

Process and Schedule for a 2016 County Housing Bond

BACKGROUND:

Since the 2007-2009 Great Recession, housing has become less affordable. Housing has become extremely expensive that many households are forced to make serious tradeoffs in order to afford living in California. The combination of both falling wages for middle-income earners and rising home prices due to significant housing shortage have raised concerns about housing affordability.

While Alameda County and the larger Bay Area region are experiencing economic and employment growth, wages and salary growth have not kept up and residents cannot afford to buy or rent a home in their own communities. Housing has become the biggest cost in a household budget. Overpayment of rent for renters is common across all cities in the County, wherein 46% of all renter households pay more than 30% of their income in rent. There are also 55,000 extremely low income (ELI)¹ and very low income (VLI)² renters with severe rent burden that pay more than 50% of their household incomes in rent. In Alameda County alone, there is a 58,680 unit shortfall for affordable homes to extremely low and very low-income households.³ Of the 10 projected fastest growing professions, only 4 are considered “moderate” or “above moderate” income job categories, where people earn enough to afford to live in the County. The other 6 growing professions will still be “very low” or “extremely low” income jobs.

Due to the county-wide housing crisis, the County’s Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) of the Community Development Agency (CDA) has made presentations to the Board of Supervisors’ Transportation and Planning Committee November 2015 and January 2016 meetings, to inform the Supervisors and educate the public on the scope of the problem. At the February 9, 2016 Board of Supervisors Retreat, in consideration of its legal authority to place a County bond on the November 2016 General Elections, the Board reviewed the current county housing crisis and needs, and decided to explore the opportunities of a County General Obligation Bond for housing for the November 2016 ballot.

WORK SESSION PLAN:

The Board tasked the members of its Health Committee to lead a series of work sessions to determine the viability of a County housing bond and to recommend a set of processes and timeline for the potential measure. The Health Committee members (Supervisors Wilma Chan and Keith Carson) will conduct these work sessions to discuss relevant housing bond matters, including but not limited to financing, projects, programs, services, community engagement, and public education. The work sessions will have multiple purposes, including:

- To review the viability of a county-wide General Obligation bond for housing and to ensure that the County is organized and equipped with knowledge regarding a housing bond that addresses the current County housing needs.
- To discuss and consider housing bond policy and programmatic proposals.

¹ Extremely Low Income (ELI) Households are defined as those earning between 0 to 30% of AMI.

² Very Low Income Households (VLI) are defined as those earning between 31 to 50% of AMI. While, Low Income Households are defined as those earning at or below 80% of AMI.

³ California Housing Partnership Study. 2014.

Proposed Plan for Work Session on November 2016 Housing Bond

- To provide an opportunity for the Board to engage and solicit input and participation from the public and other interested stakeholders for potential policy proposals and desired programmatic use of the bond.
- To make a recommendation on the housing bond measure language and authorizing resolution.
- It is goal of the work sessions to present the final housing bond measure language and authorizing resolution to be voted on by the full Board of Supervisors at its meeting on June 14, 2016, in advance of the elections filing deadline to place a County measure on the November 2016 ballot.

There will be 6 Work Sessions, starting in March and concluding in early June. Sessions will be held on the following dates:

- **Session 1 – March 2** – 1221 Oak St., #536, Board Conference Room at 2:00 pm
- **Session 2 – March 28** – 1221 Oak St., 5th Floor, Board Chambers at 9:30 am
- **Session 3 – April 11** – 1221 Oak St., 5th Floor, Board Chambers at 3:00 pm
- **Session 4 – April 25** – 1221 Oak St., 5th Floor, Board Chambers at 9:30 am
- **Session 5 – May 16** – 1221 Oak St., 5th Floor, Board Chambers at 9:30 am
- **Session 6 – June 6** – 1401 Lakeside Drive, GSA Conference Room 1107 (11th Floor) at 9:30 am

Each session will be 1 to 1.5 hours and will be publicly noticed. PowerPoint presentations will be prepared for each session with research provided by HCD staff, outside experts (consultants, financial advisors, and bond counsel), County Counsel and other relevant County departments, as needed.

In addition to the Work Sessions above, updates will be provided to the entire Board of Supervisors for discussion and feedback approximately monthly between March and June 2016.

PROCESS OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE

The process between now and the end June 2016 is divided into four phases:

- **PHASE 1: March 2 – April 8 – Initial Stakeholder Process**
During this time period a County-facilitated stakeholder process will be conducted to discuss county housing needs, receive input and feedback on desired programs, and engage other interested parties.
- **PHASE 2: April 10 – May 22 – Draft Bond Program and Stakeholder Process**
During this time period policy and programmatic proposals will be discussed with stakeholders, city housing staff and officials, County housing staff, and Supervisors to develop a proposed program for use of housing bond revenues.
- **PHASE 3: May 2 – May 22 – Supervisorial District Town Hall Meetings**
During this phase, it is proposed that each Alameda County Supervisor host at least one district town hall meeting to inform and educate constituents about the housing bond, and to gauge support and garner feedback.
- **PHASE 4: May 22 – June 14 – Finalize Ballot Language & BOS Vote**
During this phase, the Board of Supervisors will finalize the bond ballot language and authorizing resolution. The goal is to have the Board vote on the language and resolution during the June 14th Board meeting.