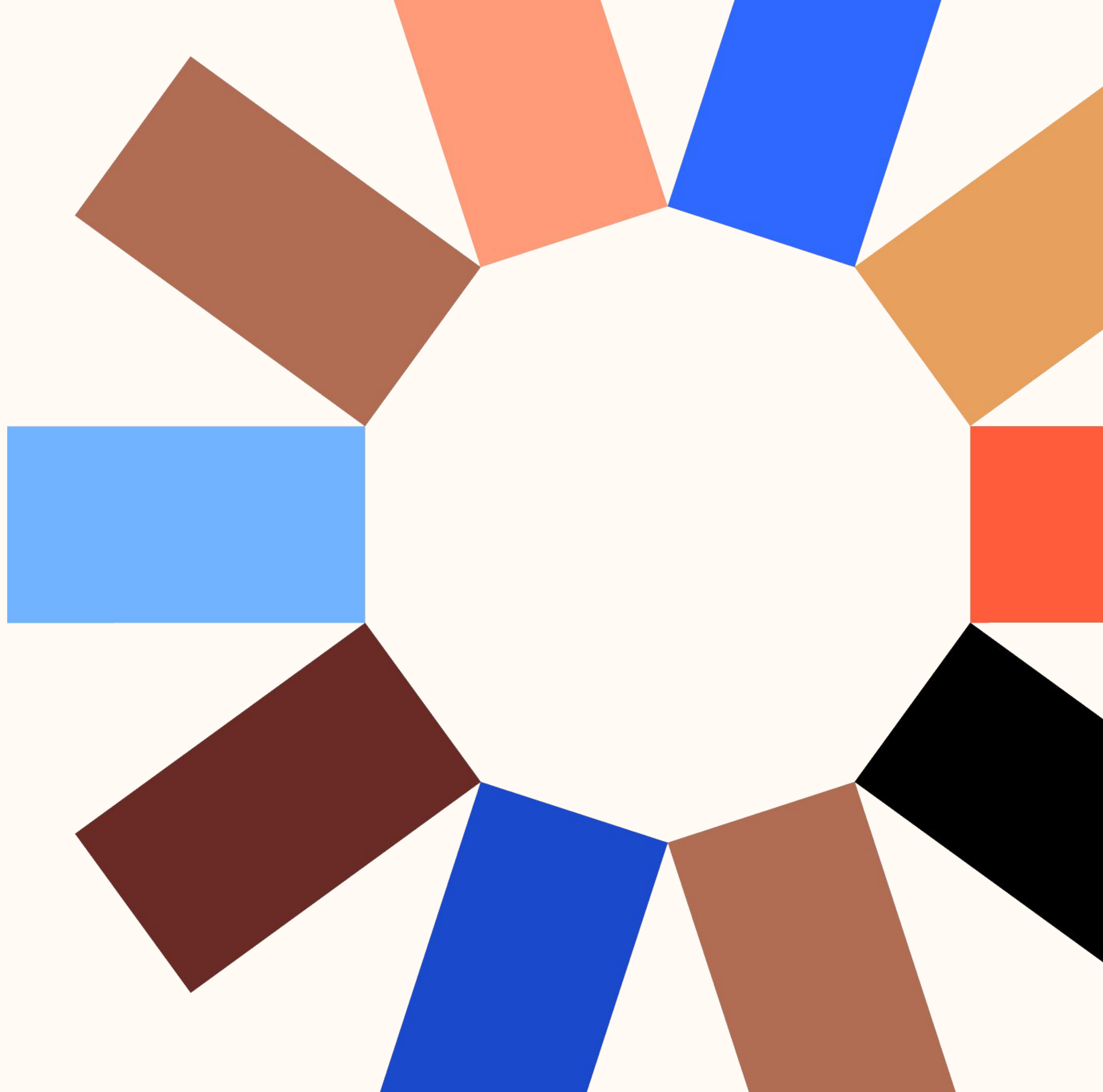


# April Report Out

April 16, 2024



# Welcome, while we wait...

## Share in the chat:

- your name
- location
- what makes you feel at home

## Agenda

**1. Welcome**

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**2. Introductions and Overview**

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**3. What's Happening | Listening Session Themes**

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**4. What's Challenging | Opportunities for Interventions**

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**5. What's Needed | Case Study of Other Models**

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**6. Next Steps**



We pioneer **disability-forward** housing solutions that open doors to **homes and opportunities for everyone**



The mission of Better Living Together is to create innovative, accessible housing solutions where people with and without disabilities live and thrive together.

**Today's Speakers:**

**Caroline Bas, The Kelsey**

**Brittney Harris, The Kelsey**

**Beatte Sass, Better Living Together**

**Tim Sass, Better Living Together**



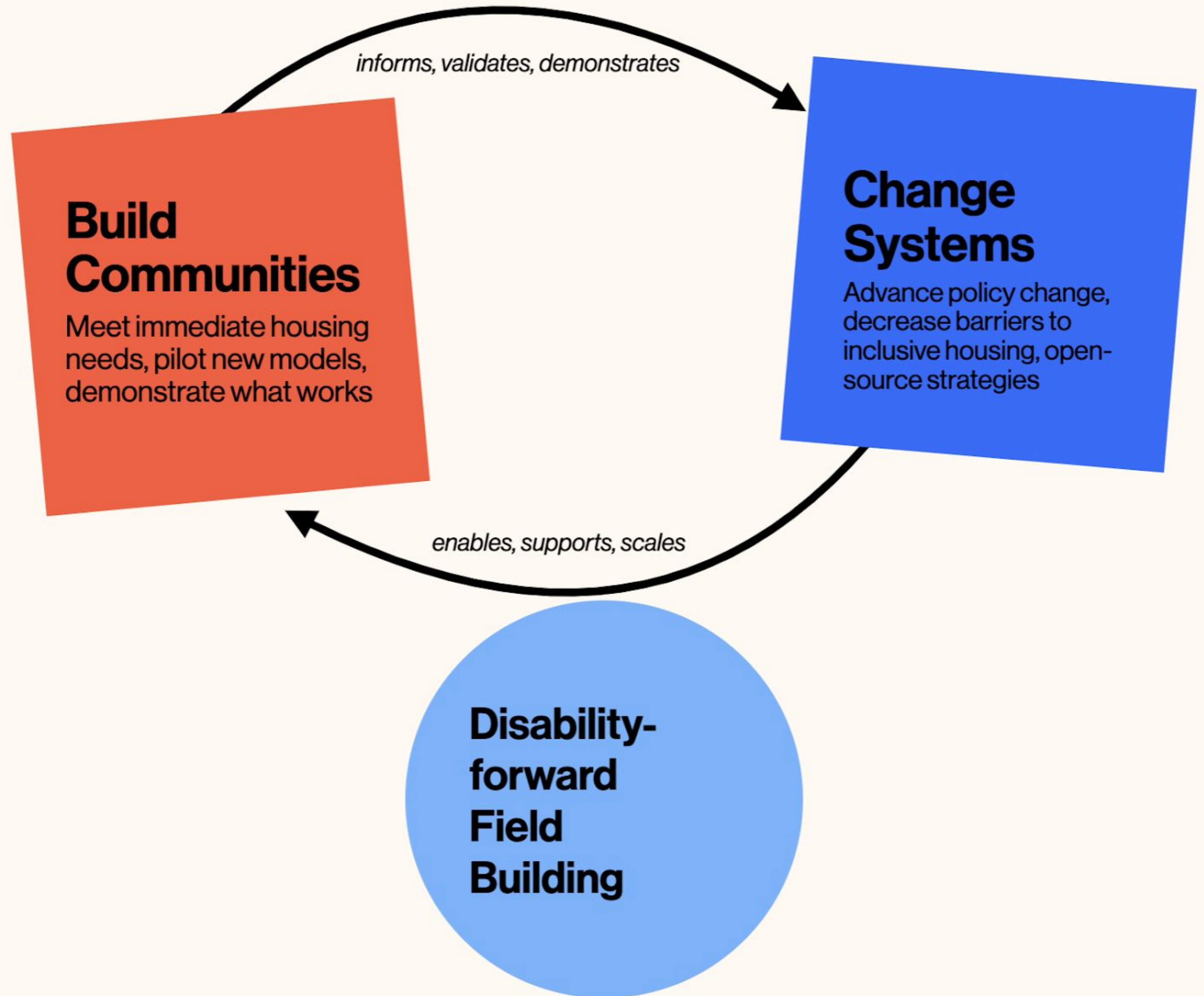
# Together We Can Do More

## Introduction

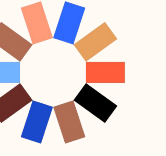
What's Happening  
What's Challenging  
What's Needed



# What Does Collective Impact Look Like



# What's Happening



# 61 million Americans with disabilities don't have their basic housing needs met. The barriers include:



## Cost

People with disabilities reliant on SSI would need to spend 131% of their entire income to afford basic housing.



## Access

Less than 6% of the housing market is accessible to people with disabilities.



## Discrimination

Over 55% of housing discrimination is based on disability, more than any other type of housing discrimination.



## Supply

Only 12% of adults with disabilities rent or own their own homes and people with disabilities are 4x more likely to experience homelessness.



# Affordable Accessible Inclusive Housing in Georgia

## Lack of Housing that is Affordable, Accessible and Inclusive

In 2017, there were over **235,000** people in Georgia with IDD – nearly **37,000** are living with a family caregiver age-60 or older

Only **one-fifth** of people with IDD in Georgia say their home meets all their accessibility needs

**17%** of homeless individuals in Georgia have a disability,

In the Atlanta Metro area, a Georgian with a living off Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits would have to spend **112% of their monthly income** to rent a one-bedroom apartment.

Over **7,000** Georgians are on the waiting list for NOW and COMP waiver services.

More than **175,000 Georgians** applied for just **13,000 slots** on a wait list for housing choice vouchers to help low-income people and families cover their rent.

## Policy and Funding Environment

There are not enough Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) to meet the need:

- 9% tax credits remain highly competitive
- Expiring affordability requirements on units produced 15+ years ago creates large risk of displacement

Local tools:

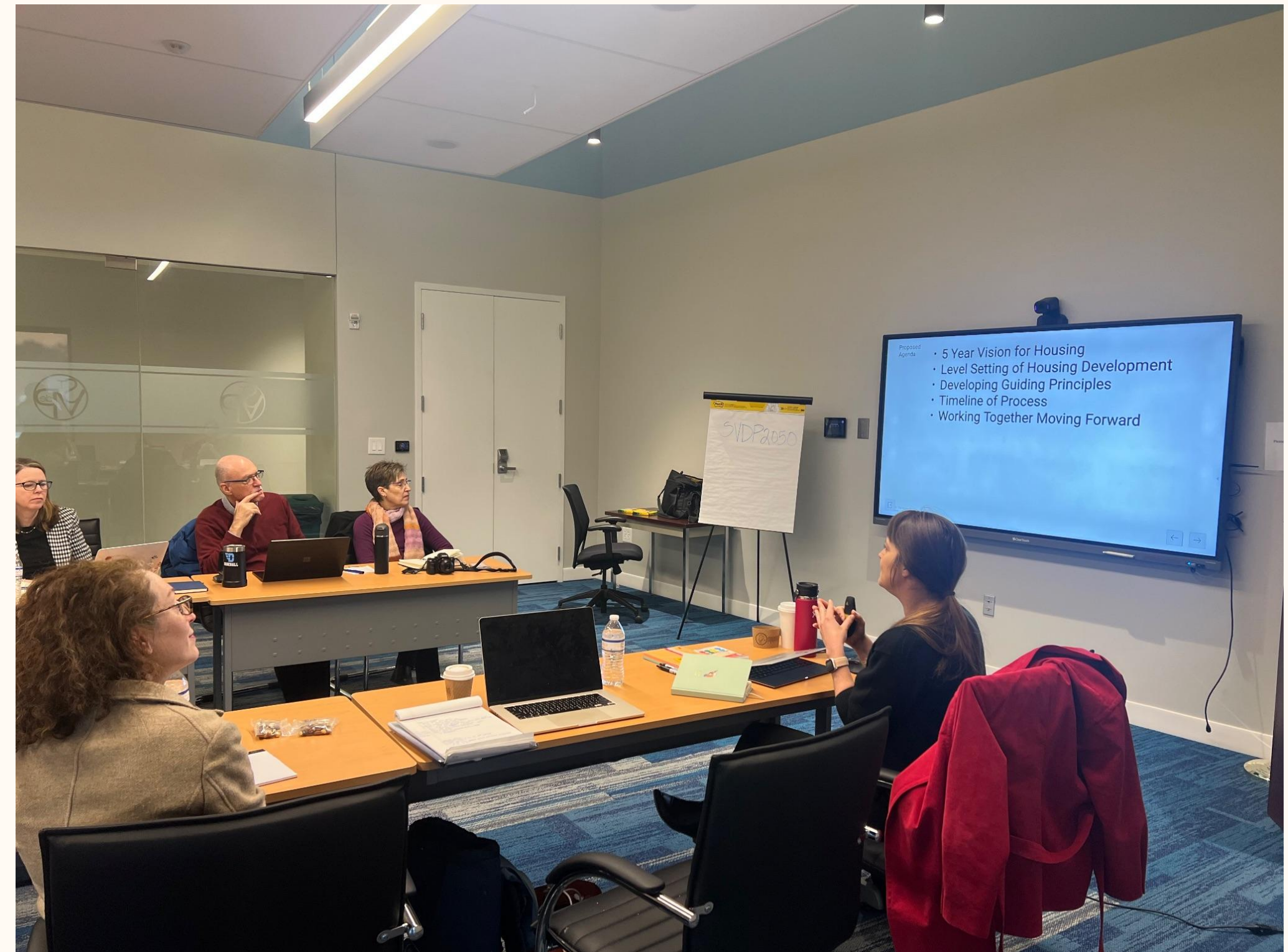
- Atlanta and Decatur have established inclusionary zoning policies

# The Kelsey's Approach to Understanding the Problem and the Opportunities

The Kelsey was founded in 2018 after engaging 300+ people to understand the state of accessible, affordable, inclusive housing. We replicated this process in the Atlanta Metro area.

In Metro Atlanta, we have conducted one on one interviews and listening sessions with:

- **25+ people** with lived experience of having a disability and/or experiences of housing insecurity and those with family members that have lived experience. We engaged this group through a Virtual Roundtable
- **20+ organizations** representing diverse sectors (ex: advocacy, disability services, developers, government)
- **17+ experts** across the Inclusive Housing Landscape, representing the development community and supportive services



**What we've heard from  
y'all...**

# Lack of Options/Variety of Housing Types

Most people who are looking for housing for their adult children or themselves do not understand what is available

# Difficult to Obtain Services

HCBS waitlist is long and only the most vulnerable can get access to services. Affordable housing developers also believe they can not properly house people because of lack of services



# Service Provider Availability

Community Living is compromised by low wages, leading to high turnover rates. This impacts the continuity and quality of services available to residents with disabilities, affecting timely access to housing and supportive services

# Peer Communities are Important

Living with people the same age, in same life stage presents greater opportunities for organic communal connections.



# A Place to Foster Community

Access to activities to foster engagement between residents and places that allow people to gather

# Robust Resident Services

Access to a resource person in assisting with day to day needs such as navigating the challenges of community living even if someone is not eligible for HCBS services



# Physically Connected Community

Residents like to be close to grocery stores, restaurants, things to do. Being able to walk and/or roll to where you are going or having MARTA close to your home is important



# What's Challenging



# Triangle of Community Living

**Community**  
with connections,  
recreation,  
spirituality, joy,  
meaningful work,  
and relationships



## Housing

that is  
accessible,  
affordable  
across a range  
of incomes,  
and meets  
personal  
preferences



## Supports & Services

including medical  
services, in home  
supports, and  
therapies  
designed to meet  
individual needs



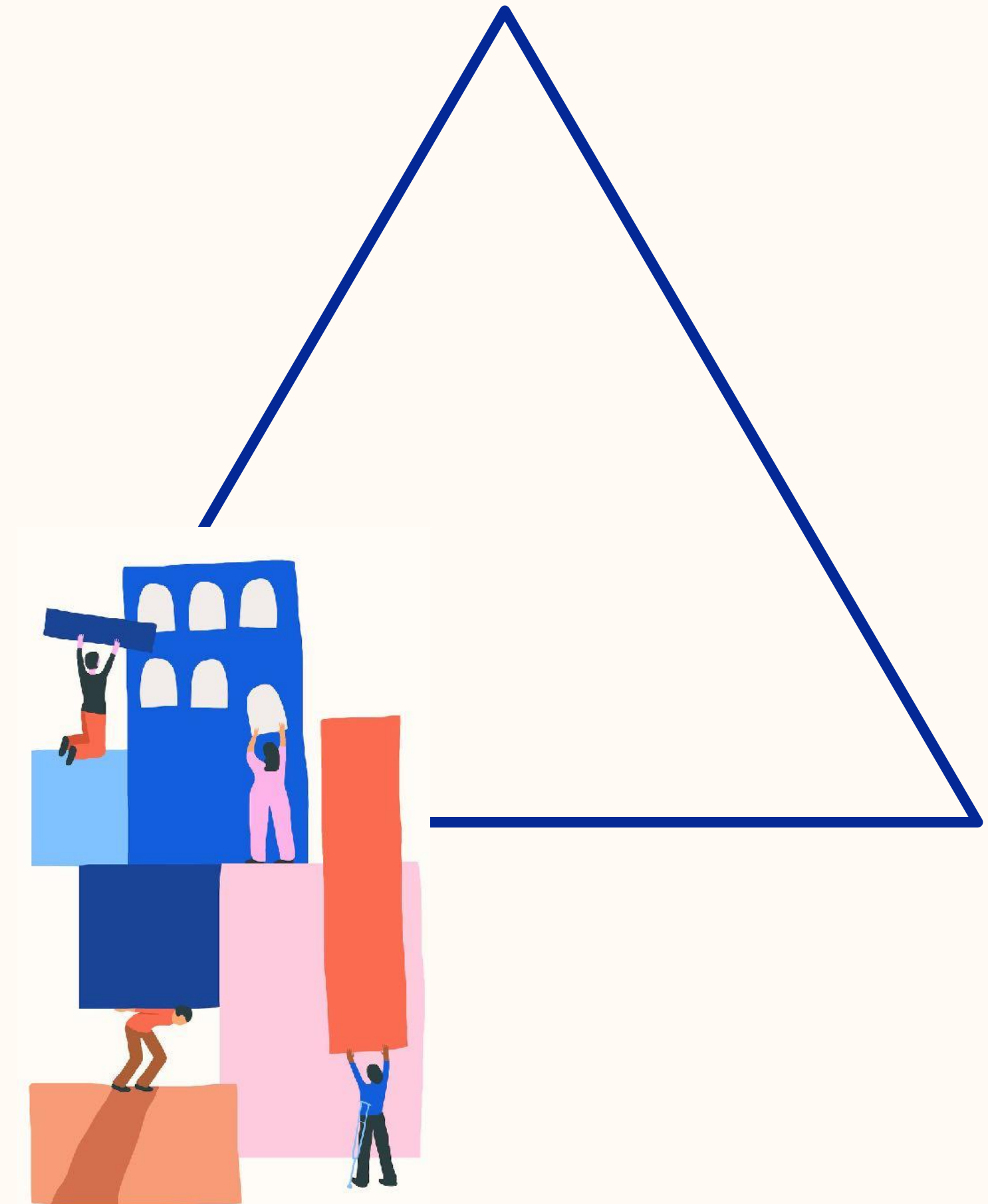
# Challenges | Housing

## Limited *Accessible* Housing Options

Key factors contributing to the limited availability of inclusive housing are:

- Location: access to amenities, security
- Cost of Accessibility Modifications
- Limited targeting funding for development
- Lack of developer incentives

**Housing**  
that is  
accessible,  
affordable  
across a range  
of incomes,  
and meets  
personal  
preferences



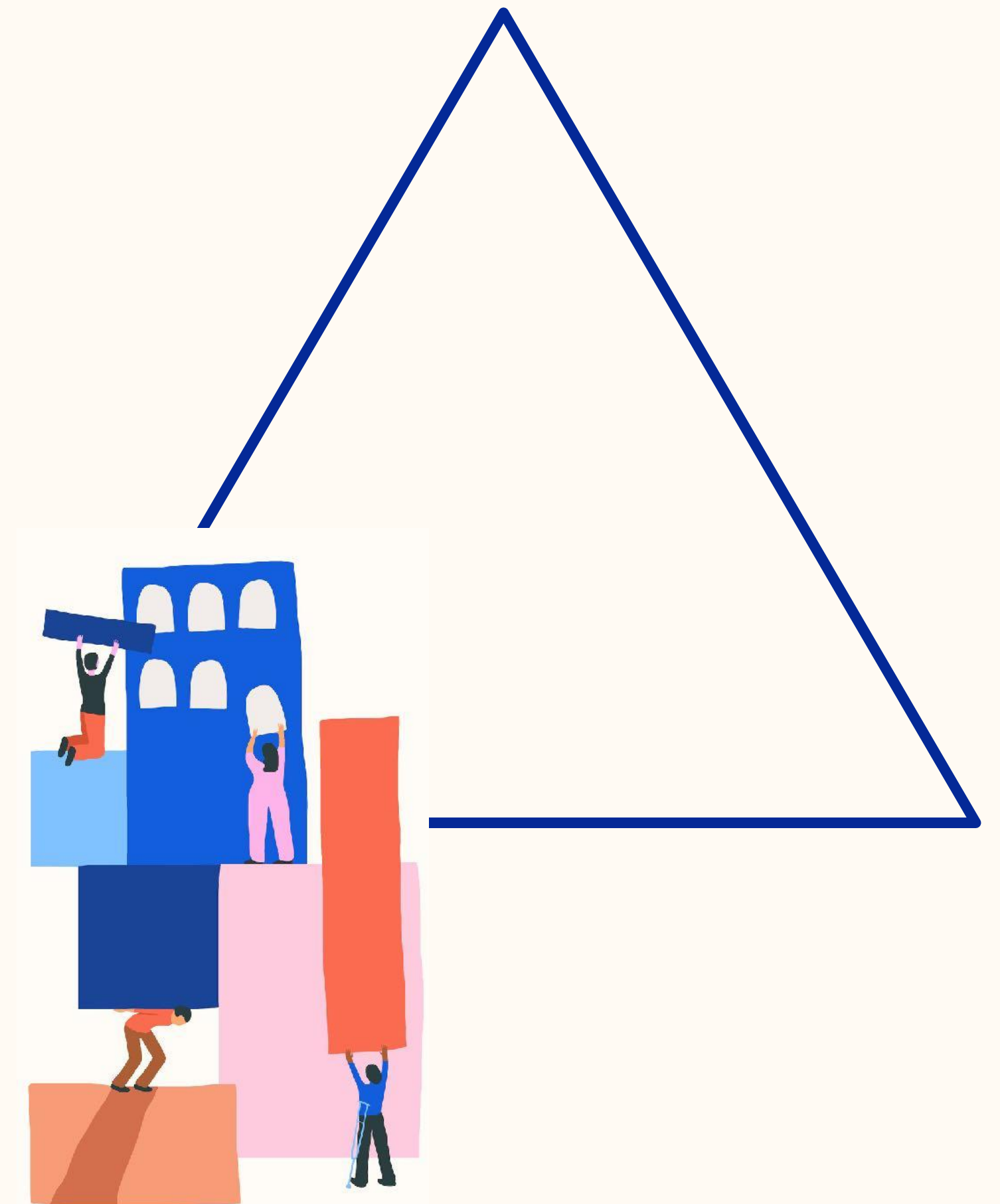
# Challenges | Housing

## Limited Deeply Affordable Housing

Not being able to access these vouchers because:

- Issued at the state level
- Lack of understanding/poor perceptions of services residents can bring with vouchers
- Extensive Application process; lack of streamlined process

**Housing**  
that is  
accessible,  
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# Challenges | Services

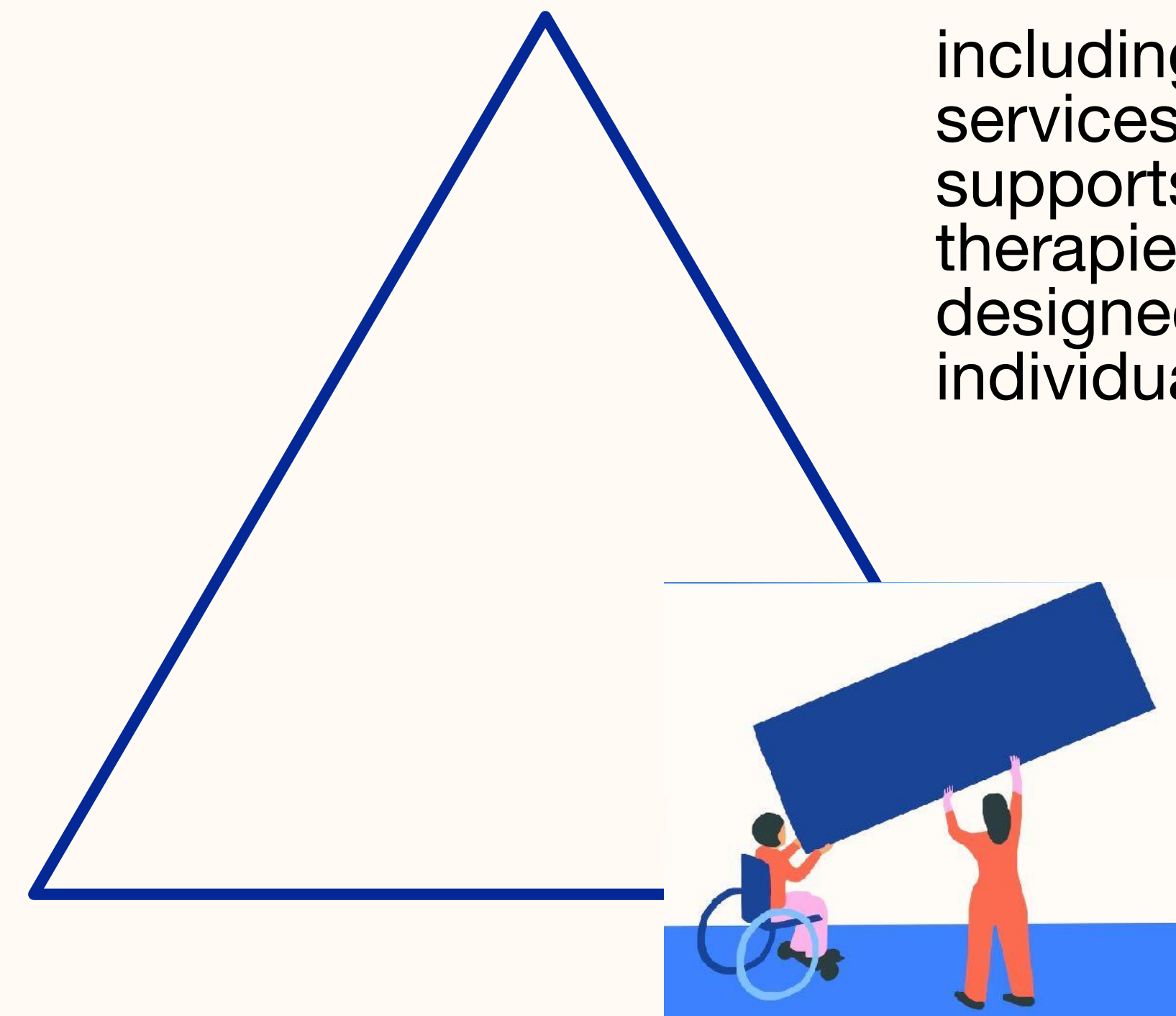
## Funding for Supportive Services

Inadequate funding for Medicaid waivers that provide funding to support independent living

- Long waitlist (7,000+) for Medicaid waivers. Some have been on the waitlist for ten years or longer
- Few established organizations that will support individuals in their own homes

## Supports & Services

including medical services, in home supports, and therapies designed to meet individual needs



# Challenges | Services

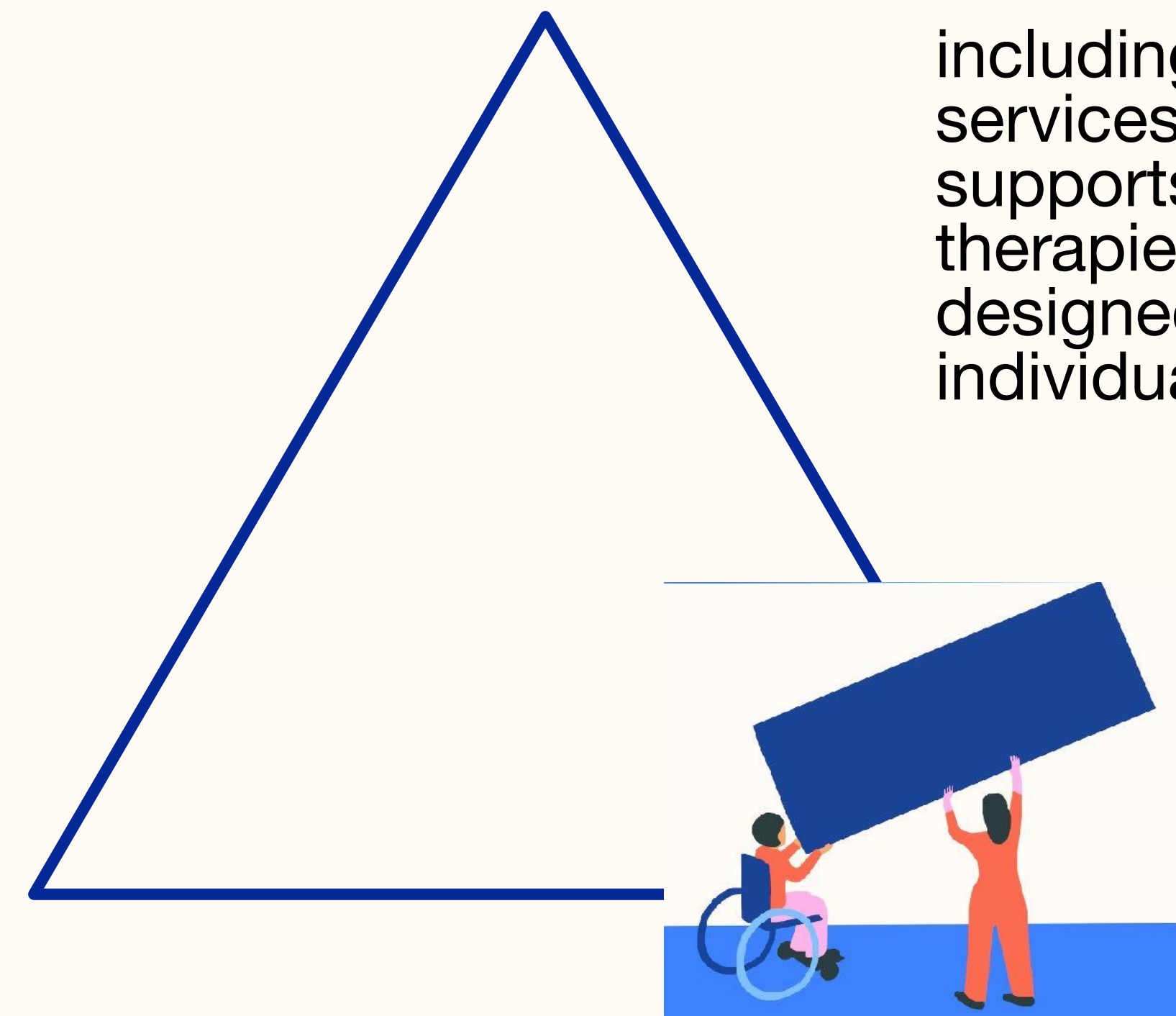
## Quality of Supportive Services

Providing quality, reliable services in accessible housing is crucial. This challenge in not being met due to:

- Exit of Support Professionals since the Pandemic
- Low Compensation
- High Turnover

## Supports & Services

including medical services, in home supports, and therapies designed to meet individual needs



# ***Olmstead* and Implications for Inclusive Housing in Georgia**

In 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that people with disabilities have a qualified right to receive state funded supports and services in the community rather than institutions.

25 Years later, Georgia, where the *Olmstead* case originated, is still subject to monitoring of a 2010 settlement agreement with the Dept. of Justice

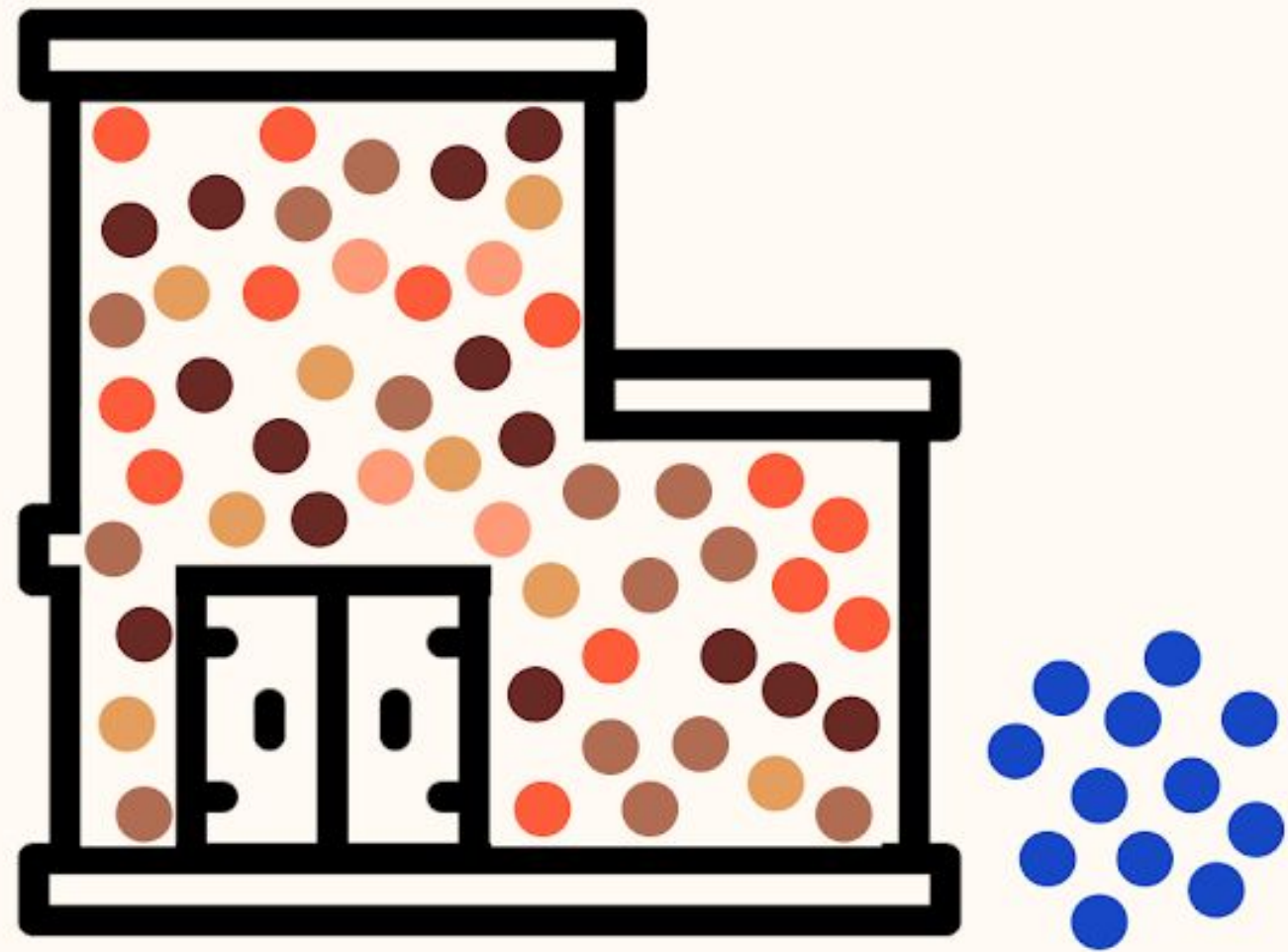
The HCBS Settings rule applies to services providers who are funded using HCBS dollars, not housing developers. It impacts housing projects in that how you develop or operate housing can impact whether the residents can receive HCBS services in it.

*Olmstead* has had the unintended effect of stifling innovation

- Leadership at the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) has said what they can do unilaterally is severely constrained by the *Olmstead* settlement. They stressed that DBHDD's hands are tied because they are under high scrutiny and oversight.

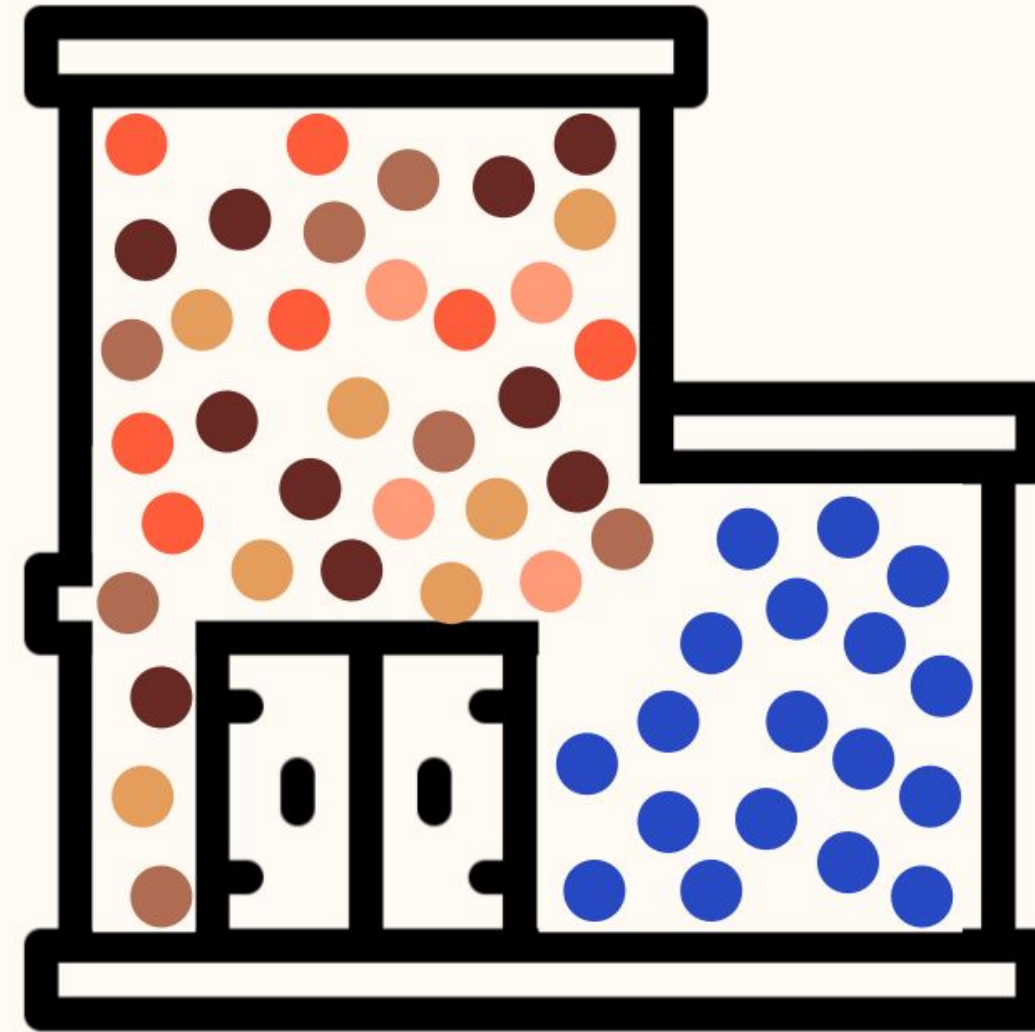
# What's Needed

# Anchored in inclusion.

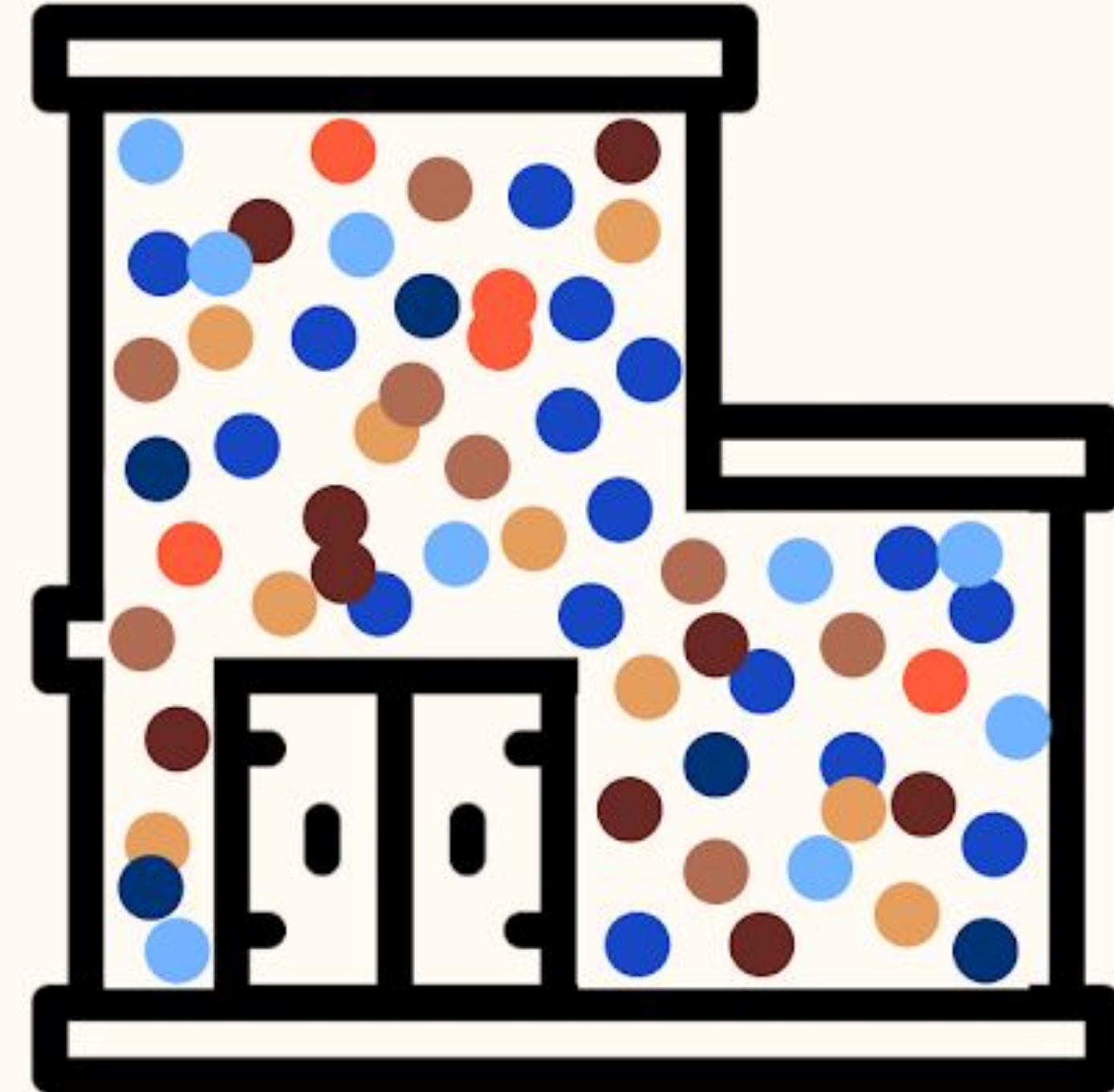


People with disabilities are segregated in:

- Hospitals
- Institutions
- Congregate Settings
- Homeless Shelters
- Disability-specific housing developments



People with and without disabilities live in the same building physically but with barriers to full access, separate lives and experiences, and no community connections



People with and without disabilities share community together, diversity is valued, interdependence is supported, and people have access to the same spaces and experiences.



# Leveraging housing infrastructure

**1773**

The United States establishes the first institution for disabled individuals in Virginia

**1937-1990**

While disabled people were mostly living in institutions the affordable, single family, and multifamily housing industry was developing. Subsidy programs were not including this population in their focus. LIHTC took hold of affordable housing industry in 80/90's.

**1990**

Americans with Disabilities Act is Signed into law mandating community integration

**1999**

Olmstead ruling is won by two developmentally disabled women to affirm their right to live in the housing of their choice and receive services

**ADA and Olmstead meant to support inclusive living. But this mostly unfunded mandate hasn't been fully realized. Instead we see:**

70% of adults with disabilities at home with parents

40% of homeless individuals have a disability

Less and 7% of people with IDD who use LTSS have their own homes

55% of all housing discrimination is disability-based

40% of people with disabilities who do have housing report needing to cut other costs to pay for housing

# 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA)

- Project-based rental assistance where the capital is provided through other local, state or federal programs;
- Creates integrated housing opportunities; no more than 25% of units in multifamily properties.
- Creates state-level partnerships across housing & services



# Mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers

A part of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, specifically for non-elderly disabled people and families. As of Nov. 2022, 73% of the 69,000 Mainstream vouchers awarded to public housing authorities are leased.



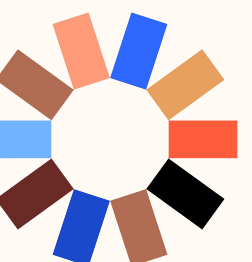

# Inclusive Design Standards

Guidelines that include 300 elements including design choices, building features, development strategies, amenities, and operational policies that support cross-disability accessibility and inclusion

Team

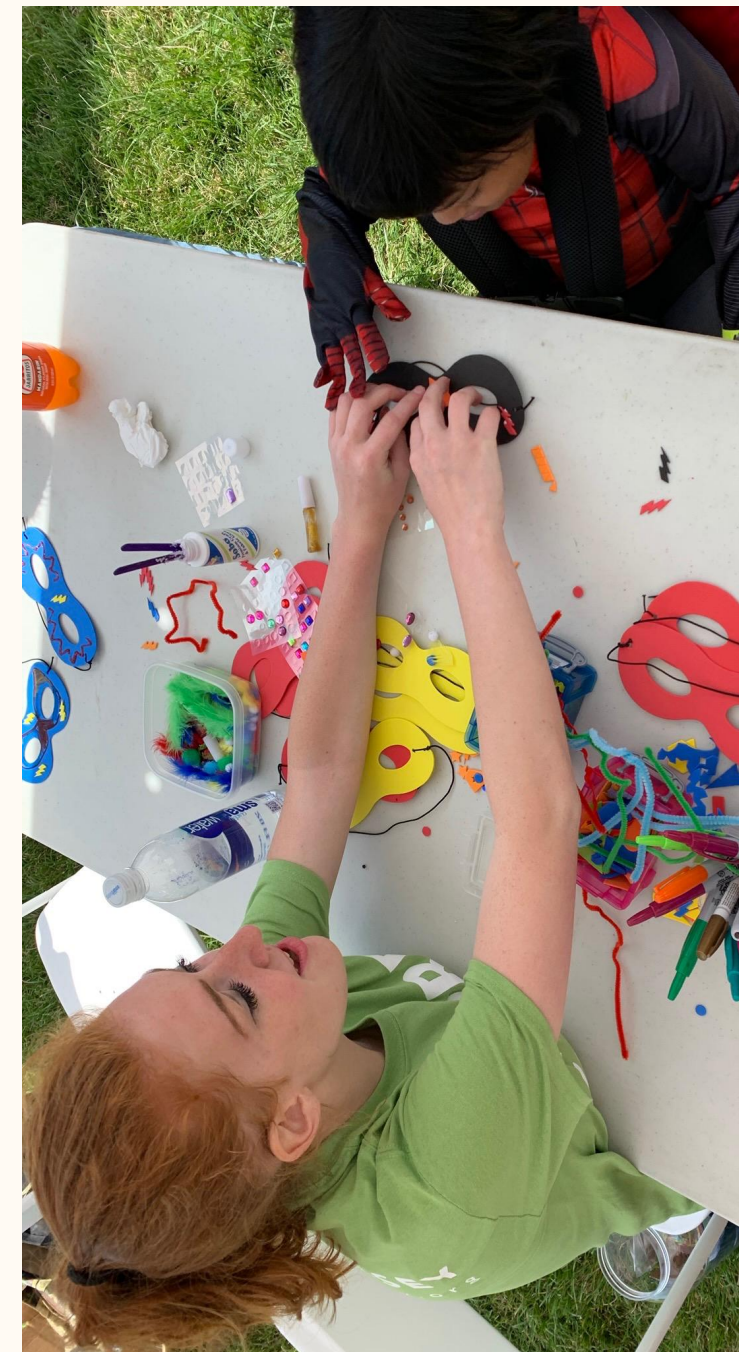
## 1.1 Disability Representation on the Project Team

Impact Areas	1 Point Value	Level 1 - People with disabilities are part of advisory groups / focus groups shaping the project with documented ability to shape and define the project. <b>ESSENTIAL ELEMENT</b> ✓
Mobility and Height Hearing and Acoustics Vision Health and Wellness Cognitive Access Support Needs	2 Point Value	Level 2 - People with disabilities are paid consultants on the project team.
Additional Benefits Accessibility Social Equity Environmental Sustainability Safety Security and Water Change	3 Point Value	Level 3 - People with disabilities are full-time members of the project team and/or developer/owner team.
Sources The Kelsey		



# HCBS Services for Community Living

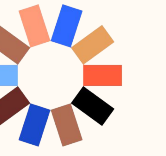
Medicaid funding preferencing community-based housing models including provision of Housing Related Services (navigation, retention)



# Philanthropy to Innovate New Disability-Forward Approaches

Foundations focused on disability rights, community inclusion, and/or housing affordability advancing new models of housing through philanthropic lending, donations, and grants to support pilots





# Inclusive Housing Approaches

## Soft Density



**Objective:** To increase housing supply in a minimally disruptive manner, enhance community inclusiveness, and leverage underutilized land for affordable, accessible living

- **Approach:**

- Utilize Density De-controls
- Develop underutilized faith-based land
- Inclusion Concierge
- Cost-effective types: duplex, triplex, cottage

**Unit Count: 10-30**

## Distributed Housing Network



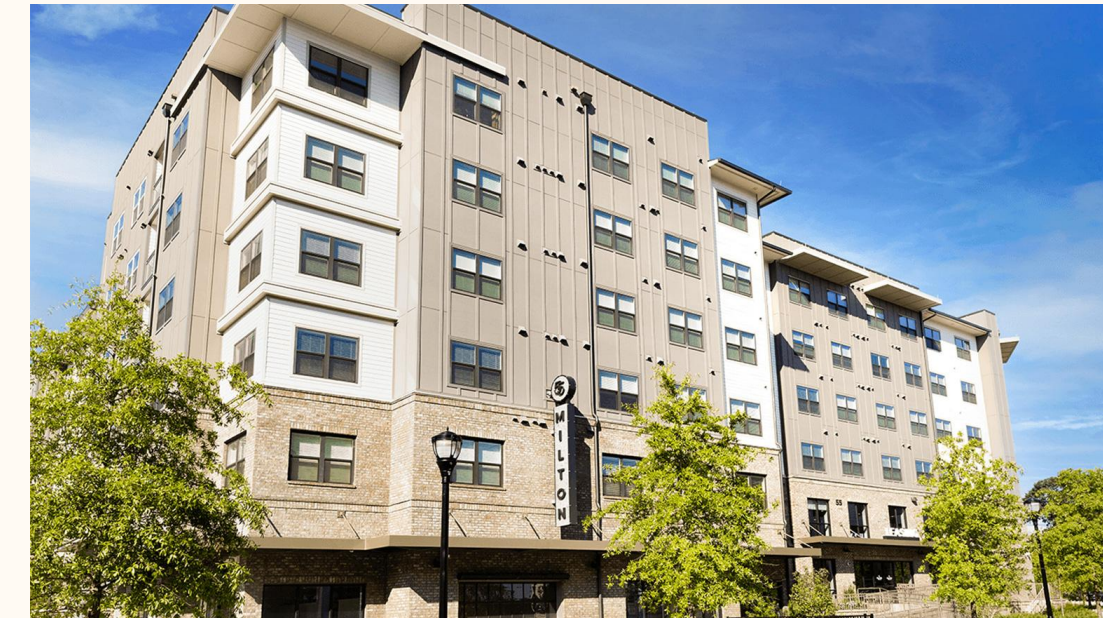
**Objective:** To rapidly deploy a community-centric housing solution within a 2-mile radius, fostering inclusivity and support through a blend of housing types and shared services

- **Approach:**

- Targeted area development: 2-mile radius
- Diverse options: Condos & ADU's
- "Collective" Inclusion Concierge
- Community Services Model

**Unit Count: 15+**

## LIHTC-Funded



**Objective:** To create a mid-rise community of affordable housing units leveraging federal and state funds, positioned near transit and commercial hubs to meet the local demand for accessible living spaces

- **Approach**

- 4-6 stories, located at CBD
- Mixed-income
- On-site inclusion concierge
- Primary funding strategy: state & federal funds

**Unit Count: 56-100**

## Current Project Under Development

# Two Sparrows Development

**Supportive Community for Adults with Disabilities:** Two Sparrows Village provides a nurturing and inclusive community for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This community is designed to promote independence and a high quality of life, offering both residential options and day programs to support its residents

**Neuro-Diverse Housing Model:** In partnership with Christian City, Two Sparrows Village has developed a new housing model featuring a fully renovated cottage with individual suites designed to accommodate neuro-diverse adults.

**Community Involvement and Support:** Two Sparrows Village encourages community participation and support through various events and service days. These events not only help to provide essential items for the residents but also raise awareness and foster community support for the needs of neuro-diverse adults

# Bobby Dodd Institute Development

- BDI is opening a new support center, which will be a critical tool for their growth and a place of dignity for those they serve.
- The support center will provide services and a gathering place for people with disabilities, and will be an asset to the Bolton neighborhood.
- BDI is partnering with a developer to build housing units that are designed using universal design principles, which will accommodate people living with disabilities.
- This expansion will allow BDI to provide more tools and resources leading to independence and self-sufficiency for people with disabilities.



# Case Study\*: The Kelsey

\*Note: These are composite personas based on the design and operational elements integrated into these projects

# Sam at The Kelsey Civic Center

Sam works as a program manager at a local nonprofit. He is a wheelchair rider and lives alone in a one bedroom apartment.

***Impact Area: Mobility and Height***



Disability Community  
Cultural Center celebrating  
disability as an identity



Wide hallways and  
walkways, door actuators,  
elevator design

Service Coordination from  
Inclusion Concierge in  
case service provider  
does not up

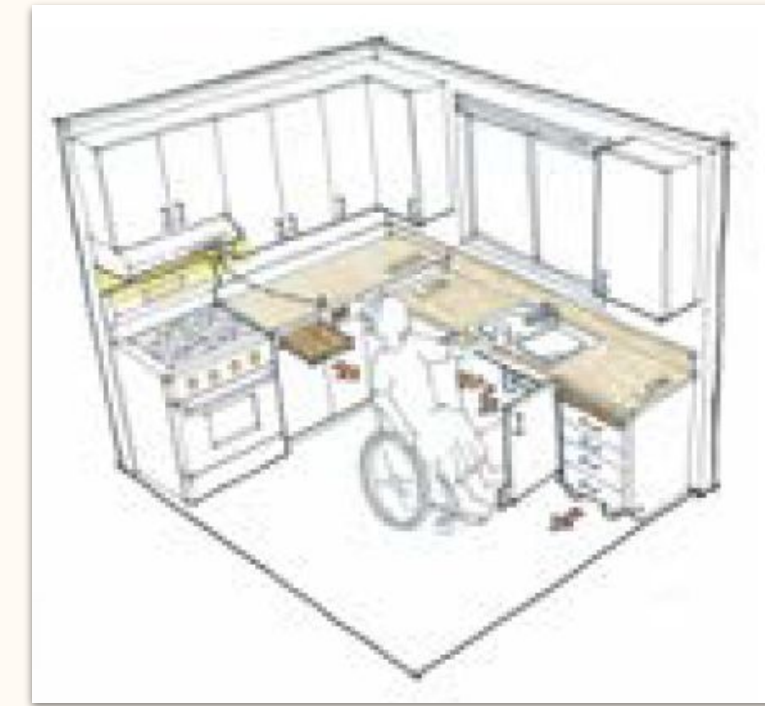


# Cathy at The Kelsey Ayer Station

Cathy lives in a studio alone. She has had chronic illness for the past 10 years and lives on social security income. She doesn't have energy to leave the house so her home is her world. She enjoys when her family visits her.

***Impact Area: Health and Wellness, Support Needs***

Plain language leasing ensures that she understands responsibilities and rights of her lease



Kitchen layout conducive to seated food preparation

Deeply affordable apartment without a voucher enabled by income averaging



# The Garcias at The Kelsey at Atlas

David, the father works as a bus driver, his wife Karen, works part time in a restaurant and takes care of her children Danielle and Joseph. Danielle has sensory sensitivities and Joseph has down syndrome.

## ***Impact Areas: Cognitive Access***



Focus Groups for programming and amenity design



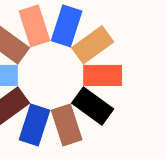
Uses shared community spaces as an extension of their own space



Inclusion hours for people with and without disabilities focused with disability-forward themes

# What's Next

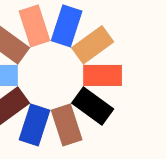
# Disability-Forward Housing Policy Changes include: AFFORDABILITY



**Policy Goal:** Make housing more financially accessible for individuals with disabilities.

- **Recommendation 1:** Launch targeted financial assistance programs to help reduce housing costs for residents with disabilities, such as tailored housing vouchers for people who use Home and Community Based Services (HCBS).
- **Recommendation 2:** Expand the allocation of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) in Georgia specifically for developments that include a significant percentage of units designed for accessibility, with additional incentives for projects proximate to transit and commercial corridors.
- **Implementation Suggestion:**
  - Encourage the State of Georgia to change their accessibility minimums by completing [this survey](#).
  - Participate in national advocacy related to Mainstream and Project-based vouchers

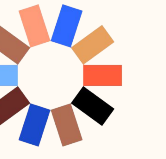
# Disability-Forward Housing Policy Changes include: ACCESSIBILITY



**Policy Goal:** Improve the physical accessibility of housing across Georgia.

- **Recommendation 1:** Align affordable, accessible housing requirements with the demographic share of disabled people in Georgia (~13% according to ACS data).
- **Recommendation 2:** Provide state-funded grants or tax incentives for the retrofitting of existing units to enhance accessibility, with specific programs aimed at older buildings in transit oriented areas of the Atlanta Metro.
- **Recommendation 3:** Encourage the creation of accessible housing within areas that have recently expanded zoning laws to allow for more density.
- **Implementation Suggestion:**
  - Encourage the State of Georgia to change their accessibility minimums by completing [this survey](#).
  - Support statewide advocacy on an accessible housing tax credit and/or grant.
  - Advocate to local municipalities about the importance of accessible gentle-density housing through the allowance of small apartment building and cottage communities.

# Disability-Forward Housing Policy Changes include: INCLUSIVITY

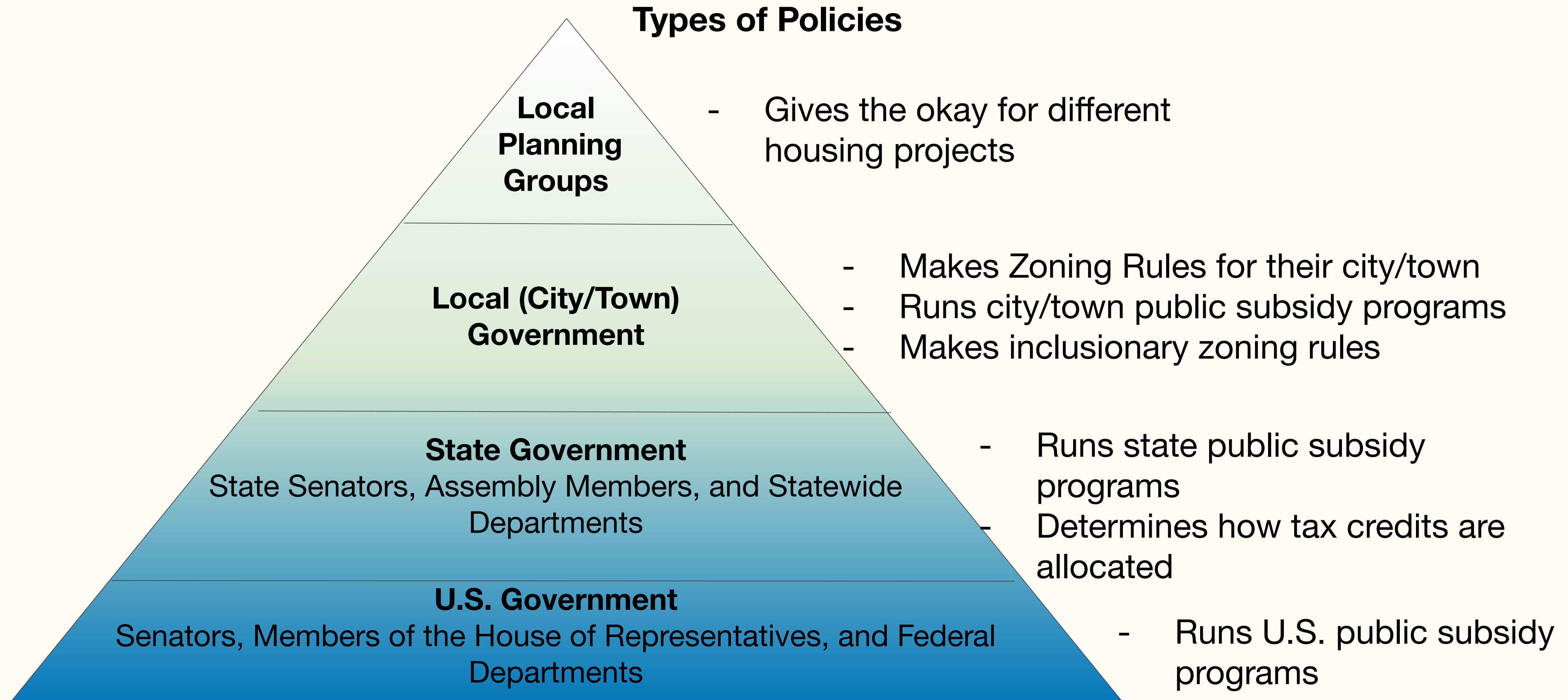


**Policy Goal:** Foster inclusive communities that integrate individuals with and without disabilities in developing affordable housing communities.

- **Recommendation 1:** Support the development of supportive housing models that provide robust resident services to support people with disabilities to live independently.
- **Recommendation 2:** Provide tools to Housing Developers to understand the Olmstead mandate and how they can design housing that leverages HCBS housing.
- **Implementation Suggestion:** Participate in advocacy related to how the State of Georgia allocates tax credits through completing [this survey](#) and participating in public comments.



# Who Makes Housing Policies



# Stay Engaged with The Kelsey/Better Living Together

## Learn Center

Utilize our free open sourcing toolkits and playbooks from our Learn Center. We also provide technical assistance for more specialized support - [thekelsey.org/learn](https://thekelsey.org/learn)

## Advocacy

Participate in general affordable housing / disability advocacy opportunities, as well as specific calls to action with Better Living Together and The Kelsey leadership

## Advisory Group

Join the Better Living Together Advisory Group. If you have lived experience, and wish you serve, please email Beate Sass, [beate@betterlivingtogether.org](mailto:beate@betterlivingtogether.org)

## Keep in Touch

Sign-up to receive updates from Better Living Together by signing up for the newsletter at <https://betterlivingtogether.org/contact-2/>

