

Fairfax County Benchmarking Charts

Community Development Program Area Benchmarking Charts

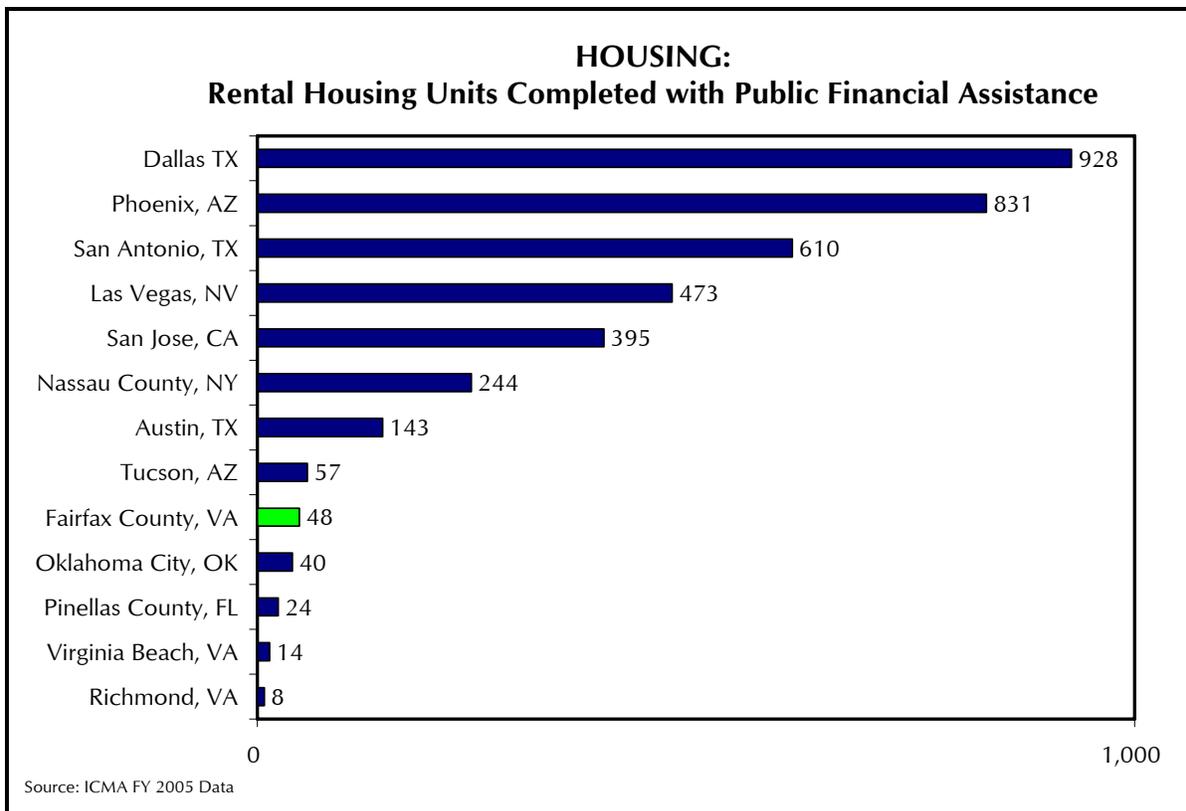
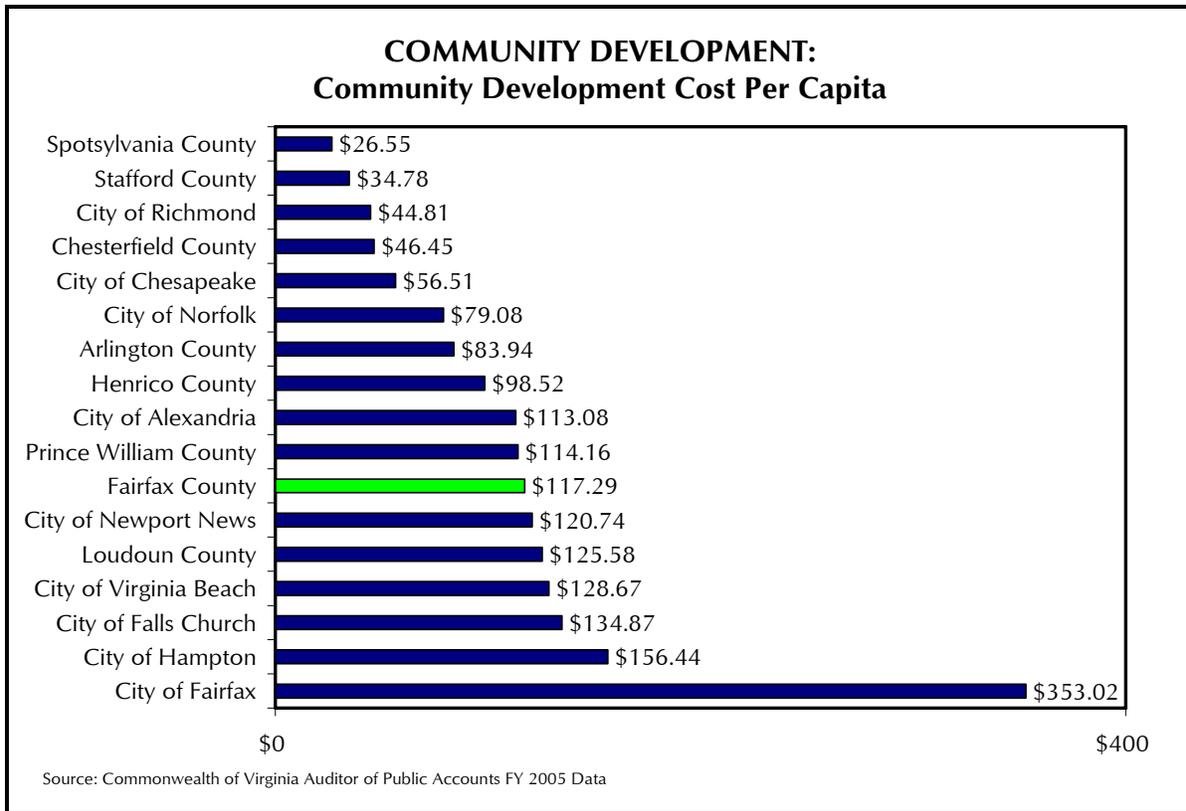
Since the FY 2005 Budget, benchmarking data have been included in the annual budget as a means of demonstrating accountability to the public for results achieved. These data are included in each of the Program Area Summaries in Volume 1 (General Fund) and now in Volume 2 (Other Funds) as available. Since 2000, Fairfax County has participated in the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) benchmarking effort. Participating local governments provide data on standard templates provided by ICMA in order to ensure consistency. ICMA then performs extensive review and data cleaning to ensure the greatest accuracy and comparability of data. As a result of the time for data collection and ICMA's rigorous data cleaning processes, information is always available with a one-year delay. FY 2005 data represent the latest available information.

Not all jurisdictions provide data for each of the 15 service areas benchmarked. Housing and Code Enforcement are two of the benchmarked service areas in this program area for which Fairfax County provides data. While not a comprehensive presentation of all the agencies in this program area, the benchmarks shown provide an indication of how Fairfax County compares to others in these two major areas. A total of 66 jurisdictions responded to the Housing template for FY 2005. This included 12 with populations of 500,000 or more. For FY 2005, 112 jurisdictions provided Code Enforcement data. Of these, 11 have populations of 500,000 or more. For the greatest degree of comparability, Fairfax County generally benchmarks its performance with other large jurisdictions (population of 500,000 or more) as well as other Virginia localities as available. It should be noted that the other cities and counties in Virginia historically participating in the ICMA effort include Richmond, Virginia Beach and Prince William County, as well as for the first time, Alexandria, Chesterfield County and Chesapeake, which responded to at least some of the template questions. As noted above, not all respond to every service area template.

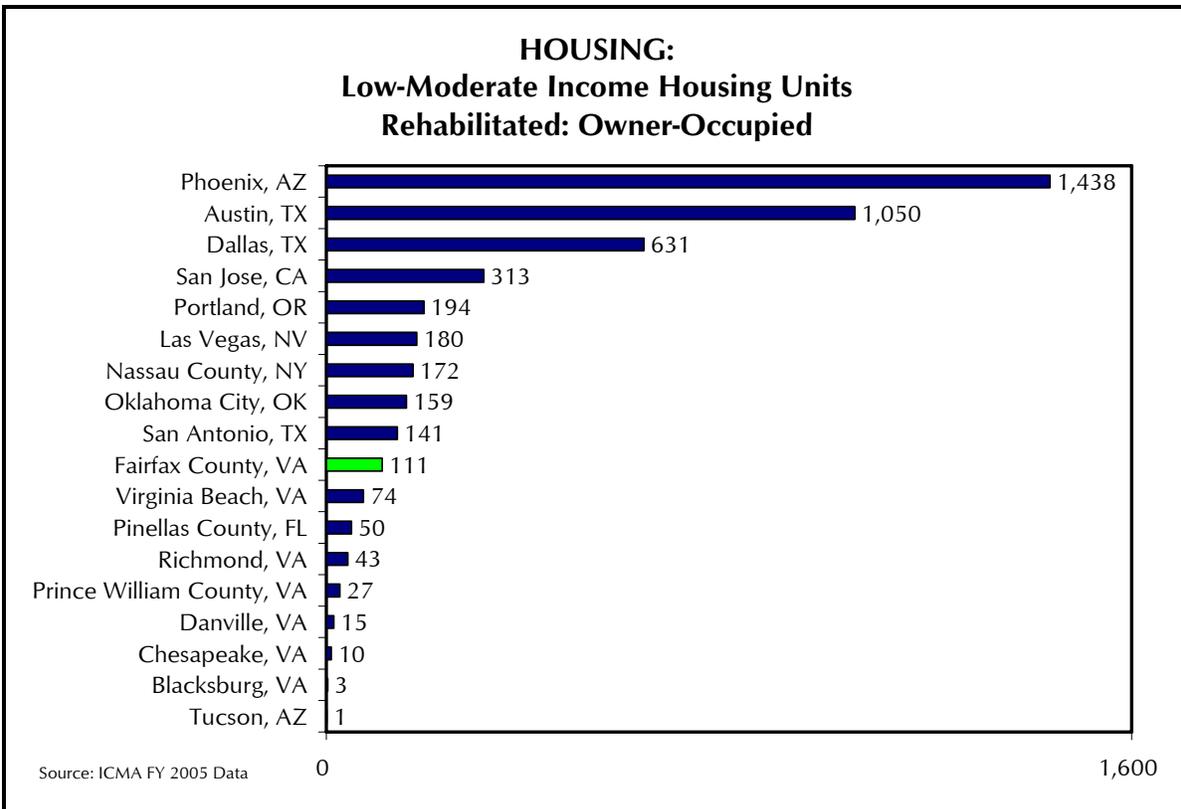
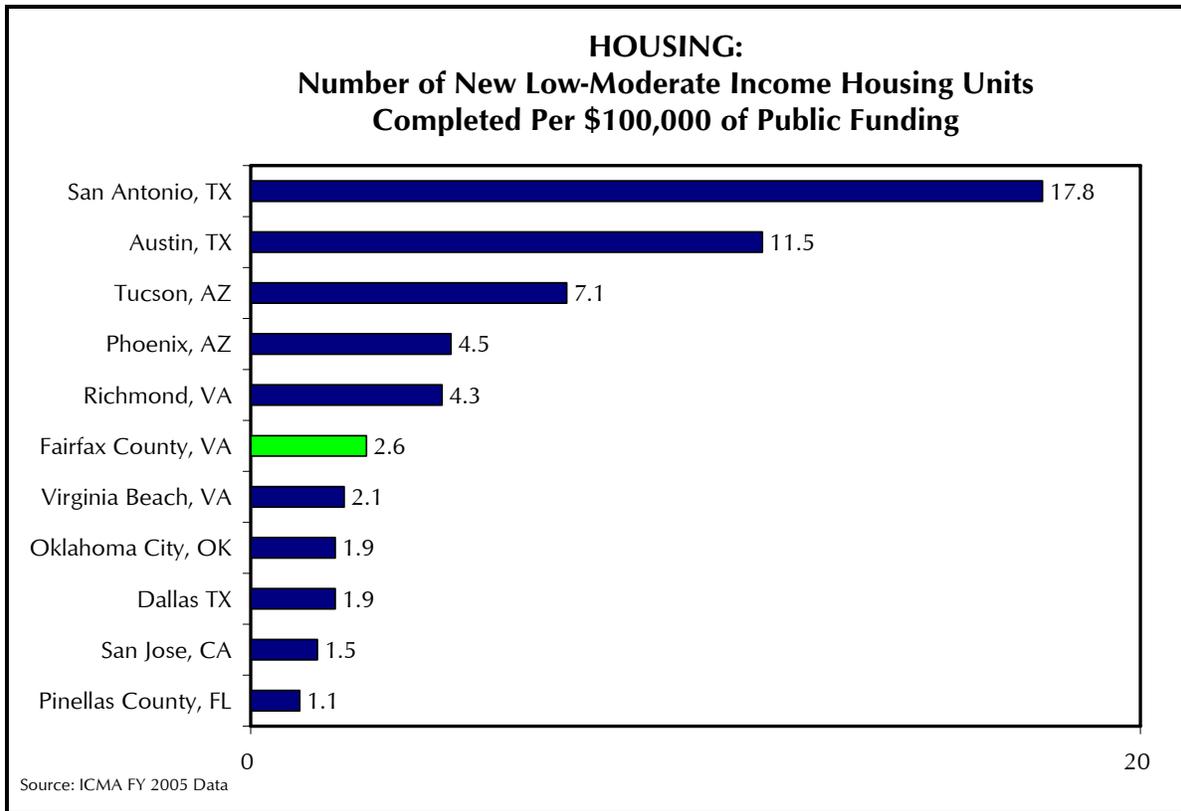
An important point to note in an effort such as this is that since participation is voluntary, the jurisdictions that provide data have shown they are committed to becoming/remaining high performance organizations. Therefore, comparisons made through this program should be considered in the context that the participants have self-selected and are inclined to be among the higher performers than a random sample among local governments nationwide. It is also important to note that performance is also affected by a number of variables including funding levels, weather, the economy, local preferences, cuts in federal and state aid, and demographic characteristics such as income, age and even ethnicity. As noted above, not all jurisdictions respond to all questions. In some cases, the question or process is not applicable to a particular locality or data are not available. For those reasons, the universe of jurisdictions with which Fairfax County is compared is not always the same for each benchmark.

In addition, as part of an effort to identify additional benchmarks beyond the ICMA effort, data collected by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) for the Commonwealth of Virginia are included here as well. Again, due to the time necessary for data collection and cleaning, FY 2005 represents the most recent year for which data are available. An advantage to including these benchmarks is the comparability. In Virginia, local governments follow stringent guidelines regarding the classification of program area expenses. Cost data are provided annually to the APA for review and compilation in an annual report. Since these data are not prepared by any one jurisdiction, their objectivity is less questionable than they would be if collected by one of the participants. In addition, a standard methodology is consistently followed, allowing comparison over time. For each of the program areas, these comparisons of cost per capita are the first benchmarks shown in these sections.

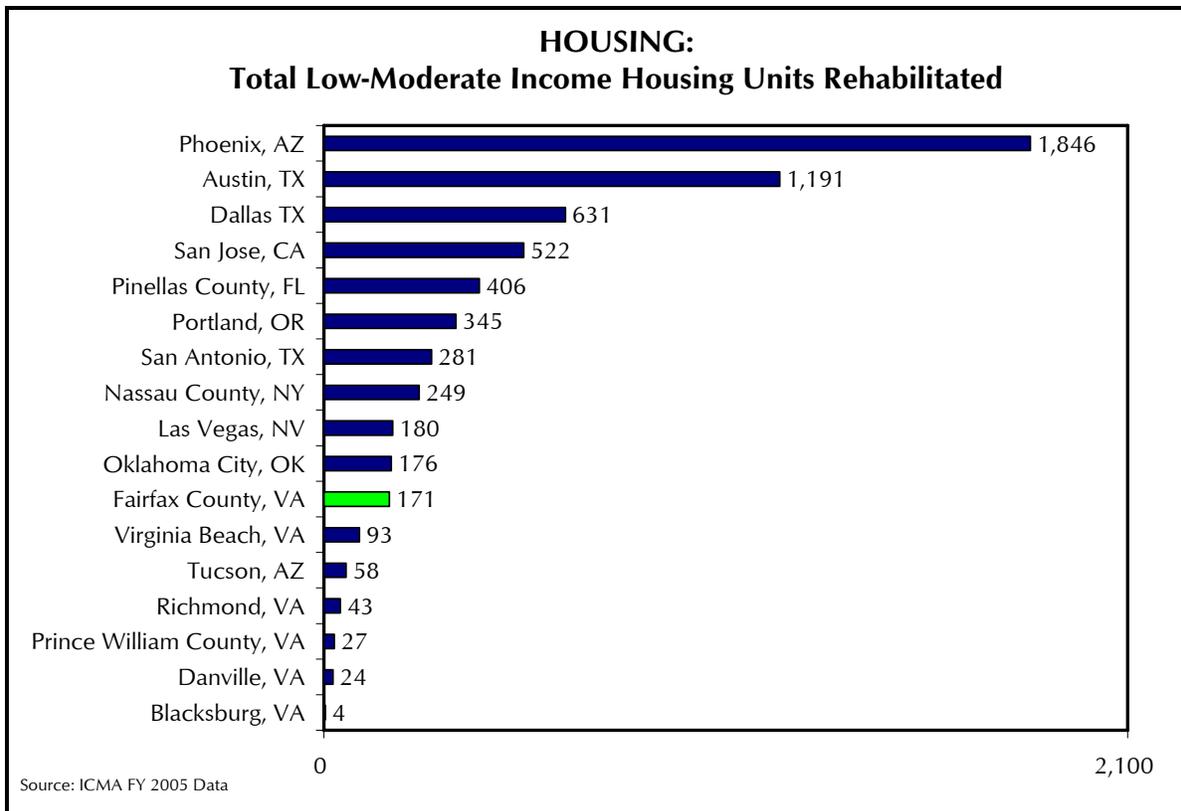
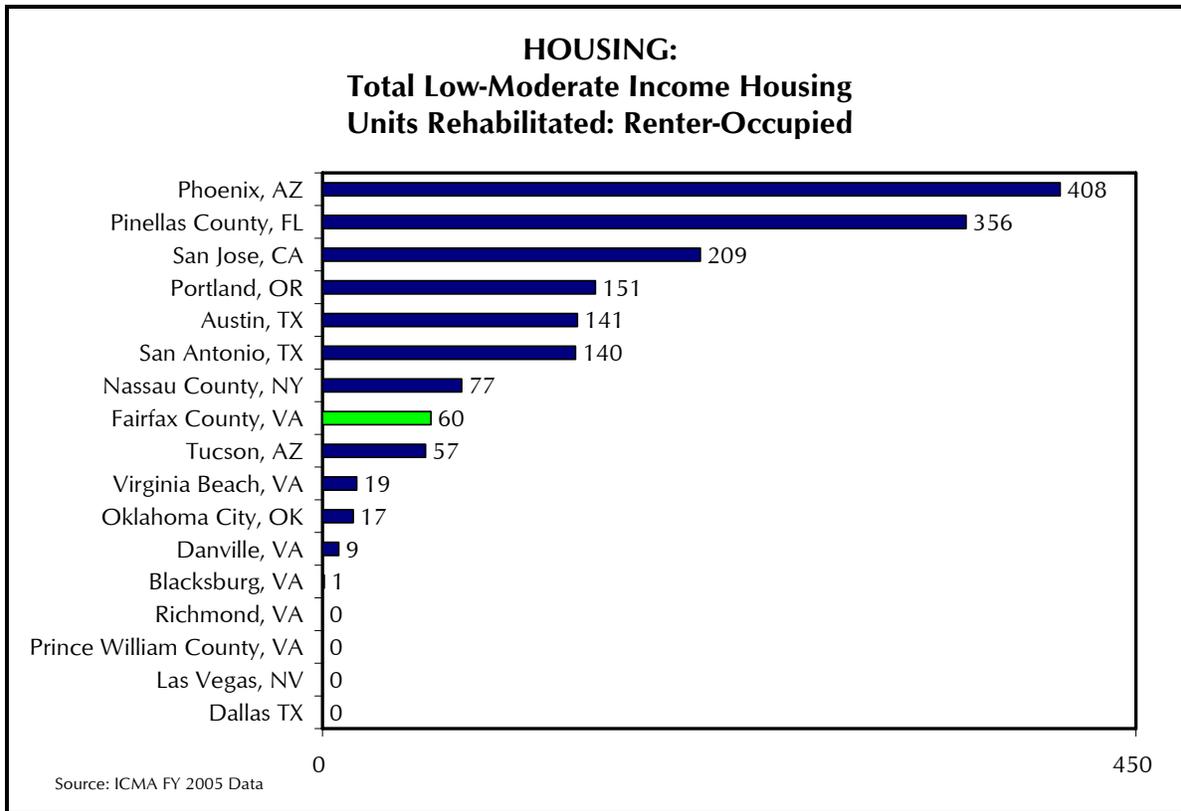
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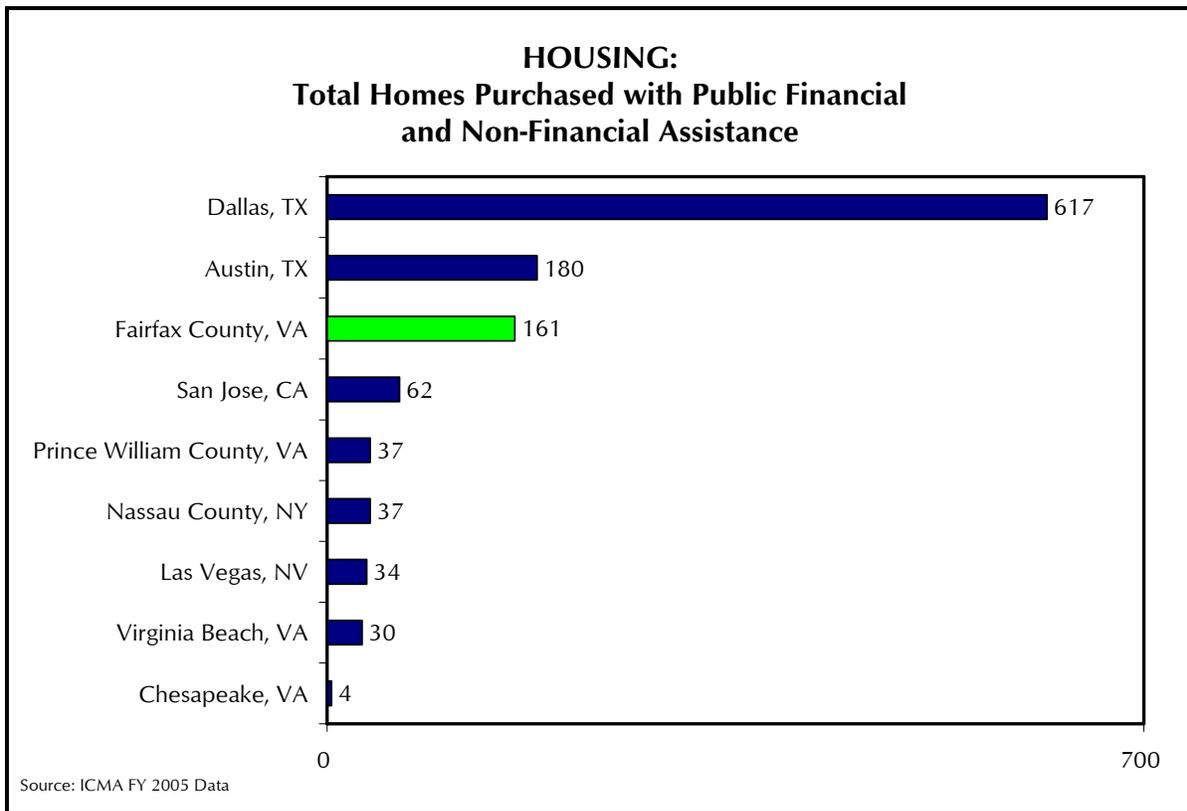
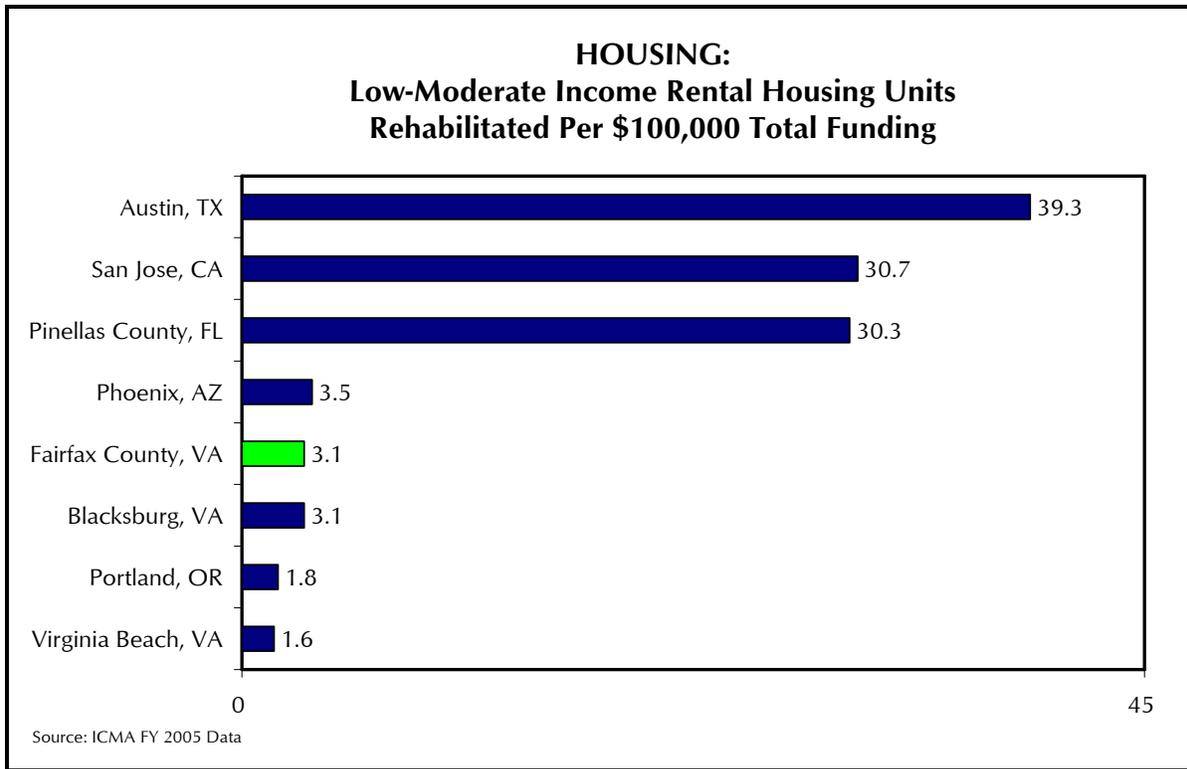
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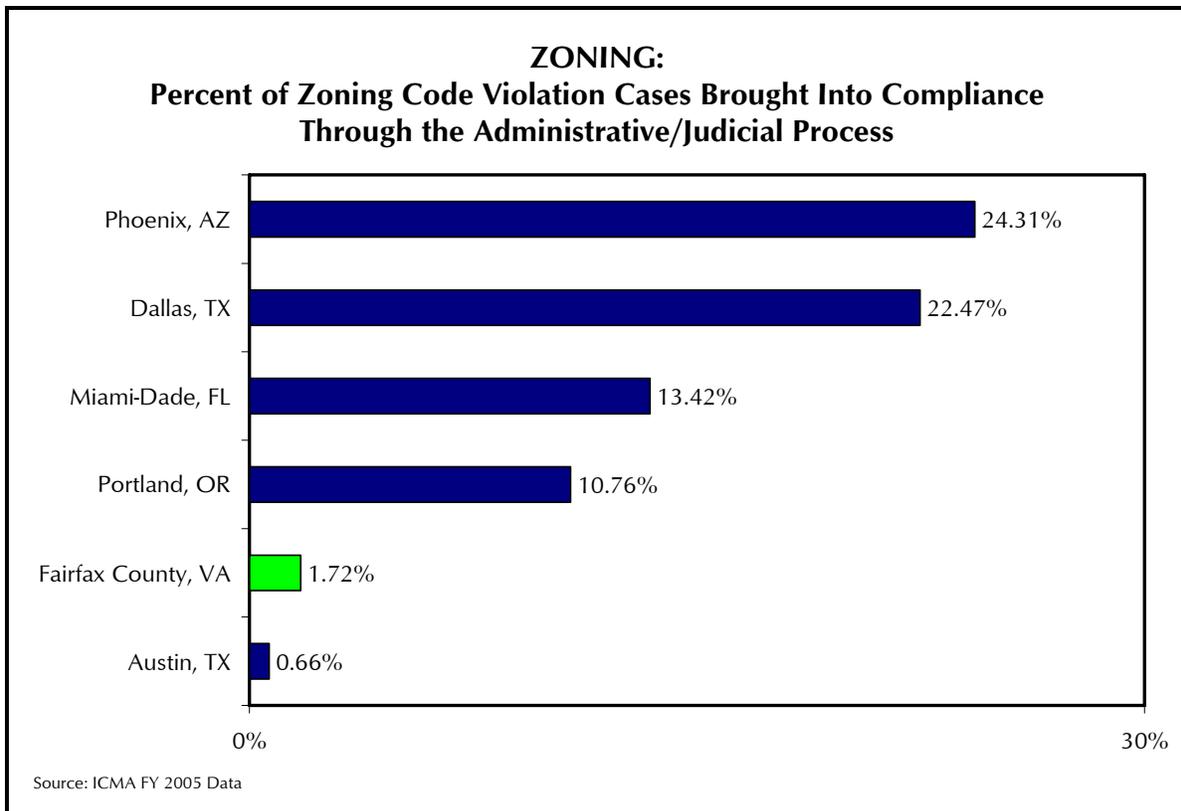
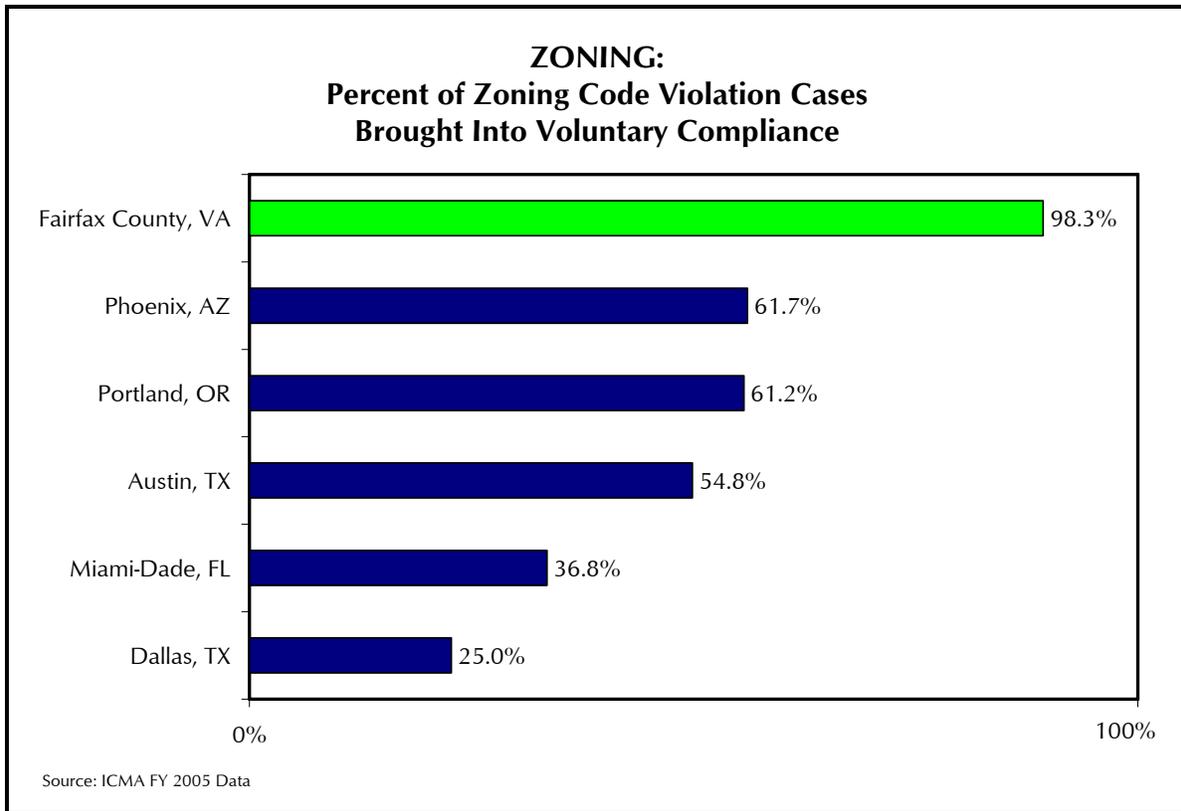
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