

Meeting Minutes - Monday, August 16, 2021, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Advisory Council on Aging Housing (ACOA) Workgroup

Present: Gerald Richards (Chair); Lenore McDonald (Co-Chair; Center for Elders' Independence); Lidia Gutierrez (Meals on Wheels Diablo Region); Elizabeth Verdin (The Hume Center); Jim Donnelly (ACOA); Ana Bagtas (Area Agency on Aging); Clara Fuchshuber (Front Porch/Covia); Hector Malvido (Ensure Opportunity); and Nhang Luong (Staff Support; Area Agency on Aging)

Introductions

Agenda and minutes approved unanimously

Presentation: East County Project - Lidia Gutierrez, Older Adult Support Specialist for East County with Meals on Wheels Diablo Region

East County Project launched in 2020 under the direction of five senior service organizations: Meals on Wheels Diablo Region (MOWDR), Choice in Aging, Contra Costa Senior Legal Services (CCSLS), Diablo Valley Foundation for the Aging, and Empowered Aging.

East County Project funded by John Muir Foundation.

Lidia Gutierrez hired about 4 months ago. She works for all five organizations but reports to MOWDR.

Purpose of program is to help East Contra Costa seniors overcome barriers to accessing services.

Lidia is Oakley resident and bilingual in English/Spanish. She has been learning about resources by attending Zoom meetings.

As in-person gatherings resume, Lidia plans to conduct outreach at community events. Upcoming events include resource fairs in Antioch, Knightsen, and Oakley. Outreach will target hard to reach population including people who live on boats and mobile home parks.

Can Lidia represent other organizations beyond the current five? The project is open to other partners. Client referrals can come from any organization; it is not limited to the five partners.

The program will provide short-term case management/linkages to services.

East County Project interacts with MOWDR's Case Management Program, which experienced 40% client increase. At MOWDR, the Case Management Program does initial assessment and follow-up of all in-house program clients. Case management also has a presence at senior centers.

Update: Master Plan on Aging (MPA) Local Playbook/Planning - Ana Bagtas, Program Manager, Area Agency on Aging

At the Master Plan on Aging (MPA) meeting on June 24, the Housing Subgroup recommended the following goals:

1. Build more affordable housing for Older Adults and People with Disabilities, especially Permanent Supportive Housing for Extremely Low Income and Very Low Income Households.
2. Contra Costa needs to increase supply of alternative housing types, including group homes, shared housing, Additional Dwelling Units (ADU), and board and cares.

3. Multigenerational housing creates inclusion and affordability. Creating “granny units” and ADUs built intentionally with access and space in mind. Cities need to work with developers to create small and large homes that allow people with different income levels and access needs to live in a community together.
4. Housing: Continue/adapt Project Room Key housing & ensure affordable to older adults.

Next step is to form a Contra Costa Implementing the Master Plan for Aging in California Together (IMPACT) Committee, a steering committee similar to what has been formed at the state level. The Contra Costa IMPACT Committee will help shape and guide local MPA planning and implementation. In addition, there will be MPA workgroups, including one on housing, to carry out MPA goals and objectives.

How will MPA Housing Workgroup differ from Advisory Council on Aging (ACOA) Housing Workgroup? ACOA Housing Workgroup, for the most part, convenes to share information and learn about successful housing models to promote. It is not a decision-making body. It would be unfortunate to have two housing workgroups running parallel. We will wait to hear more about the MPA Housing Workgroup before deciding next steps.

Timeline – First meeting of IMPACT Committee to take place in September. The IMPACT Committee will develop a timeline. The hope is for workgroups to convene in the fall.

Area Agency on Aging will review its Area Plan and add objectives related to MPA.

MPA Housing goals are ambitious. Housing development will need City involvement. Cities are struggling with affordability. A strategy is to figure out what cities do best and what the County brings to the table. Project Room Key might be a good collaborative project for cities and the County.

Cities have list of surplus properties that potentially can convert into housing or space for services. Alameda Point Collaborative is an example of a project that brings housing as well as social and health organizations under the same space.

A focus of the MPA or ACOA Housing Workgroups could be reviewing Housing Elements of local cities. It would be good to include city data in the housing white paper. We can work with city representatives to the ACOA to engage city leaders in housing issues.

County Supervisors Gioia and Anderson lead a committee on housing that met about 4 times. The committee was established with help from Ensuring Opportunity. A suggestion is to reach out to Ensuring Opportunity to identify individuals for the MPA IMPACT Committee and workgroups.

Update: Housing Legislation, Gerald Richards, Chair

AB 71 – Amends tax code to create dedicated funding for homeless services.

Proposition 1304 – affirms state take tangible steps to overcome patterns of segregation and further the goal of fair housing.

SB 91 tenant protection had been replaced by AB 832. SB 91 extends rental assistance program. A lot of the money allocated have not reached renters. Contra Costa’s allocation is \$70 million with 1% set aside for outreach services.

Richmond Community Foundation (RCF) and Ensuring Opportunity issued Request for Proposal for outreach services and awarded 12 outreach and some technical assistance grants. Tenants are now potentially eligible for complete rent forgiveness if certain criteria is met. Tenants can now apply for Emergency Rental Assistance (ERAP) without landlord consent. People have from now until October to apply for ERAP.

Bay Area Legal Services will have a hotline to answer questions about ERAP.

Update: Home Match Contra Costa – There were three matches in the month of August.

Next meeting: September 20, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.