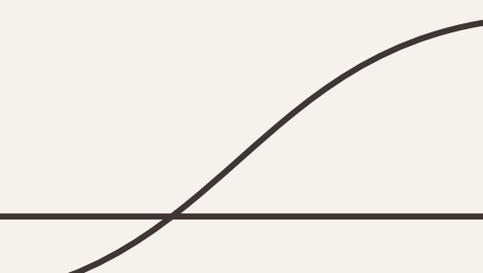


Homelessness in Austin, Texas

The history, criminalization, and environmental injustice on the homeless in Austin



Agenda

01

**Introduction to
Austin's
Homeless Crisis**

02

**2021 Winter
Storms***

03

**Recent
developments**

04

**EJ Principles in
Action**

05

**Local
Organizations**

06

Next Steps



Austin's Homelessness acknowledged in the 1960s

1980s

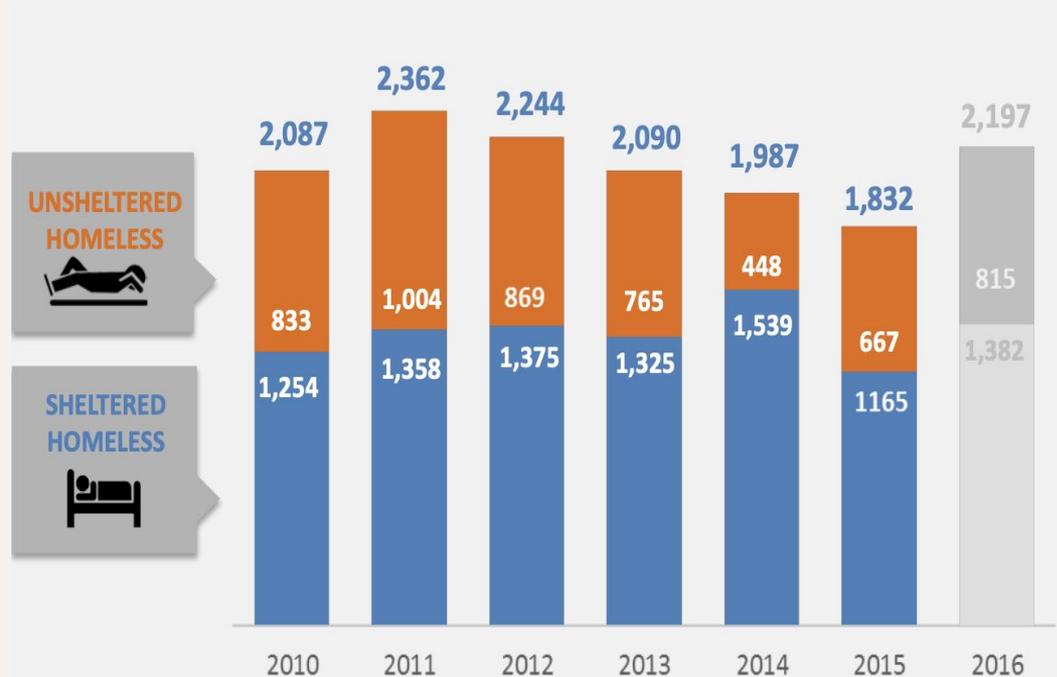
- Austin's first homelessness task force
- 5-step plan to fight homelessness
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987

1990s

- No camping ordinance abolishes task force
- Local advocates: The Austin Homeless Advocate

2000s

- Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Austin/Travis County.
- Austin's Action Plan to End Homelessness by ECHO



Climate disasters disproportionately hurt vulnerable populations

2021 Winter freeze

- 6 homeless dead
- Absence of communication from local officials to homeless individuals
- Hundreds of texans dead, mostly from vulnerable populations
- 6 days of boil notice
- 4.5 million Texas homes and businesses without power

2022 Winter Freeze

- Damages persists over a year later for affordable housing tenants
 - Even less space in warming centers due to Covid-19 precautions
 - Fear of electric bills left many homes heatless
-

How did it get so bad?



Criminalizing poverty

Sept. 1st, 2021 Austin
Bans homeless
encampments



Rapid growth, and lack of affordable housing

Median house priced
has more than
doubled in 10 years.
210,000 → 530,000



Energy Infrastructure

Rolling blackouts left
Texans cold for days,
and owing thousands
in energy bills



EJ Principles in Action

Using Pellow's Pillars

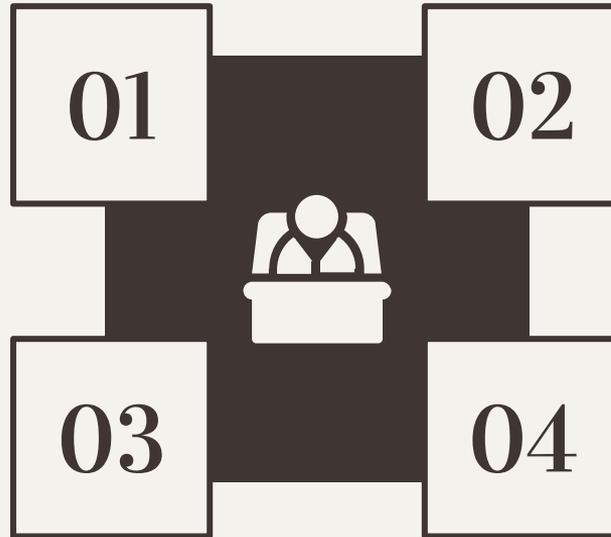
Pellow's Pillars of Environmental Justice

Intersectionality

Poor, marginalized communities bearing brunt of the Climate Crisis

Struggles and the State

State of Texas criminalizing homelessness, while not funding solutions



Scale

Austinites have less space to live, work and play, after quick changes

Indispensability

Austinites need access to reliable power, and the access to live

Community Activists



We aim to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring in Central Texas



mission is to provide a pathway home for our neighbors experiencing homelessness by offering emergency shelter, affordable housing, recuperative medical care, supportive services, and community awareness.



AUSTIN JUSTICE COALITION

mission is to improve the quality of life for people of color by helping them be the driving force behind their own liberation.



Mission is to provide dynamic, proactive leadership that engages policymakers and the community to end homelessness.

Next Steps



- Invest in affordable housing
- End criminal ban on camping
- Invest in winterizing the energy grid
- Open more shelters and warming centers
- End “us” vs “them” narrative



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