

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### PURPOSE:

The objectives of the Housing Action Plan's Community Engagement strategy are to:

- Improve the relationship and level of trust between the community and City by ensuring the community is *informed* about and *involved* in the Housing Action Plan activities.
- Ensure the community fully understands the Housing Action Plan Program through meaningful community education that is inclusive and equitable.
- Strengthen community connectedness through meaningful community workshops and outreach where each person has the opportunity to *participate* in the discussion and voice any matters which are important to them.
- Obtain sincere feedback by engaging in conversations with the community in order to proactively consider and address their comments/remarks.

### OUTREACH, ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION PLAN:

#### **Inform/Educate**

Provide the community with information to assist them in fully understanding the Housing Action Plan (HAP), providing multiple points of access to get information:

- Social media efforts – Nextdoor, Facebook, Twitter, Downtown Santa Rosa Instagram
  - Use social media to alert the community to upcoming community meetings, workshops, etc. regarding the HAP.
  - Also use social media to disseminate information about the HAP, housing, homelessness initiatives, and other types of media, such as CMedia videos on housing.
- Distribution lists – Govdelivery. Use Govdelivery to notify community of news, upcoming community meetings, workshops, etc. regarding the HAP and other important housing and homelessness initiative announcements.
- Newsletters – Utilize existing internal and external (community-based and neighborhood specific) newsletters to disseminate information about the HAP and other important housing and homelessness initiative announcements.
- Website – utilize PED, HCS, and Community Engagement/CAB pages to post updates and information regarding the HAP. In addition, utilize the “What’s Happening in SR” section of the landing page to post current news regarding the HAP and other important housing and homelessness initiative announcements.
- Media – Utilize local media contacts to distribute media releases. Also work with local media outlets, such as CMedia, to create video clips and interviews regarding the HAP.

- Council presentations – Utilize Council meetings to inform elected officials and the public of specific HAP components.
- Information sessions – public presentations throughout the community to include a diverse group of stakeholders and residents, upon request of group.
- Trainings
  - Provide cultural competency training on homelessness to Community Advisory Board (CAB) Members.
  - Provide education and training to CAB on the HAP.
  - Arrange visits to homeless shelters and encampments to learn more about realities of homelessness.
- Outreach Materials
  - Create outreach materials for CAB members and other community groups to use to inform the public.
  - Create talking points for the HAP.
  - Create a glossary of terms for the HAP.
  - Create FAQs for the HAP and for homelessness in the City of Santa Rosa.

**Consult/Inclusion**

Directly engage the community to ensure the public voice is consistently understood and considered:

- Community sessions/public workshops – going beyond informational sessions. These sessions are to provide the public with an opportunity to not only ask questions, but to provide feedback and suggestions based on their own experiences and how they view housing in their neighborhood or for the broader community.
  - Utilize existing community and neighborhood group meetings to present at before creating stand-alone public meetings.
  - Consider partnering with the Homeless Action and Santa Rosa Together Homeless Talk Series, as a starting point.
- Polling/surveys – these should only be used to get feedback on very specific issues/projects. Follow-up with the public should happen via a simple fact sheet on the findings of the survey. A report should be created and presented to Council.

\*With any type of feedback sought, follow-up is crucial with the public. There needs to be a mechanism for going back out to the community to share what we have done with their feedback. This is where the Community Advisory Board (CAB) could come in and help with follow-up outreach.

### **Involve/Cooperation**

Involve key stakeholders, community based organizations (CBOs), and community members in actively educating, organizing, and seeking feedback from the public on the HAP. Proactively address community feedback and recommendations to maximum extent possible. Each participating group receives training on HAP, including talking points, to help prepare them for peer-to-peer/public education.

- Citizen advisory committees, community/neighborhood groups, etc., provide information about the HAP and collect feedback from the public and/or work with the public to come up with additional solutions/strategies. These groups include:
  - Community Advisory Committee (CAB)
  - Santa Rosa Together
  - Homeless Action
  - Roseland Parents Club
  - Various neighborhood associations and groups
  - Student organizations at SRJC and SSU
  
- Staff works with key stakeholders to gain support for the HAP and to train additional spokespeople and educators about the HAP. Stakeholders include:
  - Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce
  - Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
  - Black Chamber of Commerce
  - Building Coalition
  - North Coast Builders Exchange
  - Housing Authority
  - Sonoma County Alliance
  - AIA
  - Other Boards, Commissions, and organizations that come forward through the engagement process
  
- Partner with CBOs to help disseminate information about HAP, additional housing programs and resources, and assistance to members of the public in need of housing help. CBOs include:
  - Community Action Partnership
  - Catholic Charities of Santa Rosa
  - Burbank Housing
  - St. Joseph's Health System of Sonoma County – Community Benefit Department
  - Northern California Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit
  - Latino Service Providers
  - Sonoma State University
  - Santa Rosa Junior College
  
- Proactively address issues or opportunities presented in community meetings (follow-up):
  - Fact sheets summarizing data, information, etc.

- Reports for Council and community partners
- Returning to groups previously asked for feedback to summarize what was addressed and how it was resolved.

TIMEFRAME: On-going