

# County of Santa Clara

## Office of Supportive Housing

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January 27, 2023

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors  
Jeffrey V. Smith, M.D., J.D., County Executive

FROM: Consuelo Hernandez, Director, Office of Supportive Housing

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SUBJECT: Report on Affordable Housing Opportunities with School, Community College, and Hospital Districts

### **Background**

Under Advisement from May 4, 2021 (Item No. 16), September 14, 2021 (Item No. 13), and December 13, 2022 (Item No. 26), this report provides an update regarding Administration's efforts to explore housing opportunities with school, community college, and hospital districts (collectively "Districts"). This report also serves as a consolidated response to prior referrals related to the same subject. A list of these referrals is listed at the end of this report. These referrals are part of a broader effort to meet multiple needs, create partnerships with other government agencies, and develop a better affordable housing system.

Following a Board referral in summer 2018, the Office of Supportive Housing ("OSH") engaged with all Districts via letters, emails, meetings and conversations to explore opportunities for support and partnership. Generally, the Administration sought to determine the extent to which County resources, particularly the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond (Housing Bond), were necessary, and how a partnership could meet Districts' needs and satisfy the requirements of the Housing Bond and the Board-approved program. In response to subsequent referrals, the OSH continued its outreach to Districts over the last four years. For example, earlier this year, OSH met with Santa Clara Unified School District, Fremont Union High School District, and Sunnyvale Elementary School District following introductions by Supervisor Lee.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> OSH received no response from Cupertino Union School District.

## **Summary of Progress**

While Districts varied in terms of readiness, control of developable sites, funding, and community support, the County's and Districts' efforts are increasing affordable housing for teachers, school district staff, and community college students.

- The County took a leadership role in the 231 Grant Educator Workforce Housing project, with funding contributed by four school districts (Mountain View Whisman, Palo Alto, Mountain View Los Altos, and Los Altos) and the Foothill-De Anza Community College District. The project continues to progress and will provide 110 apartments for educators in Northern Santa Clara County, with an anticipated groundbreaking in spring 2023.
- The West Valley-Mission Community College District reviewed progress on its housing feasibility studies at its April 11, 2022, District Council meeting, and the next phase of the study is currently underway.<sup>2</sup> Staff from OSH remain engaged with the West Valley-Mission Community College District, especially considering the Board's referral from September 14, 2021 (Item No. 13).
- While the County was not able to negotiate an agreement to partially fund San Jose Unified School District's (SJUSD) feasibility study, SJUSD was able to prepare a feasibility study regarding affordable housing for educators and school district staff on district-owned land. The report was completed in June 2020.<sup>3</sup> OSH staff continues looking for opportunities to support and partner with SJUSD.
- Foothill-De Anza Community College District's Affordable Housing Task Force reviewed a proposal for an Affordable Study Housing Market Analysis at its November 2, 2022, meeting.<sup>4</sup>
- Since 2018, at least three school or community college districts have enacted ballot measures to fund affordable housing development for staff and teachers at below-market rates. Of these measures, two were approved by voters.
- Finally, in some instances, OSH staff worked with Districts, including Evergreen and Franklin McKinley to conduct preliminary feasibility studies by leveraging OSH staff and consultants hired by Districts.

## **Challenges**

Though OSH's meetings with Districts have been productive, educator housing efforts face many challenges. Only about 20% of Districts have had the opportunity to explore affordable housing opportunities. First, very few Districts had or were in a position to identify District-controlled sites for potential redevelopment. In some cases, although Districts had underutilized properties, the properties had substantial constraints and redevelopment was infeasible or would be too expensive. Second, many Districts lack resources to support predevelopment activities and/or to provide long-term financing. As

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [https://wvm.edu/Documents/Housing\\_Feasibility\\_Study.pdf](https://wvm.edu/Documents/Housing_Feasibility_Study.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://sjusd.app.box.com/s/wykwrlpt6eu8nb4i9ew467zgg4la1a7/file/710619043348>.

<sup>4</sup> Available at: <https://www.fhda.edu/about-us/participatorygovernance/affordablehousingtaskforce.html>.

noted above, ballot measures for affordable housing are not always supported. Finally, many Districts lacked the administrative capacity to undertake the significant tasks associated with sponsoring, financing, and managing affordable housing.

### **Related Resources and Legislation**

Still, the County's efforts have increased collaboration and coordination between local agencies, putting Santa Clara County in a better position to take advantage of new State legislation to support affordable housing efforts by school and community college districts. New resources and legislation may help Districts that are interested in further exploring affordable housing development. Publications<sup>5</sup> available through cityLAB (at UC Los Angeles), the Center for Cities + Schools (at UC Berkeley) and Terner Center for Housing Innovation (at UC Berkeley), introduce school administrations, their Boards, and community members to affordable housing strategies being implemented by California school districts. The resources also make recommendations on how to advance affordable housing on school district-owned land.

The Teacher Housing Act of 2016 is the foundation of California's emerging policy framework on affordable educator housing and formally authorized school districts to pursue affordable housing for their employees.<sup>6</sup> Subsequent legislation, including AB 2295 (Bloom),<sup>7</sup> which will become effective January 1, 2024, through January 1, 2033, continues to reduce zoning restrictions and speed up the timeline for developing affordable housing on school district-owned land.

### **Prior Board Referrals and Reports from Administration**

The Board has issued several related referrals, including:

- Referrals from Supervisor Chavez on June 5, 2018 (Item No. 17), August 28, 2018 (Item No. 11), and November 5, 2019 (Item No. 12) directing Administration to explore affordable housing opportunities with community college, school, and hospital districts, and to collaborate with San Jose Unified School District on affordable housing.
- A referral from Supervisors Lee and Simitian on May 4, 2021 (Item No. 16) directing Administration to explore supportive housing options with school districts in District 3.
- A referral from Supervisor Simitian on September 14, 2021 (Item No. 13) directing administration to work with the West Valley-Mission Community College District to explore affordable housing opportunities on its land. As part of the September 2021 referral, the Board

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<sup>5</sup> Center for Cities + Schools, cityLAB, and Terner Center for Housing Innovation made the following publications available in early 2022: Education Workforce Housing in California: Developing the 21st Century Public School Campus (2021), available at [Report--Education-Workforce-Housing-in-CaliforniaCCS-cityLAB-Terner-Center2022-1.ashx \(csba.org\)](#), and Education Workforce Housing in California: The Handbook (2021), available at [Handbook-Education-Workforce-Housing-in-CaliforniacityLAB-CCS-Terner-Center2022pdf.ashx \(csba.org\)](#).

<sup>6</sup> Center for Cities + Schools, cityLAB, and Terner Center for Housing Innovation. (2021). Education Workforce Housing in California: Developing the 21st Century Public School Campus. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, p. 14 of report. Available at [Report--Education-Workforce-Housing-in-CaliforniaCCS-cityLAB-Terner-Center2022-1.ashx \(csba.org\)](#).

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Assemb. B. 2295 (2021-2022), Chapter 652 (Cal. Stat. 2022). Available at: [Bill Text – AB-2295 Local educational agencies: housing development projects.](#)

directed Administration to provide an off-agenda report with an update on efforts to collaborate with Districts around affordable housing since April 2020.

- A referral from Supervisors Ellenberg and Chavez on December 13, 2022 (Item No. 26) directing Administration to report with an update relating to housing feasibility studies with school and community college districts.

Administration's earlier Board reports from October 16, 2018 (Item No. 18) and May 21, 2019 (Item No. 20) described the overall approach for working with Districts to examine development opportunities. Administration's April 29, 2020, off-agenda report summarized the status of the County's efforts to explore partnerships and jointly fund feasibility studies with Districts up to that date. These prior reports are attached for reference.

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