

**HOPE & SOLUTIONS**

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY, PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT &amp; SOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

**Mike Johnson, Chair****Doug Halter, Vice Chair****Jeannette Sánchez-Palacios, Councilmember****Peter Gilli, Community Development Director****Leona Rollins, Housing Services Manager****REGULAR MEETING****Tuesday, September 13, 2022 at 3:00 PM****REGULAR MEETING****TUESDAY, September 13, 2022 – 3:00 PM****CITY HALL – COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM****501 POLI STREET, VENTURA**

The public has the opportunity to address the HOPE & Solutions Subcommittee on any item appearing on the agenda. Persons wishing to address the Subcommittee should fill out a "Speaker Form." If a member of the public wishes to comment on an item and does not want to speak before the Subcommittee, the person may complete a "Comment Form."

Mike Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

*PRESENT: Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Halter, Councilmember Sánchez-Palacios*

*Staff Present: Leona Rollins, Lee Sherman*

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

This is the time set-aside during the HOPE & Solution Subcommittee meeting for members of the public to address the Subcommittee concerning any item not on this agenda.

**Speakers:**

*Community member Judy Alexandre spoke during public communications.*

**1. [Approval of Meeting Minutes](#)**

Action Item: Approve the meeting minutes of the regular meeting on July 12, 2022.

*Councilmember Sanchez-Palacios made a motion to approve.  
Vice Chair Halter seconded. The vote was as follows:*

*AYES: Halter, Sancez-Palacios, Johnson  
NOES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: None*

*Chair Johnson declared the motion carried.*

**2. Foul Weather Shelter**

Information Only: Receive an update on the Foul Weather Shelter for season 2022-2023.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on the Foul Weather Shelter.*

- a. The Foul Weather Shelter will be activated for the 2022-2023 season from December 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 when the City is expected to receive inclement weather of an half inch of rain and/or the temperature is 40 degrees or below.*
- b. The Housing Services Division has spoken with the City of Oxnard who is considering re-establishing their Foul Weather Shelter and using similar requirements as the City of Ventura, but the matter will have to go before Oxnard City Council.*
- c. The City will be partnering with the River Community Church to host the intake process, distribution of meals, stay warm packs as well as transportation to local motels for our selected unhoused individuals. The River Community Church will also serve as the location for where community members can drop off their monetary donations and donated items for the stay warm packs.*

***Public Comment (Speakers):***

*Community member Judy Alexandre made public comment regarding need for Extreme Heat Shelter, East End shelter is too remote; also need to take temperature readings in different areas such as river bottom for activation of FWS.*

*Chair Johnson asked CM MacIntyre status of grant for Air Conditioner for Main Library. CM AM submitted earmark to Rep. Carbajal; won't know until end of calendar year. Halter commented on newly built homes having air conditioners or*

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*generators. Johnson mentioned extremes of Climate Change and how unpredictable they are.*

### 3. Homelessness Plan

Information Only: Receive an update on the status of the Homelessness Plan.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on the Homelessness Plan.*

- a. *The Housing Services Division has met with Focus Strategies and the National Alliance to End Homelessness to discuss our comprehensive homelessness plan. Both organizations have offered to assist the City of Ventura with the comprehensive plan but would want to focus on action and strategies to truly assist our unhoused individuals and families.*
- b. *The Housing Services Division is in the process of drafting a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant/organization to assist us in drafting the plan starting in January 2023 with the hopes of bringing the plan to City Council in spring 2023.*
- c. *On another positive note, the Ventura County Continuum of Care (CoC) is planning to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an in-depth analysis of their current homelessness plan and system, so if the National Alliance to End Homelessness responds to our respective RFPs and are awarded then we will be collaborating with the CoC in this effort.*

#### **Public Comment (Speakers):**

*Community member Robert Shaffer made public comment about need for different neighborhood plans rather than just one overall plan. Plan should be developed by residents, rather than pay consultant, tailored to unique aspects of community. LR assured assessment would be thorough and would involve on the ground representation. DH asked what is in a homeless plan? LR Explained further, what types of housing we need (transitional, supportive, permanent) and in what proportion; emphasized need for affordable housing, illustrated factors for success. DH wanted to know if causes of homelessness would be investigated. LR assured it is part of process. DH wanted to know if factors beyond housing affordability such as jail discharge, mental illness, homeless migration from other communities would be investigated. LR described factors that draw homeless here such as weather and availability of resources. DH suggests look at Ventura not just as isolated but in relation to other cities. MJ, imperative to continue moving forward, we are not in danger of building too much housing. Need to coordinate with county, COC, College, HA, DVP, VSSTF etc. Each person's path*

*to homelessness is unique. Important not to get hung up on “perfect”. Ten year was a mistake. DH asked if housing affordability or availability can be solved by ADUs. Separate entrance has been illegal for 70 years. Allows families to care for loved ones who may be unable to care for themselves. Encourage more in city. LR agreed, described state grant program for ADU construction. Will do more research. MJ mentioned SCAG REAP funding, ADU planning book, streamline process by adopting county plan. Greatly bring down cost and time. LR mentioned ADU companies that provide manufactured homes. MJ, council could allow more ADUs. Cost of construction is prohibitive. DH explained difference between ADU and JADU. Deborah Schreiber mentioned board and care homes, up to six unrelated persons living together. Useful for sober living, those with mental health challenges who cannot live alone. These are currently allowed. Room and Board not licensed. Could be first step for street homeless. MJ to follow up with PG. DH spoke of college housing experience in IV sharing house with co-op roommates.*

#### **4. Tenant Protections Ordinance**

Information Only: Receive an update on the status of the emergency Tenant Protections Ordinance.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on the Tenant Protections Ordinance.*

- a. The Housing Services Division will be drafting an emergency Tenant Protection Ordinance which will address housing instability and homelessness to ensure that individuals and families throughout the City can remain in their homes and not be subjected to displacement and/or exorbitant rent increases.*
- b. The Housing Services Division completed research into other Ventura County jurisdictions and confirmed that the City of Oxnard is the only jurisdiction with a Rent Stabilization Ordinance and Tenant Protection Ordinance.*
- c. The Housing Services Division has contacted the City of Oxnard to learn more about their process in developing their Rent Stabilization Ordinance and Tenant Protection Ordinance to determine what the best course of action will be for the City’s emergency Tenant Protection Ordinance.*
- d. The Housing Services Division will not take the emergency Tenant Protection Ordinance to the Planning Commission and only to City Council; however, a permanent ordinance will go to the Planning Commission and then to City Council.*

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### *Public Comment (Speakers):*

*Community member Jennifer Harkey (VCoC) made public comment Cypress Place getting 17% rent increase. Many increases since moratorium lifted, several reported to County attorney's office. County has referral program for tenant assistance, HHAP funding coming soon. Robert Schaffer questioned who would be writing TP ordinance. MJ answered "staff". Schaffer indicated lack of confidence in staff and decried lack of transparency, accusing staff of acting without community input and not being able to see plan until presented to council. MJ tried to explain process to him as it is staff's role to draft such ordinances. Info would be included in agenda three days ahead of time. It would be two weeks before second reading to make sure we didn't rush into things. Discussion of issues with emergency ordinances, skip waiting period, requires higher threshold 4/5 votes. Urgency ordinance appropriate for interim until more permanent in place. MJ expresses concerns about taking emergency approach but open to advice from VSSTF or VCoC. JA: increase in people effected by rent increases, visible at one-stop, Cypress Place one example. Urgent need is real, need to keep people housed. Asked JH if county had homeless prevention funding. JH explained process to receive assistance for effected families. JA "need is now". DH: We must be cautious about pitting one part of community against another, must be cognizant of all economic levels. Be realistic. State tenant protections 10% cap seemed important before inflation. In order to rent property you must have people willing to own property. Don't pit property owners against tenants; work together for mutual benefit. Most landlords he knows are families and most take care of their properties. Many people in past six months don't care about keeping up with market rate, concerned with what costs of maintenance are; hillsides families pay three times as much for insurance. Costs dramatically up for property owners. Find solutions do-able for all. "I would be much more inclined to invite people to come live with me than I would to encourage somebody to have to lose money to own property." "Don't automatically assume that anyone who owns property is greedy. There are always bad players." Property owners are similar to minority groups such as LGBTQ that experience the stigma of preconceptions, and it won't help to antagonize them. Discourse again about first job, first apartment. JSP asked about implementation and oversight. LR indicated still under evaluation, need to work out enforcement, preference to keep in house. Karen Flock (Housing Authority) – Will there be opportunity for community input? LR yes, contact me directly to make suggestions. DS: wishes there was a way for landlords to make repairs without evicting tenants; perhaps include as part of permit process. MJ: council had long discussion on that topic. Stephanie Caldwell (Chamber of Commerce): What is the timeline? LR: looking at next few months. Ultimately decision will rest with council. SC: What is best process for stakeholders to engage? Concerned report will only reflect views of housing advocates*

*and not the housing industry. LR: we want feedback from everyone, looking at establishing an email for comments. Need to hear from landlords and property management companies. Don't want protections to result in bankruptcies. SC: risk losing housing units if landlords can't make profit. MJ: This is first step in process. Lots of engagement, won't be a surprise.*

**5. Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant**

Information Only: Receive information on the HHAP grant and the City's plan to apply for funding for a homelessness prevention program.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant..*

- a. The Housing Services Division is currently managing a Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant which allows us to have an individual with lived experience work as an Outreach Worker with the Downtown Ventura Partners, however, our subsequent applications for funding for street outreach have not been awarded.*
- b. When speaking with the Ventura County Continuum of Care (CoC), it was indicated that the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is currently not viewing street outreach as a viable option at this time. So, it has been recommended that the City submits applications for one of the following:*
  - operating costs*
  - rapid re-housing*
  - homelessness prevention/rental assistance*
  - shelters*
  - permanent supportive housing*
- c. The Housing Services Division is planning to apply for homelessness prevention/rental assistance and offer short-term rental assistance subsidies. The Housing Services Division is currently working on a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to find qualified agencies, contractors or organizations that we can contract with to ensure that the program will be successful and positively impact extremely low to low-income individuals and families throughout the City.*
- d. The Request for Proposals (RFP) for HHAP 4 will be released later this month and HHAP 5 will be released at a later date; the Housing Services Division is planning to apply for both rounds of funding.*

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### *Public Comment (Speakers):*

*Community member Stephanie Caldwell made public comment about timeline. If admin process takes too long people lose home before getting support. LR: priority for individuals or families who have been noticed. Goal is to work quickly before thirty days expires, to qualify individuals / families. Make sure working with agency that has good track record with this program. MJ: council directed staff to put money toward homeless prevention fund. Many organizations out there with good track record. We can't overthink, just do it.*

### **6. Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing**

Information Only: Receive information on the meeting with the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura and a potential affordable and permanent supportive housing project in the City.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing.*

- a. *The Housing Services Division met with the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (HACSB) regarding the acquisition and rehabilitation of a local motel to convert it into affordable and permanent supportive housing.*
- b. *There were three motels being considered including the La Quinta (5818 Valentine Rd., Ventura, CA 93003), Motel 6 (3075 Johnson Dr., Ventura, CA 93003) and the White Caps Motel (1612 E. Thompson Blvd., Ventura, CA 93001), however, La Quinta is a more viable option for the following reasons:*
  - i. *there are 142 rooms and 120+ parking spaces*
    1. *6 accessible rooms located on the first floor*
      - a. *will need to add an additional 10 accessible rooms which will need to be spread out around the property to meet requirements*
    2. *3 suites which can be converted and used as offices for management*
      - ii. *allows for population mix*
      - iii. *access to public transportation options*
      - iv. *number of amenities including commercial laundry room, gym and pool*
- c. *Both the City and the HACSB are interested in the property, so HACSB will be moving forward on working on a pro-forma.*

The City will start working on fulfilling the requirements to receive our HOME-ARP funding of \$1.6 million for this project and analyzing other funding sources such as Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA) and HOME funding.

*Public Comment (Speakers):*

Community member Robert Schaeffer asked which hotel. MJ said La Quinta, the one with all the sex trafficking. Would not advise friends or family to stay there. Excited we are working with county and HA on permanent supportive housing. Other cities have been successful. JSP asked about timeline. LR referred to KF. KF: many different steps, no site control, looking at state Homekey funding coming in February. Kyler also working on project. Jim Duran: will this be specific to Ventura residents, or whole county? LR: Ventura residents. JD: If it is PSH will there be services on site? LR: yes. MJ: to clarify can't be limited to Ventura residents. LR: we can state preference. Vision is not to turn anyone away. Available to all that need it. MJ: we would not be the first, happening countywide.

**7. Faith-Based Congregation Meeting**

Information Only: Receive information on Faith-Based Congregation meeting held on August 30, 2022 regarding homelessness and housing.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on the Faith-Based Congregation Meeting.*

- a. Meredith and I co-hosted a faith-based congregation meeting which allowed congregations and organizations to discuss how they have been assisting unhoused individuals and families in our community.*
- b. It was an excellent event and many of the congregations and organizations are looking to start or strengthen their partnerships to ensure that we can prevent and end homelessness in our community.*

*Public Comment (Speakers):*

Community member Pam Kelley who hosted meeting reported it was extremely positive. Very exciting, committee is figuring out how to continue engagement. Many people didn't know these are things were happening. Lots of excitement. MJ: thanks to advocacy community for networking and pulling all the different organizations together.

**8. BAM! aka Beautify and Maintain!**

Information Only: Receive information on BAM! and the work that they are doing in the City.



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*Leona Rollins provided an update on the BAM!*

- a. *During a recent meeting, there seems to have been some confusion on the role that BAM! plays in our community. Just for clarification, BAM! does not assist with active encampment clean-ups, however, once an encampment has been vacated, BAM! removes all the trash, debris and beautifies the area.*

**Public Comment (Speakers):**

*Community member Robert Schaeffer asked for contact phone number. LR provided. MJ asked CM MacIntyre what status of BAM! Is currently. AM: recruiting for position, hopes to also work with ARCH and perhaps have residents volunteer or be paid to contribute, give purpose and routine, opportunity to help. MJ: do we need to purchase truck. AM: tremendous backlog for vehicles right now, looking into solutions. MJ: timeline? AM: need to create program to explore safety, legality etc.*

**9. Housing Workshop on the Westside**

Information Only: Receive information on an upcoming Housing Workshop hosted by the City and their community partners.

*Leona Rollins provided an update on the Housing Workshop on the Westside.*

- a. *In the next few months, the Housing Services Division will be planning a Housing Workshop on the Westside with some of our community partners regarding homelessness and housing. The Housing Services Division is planning to invite representatives from the Housing Rights Center (HRC), Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (HACSB) and other agencies and organizations.*

**Public Comment (Speakers):**

*Community member Stephanie Caldwell spoke during public communications endorsing the idea, great way to inform people of resources available to them. MJ: had suggested to VC Supervisor who once served on council, would like county to take lead on expertise on tenancy and landlord issues. Ventura could pay into program so residents and property owners could make use of it. Based on rural legal assistance programs. Landlords tenants need guidance on process, responsibilities. Educate landlords on legislative changes. Not always clear. LR: that's what the HRC does. We can reach out to county to participate. MJ: he doesn't know who to refer distressed tenants to when he*

*gets calls. Thinks county should spearhead tenant/landlord mediation issues and everyone could “chip in” based on population. County should be involved in Westside workshop. DH: lots of tradesmen, blue-collar workers live on the West Side easily 1,000- jobs. Not having kids I see my employees as my kids and I try to share what I have learned in life, try to get them to plan ahead. Most of them happen to be Latino, who are working toward the American Dream, of owning a home. Difficult for them to get information on home buying assistance for first time home buyers, knows several men who live together who are saving up to buy and renovate and they need information on home-buying process. Allow people to dream and strive to do something more because a lot of them are very capable people. SC: two organizations that are good resources, CA Apartment Association, has hotline. Laws are changing, complex, convoluted. First time home buyer program through Ventura County Association of Realtors. Rather than recreate the wheel tap into these resources. LR will invite to conference. KF: also invite VCCDC.*

## **HOPE & SOLUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

*Staff Communications: None*

*MJ: council voted to have grant funding for PSH, FWS, prevention will come through subcommittee. Will work with Ms. Rollins and staff to schedule meeting sooner than next month. Appreciates council putting trust in us to deal with this issue. Asks LR when next meeting is scheduled. LR answers 10/11/ MJ: we will schedule something before that because we have a lot of work to do.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*This meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM.*

The Staff Reports relating to agenda items are available in the Community Development Department, Room 133, 501 Poli Street, Ventura during normal business hours. The Materials related to an agenda item submitted to the HOPE & Solutions Subcommittee after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public review in the Community Development Department. This agenda was posted on Wednesday, September 7, 2022, at 11:00 AM on the City Hall Public Notices Board and on the Internet website ([www.cityofventura.ca.gov](http://www.cityofventura.ca.gov)).

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