



Atlanta Regional Housing Forum

Leveraging Public Lands to Expand Affordable Housing in Metro Atlanta

*Program Begins
Wednesday, December 7
9:30 a.m.*

*In person at St. Luke's Episocpal Church
Online at www.AtlantaRegionalHousingForum.org*



Bill Bolling
Moderator & Founder



Elizabeth Appley
Attorney At Law



Rob Garcia
Pinnacle Bank



Mayor Patti Garrett
City of Decatur, GA



Marisa Ghani
Housing Sustainability
Advisors



Chair Carlotta Harrell
Henry County, GA



Daniel Drake
Atlanta Public Schools



Terri Lee
Atlanta Housing



Jacob Vallo
MARTA



Joshua Humphries
City of Atlanta



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Up Next: *Expanding Jurisdiction Roles: Atlanta Regional Commission's
Local Leaders Housing Action Committee*



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ARC Local Leadership Housing Action Committee Members



Nicole Hendrickson
Chairwoman
Gwinnett County Commission
(Chair of Committee)



Rob Garcia
(Co-Chair of Committee)



Harry Johnston
Chair
Cherokee County Commission



Jeffrey Turner
Chair
Clayton County Commission



Lisa Cupid
Chairwoman
Cobb County Commission



Ted Terry
Super District 6 Representative
DeKalb County Commission



Carlotta Harrell
Chairwoman
Henry County Commission



Patti Garrett
Mayor
City of Decatur



Lynn Deutsch
Mayor
City of Dunwoody



Rusty Paul
Mayor
City of Sandy Springs



Vince Williams
Mayor
City of Union City

Atlanta Regional Commission: LLHA Partners





**Atlanta Regional
Housing Forum**

Leveraging Public Lands to Expand Affordable Housing in Metro Atlanta

Up Next: A Look Ahead to the 2023 Legislative Session



Elizabeth Appley
Attorney At Law

All slides from today's Forum are available at www.AtlantaRegionalHousingForum.org/dec2022

Advocating for Housing Priorities:

2023 Georgia General Assembly

Atlanta Regional Housing Forum

December 7, 2022

Elizabeth J. Appley,
Attorney and Public Policy Advocate

- Enterprise Community Partners Southeast
- Georgia Advancing Communities Together
- Georgia Supportive Housing Association
- 9to5 Georgia
- Presbyterians for a Better Georgia

Housing is the Foundation for Thriving Communities

Georgia law: *“The General Assembly affirms the state’s policy to provide decent, safe, and affordable housing to all segments of the population of this state.”* OCGA §8-3-171 (1991).

Georgia has a dire and growing shortage of affordable housing and too few resources to address the problem. The conditions that caused this existed before the pandemic and have gotten worse -- impacting the ability of men, women, and children to succeed.

Georgia has a high proportion of renters - many are economically vulnerable. Georgia law fails to provide basic tenant protections to keep people safely and stably housed.

The end result of too little affordable housing is homelessness. The system is not adequately meeting the needs of the chronically unhoused. A significant portion have mental illness and substance use disorders and are cycling through the criminal justice system, emergency rooms, and state hospitals with a high cost in terms of wasted dollars and human lives.

At the same time, affordable housing has become a commodity, and large corporate investors are buying up huge numbers of property for rent, disrupting neighborhoods, putting home purchase out of reach for many homebuyers, and using predatory practices that harm renters.

Why is State Advocacy Necessary?

Many aspects of what can be done at the local level regarding housing are controlled by state law:

- Rent control by a city is barred by state law.
- Renters are not allowed to withhold rent when a landlord fails to make repairs.
- The state Fair Housing Act prohibits cities from enacting other forms of discrimination protection such as “source of income” protection.
- Cities are prohibited from creating a registry of multi-family rentals.
- A city may not activate code enforcement regarding conditions inside an apartment, only what they can see from the street.
- State law controls what taxes a city can impose to raise revenue.
- Restrictions apply when a city wants to rezone properties for denser development.

Tenant Protections to Keep Families Stably Housed: Notice & Right to Cure Pre-Eviction Filing

- Georgia has some of the highest eviction rates and eviction filing rates of any state. The face of eviction in Georgia is Black women with children, with race increasing the risk of eviction by 200 to 400%.
- Once an eviction is filed the record follows the family for decades, making it impossible to rent a decent home, regardless of if the family is ever evicted. Evictions have short and long-term negative effects on children and adults in terms of physician and mental health, ability to success in school, hold a job, etc. A 16-year study of pregnant women in Georgia found a negative effect on birth outcomes from eviction – preterm births and low birth weight.
- Bill proposes to provide written notice and a seven day right to cure before a landlord can file for an eviction. Georgia law now requires notice to a tenant but does not require it be in writing. Once notice is provided, the landlord is now free to go to court *immediately* to seek an eviction.
- 40 other states, including LA, MS, FL, SC, TN, VA, and TX, provide a notice period for the tenant to cure before the landlord can go to court and file for an eviction. The American Bar Association adopted a resolution in February 2022 urging states to adopt 10 eviction protection laws. #1 was to give tenants notice and an opportunity to cure the nonpayment of rent before an eviction can proceed.
- New research showed that a right to cure of even a few days reduced eviction filings by 43.6%.
- WIN WIN! Tenants get a little extra time to pay the rent and Landlords get paid without going to court.
- Leading efforts to pass this in 2023. New bill with new number is necessary with start of the new session.

Housing People Who are Unsheltered

- **HB 713 and SB 535 would have sent federal and state funds for homelessness away from permanent supportive housing and services and into unproven strategies to hide rather than house homeless persons.**
- **We worked in coalition to fight the big money interests pushing HB 713 and SB 535. They Did Not Pass!**
- **These bills proposed to criminalize homelessness and force cities and counties to enforce criminal anti-sleeping and anti-camping bans against chronically homeless people as a way to force them to move into sanctioned encampments: Parking lots with port-a-potties, potable water, and a fence around the perimeter. No services, no funding, and no housing. These bills punished cities that did not force people into encampments using the criminal law with the loss of funding to address homelessness, and in one version, all state rent funds, as well as penalizing any non-profit in the city with the loss of all LIHTC funds.**
- **Best practices show funding intensive outreach, rapid rehousing with supportive services, and transition to permanent supportive housing with wrap around services is the key to ending homelessness.**

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness

- **SR 659 creating a Senate Study Committee to push forward these strategies to address chronic unsheltered homelessness.**
 - **We secured witnesses and testimony that explained the causes of homelessness, best practices to address chronic unsheltered homelessness, and support funding to help house people.**
 - **Report and Recommendations adopted stepped away from criminalization and diverting funds away from housing, but without Republican leadership support.**
 - **View video on legislative website: www.legis.ga.gov**
- **Working with the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission to address the diversion of homeless people away from the criminal justice system and into housing and identify best practices and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly about how to address this.**

More Affordable Housing

- Georgia Chamber of Commerce named workforce housing as one of their top three priorities for the 2023 session.
- Bills brought by deep pocketed Real Estate Investment Trusts and institutional investors seeking to bar local governments from limiting developments of Build to Rent communities of single-family homes. Both bills failed to pass. As a fallback, they created a House Study Committee that claimed to be about housing affordability. Report adopted.
- What will it look like? Will it meet the needs of lower income households?
 - More limits on how cities and counties can exercise zoning power?
 - Zoning limitations on lot size? Require allowance for increased density?
 - More investment of state funds into affordable housing?
 - Tax credits or other incentives for construction of workforce housing by employers?

Policy Priorities for 2023

Tenant Protections: Pass Notice and Right to Cure Pre-Eviction Filing. Oppose anti-tenant measures. Support source of income protection, application protections, stronger code enforcement, sealing eviction records, etc.



Housing the Homeless: Fight legislation to criminalize homelessness, divert homeless funding away from Housing First and supportive housing into sanctioned encampments. Work for strong supportive housing policies and funding.



More Affordable Housing: Support affordable housing policies that allow for increased density and reduce restrictions on affordable housing, and support funding and policies that create a continuum of affordable housing options for lower income and other vulnerable households.

Funding Priorities for 2023

Increase	Increase funding for affordable housing development/rehabilitation and homelessness prevention and services.
Allocate	Allocate increased funding to the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homelessness.
Increase	Increase funding for the Georgia Housing Voucher Program for people with serious mental illness cycling through the criminal justice system, emergency rooms and state hospitals, under the DOJ/DBHDD Settlement Agreement.
Fund	Fund legal representation for people facing eviction and creation of a permanent emergency rental assistance program.

Next Steps

Prior to the legislative session which convenes on January 9, 2023, meet with your State Senator and State Representative and discuss your housing priorities.

Find out who represents you at www.openstates.org



Watch for updates and alerts during the legislative session and throughout the year and act when you are asked.



Join us for Georgia ACT's Housing Day at the Capitol on February 22, 2023.

Thank you!

Questions? Comments?

Elizabeth J. Appley

Attorney and Public Policy Advocate

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Up Next: *Understanding the City of Atlanta's
Affordable Housing Strike Force*



Daniel Drake
Atlanta Public Schools



Terri Lee
Atlanta Housing



Jacob Vallo
MARTA



Joshua Humphries
City of Atlanta

City of Atlanta: Affordable Housing Strike Force

- City of Atlanta COO Lisa Gordon
- City of Atlanta Senior Advisor Courtney English
- MARTA Interim General Manager & CEO Collie Greenwood
- Atlanta Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Lisa Herring
- Atlanta BeltLine President & CEO Clyde Higgs
- Atlanta Housing President & CEO Eugene Jones, Jr.
- Invest Atlanta President & CEO Dr. Eloisa Klementich
- Metro Atlanta Land Bank Executive Director Christopher Norman
- Atlanta Land Trust Executive Director Amanda Rhein

STEERING COMMITTEE

Bill Bolling, Founder & Moderator
Food Well Alliance

James Alexander
Mercy Housing Southeast

George Burgan
Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership

Bruce Gunter
Civitas Housing Group

Natallie Kaiser
HouseATL

Kandice Mitchell
Enterprise Community Partners

Sam Shenbaga
Atlanta Regional Commission

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Cathryn Marchman
Partners for HOME

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M3 & Associates

John O'Callaghan
Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership

Marion Phillips
Georgia Power

Lejla Prljaca
Lawrenceville Housing Authority

Amanda Rhein
Atlanta Land Trust

Meaghan Shanon-Vlkovic
Enterprise Community Partners

