



City of Salinas

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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September 5, 2017

County of Monterey
Economic Opportunity Committee
c/o David Spaur, Director of Economic Development
1441 Schilling Place
Salinas, CA 93901

Re: Status Report: Farmworker Housing Study and Action Plan for Salinas Valley and Pajaro Valley

Dear Mr. Spaur and Committee Members:

On behalf of the City of Salinas and its partners in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys including Monterey County, I am pleased to send you this overview and update on the Farmworker Housing Study and Action Plan.

Project Purpose:

- Develop a collective **Action Plan** to address farmworker housing shortages so employers can rely on trained stable workforce.
- Foster **regional collaboration** so that the supply of farmworker accommodations matches needs of specific types of farmworkers (e.g. seasonal unaccompanied vs. year-round family) and improves farmworker family health through safe living conditions.
- Provide current **data** to support advocacy for resources and resource allocation, e.g. supporting project financing by affordable housing developers.

Background: During the 2015-2023 Housing Element Update process, City Council directed staff to conduct a needs assessment of farmworker housing and allocated funding in both 2015 and 2016 for this effort. Salinas's staff soon discovered that south Salinas Valley mayors were also interested in best practices around farmworker housing and had traveled to Napa County to learn about their pioneering solutions for funding farmworker housing. Recognizing that a successful approach required regional solutions, the City of Salinas agreed to coordinate a regional survey and study of farmworker housing and the development of an Action Plan to address the needs.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in July 2016 and a contract with the California Institute for Rural Studies (CIRS) and California Coalition for Rural Housing (CCRH) was executed in December 2016. CIRS and CCRH are experienced with conducting agricultural

workforce surveys and analyzing best practice projects throughout California, most recently in the Coachella Valley and San Mateo County.

Funding: The following partners contributed towards the \$300,000 cost of the consultants and to conduct the Study and draft the Action Plan: Monterey County (\$25,000), Santa Cruz County (\$20,000); the cities of Gonzales (\$5,000), Greenfield, (\$5,000), King City (\$5,000), Salinas (\$204,000), Soledad (\$5,000), and Watsonville (\$5,000); the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (\$20,000); and affordable housing developers/managers: Midpen Housing (\$3,000), Monterey County Housing Authority (\$1,500) and Monterey County Housing Development Corporation (\$1,500). The United Way of Monterey County will contribute (\$3,000) toward the Summit to unveil the Study and Action Plan. The City of Salinas is also providing project management support.

Collaboration/Oversight Committee: An Oversight Committee for the Study was formed of representatives from funding partners plus collaborative stakeholders: Monterey County Departments of Health, Social Services, and Economic Development; Grower-Shipper Association of the Central Coast; California Strawberry Commission; Farm Bureaus of Monterey County and Santa Cruz County; and the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership. There are no regular meeting dates for the Oversight Committee; it convenes when needed to provide guidance on milestones of the project. In June 2016, the Oversight Committee guided the development of the scope of services in the RFP. In October 2016, the Committee met to review proposals and interview and select CIRS and CCRH from the responses to the RFP.

Progress to Date: The contract got underway in January 2017. Initial efforts included analysis of the bi-county agricultural economy in order to structure the data collection with appropriate proportional representation, not just geographically (Pajaro vs. Salinas valley), but according to targeted categories such as crop type, organic, corporate vs. family farms, labor contractors, and processing plant employees.

Eleven versions of the survey instrument for the housing needs assessment were tested. Surveyors were hired in May-June 2017 and completed the surveys by mid-August. Despite the national atmosphere around immigration status/enforcement, there appeared to be no trust issues among the farmworkers interviewed. State Assemblymember Anna Caballero recorded PSAs about the survey being confidential with no questions asked about legal status. Each person interviewed was given a bilingual card with the survey coordinator's phone number and a statement that the survey was confidential and that no information would be provided to employers or anyone outside the scientists compiling the data.

A Subcommittee of the Oversight Committee has been meeting since May regarding the case studies/best practices research to provide direction to CCRH. Example case studies (e.g. from San Mateo County's Agricultural Workforce Housing Study) helped determine content/level of detail. The Subcommittee also reviewed what kinds of projects to study with the goal of identifying up to six different prototypes. Site selection criteria, local funding sources, policy and restrictions, will be applied to identify potential sites.

Another task underway is to review Santa Cruz County land use regulations that have been affecting the development of agricultural workforce housing.

Schedule/Next Milestones:

Data entry of the survey responses is underway with data analysis to follow. Preliminary survey results are anticipated in November. The regional summit meeting (to which the members of the Monterey County Economic Opportunity Committee are invited) is expected in the first quarter of 2018. The summit meeting will review the needs assessment data, and research on best practices, sites, and regulatory barriers to develop the Action Plan.

Sincerely,



Megan Hunter
Director of Community Development

Cc: Ray Corpuz, City Manager
Jennifer Coile, Project Manager – Farmworker Housing Study, Advanced Planning Division