

DISABLING INFRASTRUCTURES

Louisville's (In)accessible Housing Crisis

June 2026

**LESS THAN 1% OF HOUSING
IN LOUISVILLE IS WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBLE. 6 HOUSEHOLDS COMPETE
FOR EVERY 1 ACCESSIBLE HOME.**

**“DISABLED PEOPLE ARE AN
AFTERTHOUGHT. SOCIETY DOESN'T
THINK THE NEED TO SEE US EXISTS.
BUT IT DOES.”**

-RACHEL ZOELLER



Gathering Strength
For Living Your Best Life

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A Collaboration With



**Community
Foundation**
OF LOUISVILLE

Funded By



Local Data for
Equitable
Communities

WE CAN BUILD A BETTER CITY WITH EVERYBODY IN MIND.

A disability is considered a problem within an individual, a deficit someone carries throughout an otherwise neutral world. But the problem isn't the person. The problem is the world we built. Wheelchair users don't lack ability; they are made "unable" by stairs, narrow doors, and broken sidewalks. We didn't build a neutral world that some people simply struggle to navigate. We built a world optimized for one type of body and mind, making everyone else appear to be the problem. These are disabling infrastructures.

“IT'S LIKE BECOMING A NINJA TO TAKE A SHOWER OR DO THE DISHES. I BECAME AN OLYMPIAN JUST TO TAKE A SHOWER.”

-KAELIN HALL

THERE ARE 18,000 HOUSEHOLDS WITH A WHEELCHAIR USER AND ONLY 3,000 WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOMES

Housing infrastructure is fixable. Minimum wheelchair-accessibility includes but is not limited to: a zero-step entrance, accessible doors and pathway throughout the house, an accessible bathroom, and an accessible kitchen.

1 IN 3

LOUISVILLE HOUSEHOLDS INCLUDES A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY

34% of KY adults have a disability compared to 29% nationwide. Inaccessible housing increases fall risk, contributes to poor health outcomes, and drives higher costs of healthcare and nursing home institutionalization. Unintentional falls alone cost the U.S. healthcare system an estimated \$80 billion in 2020.

BY 2050

SENIORS 80+ WILL GROW 30K→50K, 57% WILL HAVE A DISABILITY

The need for more accessible housing is a demand that's only sure to grow since disability is strongly associated with age.

The likelihood of becoming disabled increases significantly over our lifespan.

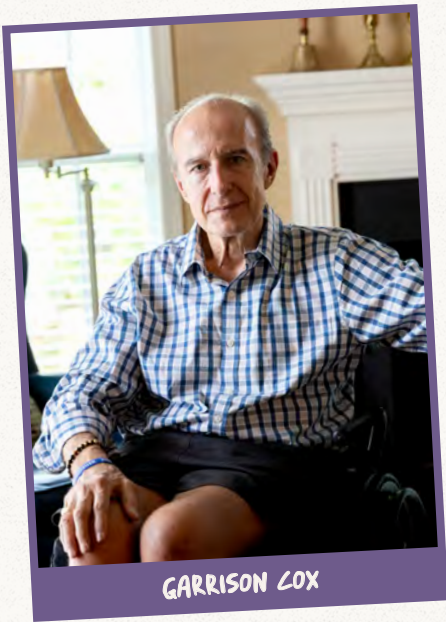
LOUISVILLE FACES A SEVERE AND GROWING SHORTAGE OF ACCESSIBLE HOUSING — A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY AFFECTING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF RESIDENTS.

LOUISVILLIANS WITH DISABILITIES ARE 2X MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE POVERTY

A low income DOES NOT directly cause disabilities. Even so, it does compound problems and create more barriers to acquiring vital resources, often resulting in a cycle of poverty for people with disabilities, their households, and/or families.

30% HIGHER DISABILITY RATES FOR BLACK RESIDENTS

The current disparities in the prevalence of disability reflect both current inequities and the long-term impacts of discriminatory housing and economic policies. Historic patterns of racialized segregation and disinvestment have concentrated health risks in communities, like West Louisville, contributing to higher rates of disability and reduced access to safe and accessible housing.



GARRISON COX



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Learn More About the Story Behind the Stats

