

Community Land Trusts: The Opportunity for Lasting Affordability

A Statewide AFN CLT Summit
June 4, 2025



MISSION: Asset Funders Network (AFN) is the leading national grantmaker membership organization focused on advancing equitable wealth building and economic mobility.

On June 4, 2025, AFN's San Antonio Area, Central and North Texas chapters co-hosted the first-ever Texas Statewide CLT Summit, bringing together seasoned practitioners, emerging leaders, funders, and municipal partners. The event highlighted the growing relevance of CLTs, the challenges they face, and the critical role philanthropy can play in supporting lasting affordability through community-rooted solutions.

The day-long gathering of **32 community-based organizations** and **16 funding organizations** from across the state offered opportunities to dive into topical conversations on subjects like financing and investment, technical assistance, and community engagement. **Attendees also saw CLTs firsthand through a bus tour led by local housing leader HousingWorks.**

Event participants surfaced two complementary paths to advance CLTs across Texas:

- **Community organizations** can deepen peer learning, resource sharing, and implementation support.
- **Philanthropy and AFN** can strengthen field-building through funder coordination and narrative change.

Opportunities for Community Organizations

- 1 **Invest in Ongoing Practitioner Community Building Work at the State Level**
 - **Launch a Statewide Texas CLT Online Forum**
 - Facilitate an ongoing peer exchange and sharing of opportunities. Include light moderation/monthly prompts.
 - Start-up support.
 - Technical assistance.
 - Funding opportunities.
 - Policy updates and advocacy collaboration.
 - **Convene a Regular Statewide Virtual CLT Working Group**
 - Set up a quarterly virtual meeting series focused on implementation.
 - Peer presentations.
 - Thematic discussions (rural strategies, policy levers, fundraising, related innovations like on-site childcare).
 - Occasional funder spotlights.



"No community has all of the answers. We have an opportunity to learn from each other doing this work in different communities, and an opportunity to adapt the ideas shared with local and cultural relevance to our work. This is the value of cross regional learning" - AFN Member

Participating Community Organizations

- Bastrop County Public Health Department
- BCL of Texas*
- City of Austin Housing Department*
- City of Dallas*
- City of Denton
- City of McKinney
- City of San Antonio - Office of the Chief Housing Officer*
- City of Smithville
- City of Waco, Housing & Community Development
- Dallas Community Land Trust
- Equidad ATX*
- Esperanza CLT*
- Fort Worth Community Land Trust
- Freddie Mac*
- Greater Taylor Foundation
- Grounded Solutions Network*

*Speaker

Opportunities for Community Organizations continued

2 Develop Regional Technical Assistance (TA) Strategies

- During the afternoon technical assistance deep dive workshop for practitioners, the top-ranked technical assistance needs identified during the voting exercise were:
 - On-the-ground TA for an active CLT (already have start-up support).
 - Education (residents, lenders, real estate agents, title officers).
 - Collaborative learning with peers.
 - Money (seed capital, specialized mortgage products, investment strategies like program related investments).
 - Development expertise.
 - Legal assistance.
- When asked “Where are you stuck?”, the top votes were:
 - Environmental reviews and contractors.
 - Funding stack and layering.
 - Legal structures and homebuyer education.
 - Business model messaging to secure buy-in from funders, elected officials, etc.

Participating Community Organizations continued

- Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation*
- Homes for Good Foundation
- Houston Community Land Trust*
- HousingWorks Austin*
- LISC San Antonio*
- Meeting of the Minds
- Mexican-American Unity Council*
- National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders
- San Antonio Housing Trust
- Sunrise Development Group
- SWTC Career Tracks
- Texas Rural Funders
- The Community Atlas
- The Policy Gap
- University of Texas-San Antonio
- University of Texas-Austin School of Law*

*Speaker

Opportunities for Philanthropy and AFN

3 Create Additional Spaces for Funder Conversations

- Continued education on different models and activity happening in organizations across the state.
- Opportunity to build capacity for related supports like shared services models.
- Entry points for investing.
- Prioritization conversations for collective action.

4 Support the Issue through Narrative Change and Public Communications

- LinkedIn posts and blog posts.
- Storytelling and public information campaigns.

“AFN helps us grantmakers realize that we are all working toward the same North Star. Through framing and language we can all agree that we’re working toward generational economic mobility.” - AFN Member



Texas Institutional AFN Members by Chapter

Central Texas

Austin Community Foundation
Couch Family Foundation
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
GFiber
Indeed
JPMorganChase
Michael and Susan Dell Foundation
St David’s Foundation
Texas Mutual
The Reissa Foundation
United Way for Greater Austin
University Federal Credit Union
Wells Fargo

North Texas

Carl B. And Florence E. King Foundation
Charles Schwab Bank
Communities Foundation of Texas
The Dallas Foundation
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Holloway Family Foundation
JPMorganChase
The Meadows Foundations
The Morris Foundation
The Rainwater Charitable Foundation
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
United Way of Tarrant County
Wells Fargo

San Antonio Area

City of San Antonio
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Frost Bank
GFiber
H.E. Butt Foundation
Jefferson Bank
JPMorganChase
McKenna Foundation
Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas
San Antonio Area Foundation
United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County
Wells Fargo

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Appendix: Additional Resources to Extend Learning

Further Reading & Resources:

- Asset Funders Network 2024 brief on shared equity housing models, including community land trusts: [“Shared Equity Homeownership”](#)
- The University of Texas at Austin School of Law: [Community Land Trust Toolkit](#)
- Grounded Solutions Network: [Community Land Trusts in the US Map](#)

Glossary of Key Terms for CLTs & Related Shared Equity Models:

- **Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI):** A specialized financial institution that provides financial services and support to low-income communities, individuals, and businesses. CDFIs focus on expanding economic opportunities and helping underserved populations access capital and financial services that they might not otherwise have.
- **Community Land Trust (CLT):** A nonprofit organization that owns and stewards land for the long-term benefit of the community. CLTs provide shared equity homeownership by leasing land to income-eligible buyers who purchase homes on the land at below-market prices, with resale restrictions to maintain affordability. CLTs typically also provide homebuyer education services and related programs to make the new homeowner successful.
- **Community Opportunity-to-Purchase Agreement (COPA):** A process where local entities, often including tenant associations or qualified non-profits, have the right of first offer or first refusal to purchase a residential building being sold. It's essentially a way to ensure that the community has a chance to acquire a property before it's sold to a general buyer. See TOPA below.
- **Decommodification:** The process of removing land or housing from the speculative market to prioritize community benefit and long-term affordability over profit.
- **Land Equity Cooperative:** A specific type of housing cooperative where ownership of the land is held by the cooperative itself, typically a non-profit organization, and residents own shares in the cooperative, which provides them with the right to occupy their units. This structure aims to keep housing affordable for low-to-moderate income residents and ensures that the value of the land does not become a factor in determining housing costs.

- **Limited Equity Cooperative:** A shared equity model where residents own shares in a nonprofit corporation that owns a multifamily building. Residents occupy designated units and re-sell shares at restricted prices to maintain affordability.
- **Mission-Related Investments (MRI):** Investments made by foundations to achieve both financial returns and positive social or environmental impact, aligned with their mission. These investments aim to support the organization's goals while generating returns comparable to market rates,
- **Permanent Affordability:** Housing that remains affordable for future generations through mechanisms like resale restrictions, ensuring long-term access for low- and moderate-income households.
- **Program-Related Investments (PRI):** Investments made by philanthropic organizations to achieve social outcomes, often providing below-market-rate returns.
- **Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT):** A company that owns, operates, or finances income-producing real estate. Affordable housing REITs specifically invest in, develop, and manage properties designed to provide housing at below-market rents for low- and middle-income families.
- **Resident-Owned Community (ROC):** A manufactured housing community where residents cooperatively own the land beneath their homes, providing stability, affordability, and potential wealth-building opportunities.
- **Shared Equity Homeownership:** A self-sustaining subsidy model for affordable homeownership that includes resale restrictions to maintain affordability while allowing homeowners to build equity.
- **Stewardship:** Practices designed to ensure permanent affordability and support homeowners, including pre-purchase guidance, post-purchase assistance, and maintenance of community assets.
- **Structural Racism:** A system of public policies, institutional practices, and cultural norms that perpetuate racial inequity over time, often impeding access to housing and wealth-building opportunities for communities of color.
- **Subsidy Retention:** A mechanism that keeps homes affordable for future buyers by leveraging initial subsidies to maintain affordability over time.
- **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA):** Policies that give tenants or qualified nonprofits the right of first offer and the opportunity to match third-party offers to purchase multifamily buildings, stabilizing housing affordability and empowering residents. See COPA above.
- **Wealth Building or Asset Building:** The process of accumulating financial assets, such as home equity, that contribute to economic security and intergenerational prosperity.



Grantmakers Advancing Economic Equity