



Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County

Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County (HFHSC) is proposing to start a repair program aimed at helping low income senior homeowners care for their homes and preserve Sonoma County's housing stock for the long term.

Background:

During the fall of 2016, Habitat was approached by the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce to help with a house in the City of Sonoma that had been recently red-tagged. The senior living in the home had extremely limited resources and would potentially become homeless if her home wasn't fixed. There were NO existing resources to help her fix the problem. We mobilized, working with our volunteer and vendor networks to develop in-kind donations; we worked with our donor community and the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce to procure financial donations to help fund the project. As a result of our work, she was able to retain her home, and as this project became known throughout Sonoma Valley we started to receive more and more phone calls asking for help. In our research, there is very little help available to low income seniors, especially those that have NO ability to participate financially. We are looking for funding streams and grant opportunities to serve this particular community.

Our Aging in Place repair program will help maintain housing stock throughout our community and help low income seniors live safely in their homes thereby saving taxpayer dollars. Research has proven that homelessness is much more expensive to a government entity than repairing an existing home. A 2009 study by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development found that for those low-income seniors forced out of their homes the monthly median cost for care was \$5,243 compared to \$928 for monthly care for seniors who aged in place at home. The University of Missouri found that enrolling only 10% of seniors who need to age in place in such a program would save nearly 9 billion public dollars.

Our AIP program will ensure our seniors live in safe and healthy homes, will connect them with other service organizations, and will help to alleviate social isolation for a population with few or no support networks. By opening their homes and their lives to community volunteers and neighbors, they can form important social connections that can continue to aid their mental and physical health after the project is completed. The Aging in Place model is becoming accepted nationwide, and Habitat affiliates have successfully partnered with the cities of Oakland and San Jose using grant resource to provide financial resources to help this needed population. Now a robust program is located in your own back yard.

How would our program work?

- The program will serve homeowners and mobile homeowners 62-years-old or older who reside in Santa Rosa, as proven by their provided home address and assured by an eventual site visit
- Except for in special situations where an individual is outside our normal scope but has a need or issue so significant that it cannot be ignored, requested documentation must verify occupancy and ownership. Examples of special excepting situations include two cases of individuals referred to us by Adult and Aging and by the Council on Aging respectively. The first had a severe mobility issue and could not leave her apartment. All she required was a ramp, which we built even though she did not own the residence. The second had transferred her home to her son during a period of serious illness. She recovered from her illness and is still fiscally responsible for the home and taxes, but her son is technically the owner. She is not able to keep up with the deferred maintenance involved and thus we are stepping in to help
- Applicants must have an income of 80% of median income or less, which requested documentation will verify. **Grant monies are to be used to provide resources to the neediest segment of the senior population.**
- Scope of Work will be determined based on what projects we are currently able to do and the need present with the assisted unit. Our program would be phased in with the first phase focusing on outdoor repairs and simple health and safety projects. Our intent long-term is to have projects both inside and outside the home.
- We will be able to meet or exceed all City insurance requirements.
- As per Habitat for Humanity standards, recipients would be selected based upon need, ability to partner, and ability to pay. However, if selected for the program by the City of Santa Rosa, ability to pay would not be a factor.
- Further selection and approval processes can be developed in collaboration with the City.
- As part of the reimbursement process, each project's hard costs, donations, and volunteer hours will be tracked. Further procedures may be developed to meet both Habitat's and the City's needs.

Are there other programs meeting the need?

Rebuilding Together chapters in Petaluma and Sebastopol are the only organization providing this type of work in Sonoma County. All other Rebuilding Together chapters are no longer operating. Some governmental entities have small rehab programs but it is unclear how a homeowner would access those funds.

What Habitat can offer?

Infrastructure to manage applicant process

Volunteer Resources

In-Kind Material Resources

Specialized Contractor Resources

We have the ability to stretch grant and donor dollars further to serve more people.

What do we need from you?

Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County is requesting \$12,000 to carry out six Aging in Place repairs for low income seniors' homes in our community.

To partner with Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County's AIP program contact:

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