

Via Byrd



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About Me

My name is Lia Byrd and I am a recent college graduate from Cal State East Bay. I have a bachelor's degree in sociology. I was apart of the Bay Area Housing Internship Program cohort 6, and I worked at The Kelsey.

For my career goals I always knew that I wanted to help the most vulnerable people in my community but I didn't know exactly what that would look like. Since joining the BAYHIP internship I knew that working in affordable housing would do just that.

I now currently work for the City of Alameda Housing Authority as a program assistant in the property operations department. While BAYHIP gave me a background in development, my new position allows me to see the residents which gave me another purpose in this field. I get to see the people I am serving through my work.

The Kelsey

I interned for The Kelsey which is located in San Francisco. The Kelsey focuses on creating affordable and accessible housing for people with disabilities. The Kelsey's mission is to be radically inclusive and provide affordable and quality housing for everyone. This is done through their Accessible Design Standards which brings inclusivity to the architecture to the key features to the units in the properties.

The Kelsey Ayer Station is a new property that the Kelsey opened in San Jose, with many new projects to come such as the Kelsey Civic Center. The Kelsey also has new development project coming to the city of Birmingham Alabama. This organization aims to spread accessible housing all throughout the United States which inspired a lot of my projects during my internship.

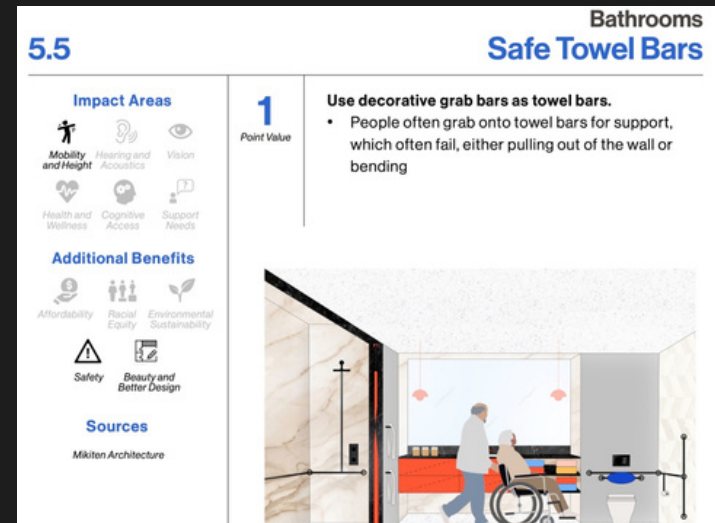


Projects



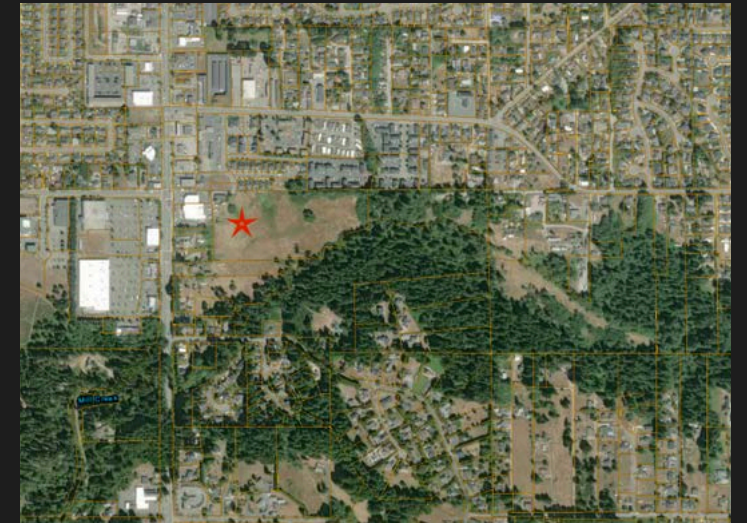
Civic Center Construction Site

This is a construction site visit of the Kelsey Civic Center, a new housing project. TKCC will create affordable housing for a low income individuals while also providing accessible units.



Accessible Design Standards

Key features for the building standards and units to make sure that residents are comfortable and have access to anything they need in their homes. Each feature targets a specific area impacted by a disability such as vision, hearing, or cognitive etc.



HCD Infill Infrastructure Grant Application

Funding application for Humboldt County to provide affordable housing for mixed incomes. This is an aerial map of the desired location for the project.

| State | Housing Authority | Link to homepage | Disability Authority | Funds available for disability housing. What funds? How much? Where do they come from? Who manages it? | Definition of "disability" | How they do placements for housing? Who manages the waitlist for housing? |
|------------|------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Alabama | Alabama Housing Finance Authority | https://www.ahfa.com/~:text=AHFA%20is%20a%20public%20corporation,of%20single-%20and%20multifamily%20housing. | Department of Mental Health | - Housing and Urban Development gives \$3.4 million for affordable housing | "Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the "major life activities" of such individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment" (Americans with Disabilities Act) | -Must receive benefits through SSA -Age limit is between 14-66 |
| Alaska | Alaska Housing Finance Corporation | https://www.ahfc.us/tenants/rental-programs#:~:text=Alaska%20Housing%20provides%20rental%20housing,homes%20as%20long%20as%20possible. | Disability Determination Services | | Someone who is "unable to engage in substantial gainful work due to mental or physical impairment". Condition must also last more than 1 year or result in death. (Disability Determination Services) | -Must be at or less than 80% of median income -Once applicationn is submitted you must be approved to get on waiting list. -Alaska housing manages waiting list (Alaska Housing Finance Coroporation) |
| Arizona | Arizona Department of Housing | https://housing.az.gov | Division of Developmental Disabilities | - Recieved two grants to pay \$6 million in subsidies for housing propertires -Partnered with Public Housing Authorities, Arizona Department of Housing, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment, and Housing of Urban Development. (Arizona Department of Economic Security) | - "These are persons who have physical impairments that substiantioally limit one or more major life activities, have a record of such impairment, or are regarded as having such impairment" (Arizona Department of Housing) | -Arizona Public Housing Authority accepts Housing Choice Voucher Program applications -use lottery system waiting list (Arizona Public Housing Authority) |
| Arkansas | Housing and Urban Development | https://www.hud.gov/arkansas | Disability Rights Arkansas | -nonprofit organization funded with federal grants (Funding - Disability Rights Arkans) | -"That condition which renders the most serious impairments and/or condition which has the greatest impact on an individual's ability to function" (Agency Definition of Disability/Eligibility for Services) | |
| California | Housing and Community Development | California Department of Housing and Community Development | Department of Devolpmental Services | -The Multifamily Housing Program (MHP) was funded \$1.5 billion dollars in 2018 to build affordable housing for large families, those with disabilities, and supportive housing. Eligible projects are new reconstructions, rehabilitations, and conversions of nonresidential to rental housing | -"conditions that limit a major life activity, including physical and mental disabilities, as well as medical conditions such as cancer or HIV/Aids" (Discrimination Laws Regarding People With Disabilities CRD) | -"The Housing and Disability Advocacy Program is administered locally. Look up your CountyPoint of contact for more informaation or contact the CDSS Housing and Homelessness Division to learn more about how to connect with your local program" |

The document above is a state funding resource spreadsheet. The Kelsey focuses on expanding affordable housing across the United States. This document shows where additional funding for future projects and their definitions on disabilities. This supports housing for people that are low income but also disable bringing more accessible properties to their state.

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The document to the right, is a LIHTC factsheet. It informs everyone about the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program and requirements for funding in different states. In my current position I am receiving extensive training on the LIHTC program which will help future residents applying for LIHTC units.

Advancing Access in Housing Nationally:

Fact Sheet on Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Accessibility Requirements

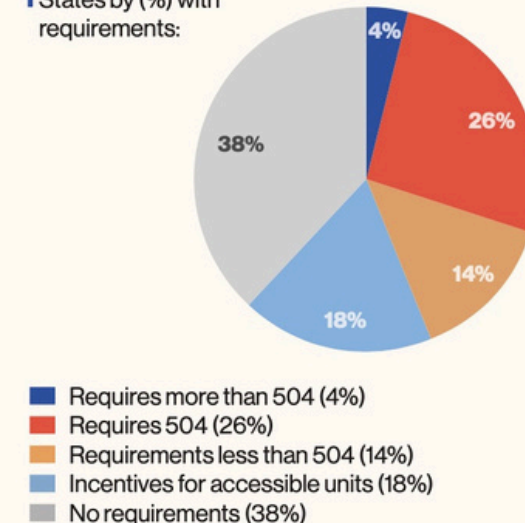
LIHTC, the nation's primary driver of affordable housing, does not have any in-unit requirements for mobility or sensory access, contributing to the severe shortage of accessible, affordable housing for people with disabilities. While 11.1% of people have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs¹, less than 1% of the US housing stock is accessible to wheelchair users and less than 5% is accessible to people with mobility difficulties². For people with sensory and other disabilities, this shortage is equal or greater.

The shortage of affordable, accessible housing means disabled people and older adults, along with their families, experience higher rates of housing insecurity, homelessness, and institutionalization.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act³ creates a uniform requirement of:

- 5% of the dwelling units be accessible for persons with mobility disabilities
- 2% of the dwelling units are accessible for persons with hearing or visual disabilities

States by (%) with requirements:



State-by-State Progress

Many states are demonstrating leadership in accessible housing by already mandating or incentivizing access in their housing programs and funding in the following ways:

- A requirement for developments to follow Section 504
- A requirement for developments to build units beyond what Section 504 requires
- Other accessibility requirement less than what 504 requires
- Incentive structures where additional points are awarded for constructing accessible units

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Disability Impacts All of Us](#)

² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, [Accessibility of America's housing stock: Analysis of the 2011 American Housing Survey \(AHS\)](#).

³ Section 504 requirements are included in the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS)

Bay Area Housing Internship Program



The BAYHIP program not only gave me a kickstart to my career goals but it brought me unforgettable experiences and new friendships. I was able to learn about vulnerable communities that struggle with finding housing and how I can actively work to help change this. Developing housing is not only a difficult process but it takes a passion to stick with a project and see it all the way through. This is what I learned from individuals already in this field. The people I've encountered genuinely care about providing safe housing to people and I am glad to be apart of this.

My fellow Cohort 6 members gave me new friendships that I hope to continue. We all shared our own common struggles with housing in the Bay Area. I was nervous to start the internship on the first day and I was immediately welcomed with kindness. Izanie and Monica also did an amazing job running this program and checking in on us to make sure we felt supported at all times. I am exceptionally grateful for being apart of this program.

Future Goals

While I currently am a program assistant for property operations, I hope to become a future project developer. I would like to obtain a real estates license to give me a deeper understanding of the housing market and I would like to use those skills to transition to an affordable housing project developer.

I am well aware that my career paths can change but I do certainly hope to stay in the affordable housing industry because this is such an important place to be and thrive. I am grateful for the experiences and connections I have made and hope to make many more!

Feel free to reach out via LinkedIn!

