



**Mary-Margaret Lemons**  
**President | Fort Worth Housing Solutions**  
Fort Worth, TX  
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### Work Locations

City

### My company will cover travel costs?

Yes

### Area of Expertise

- Asset Management
- Community Development
- Developer
- Government Agency
- Legal
- Policy
- Property Management

### Topic/Details on Expertise

Affordable Housing

### Preferred Presentation Format

- Conference Panel
- Virtual Presentation

### Speaker Description

Mary-Margaret Lemons Bio

[Long version]

Mary-Margaret Lemons was appointed president of Fort Worth Housing Solutions in December 2017 after serving as the agency's General Counsel from 2015 to 2017. She previously served as an attorney specializing in oil and gas and earlier as General Counsel at a local \$1.2 billion bank overseeing Risk Management, Compliance and Vendor Management.

Under her leadership, FWHS has transitioned from a traditional public housing authority to one that has deconcentrated poverty by providing a variety of safe, affordable housing opportunities to the city's workforce and low-income residents throughout Fort Worth. About 60 percent of the agency's revenue now comes from non-federal funds. FWHS pays

landlords about \$50 million each year, a powerful economic impact.

Today, FWHS manages 6,400 rental assistance vouchers across various programs that help more than 41,000 people cover housing costs every day. The agency closed the city's last two, aging public housing communities – Cavile Place and Butler Place – in 2020 and worked with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to allow residents to relocate to homes of their choice in higher opportunity neighborhoods.

Since 2015, Lemons has significantly expanded the agency's real estate portfolio. Today, FWHS operates 52 mixed-income, residential communities with properties in each City Council district, totaling more than 10,000 units with 85% operating at multiple levels of affordability to serve Fort Worth households.

In 2020, Lemons partnered with the City of Fort Worth and private development partner Ojala Holdings, LLC to apply federal CARES Act funding to the renovation of an extended-stay hotel that is now the city's largest permanent supportive housing community for chronically homeless residents. The 119-unit Casa de Esperanza apartments in northeast Fort Worth offers residents case management and wrap-around support in partnership with numerous agencies in a model proven to help previously homeless residents move toward self-sufficiency.

Lemons also led the intense, community-focused, collaborative planning effort that preceded HUD's \$35 million Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant award to the City of Fort Worth and FWHS in 2020. The grant has seeded a massive revitalization plan for the historic Stop Six community in Southeast Fort Worth. City leaders, FWHS and numerous partners have begun construction on six phases of new, mixed-income housing with ground-level retail space as part of the effort. Fort Worth voters in May 2022 approved bonds to build a new Stop Six community hub and aquatic center for the neighborhood. The first phase, Cowan Place, opened in 2023.

Lemons serves on the Board of Trustees for the national Public Housing Authorities Directors Association and is a member of the Board of Directors for Downtown Fort Worth Inc., North Texas LEAD and the Continuum of Care for Tarrant and Parker counties.

The Fort Worth Business Press honored Lemons as one of its Great Women of Texas in April 2022, and Fort Worth Inc. magazine has named her repeatedly to its list of the 400 Most Influential People in Fort Worth. She was honored as "Communicator of the Year" by the Greater Fort Worth Chapter of Public Relations Society of America in 2019. The Texas Wesleyan School of Law named her 2012 Alumnus of the Year. She was named to the Fort Worth Business Press "40 Under 40" list of for young leaders in 2012.

Lemons earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations from The University of Texas at Arlington and a juris doctor from Texas Wesleyan School of Law.

Very short bio [50 words]

Mary-Margaret Lemons has served as president of Fort Worth Housing Solutions since December 2017 and was the agency's General Counsel from 2015 to 2017. She previously served as an attorney in the oil and gas and banking sectors. Lemons is a nationally recognized leader who has guided the evolution of FWHS from a traditional public housing authority to a developer of mixed-income housing opportunities throughout the city and provider of programs designed to help residents achieve self-sufficiency. Learn more at [www.fwhs.org](http://www.fwhs.org).

About Fort Worth Housing Solutions

Fort Worth Housing Solutions is changing the face of affordable housing by providing mixed-income rental and home ownership opportunities that provide the foundation to improve lives. The agency was established by the City of Fort Worth in 1938 to provide decent, safe housing for low- to moderate-income residents. Today, the FWHS portfolio includes 38 mixed-income, residential communities with almost 6,800 units. The agency manages Housing Choice Vouchers that help families and individuals cover rental costs. FWHS works closely with numerous partners to promote economic independence and positive change in the lives of the more than 33,000 individuals we touch on a daily basis. Learn more at [www.fwhs.org](http://www.fwhs.org).

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