LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE

Right at Home Austin

A brief program update: where we are and what's next

Presented by Jason Phillips

November 2, 2026 · ECHO

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Austin is part of a national prevention movement

10

pilot communities nationwide

15,000+

participants across all sites

$100M

private funding goal

Together, we're building the evidence for a federal prevention strategy.

Austin stands out: our national technical assistance partner called our design the clearest translation of community values into program design across all 10 sites.

SINCE OUR LAST UPDATE · DECEMBER 2025

From planning to implementation

THEN

- Austin named a national planning site
- A year of community design ahead
- Partners and model still to be shaped

NOW

- Community-designed model in place
- Three grassroots partners on board
- First households in March 2027

WHY PREVENTION

She paid this month's rent. Next month's won't make it.

A mother of young children is hospitalized for days, and her paycheck takes the hit. Most systems wait for the eviction notice. RAHA doesn’t have to.

Based on a real situation in our community; details anonymized.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM COMMUNITY

People were clear.

> You can't get rental assistance unless you are evicted.

> Our trauma is being weaponized against us. us.

> Help before it's too late. Support that lasts long enough. Meet me where I am.

Source: Living in Limbo, Community Workshop Findings, April 2026 (Workable World Consulting for ECHO)

WHO RAHA IS BUILT FOR

Four groups the system was built to overlook

1

Families shaped by structural exclusion

Rules rooted in redlining and discriminatory lending, changed in name but not always in effect

2

Justice-impacted individuals and families

When the system touches your life, it reaches housing, work, family, and finances all at once

3

Households outside formal housing

Doubled up or without a lease: real community solutions that paperwork rules can’t see

4

Caregivers carrying invisible labor

Unpaid child, elder, and kin care that communities depend on but programs don’t count

HOW PEOPLE FIND RAHA

No portal. No waitlist. No open enrollment.

People find RAHA the way communities have always found resources built for them: through relationships.

1

Reputation

Years of presence mean trust already exists

2

Contact

The relationship built over time

3

Need surfaces

Honesty is possible because trust is there

4

Witnessing

Staff see what is happening, without forms

5

RAHA

A natural next step, not a referral

Direct assistance within 72 hours. Speed is part of whether help actually works.

OUR PARTNERS

Grassroots organizations lead the way

RAHA supports and uplifts the trust these groups have already built. It does not replace it.

Grassroots partners, each serving about 100 households in the first phase.

How partners are selected

Already trusted

Deep, existing relationships in the communities most affected by housing instability

Reach who systems miss

Connected to households that larger institutions often don’t reach or don’t serve well

Ready to walk alongside

Able to offer case management and connect families to direct cash support

A YEAR OF COMMUNITY DESIGN

Built with community, and it held

Lived experience at the table

The Rooted Voices workgroup brought people closest to the issue into decisions.

Providers and neighbors convened

Community and provider convenings shaped who we serve and how.

The principles carried carried through

Trust over paperwork, no eviction notice required, and direct cash first.

WHERE WE ARE

The road to launch

COMPLETE

Plan and co-design

2025 to fall 2026

Community design shaped who we serve and how.

WE ARE HERE

Build

November to December

Partner agreements, payment setup, and data systems.

NEXT

Prepare

January to March

Partners hire staff and complete joint training.

LAUNCH

Enroll

March 2027

First households enrolled.

THE PEOPLE THE SYSTEM MISSED

They were always here.

RAHA is built to reach them. First households in March 2027.

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