

ULI Austin Case Study



Mobile Loaves & Fishes
Serving Goodness.™

Community First! Village



PROJECT SUMMARY

The Community First! Village is a 27-acre master planned community that provides affordable, permanent housing and a supportive community for the disabled, chronically homeless in Central Texas.

The Community First! Village includes:

- An innovative mix of affordable housing options
- Places for worship, study, and fellowship
- Memorial garden, prayer labyrinth and columbarium
- A community garden featuring fruit- and nut-bearing trees and vegetables
- A chicken operation, bee hives producing fresh honey, and aquaponics
- A medical facility for health screenings, and other support services including hospice and respite care
- Walking trails
- An outdoor theater and bed & breakfast for mission visits
- Capital Metropolitan Authority bus stop
- WiFi Enabled throughout complex

QUICK FACTS

Location

Austin, Texas

Project Type

Special Use

Affordable Housing & Community Engagement

Site Details

100 Recreational Vehicle sites

125 Micro Homes

25 Canvas Cottages

27 Acres

Land Uses

Residential, Entertainment Facilities (Outdoor Movie Theater), Food Services, Event Space, Open Space, Playground, Community Garden, Dog Park, Medical Center, Hospitality (Bed & Breakfast)

Keywords/Special Features

Affordable Housing, Chronic Homeless, Master Planned Community, Healthy Places

Website

mlf.org/community-first

Project Address

9301 Hog Eye Rd.
Austin, TX 78724

Master Developer & Owner

Mobile Loaves & Fishes

Awards

2002 & 2008 Westlake Chamber Citizen of the Year Award

2005 Champions for Children

2005 Red Cross Hero of Central Texas

2006, 2007, 2008 & 2009 Ernst & Young Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award Finalist

2007 Community Service Award from Real Estate Council of Austin

2008 Interfaith Service Award

2009 AAIM Patrick Flood Humanitarian Award

2010 Social Media Award from Austin American Statesman

2014 Silver Beaver Award (BSA)

2015 BSA District Award of Merit

2015 Austin Foundation for Architecture

2015 Austinite of the Year

2015 Christ Brings Hope Award from Relevant Radio

2015 University Catholic Center's Father Dave O'Brien Award

2016 AIA Austin Community Vision Award

2016 Urban Land Institute's Austin - Vision Award

2016 Commercial Real Estate Award – Community Impact

2016 Engineering News, Best of Residential/Hospitality for the Texas & Louisiana Region

Site and Background

"Everyone deserves a home," is the motto of Mobile Loaves and Fishes (MLF). MLF began when five parishioners of St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Austin, Texas boldly answered a call to "Love your neighbor as yourself." MLF was founded by Alan Graham, Bruce Agness, Pat Patterson, Mark White, and Jack Selman. MLF began by delivering meals out of the back of a minivan to men and women they found living on the streets of their city. Alan readily admits that their original paradigm of serving the homeless had some flaws, but with the help of a formerly homeless man, they perfected the model that they successfully use today.

That first trip was in September of 1998; by December of that year there was enough money to purchase a 1997 Ford F-250 pick-up truck with a catering bed.

Since that first truck run, teams of volunteers have served meals with a side of hope to the homeless and working poor on the streets of Austin and San Antonio, Texas; Providence, Rhode Island; New Bedford, Massachusetts; and Minneapolis, Minnesota. To date, Mobile Loaves & Fishes has served nearly 5 million meals, and with the support of more than 18,000 volunteers, They are the largest prepared feeding program to the homeless and working poor in Austin.

In addition to continuing their truck ministry, they have expanded to include the Community First! Village and the Community Works micro-enterprise program.



Finished Micro Home at Community First! Village

Vision

The foundation of MLF was in its catering trucks. What they have realized over time is that these catering trucks did three things to humanize the homelessness.

1. Trucks went to where people were – as opposed to the homeless being herded to locations to be fed.
2. An abundance of food offered the homeless Choices (healthy food options, hygiene items, clothing and books).

3. Created a one-to-one interaction between those able to serve, and those needing to be served. It became about personal interaction, and putting names to faces.

MLF began hosting "Street Retreats," with their retreat center being the un-walled streets of Austin. Men and women from different walks of life set out for 72 hours on the streets with no food, water, telephones, credit cards, or cash. Through this transformative experience, participants are opened to what it means to be homeless and have a deeper understanding of how people ended up on streets.



Volunteers building a Micro Home at Community First! Village

FOOD TRUCK OPERATIONS

<http://mlf.org/program-locations/>

Austin, TX - 8 Trucks

Supported by 8 area nonprofits/ churches

San Antonio, TX - 2 Trucks

Supported by 2 area churches

New Bedford, MA - 1 Truck

Minneapolis, MN - 1 Truck

Rhode Island - 1 Truck

Supported by 11 area churches



Example of MLF Food Truck



"I was at the same job for seven years, maintaining a large property. I happened to lose my job and everything kind of went downhill after that. Me and my dog, Bones, wound up homeless. I was living in a tent, making it day to day. Holding a sign, you know. Mobile Loaves & Fishes brought me to volunteer out here about two years ago. Then they hired me part-time, coming out on Saturdays, paying me for it. Then it grew until I was working four days a week, and then full-time, plus Saturdays, recondition donated RV's and help run the food trucks. Now I've worked to the point where I could get a car, and I have moved into a micro home at CommunityFirst. A lot of people who end up homeless like myself, they don't have a lot of family, so this became my family. It's 100 percent changed my life."

– Johnny, Community First! Resident.

MLF has now hosted over 150 volunteers at these Street Retreats.

After gaining a better understanding of the needs of those he served through MLF, Alan had an opportunity visit some property with a friend and MLF co-founder, in 2004. This friend was looking to purchase a ranch in Fredericksburg, TX, which included an old deer camp and an unused recreational vehicle (RV) on the property. In the moment he saw the RV, Alan realized he could live in it. And an idea was born, an RV seemed like a great way to lift a person off the streets.

In March of 2005, MLF lifted up its first homeless friend from the streets of Austin and moved him into an RV. That man is still in the same RV today and continues to do well.

Through MLF, Alan quickly purchased a second RV to house another person. Both these RV's were placed in existing mobile home complexes.

Alan has stated that as a former real estate developer, this has always been in his DNA, this is the business that he loves. Using his knowledge of real estate and the needs of the homeless, he set out on a mission: to plan an RV park for the homeless, the Community First! Village.

Planning & Design

By 2006, MLF had purchased 4 RV's for the homeless, all placed in various RV parks throughout Austin. Alan began researching RV parks, their pro forma's and land requirements. He found a national consultant for developing RV parks (who happened to be based out of Austin, TX) to hire as a consultant on creating an RV park for the homeless. This first pro forma is still the basis for the Community First! Village – although it is much more sophisticated today.

This pro forma is in a stage that can be shared with another entity and easily be duplicated. (See *PROFORMA* on Page 9.)

Model Village

MLF attained a platt map from one of the RV parks they placed an initial RV in. Alan took this to an architect (as a sample) to recreate his new vision of an RV park for the homeless, and a focus on community. He then had another friend develop a video to promote this idea. Next, he purchased an additional RV and created a model home for potential donors/investors to tour. He placed this on leased land in East Austin.

Site Selection

MLF brought then Mayor Will Wynn into the conversation. Former Mayor Wynn's grandfather died a homeless alcoholic, offering Wynn a unique perspective and shared ambition to launch this type of RV park. Jointly, MLF and Wynn asked the City of Austin to provide land for such an RV park and MLF would raise money to provide the RV's and infrastructure.

However, in late 2007, new City of Austin rulings for "Quality of Life" called for no camping, no sitting, no lying on Austin's streets. Many local groups had become tired of pan-handling and homeless near their downtown businesses. These organizations were building additional support for removing homeless from downtown, yet weren't sure what to do. Enter ULI Member, Tim Hendricks of Cousins Properties, who realized these organizations didn't understand this population and connected with former real estate developer, Alan Graham. Alan presented Tim his pro-forma all while helping him understand the homeless population. Tim then became an advocate for MLF and Community First! Village as a responsible and ethical way to alleviate the issue of homelessness. Next, Tim

DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Mobile Loaves & Fishes Founded	1998
Vision Created	2004
Fundraising	Late 2004
Model Home Village	2014
Land Aquired	2014
Ground Breaking	Summer 2015
First Resident	Fall 2015
Open House	April 2016
Est. Completion	2018



and Alan approached local real estate leader Paul Bury to lobby the City Council for land. Despite the support from Mayor Wynn, Tim and Paul, City land was not allocated to this project, which Alan is now grateful for – in hindsight.

To find current land, he worked with an architecture class at the University of Texas (and professor Steve Ross), to do a search for land using existing parameters. The land needed to be reasonably close to wastewater/water, outside of city limits, near public transportation, have access to electricity, be eased and have rich soil for farming. At end of semester, class presented their findings to Alan/MLF. He and a peer drove around to the ten sites presented by the class. Four other sites had been considered before the current location was selected. (Other sites considered were near airport, near domain, 3rd undisclosed and then finally this one). An adjacent 3 acres was also needed to provide adequate frontage access to Hog Eye road for emergency vehicles.

The Community First! Village now sits on a 27-acre site in East Austin, which started out covered in brush, but now home sites dot the land.

Site Layout

MLF worked with a land planner at Bury, Inc. (now Stantec) to create a site layout. MLF desired a “sense” of community at a macro and micro level. The challenge was to engineer this idea of community to the real life topography and constraints such as waste water access and flood plain. The center of Community First! Village needed to be an area that acted as a gravitational pull for both residents and non-residents alike – the crown jewel. This hospitality center broke ground in the summer of 2016.

The RV's are stationed together to support water/waste water infrastructure. The micro homes and cottage tents are on the opposite side of the property and utilize shared facilities for restrooms, showers and laundry. In addition, this section of the property includes libraries and outdoor kitchens. The Genesis Gardens and the Hospitality Center are located in the middle of the property.

Types of Housing

Once the decision was made to move purchase land outside of city limits, other options became available for housing in addition to the RV's. Community First! Village will have the following:

- 120 Micro Homes
- 100 Recreational Vehicles (RV's)
- 20 Canvas Cottages

(See table on page 11)

Micro Homes

The idea of micro homes came from Alan's memories of traveling. Often times his family only had a tent or camping cottage, but his best memories came from these trips. He realized these options offered safety, privacy, shelter and security.

Alan approached the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects to conduct a tiny home competition called Tiny Victories.

The object of the Tiny Victories competition was to design a minimalist shelter or “micro home” suitable to house one person for an extended period of time. The home needed to provide the basic needs of shelter and comfort, while also



Micro House and Canvas Cottages

promoting one's sense of place within the community. Since kitchen and bathroom facilities are provided in a common area, the designs did not need to include these amenities. For the competition, AIA Austin and Community First! strongly encouraged a creative or experimental level of exploration with these designs, while still maintaining the objectives of empowerment and dignity present in the Community First! Village.

Visit tinyvictories.org for more information.

Fifty-four home designs were submitted. Each was between 144 and 200 square feet and represented a variety of vernacular and design concepts. This competition produced four of the current plans used for the micro homes. A few other designs have also been added to the Village.



Tiny Victories Design Winner

Recreational Vehicles

Many RV's are still being refurbished and put into use. There is still fundraising taking place for the remainder of the RV's. However, fundraising for the RV's has been more difficult in light of the media coverage for micro/tiny homes. Ironically, RV's are better for long-term housing. Each RV will include a fully functioning kitchen equipped with cooking supplies and refrigerator, bathroom with standup shower and separate bedroom.

Canvas Cottages

Canvas-sided cottages are sturdy enough to be left up year-round. These Cottages are half the cost of the micro homes, easy to assemble and outfit with electricity. These cottages are built securely on a structured deck.

Approximately 12×12 in size, the one room cottages offer a single bed, chair and a small table. This option is equipped with electrical power, a wall socket and ceiling light. Outdoor kitchens, private bathrooms, and shower and laundry facilities are conveniently located throughout the property.



Refurbished 5th Wheel Recreational Vehicle

KEY PARTICIPANTS

Key Community Leaders

Tim Hendricks, Cousins Properties
Paul Bury, Bury Inc. (now Stantec)
Will Wynn, Former Mayor of Austin
John Cyrier, Sabre Commercial
Joe Bland, Joe Bland Construction
American Institute of Architects/Austin Chapter
Custom Home Builders Association

Additional Community Collaborators

Austin Travis County Integral Care
Family Eldercare
Ending Community Homelessness Coalition
Community Care Collaborative
National Charity League
Boy Scouts of America
Sustainable Food Center
Central Texas Food Bank
Caritas of Austin
Urban Roots
Travis County Sheriffs Dept.
Austin Police Department
Junior League of Austin
Young Men's Service League
New Life Institute
Seton Medical Center Austin
Hospice America
HEB
Tree Folks
Central Health

Land Planning & Civil Engineering (In-Kind)
Stantec (formerly Bury, Inc.)

Home Builders (In-Kind)

Ash Creek Homes
Bailey Homes
Centerra Homes
Chesmar Homes
Classic Constructors
Dalgleish Construction Company
David Weekley Homes
Don Crowell Builders
Flynn Construction
Foursquare Builders
Hatch Works LLC
Hoar Construction
Jaramillo Homes
Jauregui Architects
Jenkins Custom Homes
JGB Custom Homes
JB Cumby Construction
Pilgrim Building Co & Enabler LLC
Risinger Homes
Ryan Companies
Sixthriver Architects
Scott Felder Homes
Soledad Builders LLC
Spencer Construction Mgmt
Structura, Inc.
Travis Creek Homes LLC

Architects (In-Kind)

Barley | Pfeiffer Architecture
Black+Vernooy
Cornerstone Architects LLP
Designtrait
Fazio Architects
Jauregui Architects
L M Holder III FAIA
Page/
Shifflet Group Architects
Sixthriver Architects and Hatch Ulland Owen Architects
SmithKennedy Architects
STG Design

CommunityFirst! Features

Anthropologically, people need people, not electricity. The Community First! Village includes many features to engage the outside community and support the healing of the residents, integrating them back into society. This brings a sense of dignity to back to these individuals. Ultimately, MLF envisions this micro community becoming a vital part of all of Austin.

Community Works Program

Community Works provides a variety of opportunities for the chronically homeless to use their talents to earn a dignified income.

- **Genesis Gardens** - Through Genesis Gardens, neighbors from all over Austin come together to roll up their sleeves and engage with Community First! residents, practice hospitality, recall what it means to put down roots, and share the abundance of our yields. The bounty from the garden is washed, bunched, canned, pickled, preserved or cooked and provided to neighbors throughout the Village — giving them direct access to the best vegetables on Earth! The farm at Community First! Village features more than three acres of organic vegetable production; hundreds of fruit and nut-bearing trees; dairy goats, chickens, rabbits, donkeys and honeybee; and a geodome and aquaponics system.



Aerial view of Genesis Gardens

- **Community Forge & Woodshop** - The Community Forge & Woodshop empowers Community First! friends to engage in the creation of timeless crafts while also earning a dignified income. Through blacksmithing, woodworking and a range of other projects, the men and women in this Community Works program become part of a restorative journey toward social contribution, financial stability and a mastery of handcrafting skills. Craftsman and artists receive 100% of the profit from the sale of their products, enabling them to become more settled and experience greater stability in Community First! Village. They also encounter a greater sense of purpose, healing and friendships — foundational components of life that every person needs and deserves.
- **Community Art House** - The Community Art House provides a means through which the Village's highly creative artists at Community First! produce and sell some of the best works of art in Austin. The art program provides a safe and supportive environment that fosters healing and creative expression for our formerly homeless friends. Mobile Loaves & Fishes partners with Community First! artists to assist with the promotion and sale of their artwork, supporting their efforts to earn a modest living income through the beautiful use of their natural talents.



Community Works, Workshop Participant



Community Works, Workshop Participant



Biodome Gardening

- **Community Concessions & Catering** - Every dollar makes change. The Community Concessions & Catering program provides opportunities for Community First! residents to earn a modest living income through concessions-related activities, either at the Village or around Austin as part of local events and festivals.

Mobile Loaves & Fishes' Community Concessions & Catering family includes: Street Treats, a mobile vending operation; Community Grille, delivering "Honest to Goodness Goodness" hamburgers, hot dogs and Frito pies at Community First! or off-site catered events; Goodness Grille, for preparing and serving brisket and other carnivore-friendly meals at large events; and the Sweet Goodness trailer, where we serve snacks, drinks, candy and other sweet treats for the soul.

- **Chicken Coop** - Want to see one of the funkiest chicken coops in Austin? Then take a short walk from your room at the inn and visit our laying ladies. These chickens provide eggs to Community First! residents, as well as lots of entertainment to everyone who stops to watch their fussing, pecking, brooding, and hunting.

"A friend told me that the Mobile Loaves and Fishes food truck was parked under the bridge near me. It had been raining. I was hungry and wanted to get to the truck, but my wheel chair got bogged down in the mud. I had to crawl to the truck. I Was embarrassed, wet and dirty. But they helped me clean up, gave me dry clothes, fed me and prayed with me. They treated me with dignity."

– Bonnie, Community First! Resident.



Community Theater and Community Inn

- **Workshop** - The Workshop empowers the homeless in the pursuit of timeless crafts, and helps them earn a dignified income along the way. Through blacksmithing, woodturning and most everything in between, the men and women are engaged in a new, restorative journey toward social contribution, financial stability, and a mastery of handcrafting skills. The craftsmen and artists receive 100% of the profit from product sales, art shows, and volunteer education events, allowing them to become a settled, stable part of Community First! Village – and find the purpose, healing, and friendships every person needs and deserves.
- **Art House** - The Art House provides art opportunities to a unique, highly talented group of artists from the streets. Housed in a refurbished RV home, the Art House provides a safe and supportive environment that fosters healing and creative expression for those involved. The Art House promotes the production, improves the quality and assists with the sales of the artwork resulting in increased confidence and enhanced skills providing dignified income opportunities for the homeless artists. Mobile Loaves & Fishes Art House seeks to provide homeless artists with dignified income opportunities. The program creates jobs for artists who would otherwise be on the streets.
- **Street Treats** - One dollar changes everything! Through this mobile vending operation, men and women earn a dignified income selling ice cream, chips, soda and water at local festivals and community events such as SXSW, ACL, and Pecan Street Festival. All profits and tips go directly to the vendor.

Community Cinema

The Community Cinema is a place where film, family and fun come together at Austin's coolest outdoor movie venue. Nestled into the Community First! Village countryside, the outdoor cinema and amphitheater has room for hundreds to catch a show under the stars. Mobile Loaves & Fishes is thrilled to partner with Austin's iconic Alamo Drafthouse to present the most exciting movie experience in town. The Community Cinema presents free screenings throughout the year – and the public is always invited! Movies start at sundown, and visitors are welcome to come out early to explore Community First! Village before shows begin.

Community Inn

The Community Inn is a bed and breakfast type micro-enterprise operating near the entry of

Community First! Village. Community Inn's primary purpose is to empower communities into a lifestyle of service with the homeless. The Community Inn not only welcomes guests, but also provides income opportunities for residents of Community First! Village. From housekeeping and cooking, to artisan gifts, a stay at the Community Inn supports this Community Works micro-enterprise programs. Three options will be available for guests.

- **All-Inclusive** - These vintage campers and charming tiny homes feature air-conditioning, as well as ensuite bathrooms and showers.
- **Glamping** - Enjoy air-conditioned comfort in these tiny homes and campers, with easy access to nearby bath and shower facilities.
- **Camp-Style** - For a fun-filled stay, try one of our camp-style units, with convenient access to bath and shower facilities.

Health Resource Center

A medical facility for physical and mental health screenings and support services including hospice and respite care is located on site.

Community Access

The Community First! Village is located just outside of the City of Austin. Drive time from the community to downtown is about 20 minutes without traffic. By bicycle, it is approximately a one hour ride. Many residents will not own or have access to a personal vehicle. Riding a bicycle in the Texas summer is not safe due to extreme heat conditions. MLF was able to work with Capital Metro Transportation Authority to extend one of their bus lines to the Village. This allows residents safe affordable access between Community First! and the City of Austin.



Prayer Garden, Next to Prayer Labyrinth



Volunteers at Genesis Gardens



Interior of Micro Home

Additional Features

Additional features available to residents include a dog park, life sized chess set and a prayer labyrinth. "Jake's Place" dog park offers a safe

place for animals to run off leash. The life-sized chess board was built as a way to get to know fellow Community Inn guests and Village neighbors. The labyrinth provides a space for prayer and reflection amid our busy days at Community First! Village.

Greater Austin Area Impact

In 2014, the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) of Austin estimated nearly 2,000 homeless persons with nearly 400 of these persons being considered Chronically Homeless. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, "the cost of homelessness can be quite high. Hospitalization, medical treatment, incarceration, police intervention, and

emergency shelter expenses can add up quickly, making homelessness surprisingly expensive for municipalities and taxpayers."

Department of Housing and Urban Development, Secretary Shaun Donovan said, "Because, at the end of the day, between shelters and emergency rooms and jails, it costs about \$40,000 a year for a homeless person to be on the streets." ECHO estimates these costs to start at \$7,800 plus any costs associated with temporary housing and can escalate to \$20,000 per year to local tax payers.

With Community First! Village looking to serve 200 chronically homelessness individuals, the estimated savings start at \$1.7 million and can increase to \$3 million per calendar year with increased use of services.

Management & Residents

In the fall of 2015, three couples from Austin Ridge Bible Church moved into the Community First! Village as missional residents. Their goal was to support new residents in their transition to housing.

Homeless to Housed

Mobile Loaves & Fishes requires all potential residents to participate in a Coordinated Assessment as part of the initial application process for Community First! Village. This assessment and starting the application process is not a guarantee of housing – it's just the first step in the process.

All potential residents are required to complete the Coordinated Assessment Intake, provide fingerprints for FBI check, and agree to a criminal background check. To ensure that Community First! is addressing the problem of chronic homelessness in Austin, they require potential residents to show proof of homelessness for at least one year within the Austin metropolitan area.

Occupancy

MLF plans to occupy the Community First! at a rate of two-to-three new residents per week. As of June 30, 2016, the occupancy rate for Community First! Village was 22%. They are adding about 3 people a week until full at 250 people. Community First! Village currently has:

- 120 residents total at Community First! Village.
- 96 of the neighbors are formerly homeless individuals.
- 24 of them are missional residents (individuals who live and serve at the Village to help residents assimilate to housing, but are not formerly homeless.)

FUNDRAISING SUMMARY (AS OF 7/31/2016)

Donor Type	Number	Amount
Custom Home & Commercial Builders	14	\$255,400
Faith Communities	23	\$920,567
Businesses	49	\$734,502
Civic Organizations (Includes educational institutions)	17	\$152,446
Foundations	21	\$1,795,700
Individuals Donating \$ 20K or more	103	\$9,508,124
Individuals Donating less than \$20K	1752	\$2,347,652
Total Donations	1,818	\$ 15,717,390

Finance

This \$14 million development has been privately funded. Each of the 20 canvas cottages, 100 RV's and 120 micro homes are sponsored, largely by individual donors. (See FUNDRAISING SUMMARY on page 9). MLF has intentionally chosen to not pursue governmental funding. They believe this is a community issue, that the community has the means and ability to resolve. This in turn will free up government funding for other issues such as infrastructure, police, fire and more.

The following information is on the current phase of the CommunityFirst!Village. A second, adjacent plot of land has been purchase. This second plot of land is in the planning phase and is not included in the following data



MLF Motto on Street Signage

PRO-FORMA (AS OF 5/1/2016)				
Land	#	Acres	Cost	Donated
Land Lease (Model Village)				\$16,000
Land Acquisition		26.921		\$1,525,000
Buildings & Improvements	#	Total Sq Ft	Total Cost	Donated
Recreational Vehicles	100	80,000	\$1,004,000	
Micro Homes (Studio)	50	12,000	\$620,000	
Micro Homes (One-Bedroom)	70	12,000	\$900,000	
Canvas Cottage (Insulated Tents)	20	5,000	\$106,250	
Outdoor Kitched (Shared w/ Equipment)	5	5,000	\$100,000	
Restroom/Laundry/Shower Facility	4	3,508	\$775,008	
Sanctuary & Hospitality Center	1	7,500	\$937,500	
Bed & Breakfast (Not Missional)	14	14,000	\$316,000	
Heath Resource Center (Medical/Bathhouse/Store)	1	2,500	\$312,500	
Operations Facility	1	5,500	-	\$550,000
Furniture/Fixtures Etc. (Residential)		-	\$144,000	
		147,008	\$5,215,258	\$550,000
Other Site Improvements		Sq Ft	Cost	Donated
Streets/Surface Parking		200,000	\$869,849	
Misc Site Readiness (Survey, Excavation, Utilities, Etc)		-	\$3,532,478	
Architecture/Engineering/Civil Drawings		-		\$271,452
Genesis Gardens (Community Gardens)		100,000	\$60,000	
Community Cinema (Outdoor Movie Theater)		10,000		\$40,000
Other Community Gathering Areas/Landscaping		100,000	\$401,940	
Other land		700,000	\$170,000	
Total		1,110,000	\$5,034,267	\$311,452



Community First! Village Entry-way

Long-Term Community

There is no limit on how long a person can stay. The idea is that a person who has chronic homelessness issues should never need to leave. This allows for a more long-term sense of belonging to a community, promoting overall wellness for the person.

Other Project Information

Volunteer Support

There have been tens of thousands of volunteer hours among all programs, including the Community Works programs, Genesis Gardens, the construction of the micro homes and more.

PROJECT INFORMATION				
Residential Information	Number of Units	Unit Size (Sq Ft)	Rental Range/ Month (Year 1 to Max)	% Completed
Recreational Vehicles	100	275	\$380	35%
Micro Homes (Studio)	50	180	\$325-335	65%
Micro Homes (One-Bedroom)	70	180	\$325-375	70%
Canvas Cottage (Insulated Tents)	20	200	\$225	100%
Community Features	Number	Unit Size (Sq Ft)		% Completed
Restroom/Laundry/Shower Facility	5	2,500		100%
Sanctuary & Hospitality Center	1	13,000		30%
Bed & Breakfast (Not Missional)	14	200-400		100%
Topfer Health Resource Center (Medical/Bathhouse/Store)	1	3,500		100%
Genesis Gardens (Community Gardens)	1	217.8K sq.ft. or 5 acres		100%
Alamo Drafthouse Community Cinema (Outdoor Movie Theater)	1	5K sq.ft. & 500 seats		100%
Memorial Garden	1	21.8K sq.ft. or 1/2 acre		100%
Dog Park	1	5K sq.ft. or 1/8 acre		100%
Chicken Coop	1	300		100%
Geodome	1	500		100%
McCoy's Maintenance Building (includes Art House)	1	3,500		100%
Outdoor Kitchen	5	400		100%

Next Phase

At one point, one family owned the land adjacent to and the current plot for Community First! Village. The family sold a portion of their land in smaller sections. MLF bought their first plot of land from that second owner.

The original owner was against development, and spoke out against the development at the Travis county hearing, when they requested (and received) entitlement for site development permit. After the permit was granted, MLF was approached by the original owner to purchase the property adjacent (which is about 24 acres) to the current Community First! Village.

Alan, readily accepted the offer, however, the final sale price nearly doubled.

This second plot of land is far more developable. There are no flood plains, the slope of land supports city sewer drainage without a pump (cost savings) and more. MLF is still a few years out from breaking ground on this second plot of land.

Micro Homes



About Alan Graham

Alan Graham is the president of Mobile Loaves and Fishes, a social profit enterprise that delivers meals to homeless and working poor people on the streets of Austin, San Antonio and New Orleans. Founded in 1998 by Graham and five friends, MLF has served more than 600,000 meals.

Graham attended the College of Mainland and later the University of Texas. In 1978 he left UT to begin a career in real estate. He was a partner in many of Central Texas' most successful real estate development projects. In the mid 1990s, Alan co-founded the Lynxs Group, which built the air cargo facility at Austin's new airport in 1997, and went on to build similar facilities at airports around the country. Alan was also a founding member of the Urban Land Institute in Austin.

Alan left the Lynxs Group in 1997 and managed Austin's cargo port as the new airport was opening. At the same time, Alan had the seed of the idea for Mobile Loaves & Fishes. He and the other founders started by making sandwiches in their own kitchens and serving them from the back of a Chevy Suburban. Alan readily admits that their original paradigm had some flaws, and with the help of a formerly homeless man, Houston Flake, they perfected the model that MLF uses successfully today.

Alan released the book, "Welcome Homeless: One Man's Journey of Discovering the Meaning of Home," available on Amazon.com in March 2017.

Learn more about Alan Graham's work with Community First! Village at <http://austin.uli.org/events/uli-austin-awards/2016-uli-austin-award-winners/>.

Lessons Learned

Launching Community First was not without its lessons learned. The struggles to get City of Austin approvals and overcome neighborhood group resistance were so great that the project was eventually placed outside of City boundaries. Bus service then had to be brought to the site to meet the resident's needs. The evolving expertise needed for site selection, capital raise, development and, finally, operations also presented staffing challenges within the non-profit with changes needed as time progressed. The advantage of being a faith-based organization allowed for the commencement of the project without full knowledge of how it would be funded or completed.



ULI CASE STUDIES

ULI Austin allows real estate professionals in Central Texas to exchange ideas, trends and project information to build more business, construct better places and develop a greater sense of community.

We are a gathering place for responsible development and sustainable land use.

Our members encourage thoughtful, responsible and engaging design and construction that result in better communities.

We host a variety of information and networking events throughout the year to engage developers, architects, engineers, policy leaders, consultants and other related professionals.

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