing market, awareness of these products is limited, and these options can be difficult to understand or have tradeoffs in terms of value and potential drawbacks.

8 Industry professionals (realtors, lenders, banks, insurance agents) interfacing with would-be buyers are often siloed and limited in their ability to support them.

- ▶ There is a lack of awareness around products and support options for would be buyers outside of FHA mortgages, and industry professionals are not equipped to adequately demys-

3 This study found that \$25,000 in downpayment assistance could help 1.1 million income-ready Black and Hispanic renter households move into homeownership nationally, raising Black and Hispanic homeownership rates nationwide by 8.0 percentage points and 3.2 percentage points, respectively. Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard, "How Much Could Downpayment Assistance Help Close Homeownership Rate Gaps for Black and Hispanic Households?", March 2023. (<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/how-much-could-downpayment-assistance-help-close-homeownership-rate-gaps-black-and-hispanic>)

4 "Millions of Americans Have Used Risky Financing Arrangements to Buy Homes," Pew Trusts, April 2022. (https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2022/05/millionsofamericanshaveusedriskyfinancing_brief.pdf)

What Are the Barriers? Continued

- tify the process and inform buyers of resources available to them.
- ▶ Mortgage lenders find the process of coupling down payment assistance programs with first mortgage loans cumbersome, time consuming and limiting in providing options for would be homebuyers seeing to purchase homes.
- ▶ Homebuyers who have experienced foreclosure or other adverse home purchasing experiences may be fearful and/or mistrusting of the homebuying process and need additional support to enter the market.

As A Result

Faced with high prices and stiff competition from investor buyers, would-be buyers may:

- ▶ Delay on buying and forego the steps necessary to ensure they are prepared and knowledgeable of the homebuying process.
- ▶ Seek opportunities to rent homes versus buying a home, leaving them vulnerable to rent increases and putting off a key asset- and wealth-building opportunity for years to come.
- ▶ Become discouraged and exit the homebuying market altogether.
- ▶ Overspend on the cost of their first home, leaving new buyers with decreased assets and higher vulnerability to market shifts, loss of equity and/or lack of resources to address unforeseen cost of homeownership.
- ▶ Purchase a home with major repair needs at a more accessible price point, defer repairs and maintenance until they are able to increase assets or secure high-cost funding necessary to complete improvements to their homes.
- ▶ Choose not to enter the housing market at all due to availability of newer, more attractive rental options with less perceived risks and less investment out of pocket for the buyer.
- ▶ Live further away from jobs, schools and economic centers, increasing transportation time and cost.

OUR VISION

Prepared with adequate knowledge, would-be home buyers across the Atlanta metro area are supported by informed industry professionals who assist them with the identification and purchase of affordable homes in conditions and at price points that are sustainable for their budgets and in locations that enable them to thrive and build equity. These efforts will be supported by local, state and other mortgage loans, down payment and closing cost assistance necessary to provide financing and address affordability gaps for homebuyers in the metro Atlanta communities.

Homeownership Preservation

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many homeowners across the Atlanta metro area do not have the knowledge, resources, and support necessary to improve the condition of their home, maintain its value, and/or access the equity in their home, resulting in deteriorating conditions of owner-occupied housing stock, lower values relative to the market, and loss of generational and intergenerational wealth.

Additionally, homeowners of color attain far less home equity growth on average than white homeowners due to appraisal bias and owning homes in undervalued communities. Recent price appreciation at the upper end of the housing market has caused an overall greater concentration of wealth in America, and an increase in the racial wealth gap.¹

What Are the Barriers?

- 1** Market forces in the regional housing market have increased costs associated with preserving home ownership, including rising tax, utility, and insurance bills as well as increased costs for repair and maintenance.
 - ▶ Property taxes have been continually increasing with the increase in home values (driven in part by historically low supply of homes for sale) and have a significant impact on homeowners whose incomes are not increasing at a rate to offset the cost.
 - ▶ As with many other prices, the cost of home repairs has increased significantly since 2018 due in part to high costs and demand for materials and labor.
 - ▶ Low- and moderate-income homeowners have limited reserves and often find themselves without the cash, credit, or equity to handle costs associated with maintaining their homes and addressing the increased cost of utilities, taxes, insurance, new code requirements, home warranty and other unbudgeted costs.
- 2** Homeowners who received forbearance during the pandemic (or other situation) may be in jeopardy of losing their homes to foreclosure due to the ending of the forbearance period.
- 3** Investor buyers are having a disproportionate effect on our region's communities of color by targeting acquisitions of housing stock in those communities.
 - ▶ Homeowners who are dealing with increased tax bills and mounting repair costs are vulnerable to cash offers from investors.
 - ▶ Without better support and education, Atlanta-area homeowners are underprepared to negotiate sales of their homes and avoid succumbing to investor purchase below market sales, predatory mortgage products or home repair offers.²
- 4** The benefits of homeownership are not experienced equally across the region or our communities; appraisal bias and historic undervaluing of homes in communities of color depress home values, reduce equity and wealth growth, and disincentivize homeownership preservation.
 - ▶ Property values in neighborhoods with modestly priced homes have been stagnant or growing at a nominal rate compared to other neighborhoods within the Atlanta metro area.
 - ▶ Appraisal bias has led to devalued housing values, resulting in lower sales prices and/or

¹ Testimony of Michael Calhoun, President, Center for Responsible Lending, June 29, 2022. (<https://www.responsiblelending.org/sites/default/files/nodes/files/research-publication/testimony-mike-calhoun-hfs-29jun2022.pdf>)

² As an example, a recent national study by ProPublica found that some franchisees of HomeVestors targeted below market offers to the elderly, infirm and those close to poverty. Buyers would record documents preventing sellers from canceling the contracts. (<https://www.propublica.org/article/ugly-truth-behind-we-buy-ugly-houses>)

What Are the Barriers? Continued

inability of homeowners to access equity.³

- ▶ Values of existing properties are also impacted by under-improved infrastructure and deteriorating properties.

5 As our region's homes age, many homeowners are dealing with long term maintenance issues and costly repairs that are beyond their financial means to address.

- ▶ Homeowners who want to refinance or get a home equity loan often find loan terms and criteria to be a barrier, restricting their access to the equity in their home to help with repairs.
- ▶ Many aging homes also have a backlog of maintenance issues that can escalate to serious health and safety issues as well as devaluation of the homes.⁴
- ▶ Some newer homes may be built with subpar components that have shorter useful lifespans, causing the homeowners to invest in repair and improvements earlier than expected.

6 No incentives exist for homebuyers to take on additional counseling and education, potentially leaving them acutely unaware of the costs, responsibilities, options, and strategies to maintain a home. Homebuyers are therefore uninformed of policies, programs and support available to them (e.g. homestead exemption, etc.).

- ▶ Homeowners are not educated on how to sustain and maintain their homes and handle crisis that may arise. As a result, homeowners may not engage with mortgage lenders or other industry supports when they face challenges or need support.
- ▶ Homeowners can have difficulty understanding how to utilize options like reverse mortgages, equity credit lines, and refinancing to pay for repairs and ongoing maintenance.
- ▶ Realtors and other industry professionals are not educated on options to help homeowners to assist with maintenance and preservation of their homes due in part to focus on closing sales.
- ▶ Many homeowners are unaware of how to navigate home repairs and contractor management and are not adequately prepared to obtain favorable resolutions when issues arise.

- ▶ Low- and moderate-income homeowners may not understand appreciation or options to generate income from their homes (e.g. rooming, ADUs etc.).

7 While homes are a top source of intergenerational wealth, heirs' property is a challenge to families retaining homes. Heirs often don't understand how to: maneuver probate court, assess best options for retaining or disposition of the property, secure funding for non-owner-occupied housing, identify resources necessary to address deferred maintenance, and/or manage a home as a landlord.

8 Homeowner support programs do not typically have adequate outreach about their offerings or adequate funding to complete projects for those residents who need them most.

- ▶ Homeowners who may be eligible for tax exemptions and support programs are unsure where to find and secure assistance and may not even be aware of their options.
- ▶ Repairs often exceed the resources available, and homeowners lack access to other funding to fill the gap.
- ▶ Nonprofits and community organizations that do home preservation lack the capacity to meet the minimum requirements to fully access public grant money for repairs, and very few are positioned to even apply.
- ▶ The number of nonprofit organizations specifically providing home repair services for residents in need has decreased.
- ▶ Resources are often targeted to very low-income households, leaving a big gap for the "missing middle" low-income homeowners.
- ▶ Programs are not coordinated or combined to address multiple issues. The process and timelines can be cumbersome and prolong addressing needs.
- ▶ Programs lack capacity to provide multilingual and multicultural support.
- ▶ Homeowners associations may not have resources or grace periods necessary to help in times of crisis.

3 "Race determines home values more today than it did in 1980," Kinder Institute for Urban Research, Rice University, Sept. 2020. (<https://kinder.rice.edu/urbanedge/race-determines-home-values-more-today-it-did-1980>)

4 "Why Housing Policy Should Include More Funding for Home Repairs", Shelterforce, August 2023. (<https://shelterforce.org/2023/08/17/why-housing-policy-should-include-more-funding-for-home-repairs/>)

As A Result

- ▶ Vulnerable homeowners, including seniors and persons with disabilities, are living in housing that has deferred maintenance or health and safety issues that they cannot afford to repair.
- ▶ Longtime homeowners, especially those on fixed incomes, are challenged to maintain their homes and pay the increasing costs of property taxes and utilities.
- ▶ Homeowners who may be eligible for support in the form of tax exemptions and other programs, are not able to access relief.
- ▶ Uninformed homeowners are vulnerable to buyers making cash offers, as well as predatory financing products and services and may subject themselves to significant loss of equity upon sale or mortgage products and services that cause harm which could lead to the loss of their home.
- ▶ Homeowners are unable to access and retain the wealth in their homes or pass that wealth on to future generations in areas impacted by appraisal bias, low cash sales and other factors that devalue the homes.
- ▶ As communities improve and newer housing stock and infrastructure enters older established communities, existing homeowners are unable to meet the demands for housing repairs, increased tax costs or required property improvements by local governments.
- ▶ The loss of legacy residents deteriorates the social fabric of their neighborhoods and cuts them out of the benefits from the increased values that result from the new investments and improvements.
- ▶ Homeowners that cannot improve their homes nor afford the rising cost of homeownership, relocate further from economic epicenters, transportation, and key services.
- ▶ Homeowners are not realizing the economic security obtained through owning a home, which can provide support for financial mobility and serve as a cushion in a time of crisis or life changes.

OUR VISION

Homeowners across the Atlanta metro area will have the knowledge, access to financing and resources necessary to support their efforts to maintain, improve and retain their homes. Homeowners will be able to utilize and/or leverage increased equity in their homes and access the wealth to thrive and support their long-term stability.

Multifamily Housing Preservation

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The existing supply of affordable multifamily housing stock in the Atlanta region is rapidly decreasing due to renovation, redevelopment, and rent increases, as well as physical deterioration leading to unsafe and unhealthy living conditions and obsolescence. These issues affect owners and tenants, while preservation tools and capacity to address this crisis are severely limited and not aligned.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1 **Market forces are driving up multifamily property ownership costs, property taxes, and rental rates, leading to diminishing affordable supply overall.**
 - ▶ Speculation works against affordability; when programs or incentives get announced (new parks, infrastructure or civic projects), there is a frenzy to invest in the associated/adjacent land, which drives up prices.
 - ▶ Atlanta is a leading market for new multi-family construction, which tends to be at high price points or luxury units.¹
 - ▶ Class B, C, and D multi-family stock is in demand for purchase, light rehab, and rent increases. Market changes, such as interest rate increases and flattening rents, may increase opportunity in the acquisition space but requires readiness to act.²
 - ▶ Competitive bidding processes (high non-refundable earnest money deposits, short inspection periods) are a barrier to affordable housing-driven buyers whose financing sources are less flexible.
 - ▶ Increases in property values impact smaller scale landlords trying to keep their units affordable in the face of rising taxes.
- ▶ Increased market-rate rental prices make preserving affordable housing less attractive to owners if subsidies don't also increase.
- 2 **As the region continues to grow, the area median income has been rising, while legacy residents struggle with low economic mobility. This ultimately broadens the pool of residents in need of affordable housing and increases demand for limited stock.**
 - ▶ Residents lack sufficient income growth opportunities to afford increasing rents.³
 - ▶ A focus on solutions for workforce housing (80-120% of the Area Median Income) leaves out solutions that will benefit extremely low-income residents.
 - ▶ Mobility infrastructure is lacking, making it difficult for residents to maintain employment and education access in the event of a forced move.
 - ▶ Voucher acceptance is decreasing, and enforceable source of income protections do not exist.⁴
 - ▶ Tenant protections to limit displacement and prevent evictions are very limited in Georgia.⁵

1 Metro Atlanta had a 203% increase in permits for multi-family construction in 2022. National Association of Homebuilders, Jan. 31, 2023. (<https://www.nahb.org/news-and-economics/press-releases/2023/01/multifamily-housing-market-to-weaken-in-2023/>.)

2 Atlanta was ranked 2nd nationally as a destination for multifamily investment for 2023. Conti Capital, Jan. 26, 2023. (<https://conticapital.com/news/top-10-markets-for-multifamily-investment/>)

3 Area median income in Atlanta grew by 1% between March 2021 and March 2022, while housing costs grew by 25%. Atlanta Business Chronicle, Dec. 29, 2022. <https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2022/12/29/commercial-real-estate-predictions-2023.html>)

4 11Alive reported that in Georgia less than half of voucher holders are able to use their vouchers. The Way Home, Dec. 26, 2022. (<https://www.11alive.com/article/news/investigations/barriers-that-keep-people-out-of-permanent-housing/85-1cf74eff-d4ee-44d9-b72c-d94664bab647>). Additionally, a 2022 study reinforced the value of voucher programs. The study indicated that voucher programs improved health and several health-related outcomes for voucher-using households, particularly young children. (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36194822/>).

5 This issue is explored further in the Community Retention Problem Statement below, pages 79-81

What Are the Barriers? Continued

3 Aging multifamily housing stock requires increased and often costly upkeep, a significant challenge for owners and tenants.

- ▶ Lapses and neglect in maintenance diminish quality of life for tenants and can pose a danger to health and safety over time.
- ▶ Resources do not exist to support small owners of multifamily housing in improving properties to support wealth building alongside affordability.
- ▶ Aging housing stock may also lack energy and water efficiency features, resulting in high utility bills for tenants who cannot afford them .
- ▶ Large renovation and repair costs can impact landlords' ability to maintain unit affordability.
- ▶ Mechanisms do not currently exist to require or incentivize owners of derelict properties to improve properties or dispose of them to the city or county.

4 The regulatory environment can make preservation of existing multifamily stock more challenging and does not currently require permanent or long-term (beyond 20-30 years) affordability.

- ▶ Redundancy and lack of coordination across public agencies and across jurisdictions creates inefficiencies and costs - each public agency operates separate funding processes, each with their own compliance requirements, and lack a cohesive preservation strategy.
- ▶ A multi-jurisdictional government landscape makes it difficult to coordinate efforts and create a cohesive strategy.
- ▶ Cost of compliance with regulations must be weighed in strategies to preserve affordability.
- ▶ Existing property tax policies give limited opportunity to achieve benefits or incentives of owning and preserving affordable housing. (i.e. minimal property tax discounts exist to retain affordability).
- ▶ Current zoning can create barriers to preservation, in the event existing uses do not comply.
- ▶ Most current subsidy sources do not require long-term (20 year or more) or permanent affordability; new public investment will be required to maintain affordability in already subsidized properties.

Funding is inadequate to meet affordable multifamily preservation needs, for all parts of the

5 supply pipeline from acquisition and rehabilitation to long term operations, insurance, and maintenance, contributing to constrained development and operational capacity.

- ▶ The cost of conventional financing is often too high for affordable housing preservation, and lower cost debt at a higher loan-to-value ratio isn't widely available. Below market equity, as well as subsidy and grant dollars are needed.
- ▶ Impact investing, which would offer below market returns or grant dollars, is still scaling in Atlanta.
- ▶ Regulations within funding programs create a challenge to fully fund depreciation and capital needs to maintain multifamily communities at an appropriate level.
- ▶ Existing Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and HUD subsidies are expiring on many projects . The ability for owners to exit the LIHTC program after 15 years through the Qualified Contract Process is a challenge to preservation. And, the ability to resyndicate with new LIHTCs is very limited due to high demand.
- ▶ Lack of nimble rapid response funding to enable quick acquisition in a heated market impacts ability to meaningfully increase/preserve supply. In general, reliance on public funding sources means a slower development process and constrains the ability of affordable housing developers to compete with the developers using private capital.
- ▶ Resources appropriate for acquisition and rehabilitation of small-medium multifamily stock are very limited. Additionally, sufficient resources do not exist to support service provision or programming.
- ▶ With limited and fixed incomes, residents in need of affordable housing are vulnerable to cost increases and may not feel empowered to voice their concerns and advocate for the resources needed to preserve their properties.

6 There is not a coordinated ecosystem focused on preservation of existing affordable multi-family properties. Funders and developers are not strategically aligned to address the loss of the properties.

7 There is a limited pool of mission-oriented developers and effective property managers with the capacity to handle multi-family preservation projects.

What Are the Barriers? Continued

- ▶ There is a lack of equitable access to resources for smaller, emerging and BIPOC developers, or for community ownership models.
- ▶ Mission-oriented developers face limited funding to support the increase of their capacity at a critical time.
- ▶ **8 Residents sometimes oppose older multifamily housing stock because they view it as a community blight as opposed to a valuable asset needing protection and reinvestment, and the most cost-effective way to meet quality affordable housing goals.**

As A Result

- ▶ Aging affordable multi-family housing stock creates significant cost burdens for owners that fall especially hard on smaller landlords due to rising taxes and repair costs, ultimately impacting affordability.
- ▶ Property owners and managers who are unable or unwilling to keep up with maintenance and repairs allow properties to fall into disrepair, creating unsafe and unhealthy living conditions for tenants.
- ▶ Residents in need of affordability have fewer choices as the supply is further constrained and are forced to locate in housing that is poorly maintained, posing health and safety issues.
- ▶ Loss of multifamily affordable housing affects our region's senior residents, creating barriers to aging in place.
- ▶ Faced with costly improvements for the sake of regulatory compliance, landlords either choose to forgo the investment and risk penalty or exit the affordable housing market by selling or shifting costs onto tenants.
- ▶ Multi-family housing that could offer affordable units to residents gets purchased and/or renovated for housing targeted at higher-income tenants.

OUR VISION

Preservation tools to address this crisis are abundant and flexible, and thus residents, both owners and renters, find that existing affordable housing stock is available, well-maintained, safe, and preserved as affordable long-term. Preservation of affordable housing:

- ▶ Sustains the social fabric, vibrancy, and diversity in neighborhoods.
- ▶ Offers access to employment and other opportunities as communities grow and are invested in.
- ▶ Supports children in achieving educational stability and improved outcomes through the ability to remain in their schools (decrease transiency).
- ▶ Reduces traffic and congestion by allowing low-wage workers to remain close to employment opportunities.
- ▶ Supports positive health outcomes through improved physical condition of properties.
- ▶ Offers wealth building opportunities for small, mission aligned landlords, while also incentivizing ongoing affordability

Public Resources

PROBLEM STATEMENT

While public subsidy is critical to addressing the scale of metro Atlanta’s housing affordability needs, public sector agencies influencing housing lack sufficient and sustainable resources, coordinated leadership, and a shared vision for coordinating funding, land, and regulatory reforms to address those increasing needs in a rapidly growing region with significant institutional investor acquisitions.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1** **Accessing and assembling public funding for the creation and preservation of affordable housing is challenging, burdensome, and difficult to navigate.**
 - ▶ We lack dedicated, flexible revenue sources that are replenished annually to support the production and preservation of affordable housing.
 - ▶ Unpredictable public resources make it challenging for developers to plan for projects that sometimes take several years to develop.
 - ▶ Accessing public resources to assemble a capital stack is a challenge: different layers, different timelines, different application processes, different payment terms that require advance capital, some of which may be in conflict with one another.
 - ▶ Public funding that is awarded on a reimbursable basis requires an additional financing source and related costs to start work.
 - ▶ The slow process of obtaining and using public funds makes it difficult for affordable housing developers to compete for real estate with those who are using only private capital.
 - ▶ Cumbersome compliance requirements can disincentivize developers from accessing public funding.
 - ▶ There is a lack of communication and transparency around opportunities, priorities, and processes to access funding.
- 2** **Current levels of public funding are insufficient to meet the needs of the region. On the federal level, potential reductions in HUD funding in the federal budget will affect entitlement communities and local housing authorities, creating further gaps.**
- 3** **Current resource allocations don’t align to an overarching vision and regional plan. There is a lack of cross-agency and regional leadership (i.e. cabinet level positions and convenings) that determines priorities, coordinates the allocation of resources, and monitors and communicates investments in a transparent way.**
 - ▶ There are no geographic priorities that align investment with regional need or existing infrastructure (transit, schools, greenspace).
 - ▶ Among public agencies, no one agency has the purview of removing regulatory impediments between agencies and the conflicting terms of various funding sources.
 - ▶ Limited coordination by local jurisdictions with the state on affordable housing policies means that there has been little progress on dedicated state funding and an enabling policy environment (i.e. tying housing into existing infrastructure investments like transit).
 - ▶ More data collection and transparency is needed to inform and coordinate efforts across a varied region.
 - ▶ There is no framework or directory of the public resources currently available in the region for affordable housing.
- 4** **Land availability varies across the region and its various jurisdictions and agencies.**
 - ▶ There is no regional inventory of publicly owned land that could be repurposed for affordable housing or redeveloped to add affordable housing.
 - ▶ Public agencies rarely consider directly acquiring property for the purpose of affordable housing, despite numerous underutilized office buildings, strip malls, and land across the region. Such redevelopment efforts would require

What Are the Barriers? Continued

out-of-the-box thinking.

- ▶ With the exception of the City of Atlanta’s Strike Force, other local jurisdictions do not seem to have assessed and assembled developable land for affordable housing across public agencies.

5 Public perception and political will around the creation and preservation of affordable housing is not aligned with the critical needs as the region becomes less affordable.

- ▶ The public at large does not understand who

needs different types of affordable housing, why it is critical to the economy, and lacks a common vocabulary and understanding of affordable housing policy and funding proposals.

- ▶ State and local decision-makers often consider housing to be a private property problem that the real estate market needs to solve.
- ▶ State and local jurisdictions are not maximizing opportunities to access federal funding and are even sometimes having to return federal funding for not fully deploying it.

As A Result

- ▶ Across the Atlanta region, residents face an inadequate and declining stock of existing affordable inventory and inadequate production levels for both multi-family and single-family housing.
- ▶ There is no geographically balanced affordable housing strategy.
- ▶ The ability to draw on a broad field of private developers and of private capital to deploy resources such as publicly owned land is constrained.
- ▶ There is no ongoing inventory of public resources available and investments made across agencies and jurisdictions.
- ▶ Families and individuals seeking out affordable housing have difficulty identifying where affordable units are located.¹
- ▶ Private funding struggles to engage with and leverage public investment for affordable housing projects, especially with the increasing costs per affordable housing development project.
- ▶ Difficult, inadequate and unpredictable public funding sources limit the number of nonprofit affordable housing developers who have the ability to produce affordable housing at scale.
- ▶ Institutional investors are able to enter the regional housing market with little to no oversight, using significant resources to acquire housing at volume, affecting availability and affordability of housing, displacing residents, and speeding up gentrification in many neighborhoods.

OUR VISION

Public sector agencies in the Atlanta region have sufficient and sustainable resources, leadership, and a shared vision for coordinating revenue, land, and regulatory reforms to address increasing affordable housing need in a rapidly growing region with significant investor buyer activity.

¹ Georgiahousingsearch.org is not widely known and does not provide up to date information on available units.

Community Retention

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Residents who are low-to-moderate income in the Atlanta region's communities of color face displacement due to a history of systemic racist practices of disinvestment, compounded with significant recent real estate activity, leading to: housing instability; the disruption of social networks; loss of intergenerational wealth; and many other negative outcomes.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1 Structural and institutional racism directly impact wealth building and resilience in communities of color, which have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and its aftermath.**
 - ▶ Atlanta receives global recognition for the exemplary cultural and business contributions of our Black and Brown communities, but simultaneously is failing to ensure those communities have equitable opportunities to thrive in place.
 - ▶ COVID-19's effects both exacerbated and elevated issues of racism and inequality, which have been systematically embedded into the region's housing through historic segregation and redlining.
- 2 Market forces in our rapidly growing region have further exacerbated inequality, driving up rent, property taxes, and the cost of living. Loss of affordable housing is forcing residents out of their generational and chosen locations.**
 - ▶ Seniors and inter-generational living are important features of our communities – elders secured housing for their families, but the market around them is making it increasingly difficult for them to stay.
 - ▶ Incomes have not kept pace with rising costs, and inflation has decreased buying power, leaving residents unable to keep up with taxes, repairs, and rent increases.¹
 - ▶ Residents who are evicted have difficulty finding replacement housing with an eviction on their record. Security deposits and increasing fees
- are also a barrier.
- ▶ Moving out of a community to a lower-cost area often pushes residents further away from jobs and increases transportation burdens; moving back becomes cost-prohibitive as redevelopment increases prices.
- 3 The region is growing quickly² without proactive strategies to protect legacy communities and guide new residents into the existing social structure of their chosen neighborhood.**
 - ▶ Allowing increased density is helpful for creating more housing, but it is likely to displace residents in the process without intentional policies for requiring affordability and preservation of existing residents. bills for tenants who cannot afford them
- 4 Our region lacks adequate resources and support for residents experiencing chronic poverty and housing insecurity to access permanent housing, and what resources do exist are not coordinated across the region.³**
- 5 There is a lack of collective political and societal will, action, and funding to value and invest in racial, economic, and cultural diversity. Current policy and practice allows residents to prevent affordable housing development in their communities.**
- 6 There continues to be a lack of meaningful tenant protections aimed at improving housing accessibility as well as reducing the high volume—as**

1 148,000 renters in metro Atlanta are considered extremely cost burdened, Atlanta Regional Commission, 2022.

2 Metro Atlanta is projected to increase by 216,000 households by 2030 – with over 90% of that population growth coming from households led by people of color.

3 This was exemplified during the pandemic with the inability to distribute federal emergency rental assistance to those who need it. Georgia lagged other southeastern states. Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank, Sept. 2, 2022. (<https://www.atlantafed.org/community-development/publications/partners-update/2022/09/02/emergency-rental-assistance-insights-from-the-southeast.aspx>)

What Are the Barriers? Continued

well as the long-term impact of—evictions, which can be catastrophic for low-to-moderate income residents.⁴

- ▶ State preemption statutes eliminate local jurisdictions' ability to enact stronger tenant protections.
- ▶ In addition to increasing vulnerability to evictions, weak tenant protections also effects residents' ability to access housing due to discrimination around source of income, credit scores, criminal history and disability accessibility.
- ▶ Political will at the state level has historically been oriented around maintaining the status quo for Georgia's landlords.

7 We do not have an adequate legal and regulatory regime for the problem of addressing substandard living conditions in rental properties, which left unaddressed lead to further displacement in addition to diminished health and educational outcomes.⁵

8 Not enough resources are invested in mission-driven organizations to focus on housing and community development in gentrifying neighborhoods.

- ▶ Community-based organizations sometimes do not have the knowledge or wherewithal to advocate for policy and regulatory changes that would create more affordable housing.
- ▶ There is limited cross-neighborhood organizing and information sharing among community organizations. A broader framework among community organizations for cooperation might help prevent displacement.
- ▶ Residents have limited pathways to gain ownership and control of real estate in their communities.
- ▶ Atlanta has limited cooperative and community ownership models for affordable housing.

- ▶ The scale of solutions being offered are dwarfed by market forces and the number of residents and families in need. Mission-driven organizations are low on capacity and availability, stretching limited resources to cover significant demand for services.

9 Real estate developers often neglect to engage residents in planning projects, unless they are required by regulation or a financing source to do so, and then it is frequently after the project is already designed and there is a short timeline for input.

- ▶ Case-by-case engagement processes attract input from a segment of the neighborhood with the time and resources to show up time and time again and give development-specific input, neglecting many community voices.
- ▶ Some residents, especially tenants, who would express concerns about the impact of redevelopment on affordability, don't necessarily trust the input collection efforts and systems. Tenants often don't belong to neighborhood associations, where development project input is often collected.
- ▶ Residents are not adequately prepared to engage with the development process.
- ▶ There are few opportunities to require developers to include affordability if they are not in an inclusionary zoning geography, and they do not need community approval for a zoning change.
- ▶ The process of selling or redeveloping publicly owned property in a neighborhood or financing a new public asset rarely incorporates substantial and comprehensive community input.
- ▶ Delays in permitting and approval processes discourage builders and developers from allocating additional time to further engage residents and the community in planning and providing input.

⁴ "Tenants Beware," Atlanta Journal Constitution, June 16, 2022 (<https://www.ajc.com/news/investigations/dwellings/georgia-renter-protections/>)

⁵ "Dangerous Dwellings," Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2022 (<https://www.ajc.com/news/investigations/dwellings/apartments-violent-crime/>)

As A Result

- ▶ Some parts of the Atlanta region are losing their social fabric as predominantly Black and Brown residents are displaced, and communities lose social and cultural assets.⁶
- ▶ Some new residents enter a community without awareness of, or regard for, the history and ongoing relationships of the neighborhood, and are not educated or encouraged to create connections that will strengthen the social fabric. This pattern of behavior encourages legacy residents to resist new investments as they have learned that change usually means their eventual displacement.
- ▶ Low-and moderate-income residents who are displaced do not reap the benefits of new economic investment such as improved access to amenities, newer housing, educational programs for children and youth, and jobs.
- ▶ Naturally occurring affordable housing and subsidized affordable housing is being lost and not being replaced by permanently affordable housing.⁷

OUR VISION

Low-and moderate-income residents in the Atlanta region's communities of color are able to prosper in place, enabling them to flourish, access the benefits of local investment and development activity, build intergenerational wealth, and preserve the unique character and social fabric of their communities.

⁶ The City of Atlanta's Black population decreased from 54% to 47% between the 2010 and 2020 census. The Latino population decreased from 10% to 6%. However, some counties saw increases, such as Gwinnett County, where the Black population increased from 23% to 29% and the Latino population increased from 20 to 22%.

⁷ Metro Atlanta lost 59,300 units renting for less than \$1,250 during the period 2014-2019, Atlanta Regional Commission, 2022.

Private Resources

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Users and providers of capital who are creating and preserving affordable housing in metro Atlanta do not have sufficient flexible, longer-term, lower-priced capital to meet increasing needs in the face of escalating acquisition and construction costs and population growth. Additionally, BIPOC developers of affordable housing have not been able to access the available capital at the same levels or terms as other developers.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1** The costs of acquiring land and building affordable housing have escalated dramatically, increasing project budgets and capital needs.¹ At the same time, market forces like inflation, slow wage growth, and increasing rents and interest rates have deepened affordability needs, increasing demands on private resources on both the supply and demand sides of affordable housing.
- 2** Private capital accepting below market, risk-adjusted returns for affordable housing (including social impact funds) has been limited due to the lower returns and higher risk.
 - ▶ Banks, which could be a stronger source of private funding, are cautious about investing in new funds and investment pools that don't have a track record. There is a high bar of due diligence to clear for them to be comfortable.
 - ▶ Frequently, project and fund exit strategies for funders are not clearly defined, which can increase the perception of risk for potential investors.
 - ▶ Development capital distribution is uneven; specifically, BIPOC-led developers still have less access to capital for development.²
 - ▶ Private funding may not offer long enough loan duration to meet developers' needs, across single family homes and multifamily rental.
- 3** Public funding commitments, which can signal to private funders that due diligence has been done on affordable housing projects and decrease perception of risk, have been historically limited across the metro Atlanta region.
 - ▶ There is no coordinated system or application process among public funding sources, and there is not enough public funding to leverage private dollars toward creating more affordable housing.
 - ▶ As we shift our focus to the wider Atlanta region, streamlining processes and coordinating public funding becomes more complicated due to the number of jurisdictions involved.
- 4** As affordability needs increase, private funders face constrained capacity and knowledge to utilize available capital effectively for affordable housing.
 - ▶ Private foundations, especially smaller ones, are hesitant to invest in affordable housing projects due to the size of investment needed per unit relative to their overall funding capacity.³
 - ▶ Private funders have to adjust to the timeline of affordable housing developments as public sources for affordable housing move very slowly compared to purely private market deals.
 - ▶ Many private capital sources aren't matching up sufficiently with the financing gap needs of current pipeline.
 - ▶ The complexity of capital structures of affordable housing projects can create barriers to

1 Significant escalations in construction costs in 2021 and 2022 over recent years - "2022 US Construction Costs Trends," CBRE, (<https://www.cbre.com/insights/books/2022-us-construction-cost-trends/06-implications-for-construction-costs>)

2 Just 2% of the real estate industry in the United States includes Black-led companies, Affordable Housing Finance, March 23, 2022. (<https://www.housingfinance.com/news/csh-announces-initiative-to-drive-resources-to-developers-led-by-people-of-color-o>)

3 Nationally, only about 1% of U.S. grantmaking by the larger foundations is in affordable housing development and related services, "Grantmakers Support Affordable Housing," Chronicle of Philanthropy, May 2023. (<https://www.philanthropy.com/article/grant-makers-support-affordable-housing-to-further-many-other-causes>)

What Are the Barriers? Continued

private funders who are new to affordable housing.

- ▶ With the numerous types of affordable housing, private funders struggle to determine their place in the many opportunities for impact.
 - ▶ There is a lack of understanding and shared perspective on the types of financing necessary for addressing housing affordability across income bands (i.e. very low income to workforce).
 - ▶ BIPOC developers and real estate professionals across the affordable housing development lifecycle need more equitable access to capital: increasing supply of BIPOC assessors, general contractors, engineers, architects, etc.
 - ▶ There is a lack of knowledge among funders about the growth in capacity and the needs of nonprofit developers of affordable housing.
 - ▶ Resources for operations, including insurance, have become a greater developer need.
- 5** While private investment tends to focus on individual projects, there is a need for resources focused on building the infrastructure for development.

As A Result

- ▶ While affordable housing production has actually increased in terms of workforce housing, production for more deeply affordable housing is flat or declining.
- ▶ Atlantans are spending a higher percentage of their income on housing, while low and moderate-income residents have fewer and often inferior and unhealthy options.
- ▶ Corporate expansions/relocations raise concerns about a sufficient supply of housing stock.
- ▶ New housing stock is largely serving the high-end of the market due to higher returns and lower perceived risk.
- ▶ Existing affordable housing stock is getting 'upgraded' to market rate resulting in loss of affordable rents.
- ▶ Affordable housing owners (naturally occurring and/or subsidized) are raising rents because they can or because there are no alternatives for debt service coverage.
- ▶ National philanthropy is challenged when supporting local projects or larger funding platforms in Atlanta given the limited affordable housing support provided by local philanthropy.

OUR VISION

Users and providers of capital who are creating and preserving affordable housing in metro Atlanta have sufficient flexible, lower-priced capital to meet the increasing need for affordable housing units in the face of escalating acquisition and construction costs, as well as population growth, and that capital is equitably available.

Under 50% AMI

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Families and individuals whose income is less than half of the region’s median income no longer have access to sufficient housing options and supportive services to stabilize and improve their economic mobility. Faced with rising housing costs and significant neighborhood level bias against affordable rental housing, these residents are increasingly vulnerable to eviction, displacement, and homelessness.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1 Market forces have created a high-demand, high-cost market that has greatly impacted the supply of, and demand for, affordable and deeply affordable housing for our most vulnerable residents:**
 - ▶ The market is not delivering the number of units per year needed to keep pace with population growth in the metro Atlanta region.
 - ▶ Land and construction prices are rapidly increasing across our region due to demand, inflation, and rippling supply chain issues.
 - ▶ The market dynamics of our region create particular challenges, such as the plurality of jurisdictions, growth in institutional investor activity, population growth and the upscaling and loss of naturally occurring affordable housing.
 - ▶ Legacy residents face displacement and limited affordable housing options due to increased rents and evictions as properties are redeveloped for a higher income market.
- 2 Significant subsidy and low-cost financing is required in a typical capital stack for housing built at this income level, but existing equity and debt funding mechanisms, including subsidies, are limited, inflexible, cumbersome, and do not prioritize resident needs.**
 - ▶ A complicated matrix of funding sources necessary to develop this housing creates a barrier to entry for developers. The funding that is available is not streamlined and does not “play well” with others. For-profit developers are frequently absent from discussions about how to increase the field of developers producing this housing.
 - ▶ Beyond construction, there is a lack of understand of the operational expenses for this (and other) types of housing.
 - ▶ Not enough public funding is available at all levels of government (federal, state and local).
- 3 There is a lack of political and community will to overcome policy roadblocks and neighborhood opposition that hinder the creation of new housing supply for residents at this income level.**
 - ▶ Alternative capital solutions are not yet to scale in Atlanta (both debt and equity, e.g. impact investing).
 - ▶ There is a need for better coordination at the systems level between state, county, municipal, and community, for resources, processes, and services.
 - ▶ If interest among funders in prioritizing racial equity lags, mission-aligned BIPOC developers (non- and for-profit) will be inhibited in building their capacity and fully realizing their potential for delivering a greater scale of affordable housing.
- 3 There is a lack of political and community will to overcome policy roadblocks and neighborhood opposition that hinder the creation of new housing supply for residents at this income level.**
 - ▶ Overlay zoning and code restrictions (e.g., supportive housing ordinances, parking requirements) exacerbate the difficulty of developing deeply affordable housing.
 - ▶ Local municipalities are categorically ruling out multifamily housing and deeply affordable units, increasing the burden on neighboring jurisdictions to make up the difference.
 - ▶ Significant preconceived notions persist about residents in need of under 50% AMI housing among landlords, developers, and prospective communities where developments might be located, exacerbating concerns from neighborhood residents opposed to deeply affordable housing.
 - ▶ Framing of this problem is a challenge politically, and often pits constituent voices opposed to affordable housing in their neighborhood

What Are the Barriers? Continued

against homeless and housing-insecure constituent needs.

- ▶ There needs to be a greater awareness of what affordable means and the need for more deeply affordable housing (30-50% AMI).

4 High construction costs and low returns on under 50% AMI housing disincentivizes developers.

- ▶ Mission-aligned housing developers, with the mission and expertise to serve this population, do not have the resources to scale up to meet the need.
- ▶ Expensive line items like public roads and municipal services add to the difficulties of developing housing in this category because they affect profit margins and long-term affordability.
- ▶ Properties are frequently taxed at levels that do not reflect the public good they are providing in terms of affordability, burdening owners' ability to sustain the property.

5 There is a lack of accessible, consistent wrap-around services connected to, or proximate to, affordable housing, that is critical for people at lower incomes to be able to achieve economic

stability and housing security.

- ▶ Housing development placement that allows tenants to reduce cost of transportation and access to key services is not prioritized.
- ▶ Not every housing voucher or subsidized unit is accompanied by a subsidy for supportive services, such as that provided through Partners for Home, which can make it difficult to incentivize a landlord to accept tenants who are at very low incomes.
- ▶ Coordination between: 1) agencies with resources and services, 2) landlords with under 50% AMI tenants, and 3) tenants in need of services is difficult.
- ▶ Lack of bridge services and supporting services for people with disabling conditions.
- ▶ Lack of consistent community infrastructure (affordable child care and after school services, quality education, public transportation, medical clinics, and affordable utilities) makes access to services challenging.
- ▶ Limited political appetite for Medicaid expansion, which would provide revenue for supportive services.

As A Result

- ▶ Homelessness and/or transiency rates increase, creating greater poverty and often a multigenerational poverty cycle.
- ▶ Families and individuals settle for substandard housing or double, and even triple up in residences.
- ▶ Residents are not sufficiently connected to robust wrap-around services.
- ▶ The Atlanta region and our community institutions (hospitals, schools, etc.) take on significant costs to address adverse outcomes of housing instability.
- ▶ Not enough housing developers are motivated and incentivized to build for this market, which has the additional impact of stifling new opportunities for innovation.
- ▶ Families and individuals are displaced from their communities and social networks which exacerbate their economic burdens (transportation costs, child care, un/under employment impact), which in turn causes neighborhoods to become increasingly less socio-economically diverse.
- ▶ Families and individuals making less than 50% of the region's median income have lower economic mobility.

OUR VISION

Families and individuals whose income is less than half of the region's median income have safe, abundant housing options in locations that maximize their access to resources and wraparound services designed to promote stability and economic mobility.

Resilience of Affordable Housing

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Climate change and disasters have a disproportionate negative impact on people who live in poor quality housing or housing located in vulnerable areas.¹ Additionally, people who are low-income are vulnerable when utility costs escalate, both due to increasing demand for year-round heating and cooling and rising utility service fees.

What Are the Barriers?

- 1** Atlanta has a high energy cost burden, due to the predominance of larger, older, inefficient, single family housing stock (especially in low income neighborhoods); year-round demand for heating and cooling; and entrenched poverty, where more families are experiencing energy costs which consume greater percentages of family incomes. Access to energy efficient housing is stratified by race and class.² Thus, 36% of Black households and 35% of Hispanic households in the Atlanta metro area experience a high energy burden, versus 28% of all metro Atlanta households.³ Residents of Bankhead, in west Atlanta, pay \$3.28 per square foot for their energy each year, while residents of Buckhead, in northwest Atlanta, pay \$0.72 per square foot for their energy.⁴
- 2** Developers, investors and many funders have not prioritized sustainability and resilience in affordable housing; it is still seen as a luxury investment.

 - ▶ Long term operational and capital cost savings related to energy efficiency and resilience are not sufficiently factored into the cost/benefit analysis.
 - ▶ Funders have not prioritized preservation and improvement of existing housing, which can have a lower environmental impact than demolition and new construction.
 - ▶ Funders too easily allow proposed energy efficient upgrades to be reduced or eliminated when building costs escalate.
- ▶ Lenders do not confirm the installation of energy efficiency upgrades that were proposed during the financing process.
- 3** State building codes do not sufficiently address resilience. In Georgia, building and energy code advancement lags significantly behind the national model codes.
- 4** State utility providers are not working proactively to include residential energy efficiency and resiliency as an integral part of their portfolio or long-term planning.
- 5** Local zoning regulations often discourage construction of multi-family housing, which can be more energy efficient, healthier and safer.
- 6** Climate effects for the Atlanta region include more high heat days and higher risks of tornados and flooding. As a region, we have not sufficiently prepared to protect our most vulnerably housed residents and their communities from disasters.

 - ▶ People who are low-income have less of a financial safety net to draw on in inefficient homes, when utility rates escalate or disasters occur.
 - ▶ Low-income families have fewer resources to manage utility rate fluctuations.
 - ▶ Residents with low incomes often lack rental insurance to assist with disasters, and many homeowners lack flood insurance. In flood-prone areas, changes in insurance company

1 US Environmental Protection Agency, "Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States: A Focus on Six Impact Sectors", September 2021. <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-report-shows-disproportionate-impacts-climate-change-socially-vulnerable>

2 Energy Insecurity in the South, Southeast Energy Alliance, April 2023. (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/4377299f586a493984222bfc6ee84e60>)

3 American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, 2020. (https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/aceee-01_energy_burden_-_atlanta.pdf)

4 Energy Insecurity in the South, Southeast Energy Alliance, April 2023. (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/4377299f586a493984222bfc6ee84e60>)

What Are the Barriers? Continued

policies often result in delayed payments or denial of reimbursements.

- ▶ People who are low-income rarely have sufficient savings to adequately handle housing relocation expenses, due to unaffordable utility bills or disasters.

7 Housing that is built in flood plains or low-lying areas is often less expensive to purchase or rent, and thus occupied by low-income households. Sometimes residents are not even aware of the vulnerability of the housing. New nearby construction often creates unforeseen hazards on vulnerable existing housing such as erosion and flooding.

8 Developing affordable housing near transit in Atlanta could contribute to resiliency and reducing climate impacts, but there are multiple local obsta-

cles to overcome. Land costs near transit continue to accelerate. There is a lack of financing options to incent construction and preservation of affordable housing in already existing transit served neighborhoods. MARTA has resource needs such as additional staffing focused on transit-oriented development and infrastructure funding. Additionally, MARTA's process for partnering with third party developers currently is cumbersome, and it has limitations on flexibility due to legal provisions in the state MARTA Act.⁵ There is also a need for developer capacity to produce high-rise, mixed-income residential in cooperation with the added requirements of a transit agency. Additionally, there are overall negative perceptions of the efficiency, effectiveness, and importance of public transit.

As A Result

- ▶ People who are low income and living in poor quality housing are vulnerable to losing their housing temporarily or permanently when disasters occur. They are also more vulnerable to physical harm from damaged housing.
- ▶ Poor quality housing also results in additional negative impacts for residents, including increased risk of asthma, allergies and other respiratory illnesses.
- ▶ Inability to manage the climate within their living spaces (too hot or too cold) increases health challenges like infections, asthma and allergies, resulting in missed classes and workdays.
- ▶ Escalating utility costs result in instability for residents (and evictions) and greater turnover for landlords. When total utility costs (usage plus service fees), increase dramatically, the impact spreads to both low- and moderate-income households.⁶
- ▶ Homeowners who are low-income often live in inefficient and unhealthy homes and cannot access short-term upgrades like energy efficient appliances, windows, and HVAC systems much less long-term sustainability improvements like solar installations, weatherization and electrification. They are also disadvantaged in the event of a power outage, as energy-efficient, well insulated housing performs better in this situation, allowing residents to shelter in place for longer.
- ▶ Metro Atlanta is projected to be one of several US cities most impacted by climate change in-migration - due to being within one day's ride of America's longest coastline (from North Carolina to Louisiana), having an advanced transportation network (easing visits home), and providing a relatively moderate climate.⁷

OUR VISION

People who are low income will live in quality, energy efficient housing that is that has affordable utilities and is resilient to climate change and natural disasters. Additionally, they will live in communities that are prepared to survive disasters.

⁵ For example, the MARTA Act will not allow MARTA to acquire land that is not specifically for transit.

⁶ Inability to afford utilities is the number one reason tenants do not renew their lease, and utility bills are the number one use of payday loans, putting families in greater economic instability.

⁷ Studies estimate metro Atlanta will gain 280,000 to 340,000 new 'climate migrants' over the next 25 years; this migration is already driving up housing and energy demand.

GRATITUDE

HouseATL is a membership coalition with a volunteer, elected Advisory Board providing essential governance functions and strategic guidance. Its work is staffed and championed by an Executive Director, while it is fiscally and operationally sponsored by the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. A memorandum of understanding with the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta outlines the valuable support provided by the Community Foundation and the responsibilities of the HouseATL Advisory Board.

This strategic planning process would not have been possible without the guidance of the HouseATL Advisory Board and Strategic Planning Committee, who met throughout the year to provide input on the process and feedback on the problem statements and recommendations as they were being developed. **Strategic Planning Committee members are noted in bold below:**

Leonard Adams
Founder, Quest Community Development Organization, Inc.

David Allman
Owner & Chairman, Regent Partners

Alan Ferguson
President and CEO, Atlanta Habitat for Humanity

Frank Fernandez
President & CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Jennifer Freeman
Community Engagement Representative, U.S. Congresswoman Nikema Williams' Office

Rita Gibson
Community Volunteer, Georgia ACT

Karen Hatcher
CEO, Sovereign Realty & Management

Dr. Bambie Hayes-Brown (Ex-officio)
President and Chief Executive Officer, Georgia Advancing Communities Together, Inc.

Clyde Higgs
President and CEO, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

Josh Humphries
Mayor's Policy Advisor for Housing, City of Atlanta

Keitt King (Treasurer)
President, Truist Community Capital, LLC

Sarah Kirsch
Managing Director, Housing Funds, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Terri Lee
Chief Operating Officer, Atlanta Housing

Michael Lucas
Executive Director, The Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF)

Odetta MacLeish-White
Director, Georgia Initiatives, Center for Community Progress

Rohit Malhotra
Founder & Executive Director, Center for Civic Innovation

Cathryn Vassell
Executive Director, Partners for HOME

A.J. Robinson
President, Central Atlanta Progress and the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

Meaghan Shannon-Vlkovic (Ex-officio)
VP & Market Leader Southeast, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.

Mariel Risner Sivley
Director of Housing, St. Vincent de Paul

Lindsey Siegel
Attorney

Richard S. Slaton, CCIM
Executive Director, Senior Commercial Banker, JPMorgan Chase

Margaret A. Stagmeier (Co-Chair)
Partner, TriStar Real Estate Investment

Tayani Odeleye
President and CEO, Levanta Residential, LLC

Jacob Vallo
Sr. Director, Transit Oriented Development, MARTA

Janis L. Ware (Co-Chair)
Executive Director, SUMMECH CDC

The 2023 HouseATL Recommendations would not exist without the support and dedication of the working groups and their Co-Chairs, who collectively dedicated dozens of hours of meeting time over the course of 2023 for members to participate in ideation, creation, and prioritization. Co-Chairs made time for planning amid packed agendas, facilitated strategy sessions, provided guidance on the process, presented at the Member Convenings, and helped refine documents that had input from a significant portion of their working groups.

Prioritizing Communities Co-Chairs

Mitchell Parsons
Director of Operations, Midtown Assistance Center

Wykeisha Howe
Co-Founder, Parent Avengers

Policy Working Group Co-Chairs

Dr. Bambi Hayes-Brown
President and Chief Executive Officer, Georgia Advancing Communities Together, Inc.

Chelsea Arkin
Senior Housing Policy and Development Manager, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

Grace Roth
Manager of Portfolio Development, Atlanta Land Trust

Funders Collective Chair

Meaghan Shannon-Vlkovic
VP & Market Leader Southeast, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.

Homeownership Working Group Co-Chairs

Dr. Christie Cade, PhD.
Vice President, Southern Region, NeighborWorks America

Karen Hatcher
CEO, Sovereign Realty & Management



The 2023 HouseATL strategic planning process was supported and facilitated by Blaze Leadership Development, an Atlanta-based leadership development firm passionate about the health, wealth, and equitable growth of our region.

In addition to developing a suite of leadership development tools, Blaze supports leaders and organizations bringing about dramatic change in their community and in their world, providing the coaching, facilitation, and strategic counsel they need to bring big visions to fruition.

