

SIMPLIFYING HOW RESIDENTS FIND AND APPLY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING



PROBLEM

Affordable housing is difficult for residents to find and secure. To find housing, residents make calls, search separate websites, and visit buildings in person. Even once housing is found, residents must complete paper-based applications, join in-person lotteries, and navigate confusing eligibility rules – an experience that falls far short of what residents should expect from a modern, effective city government.



SOLUTION

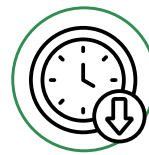
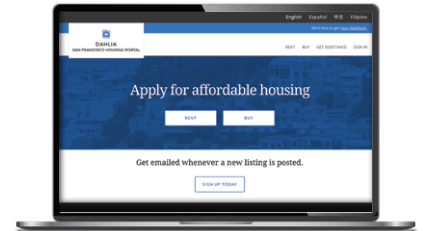
By centralizing affordable housing listings and applications in one place online, cities can make it easier for residents to find available units, determine eligibility, and apply. In cities like San Francisco and San Jose, these platforms connect those most in need of affordable housing with those offering it, and make it easier for residents to qualify and apply for housing. Instead of navigating a web of fragmented listings and complicated, time-consuming applications and lotteries, residents can search and apply for units in one place—changing a months-long process to one that can happen in 5 minutes.

IMPACT

In 2016, the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development **launched DAHLIA, their one-stop affordable housing portal.**

The portal receives

500K to 1 million
monthly visits



Time to search and apply reduced from months to as little as

5 minutes

CHALLENGES THIS IDEA CAN HELP YOU NAVIGATE

- Residents cannot easily find, qualify for, and apply to available affordable housing units.
- Helping residents navigate the housing process requires significant staff time and is difficult to scale.
- Affordable housing units sitting unfilled because residents can't find or qualify for them.

ADOPT THIS IDEA: 3 KEY STEPS



1 Inventory available housing and create common application

Work with housing staff, property owners, developers, and counselors to identify the listings and resources to be included. Partner with property owners to define a single listing format and common application. Outline a standardized data collection process.



2 Customize housing platform to local needs

Customize the portal's look and feel, application process, and policies. Enable the features that will help different types of users improve their workflows.



3 Launch the platform and expand its reach

Launch your affordable housing platform by training housing seekers, property managers, and housing counselors to use the platform. Identify opportunities to sustain and expand the portal's impact.

