

# Sonoma County Community Development Committee



Human Services Dept. Representative: Oscar Chavez (Chair), Tenant Representatives: Stephanie Hiller, Jessica Vega  
1<sup>st</sup> Dist: Betzy Chavez (Vice Chair) 2<sup>nd</sup> Dist: Michael Regan 3<sup>rd</sup> Dist: *Vacant* 4<sup>th</sup> Dist: Willie Lamberson 5<sup>th</sup> Dist: Linda Garcia  
Interim Executive Director: Barbie Robinson, MPP, JD, CHC

Public Hearing  
Wednesday, April 15  
10:00am-11:30am

Via Webex in Accordance with Executive Order N-29-20

<https://mymeeting.sonoma-county.org/orion/joinmeeting.do?MTID=7123b850e2cc6844a0fe326d2357c321>

CoS WebEx: 707-565-4657

Access Code: 996 242 780

## Agenda

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda**
3. **Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2020 Meeting (page 3)**  
The Committee will discuss and may take action to approve the minutes from March 18, 2020 or may recommend changes to these minutes.
4. **Update from Interim Executive Director**
5. **Update on CDBG-DR Multifamily Housing Notice of Funding Availability Schedule** The County of Sonoma has been allocated \$4.6 million in funding through the 2018 State of California Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery Action Plan for Multifamily Housing Recovery. Staff will present a schedule and parameters for the Notice of Funding Availability process that will be used to award funds to local projects.
6. **Public Hearing: Comments on Projects Approved for FY20-21 Federal CDBG, HOME and ESG Funding (page 10)**
  - a. Open public hearing
  - b. Close public hearing
7. **Adjournment**



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### Next Meeting:

#### Public Hearing

#### Concurrent with Cities & Towns Advisory Committee

May 20, 2020

10:00 am

Public Hearing Room  
1440 Guerneville Road  
Santa Rosa, CA

In accordance with Executive Order N-29-20 this meeting will be held virtually. Any writings or documents presented to a majority of the Community Development Committee regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection on the Sonoma County Community Development Commission website.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** In addition to providing public comment during the WebEx via phone or the chat function, public comment may be submitted via email to [Holly.Kelley@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Holly.Kelley@sonoma-county.org). Emailed comments received before 10am on Wednesday April 15 will be read into the record at the appropriate time on the agenda.

**DISABLED ACCOMMODATION:** If you have a disability which requires an accommodation, an alternative format, or requires another person to assist you while attending this meeting, please contact the Administrative Services Officer at (707) 565-7520, as soon as possible to ensure arrangements for accommodation.

**LANGUAGE SERVICES** are available upon request  
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**Public Meeting and Workshop**  
**Concurrent with Cities & Towns Advisory Committee**  
Wednesday, March 18, 2020

**Minutes**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Oscar Chavez called the meeting to order at 10:07AM and roll was called  
Committee Members Present: Oscar Chavez, Stephanie Hiller, Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Jessica Vega  
Committee Members Absent: Linda Garcia

CD Staff Present: Tina Rivera, Interim Assistant Director; Felicity Gasser, Equity and Compliance Manager; Martha Cheever, Housing Authority Manager; Diedre Duncan, Affordable Housing Asset Manager; Holly Kelley, Equity and Compliance Specialist; Thai Hilton, Housing Authority Special Projects Coordinator; Darrin O'Hara, Administrative Aide.

**2. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda**

No comments were made

**3. Approval of Minutes from January 15, 2020 Meetings**

Betzy Chavez moved to approve the minutes from February 19, 2020. Willie Lamberson seconded:

Ayes: Oscar Chavez, Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Jessica Vega

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Linda Garcia, Stephanie Hiller

**4. Assistant Director's Report**

Tina Rivera, Interim Assistant Director, gave a report on the status of the Joe Rodota Trail efforts, the success of Los Guilicos Village and the current effort of the Board of Supervisors to site locations for a semi-permanent indoor-outdoor shelter. On March 10<sup>th</sup> the Board also received update on the Homeless Encampment Assistance and Resource Team (HEART) spearheaded by Supervisor Hopkins which does outreach for those living in encampments, and the 100 Day Challenge approved by the Board, which calls for the Community Development



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Commission to move at least 75 individuals through the systems of care into homes. Tina also briefed the Committees on the current response to the COVID-19 outbreak and how County is approaching response. Departments are reorganizing to enable social distancing and only essential functions are operating. Committee members had questions about how the County was working with providers to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among encampments and in homeless shelters.

### 5. Public Hearing: CDBG and HOME Recommendations

Felicity Gasser, Equity and Compliance Manager, presented the staff recommendations for FY2020-21 federal funding. If Committees' approve, we will include these projects for the 2020-2021 Action Plan which will then be submitted to HUD. Felicity went over the policies on the webex powerpoint and in the memos in the committees' agenda packets. Committee members had questions for staff as to whether the decision to move \$40,000 from Housing Rehabilitation to Catholic Charities' predevelopment would hamper the Rehabilitation Program's ability to carry out its work. The Committee also asked clarifying questions of applicants including populations to be served by the projects and certain project eligibility for CDBG-DR.

#### Public Comment

Mary Stompe, Director of PEP Housing, stated that CDC staff had told her not to apply for funding this round because City of Santa Rosa projects were not being considered. She has been turned down 3 times in prior applications. PEP was previously turned down for the Los Guilicos site which is now sited as a homeless shelter. Where are these policies and where are they written down and why in the last round would you not fund Santa Rosa projects but now you are [funding Caritas Center]?

Felicity Gasser explained that Los Guilicos was not eligible for Federal Funds for a permanent project. The shelter sited there is not federally funded and is temporary. The projects physically located in City of Santa Rosa recommended for funding are projects that serve clients referred through coordinated entry and therefore the population served is the Urban County. The regulations stipulate that is how the funding must be allocated. We can't fund a project that serves City of Santa Rosa residents only. Finally, the CDC did not tell any applicant not to apply. They only provided technical assistance and directed applicants to the regulations if in question.

Che Casul, Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship, wanted to clarify a few of CDC's staff concerns on the Windsor Center project. I appreciate staff evaluating us for HOME funding. I wanted to address some of the concerns over eligibility. The staff report says we



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don't bring other funding to the table - we own the property free and clear and have pledged \$500,000 of our reserves to that project. Other concern was over ability to fundraise. We are brand new staff, in four months they have already raised a significant amount of funds. This project would house transitional-age youth, which is the only population among homeless that is skyrocketing. We would also be teaching them skills and trades to be successful so that they could qualify for other units that the CDC is helping to fund and contribute to the community.

Pamela Swan, Catholic Charities, clarified that the Caritas Center project is aligned with Housing First and Coordinated Entry. The project will serve residents countywide.

Jessica Vega moved to approve the staff recommendations for FY 2020-21 Funding, Betzy Chavez seconded

Ayes: Oscar Chavez, Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Jessica Vega, Stephanie Hiller

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Linda Garcia

### 6. FSS Action Plan

Thai Hilton, Special Projects Coordinator for the Housing Authority, gave a presentation on the Family Self-Sufficiency program and the benefits for participants. The program is not mandatory. An important part of the program is the establishment of a PCC or program coordinating committee, whose functions will be to assist the Housing Authority in securing commitments of public and private resources for the operation of the FSS program within the HA's jurisdiction. Thai also covered incentives and outreach for the program and how families are selected for the program. Clients accrue savings in an escrow account made up of the difference of their rent portion when it increases. Thai described how escrow funds are dispersed when a client graduates the program. Interim disbursements can be made to meet some part of the client's goal. Participation and success in the FSS program has no impact on participant housing assistance – if they fail to meet a goal on the program they do not lose their voucher. Thai shared a couple of success stories from recent graduates of the program. Committee members asked about case management, coordination with other service providers and how escrow income might affect other benefits. Thai is the Housing Authority's case manager, he actively coordinates with other service providers of the clients. Because the escrow is kept in the Housing Authority, the money deposited does not impact a client's



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qualification to other income-eligible programs.

**Public Comment**

Thomas Ells, St Vincent de Paul, had a question about those who are terminated or drop out of the program – what happens to their escrow funds? Are people immediately terminated, is there dispensation for those people? He also noted that some of the success stories had graduates who had been in the program for more than 5 years.

Thai responded that the program is initially 5 years, but clients can request an extension for two years. There’s a conversation between caseworker and client about causes as to why goals weren’t met. We make provisions for people who have reasons such as loss of job, sick family member, etc, it’s a very personal process.

Jessica Vega moved to approve the FSS Action Plan. Betzy Chavez seconded the motion:  
Ayes: Oscar Chavez, Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Jessica Vega, Stephanie Hiller  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Linda Garcia

**7. Housing Authority Rapid Rehousing Budget Update**

Martha Cheever, Housing Authority Manager, walked through the budget for the rapid rehousing program that was asked for at the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. She explained the breakdown of different sources and role of consultants. We expect over the next month to have 11 more people receiving services through the Housing Navigation and Location program – so far this program has served 2. She described all of the programs and funding sources (provided in slides and in packet) Committee members asked if the Housing Authority planned to spend all the money by December. Concerns about delays caused by the coronavirus aside, yes.

No public comment was received on the Housing Authority Rapid Rehousing Budget Update

**8. Public Hearing Open for PHA 5 Year Plan at 12:45PM.**

Martha Cheever, Housing Authority Manager, presented on the Public Housing Authority Five-Year Plan. She reviewed the goals (see slides or packet). She also went over the outcomes of the prior five year period (2015-2020). She then went over the proposed changes in the 1-Year



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Administrative Plan.

### Public Comment

Thomas Ells, I understand that there's approximately 3000 HUD vouchers in Sonoma County – how many are county and how many are city of santa rosa, and are there any in Petaluma?

Martha responded that the SoCo Housing Authority has 3000 vouchers, and the City of Santa Rosa has just under 2000 vouchers. While Petaluma is an entitlement jurisdiction, it is assigned to the County who oversees their vouchers.

Mark Krug, Burbank Housing, emailed in that non-competitive PBVs should be transparent Heather Anderson, resident, emailed in a comment expressing concern that residents in PBV housing apartments will not be required to participant in supportive services. We are enabling people who are in need of drug/rehab services (full comment attached)

Kirsten Barquist, resident, emailed a lengthy comment with proposals for recreational vehicles, and converting mobile home parks to telework sites, (full comment attached)

Thomas Ells, St. Vincent de Paul, so much in those last public comments warranted some comment. Some good suggestions about the RVs and utilization and problems with trailer parks, it would be helpful – there used to be a statewide funding source for residents of mobile home parks to purchase the parks. I don't know if that information is being provided and instead, outside parties are buying up the properties and making them unaffordable for seniors and low income. Some of those comments were very salient as well as other aspects of RV utilization.

### 7. Adjournment

Oscar Chavez adjourned the meeting at 1:13PM

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kelley, Equity and Compliance Program Specialist



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Comments regarding Public Housing Authority 5-Year Plan for FY 2020-2025

Submitted 18 March 2020 by Kirsten Barquist

## Summary

Our housing problems are the result of capitalism and "neo-liberal" government policies. More capitalism will not solve the problem; if anything, it will just make the situation worse. We need to implement socialized housing including government owned and run facilities.

## Housing for mentally ill and developmentally delayed

In February 2020 I spent a day doing "precinct walking" in Santa Rosa for a presidential candidate. One of the addresses on my list was The Rosenberg Building on Mendocino Avenue, which had quite a lot of registered voters residing there. After speaking with a few of the residents, it became clear that they are mentally ill and/or developmentally delayed. The building is an old hotel converted to studio apartments being rented out to people receiving some sort of government support. In my opinion, this population should be in an appropriate government-run residential facility under the supervision of trained professionals rather than being warehoused in a private for-profit former hotel.

"Community care" for the mentally ill and others who are not able to care for themselves has been a disturbing disaster astutely dubbed "free-range mental health care." People with mental illness, often self-medicated with booze or speed, are a large part of the homeless population. We need to provide government-owned and run facilities for these folks and get them off the streets and out of unsafe situations.

## Section 8 housing program

Stop wasting our money with this ineffective fiasco -- apparently it is called "section 8" because the waiting list is 8 years long! The only thing it accomplishes is lining the pockets of private property owners. Use the money to purchase residential property and place people in it based on need rather than credit rating.

## Recreational vehicles as temporary and long-term housing

Both Sonoma County and the State of California need to get over their apparent squeamishness regarding the use of travel trailers, motorhomes and camper-vans as housing. They are an increasingly popular option for single adults and couples of all ages. The newer models have built-in solar power and can be used "off grid" for a week or two with savvy management. They can act as emergency housing and lifeboats in a disaster situation.

If just 10% of the single-family homes in Sonoma County had an RV in the side yard with legal permitted hookups for full-time use, it would quickly provide a significant amount of housing capacity. No construction is necessary. The hookups are easy to install; of course they would need to be permitted and inspected. It would provide RV owners with a safe, high-quality place to park and homeowners with some income.

A considerable number of people are already living full-time in RVs on a stealth basis, parking illegally in driveways, side yards or side streets. While there are some RV parks



available in the county, the prices are outrageous and the pre-requisites of deposits, credit check, age of the RV, etc., are prohibitive. They are also cramped and often noisy... really a low quality of life and not a financially viable option for many. RV parks are for travelers passing through on vacation, not long-term housing.

Providing a reasonable low-cost path to legal full-time living in RVs on any residential property would be to everyone's benefit. If this form of housing is not included in the plan, it should be.

### Manufactured homes in mobile home parks

Such a waste of space and housing capacity! The financial model is bizarre and does not seem to have an exit strategy. The result is old, ugly, falling apart, energy-inefficient and often unhealthy trailers being sold for \$60-\$100K or abandoned. Parks that are not owned by the residents, which is just about all of them, do not allow renting out a room or the unit if the owner is not living in it, which means that units sit empty and rooms go unoccupied.

Sonoma County along with the state needs to implement a pro-active program to convert these parks to resident-owned co-ops in a public-private partnership. In addition, the regulations need to be modernized to allow tiny homes and RVs. The critical element is allowing people to purchase the space rather than the trailer installed on it. The land appreciates while the trailer (a vehicle) depreciates.

Just about all mobile home parks have a common house, club-house or recreation center which is unused 90% of the time. These buildings could be converted to co-working spaces and telecommuting offices for the residents.

These outdated, wasteful facilities are overdue for a major re-think and overhaul. If it is not in the plan, it should be.



**Sonoma County Community Development Commission**  
 Sonoma County Housing Authority  
 1440 Guerneville Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95403-4107

*Members of the Commission*

**Susan Gorin**  
Chair

**Lynda Hopkins**  
Vice Chair

**David Rabbitt**  
**Shirlee Zane**  
**James Gore**

**Barbie Robinson**  
Interim Executive Director  
MPP, JD, CHC

**MEMORANDUM**

Date: April 15, 2020

To: The Community Development Committee

From: Holly Kelley, Equity and Compliance Program Specialist, Sonoma County Community Development Commission

Subject: Item #6: Projects Approved for FY20-21 Federal CDBG, HOME and ESG Funding

Commission staff has compiled all of the projects to be included in the Public Review Draft of the Sonoma County Consolidated Plan 2020-2021 One Year Action Plan, which will be released for public comment in early May. This includes projects recommended for funding by your Committee and the Cities & Towns Advisory Committee in March, homeless service projects recommended for Federal ESG funding by HOME Sonoma County Leadership Council, and the 15% Public Services set-aside on a Fair Housing and Housing Justice Program per the FY20-21 Funding Policies.

Sponsor	Project	Recommendation	Rationale for Recommendation
<b>City of Cotati</b>	West School St. Path of Travel	CDBG: \$160,000	Project creates a safe pathway to Thomas Page elementary school and benefits a low and moderate income limited clientele.
<b>City of Healdsburg</b>	Sidewalk ADA	CDBG: \$175,000	Project makes investments that improve connectivity and access to amenities in a low-mod income neighborhood.
<b>City of Sebastopol</b>	Youth Annex ADA	CDBG: \$180,000	Project would serve a limited clientele that utilizes the Youth Annex for recreational activities and City Council meetings.
<b>Sweetwater Springs Water District</b>	Sweetwater Springs Water Improvement	CDBG: \$115,920	Project improves water pressure and quality for 60 homes in a low-mod area. Pressure will enable fire hydrants to be placed in the area and will improve water quality for district, which is comprised of over 2000 homes in a historically underserved area.
<b>Catholic Charities</b>	Caritas Center	CDBG: \$40,000	Caritas Center provides wrap-around homeless and housing services, shelter and transitional housing, serving more than 325 people daily. Staff recommends the expenditure of FY 2019-2020 2020-2021 award towards the required NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) prior to any additional funding recommendations



<b>City of Rohnert Park</b>	Essential Workforce Housing Program	CDBG: \$350,000	Project buys down affordability for two single-family homes forever, meaning affordability will pass on from one family to the next when the first homebuyer moves.
<b>SCCDC</b>	Housing Rehab Program	CDBG: \$324,317	Program provides low cost loans to assist low-income households for needed repairs that improve housing stability and decency while maintaining affordability
<b>Fair Housing Services</b>	Fair Housing Services Program	CDBG: \$282,820	Program provides robust fair housing that includes contracting with agencies to provide fair housing discrimination investigation, complaint intake, and counseling for low-income and disabled tenants on their fair housing rights and eviction defense legal services.
<b>BRIDGE Housing</b>	Cotati Station	HOME: \$605,000	Project will create 73 new affordable units in an area of high opportunity and potential for environmental benefits (transit-oriented, walkable amenities and schools). The project also possesses a high level of readiness and leveraged funds.
<b>Sonoma County Housing Authority</b>	Tenant-Based Rental Assistance	HOME \$37,040	Funds will ensure that 17 vulnerable households maintain housing stability while securing access to long-term rental assistance or affordable housing units.
<b>Catholic Charities</b>	Rapid Rehousing Program	ESG: \$25,113	Program provides housing location, housing-focused case management, and rental assistance to help persons experiencing homelessness to re-enter housing.
<b>Catholic Charities</b>	Homelessness Prevention	ESG: \$27,159	Program provides outreach and diversion services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
<b>Catholic Charities</b>	Family Support Center	ESG: \$93,665	The Family Support Center (FSC) is a 138-bed emergency shelter dedicated to serving homeless families with children, with the primary aim of exiting these most vulnerable families into permanent housing as rapidly as possible
<b>SCCDC</b>	Project Administration and Direct Delivery	CDBG: \$417,094 ESG: \$11,832	Staff administration and in-house work on CDBG, HOME and ESG projects
<b>Reserves</b>		HOME: \$101,967	Funding set-aside in the event of cost-overruns or unforeseen costs associated with HOME-funded projects.
<b>Total</b>		<b>CDBG: \$2,045,151</b> <b>HOME: \$744,007</b> <b>ESG: \$157,769</b>	