

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
HOUSING AUTHORITY

TO: HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS
FROM: REBECCA LANE, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
MANAGER
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
SUBJECT: REQUEST TO ALLOCATE FIFTY-FIVE (55) VETERANS AFFAIRS
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR THE WINDSOR
VETERANS VILLAGE UNDER A FIFTEEN-YEAR PROJECT-
BASED HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CONTRACT
AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Housing and Community Services Department that the Housing Authority, by resolution, approve the allocation of fifty-five (55) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers under a fifteen-year Project-Based Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract for the Windsor Veterans Village.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers for Sonoma County are allocated to the City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority. Under an existing agreement with the Sonoma County Housing Authority, the City of Santa Rosa administers the VASH vouchers outside Santa Rosa city limits.

The Windsor Veteran's Village is a proposed development applying under a new construction application for the Project-Based Voucher program. The project is a 60-unit affordable housing project designed specifically and entirely for Veterans, with a variety of on-site supportive services including a continuum of wellness programs as well as employment and training services. The project developer, Urban Housing Communities, LLC, has partnered with the Veterans Resource Center of America (VRC) to provide on-site services. On-site services will be provided in addition to the intensive case management services that are a component of the HUD-VASH program.

Urban Housing Communities, LLC applied for 55 Project-Based Vouchers under the open HUD-VASH Request for Proposals (RFP). Up to 100 VASH Vouchers were made available under the RFP.

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BACKGROUND

The Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program is a component of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. Under this program, a Public Housing Authority can attach up to 20 percent of its budget authority under the Housing Choice Voucher program to specific housing units. Project-basing of VASH vouchers is allowed so long as the VA is in support of the project.

The low vacancy rates and high rent costs in Sonoma County have presented significant challenges to Veterans attempting to use VASH vouchers. The VASH program is targeted towards chronically homeless Veterans; the unique needs of the target population create additional barriers to successful long-term housing placements. The utilization rate for the program is currently 75 percent.

The Housing Authority approved the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Project-Based VASH Vouchers in 2015 with up to 100 vouchers available. To date, 18 vouchers have been allocated under the RFP. Several more developers have requested applications, and it is anticipated that at least an additional 40 VASH Project-Based Voucher units will be requested within the next six to 12 months.

The Windsor Veterans Village proposal (Proposal) was reviewed by a committee consisting of two Housing Authority commissioners and a representative from the Veterans Administration. The committee supports the project moving forward to the full Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

The Housing Authority approval of the Proposal will authorize staff to enter into the appropriate Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contracts as required under the PBV regulations at 24 CFR Part 983 for the Windsor Veterans Village.

PRIOR HOUSING AUTHORITY REVIEW

Not Applicable

ANALYSIS

The parcel located at 9500 Oak Park Street in Windsor is owned by Urban Housing Communities, LLC (UHC). The location is within ¼ mile of a bus stop, and ½ mile of the Windsor SMART station and the Windsor Town Green. The site is approximately four miles from the VA Clinic and VASH program offices.

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UHC is a mission driven for-profit real estate development firm based in Santa Ana, CA. UHC has two other projects in Santa Rosa: The Crossings at Santa Rosa, a 49-unit multifamily project located at 820 Jennings Avenue, and the Crossings on Aston, a 27-unit multifamily project which has recently started construction.

The Proposal includes 60 total units including 48 one-bedroom and 11 two-bedroom units. Fifty-five Project-Based VASH units are proposed under a 15-year contract. In addition to the anticipated funding of \$6,111,00 from the vouchers, UHC plans to apply for California Department of Housing and Community Services Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Program (VHHP) funds, bonds, tax credits and funding through the Home Depot Foundation, which has been a major private supporter of Veterans projects and programs. The total cost per unit, including construction, land and soft costs, is \$429,000.

The service component of the proposed project is modeled after similar projects in Sacramento and Eureka managed by VRC. The Windsor Veterans Village supportive services plan includes 4.5 FTEs providing a variety of case management and services tailored to Veterans. These services will include a comprehensive needs assessment and individual service plans. The on-site services will be provided in conjunction with the case management provided under the VASH program, with the goal of ensuring a wraparound model of care. VRC has successfully secured funding for Veteran-specific services for similar projects through Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV), the Department of Labor Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP), the California Employment Development Department Veterans Employment Assistance program (VEAP), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), in addition to funding from private and philanthropic organizations.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority has an existing Project-Based Voucher program. Fifty-five additional vouchers awarded to this project would bring the total PBV program size to approximately ten percent of the total HCV budget. Initial contract rents for the units are expected to be set at the payment standard in place at the time of occupancy, subject to rent reasonableness determination.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Authorizing staff to enter into the appropriate HAP contracts as required under the PBV regulations at 24 CFR Part 983 does not constitute a project. An environmental review will be required prior to execution of the Agreement to Enter into a HAP Contract (AHAP).

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COUNCIL/BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A subcommittee of two Housing Authority commissioners and one VA representative met to review the Windsor Veterans Village proposal on December 5, 2017 and recommended that the proposal move forward for approval from the Housing Authority.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – HUD-VASH Project Based Voucher Application for Windsor Veterans Village
- Resolution

CONTACT

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