



3-5 Year Strategic Plan

This document includes Narrative Responses to specific questions that grantees of the Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership, Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS and Emergency Shelter Grants Programs must respond to in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations.

General

Executive Summary

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Executive Summary:

The 2010 Sonoma County Consolidated Plan is a five-year plan covering FY 2010-2011 through FY 2014-2015 and is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in order for local jurisdictions to receive federal housing and community development funds under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and the Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) programs. The Sonoma County Community Development Commission (Commission) will administer these programs either directly or through funding provided to other governmental or nonprofit agencies to benefit low-income households and assist in the elimination of slums and blight by addressing the goals and objectives enumerated in the Consolidated Plan and summarized below.

The overall goal of these three housing and community development programs is to develop viable urban communities principally for low-income persons by:

- 1) Providing decent housing;
 - assisting homeless persons to obtain affordable housing;
 - assisting persons at risk of becoming homeless to retain their housing;
 - preserving and retaining the affordable housing stock;
 - increasing the availability of permanent housing that is decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable to lower-income families, particularly to members of disadvantaged minorities, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability;
 - increasing the supply of supportive housing which includes structural features and services to enable persons with special needs (including persons with HIV/AIDS) to live in dignity and independence; and
 - providing affordable housing that is accessible to public transportation and job opportunities.
- 2) Providing a suitable living environment;
 - improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods;
 - eliminating blighting influences and the deterioration of property and facilities;
 - increasing access to quality public and private facilities and services;
 - reducing the isolation of income groups within areas through spatial deconcentration of housing opportunities for lower income persons and the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods;
 - restoring and preserving properties of special historic, architectural, or aesthetic value; and
 - conserving energy resources and using renewable energy sources.
- 3) Expanding economic opportunities.
 - creating and retaining jobs;
 - establishing, stabilizing and expanding small businesses (including micro-

- businesses);
- providing public services in support of employment;
- providing jobs to lower-income persons living in areas affected by those programs and activities, or jobs resulting from carrying out activities under programs covered by the plan;
- promoting availability of mortgage financing for lower-income persons at reasonable rates using non-discriminatory lending practices;
- promoting access to capital and credit for development activities that support the long-term economic and social viability of the community; and
- promoting empowerment and self-sufficiency for lower-income persons to reduce generational poverty in federally assisted housing and public housing.

It is important to note that the goals and objectives included in the Strategic Plan do not represent all of the actions to be undertaken in Sonoma County but will be used to guide the Commission in using HUD funding to address the primary goals and the priority needs identified in the Urban County. They reflect only those actions that may be carried out using CDBG, HOME and ESG funding, in conjunction with other financial and organizational resources listed in each year's Action Plan.

The Consolidated Plan serves the following four functions:

- 1) A planning document for the Urban County, which builds on a participatory process and is consistent with the 10-Year Homeless Action Plan and jurisdictional planning documents such as Housing Elements;
- 2) An application for federal funds under HUD's CDBG, HOME and ESG formula grant programs;
- 3) A strategy to be followed in carrying out HUD programs; and
- 4) An action plan that provides a basis for assessing performance.

The Consolidated Plan is organized as follows:

- 1) The Consolidated Plan is a Strategic Plan that includes five main sections: General, Housing, Homeless, Community Development, and Non-Homeless Special Needs. A sixth section, labeled *Strategic Plan Additional Files*, includes exhibits that augment the other sections of the Strategic Plan.
- 2) The Consolidated Plan also includes an Action Plan for each of the years covered by the Consolidated Plan. Each one-year Action Plan includes General, Housing, Homeless, Community Development, and Non-Homeless Special Needs Housing sections, as well as an annual *Additional Files* section, which includes exhibits that augment other sections of the related Action Plan.

The Commission developed the Consolidated Plan in consultation with a wide range of public and private entities, including governmental and nonprofit organizations knowledgeable about the needs of the low-income residents of Sonoma County, and private citizens interested in, or affected by, the housing and community development activities discussed in the Plan. These contacts were part of a continuous process conducted in order to involve the broader community in assessing priority housing and community development needs, developing priorities, goals and objectives for addressing identified needs, allocating available CDBG, HOME, ESG and other local funding to activities that address priority needs, monitoring funded activities, and evaluating programmatic and fiscal performance to ensure accountability.

Strategic Plan

Mission:

The Community Development Commission (Commission) is dedicated to enhancing the lives of the people of Sonoma County. We promote decent, affordable housing and improve neighborhoods and communities by:

- Providing rental assistance to lower income households.
- Facilitating self-sufficiency for participating families.
- Funding non-profit organizations, public service programs, public works projects and housing rehabilitation and development.
- Offering financial assistance to property owners and builders in the county's redevelopment areas.
- Providing home ownership opportunities.

We are committed to providing services to our customers and co-workers in an effective, efficient and respectful manner.

General Questions

3-5 Year Strategic Plan General Questions response:

1. Describe the geographic areas of the jurisdiction (including areas of low income families and/or racial/minority concentration) in which assistance will be directed.

The Sonoma County Consolidated Plan encompasses activities undertaken by the County of Sonoma, as well as the seven participating municipalities of Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Rohnert Park, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Windsor. Together, these eight jurisdictions comprise the Urban County, an entity recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as eligible for formula grant funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) programs.

Sonoma County's southern border is approximately 35 miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge. Bounded by the Pacific coast to the west, the County's northern border is marked by redwood forests. Throughout the County, agricultural lands support farming, dairy, orchards, and vineyards. The "Wine Country" of Sonoma County has become one of the most important tourist attractions in Northern California.

While agriculture plays a vital role in the County's economy, many tracts of agricultural land are increasingly in demand for housing development. According to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the population of Sonoma County is projected to increase 9% between 2005 and 2015, with the largest areas of growth occurring in and around the cities of Cloverdale, Santa Rosa and Petaluma. Santa Rosa and Petaluma are HUD entitlement jurisdictions separate from the Urban County and when possible are not included in statistics used for this report. However, for consistent documentation countywide statistics are sometimes necessarily included when a breakdown of jurisdictions could not be found.

For purposes of this Consolidated Plan, an Area of Racial Minority Concentration is defined as an area with distinct geographic borders (i.e. census tract) in which the percentage of minority households is more than 20 percentage points above the percentage of minority households in the community as a whole. The most current census data from year 2000 shows that the overall minority population of Sonoma County is 18.4%, while the minority population of the Urban County is 16.6%. There are 86 census tracts in all of Sonoma County, 76 of which make up the Urban County. Of the Urban County census tracts, two have racial minority percentages at or above 36.6%, therefore qualifying as Areas of Racial Minority Concentration (16.6% plus 20%).

Both of the census tracts are “islands” of unincorporated area within the City of Santa Rosa, adjacent to Highway 101, which defines the metropolitan corridor transversing the County. A map showing the percentage of ethnic minorities living in different parts of the County is included in the Strategic Plan Additional Files section of this Plan.

For purposes of this Consolidated Plan, an Area of Low/Moderate-Income Concentration is defined as an area with distinct geographic borders (i.e. census tract) in which the percentage of low/moderate-income households (with incomes less than or equal to 80% of Median Area Income [MAI], adjusted for family size) is more than 20 percentage points above the percentage of low/moderate-income households in the community as a whole. Census data indicates that 40.8% of the Urban County population is low/moderate-income. Five of the 76 census tracts that comprise the Urban County have low/moderate-income percentages at or above 60.8% and qualify as Areas of Low/Moderate-Income Concentration (40.8% plus 20%). All five of these tracts are “islands” of unincorporated area within larger metropolitan areas, four within the City of Santa Rosa and one that is located on the periphery of, and is shared with, the City of Petaluma. Each of these tracts is also adjacent to or very near Highway 101. As shown on the map in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, the areas with the highest percentages of low/moderate-income households are in the metropolitan Santa Rosa area, along the Highway 101 corridor, and in the lower Russian River area. It appears that the areas with the next highest percentages of low/moderate-income households are the more rural areas of the County. The areas with the highest percentage of low/moderate-income households roughly correlate to the areas with the highest percentage of minority households.

2. Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA) (91.215(a)(1)) and the basis for assigning the priority (including the relative priority, where required) given to each category of priority needs (91.215(a)(2)). Where appropriate, the jurisdiction should estimate the percentage of funds the jurisdiction plans to dedicate to target areas.

The Commission divides the HUD Entitlement allocation into several categories:

<i>Funding</i>	<i>Home</i>	<i>CDBG</i>	<i>ESG</i>
Affordable Housing Development and Preservation	45.0%	0	0
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	45.0%	0	0
County Owned Public Facilities and Improvements	0	15.0%	0
Countywide and Unincorporated Area Capital Projects	0	19.5%	0
Public Services including Homelessness Prevention	0	15.0%	95.0%
Incorporated Municipality Capital Projects	0	30.5%	0
Administration	10.0%	20.0%	5.0%

The division of funds in this manner effectively allocates funds throughout Sonoma County because the Urban County includes all of the unincorporated area of Sonoma County, the seven municipalities are located north (Cloverdale, Healdsburg, Windsor), south (Rohnert Park and Cotati), east (Sonoma) and west (Sebastopol). In addition, TBRA funds can be allocated to units throughout the entire county, including the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma.

The priorities identified throughout this Plan in all categories are considered during the annual funding allocation process. Funds are allocated for applications received that 1) best meet the current needs of the county, with 2) projects or programs that will be completed within a reasonable length of time, and 3) are administered by agencies proven to be effective in addressing the needs of the population to be served while complying with federal regulations.

3. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs (91.215(a)(3)).

Some of the obstacles to meeting underserved needs are as follows:

1. The overall economic climate of the country and the State of California budget crisis has constrained local government finances. This reduction of funding impacts the ability of local government and non-profit agencies to meet underserved needs of the population.
2. Local governmental policies, such as building codes, subdivision standards, and impact fees, are enacted to protect and further the general welfare of the public; however, a complex regulatory environment can have the unintended effect of creating barriers to housing affordability by increasing the per unit costs associated with housing development and by effectively exacerbating the scarcity of developable land.
3. The supply of rental housing in Sonoma County that is affordable to lower-income households has not kept pace with the increase in population in recent years. Even though the rental market is experiencing a higher vacancy rate than in the recent past, rents have not decreased to a level that is affordable for lower-income families (with incomes at or below 80% of MAI).
4. Sonoma County home prices have historically been materially more expensive than the rest of the nation. In the County's current real estate market, homes are becoming more affordable as a result of the economic downturn. However, economic conditions are also causing job loss and the foreclosure of many homes, either situation preventing many households from taking advantage of the lower housing prices. The median household income decreased 2.12% from 2000 to 2006. As of July 2009, the State of California Employment Development Department reported a 10.3% rate of unemployment, a historically high rate. Because of the wide disparity of housing prices and incomes both historically and recently, it is doubtful that home prices and household incomes will come into alignment during this Consolidated Plan period and affordable housing will continue to be an important investment of CDBG and HOME funds.
5. Countywide, the percentage of homeowners who are cost-burdened (households spending 30% or more of income on housing costs) increased from 31.7% to 44.7% between 2000 and 2006. During the same period, cost-burdened renters increased from 43.6% to 59.9%.
6. Within the past several years, the cost of residential development has increased significantly, and extension of credit, especially for ownership development, has tightened, slowing the pace of construction.
7. The lack of public transportation and the distances between homes and available jobs contributes to the high cost of housing for lower-income households, as transportation costs inflate the real cost of living.

Managing the Process (91.200 (b))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Managing the Process response:

1. **Lead Agency. Identify the lead agency or entity for overseeing the development of the plan and the major public and private agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the consolidated plan.**

Pursuant to a Joint Powers Agreement, Sonoma County is the lead agency for the Urban County. The County has the authority to select and carry out activities that are funded by the programs covered under the Plan and to submit the Consolidated Plan, including annual Action Plans, substantial amendments and annual performance reports, to HUD. Sonoma County is governed

by an elected Board of Supervisors, composed of one representative from each of the County's five Supervisorial districts.

The Board of Supervisors has designated the Commission as the agency responsible for overseeing the development of the Consolidated Plan and for administering the programs covered by the Plan. The members of the Board of Supervisors comprise the Board of Commissioners for the Commission. The Commission's Community Development division performs the consolidated planning functions. In addition to the Community Development division, the Commission encompasses the Sonoma County Housing Authority and the Sonoma County Community Redevelopment Agency.

The Board of Supervisors has established a Community Development Committee, comprised of eight appointed members. Five members represent the five Supervisorial districts and two members are low-income, Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) tenant representatives. The Director, or appointee, of the Sonoma County Department of Human Services sits as an ex-officio and non-voting member of the Committee. The Committee is the Commission's primary advisory body and assumes the responsibility of recommending policies and programs, reviewing and prioritizing HOME, ESG and CDBG proposals for funding and reviewing program performance.

The City and Town Managers, or other appointed representative, of the seven participating municipalities, form a second advisory body, the Technical Advisory Committee. This committee reviews and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on issues relating to the distribution of CDBG funds within the seven incorporated jurisdictions.

The Community Development division staff 1) works with a wide variety of public and private entities to develop the Plan, 2) issues Requests for Proposals to nonprofits and governmental agencies wishing to receive CDBG, HOME and ESG funding, 3) administers subrecipient contracts, 4) provides technical assistance related to activities, and 5) performs compliance monitoring functions. The list of public and private agencies referred to in Question 3 are responsible for administering CDBG, HOME, and ESG-funded programs.

2. Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.

The Sonoma County General Plan Housing Element, certified by the State in 2009, was used as a major source of data to inform this Strategic Plan. Because the 2000 U.S. Decennial Census and the specific subsets of that census data prepared for HUD is still the most recent data accepted by HUD, some statistics remain as reported in the 2005 Consolidated Plan. The Sonoma County Continuum of Care 10-Year Homeless Action Plan, along with consultation with various agencies, municipal governments and County departments were also utilized in the development of this plan.

Additionally, a Needs Assessment Survey was made available during one of the annual Technical Assistance sessions (November 5, 2009) that Commission staff conducts for interested applicants. Needs were identified at a public Needs Assessment Forum to gather input from housing, facility, and service providers, relevant agencies and members of the public. The November 17, 2009 Needs Assessment Forum was held at the Commission, with representatives from public and nonprofit organizations assisting the low/moderate-income residents of Sonoma County. The forum was conducted by defining the role of the Consolidated Plan in determining the Urban County's expenditure of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding, and explaining the relationship of the Consolidated Plan to the Strategic Plan. Once the parameters and limitations of the Consolidated Plan were established, the assessment of priority needs was solicited through an open dialogue, resulting in input from both geographically and philosophically diverse sources. A 30-day public comment period also gave the public a chance to comment on the draft Consolidated Plan. Final comments were invited on May 4, 2010 at the Board of Supervisor's public meeting, during which final allocation amounts for the Action Plan were decided.

3. Describe the jurisdiction's consultations with housing, social service agencies, and other entities, including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, and homeless persons.

Please see the Inventory of Services and Agencies included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan. The Commission has on-going interaction with the agencies and groups described and this informs the annual Action Plan, as well as the five-year Consolidated Plan.

Citizen Participation (91.200 (b))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Citizen Participation response:

1. Provide a summary of the citizen participation process.

In order to ensure maximum participation in the Consolidation Process among all populations and special needs groups, and to ensure that their issues and concerns are adequately addressed, the Commission's Citizen's Participation Plan is summarized below:

1. Access to Meetings, Information, Records - To ensure that citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties have the opportunity to review and comment, the Citizen Participation Plan ensures that the public will be provided with reasonable and timely access to meetings, information and records relating to proposed housing and community development activities, the proposed use of housing and community development funds, and the Urban County's past use of CDBG, HOME and ESG assistance.
2. Technical Assistance - The Commission provides technical assistance to any persons or groups interested in developing CDBG, HOME or ESG funding proposals, including groups that represent low-income persons. Such assistance includes at least two annual applicant workshops where Commission staff provides information and assistance on funding applications. Additional technical assistance is available by individual appointments with Commission staff.
3. Public Notices - Notices of (1) public hearings and other public meetings related to the consolidated planning process, (2) funding availability and applicant workshops, (3) publication of the draft Consolidated Plan (including the Annual Action Plan), (4) proposed substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, and (5) publication of the draft annual performance report, are published in the Press Democrat and posted on the Commission's office door. Each public hearing is noticed at least two weeks prior to the hearing date. Flyers in both English and Spanish are distributed to community-based organizations throughout the County that serve low/moderate-income persons and are posted in the lobby of the County Housing Authority and the main Public Library. Notices related to the consolidated planning process are also mailed directly to interested parties who request to be included on a mailing list maintained for this purpose.

Information on the amount of CDBG, HOME and ESG funding available, and the range of activities that may be undertaken, is published in the Press Democrat prior to the applicant workshop(s). An estimate of funding to be used for activities that benefit low/moderate-income persons is provided at the annual public hearings and is included in the annual Consolidated Plan Summary.

4. Publication of Draft Documents - The annual Consolidated Plan Summary is published in the Press Democrat describing the contents and purpose of the Plan. Notices of any proposed substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and of the draft annual performance report are also published in the Press Democrat. All notices list the locations where a full copy of the draft documents is available for review. The County also makes free copies of the draft documents available to citizens, upon request. Draft

copies of the Executive Summary of the Consolidated Plan are posted on the Commission's website.

5. **Public Hearings and Public Meetings** - The Commission holds at least two public hearings annually, during different stages of the community development planning process, to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. One hearing is scheduled to review housing and community development needs, proposed policies and procedures, and past program performance. At least one public hearing is scheduled to consider the annual Consolidated Plan submission. These hearings are held before the draft Consolidated Plan is published for a 30-day comment period. Public hearings and meetings are scheduled at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries. The hearings and meetings are held at the Commission office or at the Board of Supervisors' chambers, both of which are located in the most heavily populated, central part of Sonoma County, or are held in other locations throughout the County as are considered convenient to interested parties. In all cases, meeting locations are wheelchair accessible. Special accommodations for persons with visual or hearing impairments are made upon request. In cases where a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to attend a public hearing or meeting, the Commission supplies an interpreter.
6. **Public Comments** - The views of citizens, public agencies and other interested parties are considered before the County submits the annual Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and the annual performance report to HUD. Public comments may be presented orally at public hearings and meetings, or may be submitted in writing to the Commission. Following publication of the draft Consolidated Plan and any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, citizens are given at least 30 days in which to submit written comments. Following publication of the draft annual performance report, citizens are given at least 15 days in which to submit written comments. A summary of all oral comments, and full copies of all written comments are attached to the final document. At a public meeting following the 30-day comment period for the Consolidated Plan or any substantial amendment, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors reviews and considers all written and oral comments received prior to approval of the Plan or amendment.
7. **Availability of Final Documents** - The adopted Consolidated Plan, approved substantial amendments and the annual performance report are made available to the public. Free copies of the documents are distributed to interested citizens, upon request. The documents are also made available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. Citizens may obtain a copy of the documents by calling the Commission office, and final documents are posted to the Commission's website.
8. **Response to Complaints** - The Commission provides a timely, substantive written answer to every written citizen complaint relating to the Consolidated Plan (except complaints related solely to level of funding received through the competitive RFP process), substantial amendments to the Plan and the performance report, where practicable, within 15 working days.
9. Information is provided on the Commission's website in a fully accessible format whenever possible.

2. Provide a summary of citizen comments or views on the plan.

No citizen comments were received on the plan.

3. Provide a summary of efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the consolidated plan, including outreach to minorities and non-English speaking

persons, as well as persons with disabilities.

Public participation in the Consolidated Planning process is encouraged in many ways. In addition to publication of all public notices in the Press Democrat, English and Spanish language flyers were sent to over one hundred individuals and agencies that have requested to be included on the Commission's mailing list for the Consolidated Plan and related notices. The flyers were also sent to 23 organizations that are frequented by low-income persons and minority populations likely to be affected by the Commission's CDBG, HOME and ESG-funded activities. These organizations, including city and town offices, public library branches, the Sonoma County Housing Authority and nonprofit agencies that work with lower-income, Spanish-speaking, and minority persons, were asked to post the flyers in a public area. The Commission has made provisions to provide bi-lingual translators and signing or captioning services for the hearing impaired, if so requested. The sites utilized for all public meetings or public hearings are fully ADA-compliant and in centrally located areas in proximity to public transportation services.

4. Provide a written explanation of comments not accepted and the reasons why these comments were not accepted.

No comments were received.

Institutional Structure (91.215 (i))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Institutional Structure response:

1. Explain the institutional structure through which the jurisdiction will carry out its consolidated plan, including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions.

The Commission works in conjunction with multiple County departments, the seven participating municipalities, and various nonprofit agencies receiving CDBG, HOME and ESG funding (listed in each year's Consolidated Plan Action Plan), to carry out the activities covered by the Consolidated Plan. A host of other public and private organizations (also listed in each year's Action Plan) contribute to this effort through the provision of financial and organizational resources that are coordinated with the CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding for projects.

Together, the Commission, the County departments, the municipalities, the funded agencies, and the agencies providing other resources with which the CDBG, HOME and ESG funding is coordinated, constitute the institutional structure through which the Urban County implements the Consolidated Plan.

Finally, the ongoing continuum of care planning process facilitates increased collaboration among the County, City of Santa Rosa, City of Petaluma, the County Departments of Health and Human Services, and virtually all housing and homeless service providers throughout Sonoma County. The information sharing and brainstorming that takes place at these meetings is instrumental in forging new connections and working relationships among several different participants. In delineating goals and formulating action steps, the Continuum of Care Planning Group and Steering Committee have fostered an increased level of understanding among all participants regarding the comprehensive needs of people who are homeless and persons at-risk of becoming homeless. The United Way and the Community Foundation, as the two main private funders, each have a seat on the Continuum of Care Steering Committee.

2. Assess the strengths and gaps in the delivery system.

The Commission's strong working relationships with the participating cities and County departments includes an on-going dialog about the needs of low/moderate-income residents and about the many County-funded and other local programs in place to serve those needs. Through

the Commission's coordination of the Continuum of Care planning process, the County works closely with many of the non-profit agencies to coordinate their application for, and utilization of, federal funds. A frequent exchange of ideas and information benefits each participant, as well as the delivery system as a whole.

While progress has been made in inter-agency efforts to address affordable housing and homelessness, there needs to be a greater cooperative effort involving the private sector. Private and public funders could work more closely together in funding local services and housing activities. Currently, many public and private funders devote resources to numerous common projects, however, each funder has separate reporting and monitoring requirements and places specialized and individualized demands on the implementing agency. Concerted coordination efforts in this area could benefit all parties.

3. Assess the strengths and gaps in the delivery system for public housing, including a description of the organizational relationship between the jurisdiction and the public housing agency, including the appointing authority for the commissioners or board of housing agency, relationship regarding hiring, contracting and procurement; provision of services funded by the jurisdiction; review by the jurisdiction of proposed capital improvements as well as proposed development, demolition or disposition of public housing developments.

The County of Sonoma does not own or operate any public housing units.

Monitoring (91.230)

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Monitoring response:

1. Describe the standards and procedures the jurisdiction will use to monitor its housing and community development projects and ensure long-term compliance with program requirements and comprehensive planning requirements.

Project monitoring is undertaken on several levels:

Programmatic Compliance

The Commission staff regularly monitors CDBG, HOME, and ESG funded activities to ensure that all projects are administered in compliance with applicable regulations and that accomplishments are addressing the priorities established in the Consolidated Plan. Because the majority of the funding allocated to the Commission is provided to other governmental and nonprofit agencies, providing technical assistance to, and monitoring the performance of, subrecipients is crucial. The Subrecipient Agreement used by the Commission details program requirements, applicable statutes and regulations, and references the provisions of several OMB Circulars containing federal cost principles, audit, and uniform administrative requirements. An extensive Subrecipient Handbook containing copies of all pertinent regulatory provisions, along with all other forms and guidelines is available on the Commission website to all entities receiving funds. The Commission conducts an orientation session at the beginning of each fiscal year, during which all subrecipients receive updated information regarding the regulations and policies pertaining to their funded activities. Throughout the year, Commission staff provides additional technical assistance through one-on-one contacts with many of the subrecipient agencies.

Subrecipient Reporting Requirements

Subrecipients of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds are required under contract to submit three quarterly reports and an annual report to the Commission. Each of the quarterly reports provides detailed financial and quantifiable narrative information regarding the subrecipients' activities, beneficiaries, and accomplishments during the ninety-day term. The final or annual report covers

the entire term of the contract, extending through the final day of the fiscal year. The Commission reviews and monitors the reports both for completeness and for compliance with all applicable federal and local regulations.

Reimbursement Reports

Once contracts have been executed between the Commission and subrecipients for use of federal funds, the subrecipients may begin submitting requests for reimbursable expenses. Requests for funds are accompanied by a Reimbursement Report. The Reimbursement Reports contain a breakdown of expenditures by eligible, authorized activity and total expenditures for the report period, which is typically either monthly or quarterly. The reports are accompanied by backup documentation for the reported expenditures, including general ledger reports and payroll reports, receipts or bills if determined to be necessary by Commission staff. The Commission compliance staff reviews the Reports to ensure that expenditures are consistent with contract terms and that all funds have been expended only for eligible activities. Payments are not released for ineligible expenses or for activities that are not authorized in the contract documents.

Project Monitoring

The Commission's project management staff routinely monitors the projects being undertaken with federal and local housing and community development funds. In addition to reviewing financial and programmatic reports, staff assists in the development of community development projects and guides the various subrecipients through the project development process. This often entails informing, educating, and ensuring compliance with the numerous federal guidelines including labor standards, environmental assessments, relocation, displacement and one-for-one replacement, and competitive bidding procedures.

When projects or services commence implementation or construction, Commission staff may conduct site surveys. Commission staff regularly monitors service and construction sites to ensure that the projects are progressing according to schedule and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the agencies project management.

Financial Monitoring

The Commission's financial staff is responsible for monitoring the fiscal accountability and responsibility of subrecipient organizations. Financial staff periodically performs random checks of Reimbursement Reports and maintains all records of actual reimbursements made to subrecipients. The financial staff reports to project staff regarding the financial progress of all subrecipient activities by fiscal year. Similarly, project staff regularly advises financial staff of new project developments, the status of expenditures, and timeliness of reports.

Many subrecipients are required to submit annual program specific or single audits, as required by OMB Circular A-133, to the Commission within 120 days from the end of the subrecipient's fiscal year. All applicants for funds are also required to submit copies of their previous two annual financial statements at the time an application for funding is submitted. Financial staff reviews and reports on each agency's fiscal year financial statements prior to the execution of new contracts and at the close of each fiscal year.

On-site financial monitoring is also conducted annually and with additional periodic visits, if deemed necessary. Financial staff interviews project delivery staff regarding compliance with federal regulations, local requirements, and tests records for consistency with generally accepted accounting practices. The frequency of monitoring varies depending upon the source of funds, the size of the subsidy, the type of project and the monitoring history.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Commission staff reviews HMIS Data Quality Reports on a monthly basis and follows up directly with the homeless service providers. In addition, annual site visits are conducted by Commission staff and/or the Continuum of Care Evaluation Committee to check on signage, privacy, and hardware compliance.

Monitoring Affordable Rental Housing Developments

The Commission has developed an Affordable Rental Housing Monitoring Manual that details procedures for monitoring developments funded with CDBG, HOME, or and other local financing/incentives. This includes procedures for performing initial tenant eligibility certifications, annual tenant eligibility re-certifications, completing compliance reports, performing site visits, and monitoring maximum rent and income levels. The manual also incorporates all of the current forms and documents the Commission uses to monitor affordable developments. Implementation of the procedures detailed in the manual ensures that the County's CDBG and HOME programs remain in compliance with all applicable, post-completion program requirements.

Performance Measurement System

In formulating the 2010 Consolidated Plan, the County conducted an assessment of the needs prevalent in its jurisdiction and developed goals and specific objectives, along with measurable outputs, to address those needs identified. This framework creates a performance measurement system that enables the County to track the progress made in achieving the stated goals on both an annual and cumulative basis. By evaluating progress, the County continually strives to delineate meaningful outcomes and indicators to assess the impact upon those benefiting from the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs.

Monitoring results are incorporated into the annual CAPER and reported quarterly to the Sonoma County Community Development Committee, the latter being an important feedback loop that will inform future years' allocation recommendation.

Priority Needs Analysis and Strategies (91.215 (a))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Priority Needs Analysis and Strategies response:

1. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.

Priority is assigned based on the level of need that is demonstrated by the data collected during the preparation of this Consolidated Plan. Affordable housing units are considered a high priority. Please also see Managing the Process, Question 2.

2. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

This has been addressed under *General Questions* section, Question 3 of this Plan.

Lead-based Paint (91.215 (g))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Lead-based Paint response:

1. Estimate the number of housing units that contain lead-based paint hazards, as defined in section 1004 of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, and are occupied by extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families.

The 2000 Census data shows that there were a total of 96,375 housing units in the eight governmental jurisdictions that comprise the Urban County. Of those units, 61,186 (63.5%) were constructed prior to 1978, and as such, exhibit a higher probability of containing lead-based paint

hazards than those constructed since that time. Of the older units, 39,360 are owner-occupied and 21,826 are renter-occupied units. The same Census data shows that 40.8% of the population of the eight jurisdictions in the Urban County had incomes below 80% of the Median Area Income (MAI) as determined by HUD.

Assuming a proportionate distribution of housing by tenure through all income levels, approximately 25,000 housing units in the Urban County that have the potential of containing lead-based paint hazards and are occupied by low-income families. HUD's latest national survey, cited by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, indicates that one-third of the lead-burdened properties in the United States are currently lead-safe, exhibiting no conditions exceeding EPA's lead hazards standards. Including this factor in the calculation results in approximately 16,750 high-risk units occupied by households with incomes less 80% of the MAI. To the extent that low-income households may occupy a disproportionate percentage of older housing units, these estimates represent the approximate minimum number of units, with the actual number being somewhat higher.

The Sonoma County Department of Health Services (DHS) has identified seven unincorporated localities where over fifty percent of the housing units were constructed prior to 1960 and thereby exhibit the highest probability of exposing the residents to lead-based paint hazards: Rio Nido (84%), Guerneville (69%), Camp Meeker (68%), West Petaluma (57%), Monte Rio (57%), Stewart's Point (57%) and Glen Ellen (53%). DHS estimates that 2,320 children, aged 1 to 15 years, have some degree of lead poisoning and reports that over two-thirds of the children from 0 to 5 years of age are reported to have elevated blood lead levels are of Hispanic ethnicity.

A map showing the distribution of housing units in the County that were constructed prior to 1978 is included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan.

2. Outline actions proposed or being taken to evaluate and reduce lead-based paint hazards and describe how lead based paint hazards will be integrated into housing policies and programs, and how the plan for the reduction of lead-based hazards is related to the extent of lead poisoning and hazards.

Sonoma County has implemented the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Project (CLPPP). This program provides information to health care providers on the importance of routine screening of children for exposure to lead, and case management services to children identified with elevated blood lead levels. Additionally, public health nurses and environmental health specialists work with the families to identify and eliminate the source of the lead exposure, including lead-based paint hazards. Health care providers also perform blood lead testing on all children eligible to receive State assistance services at 12 and 24 months of age, and recommend screening for those not previously tested at the ages of two years and six years.

No strategic plan is complete without looking towards the prevention of lead exposure and the elimination of lead hazards, as well as treatment of those with elevated blood lead levels. Removing all lead-based paint from the housing stock of Sonoma County is not an economically feasible goal. Making housing lead-safe is the most effective strategy to protect the children of the County. The Commission addresses this through proactively disseminating printed information concerning lead-based paint hazards to all residents of housing rehabilitation and rental assistance programs. The Commission's Lease Negotiator/Inspectors have received training in visual assessment of lead-based paint hazards and are observant of the existence of this hazard during their property inspections.

The Commission's Housing Rehabilitation Specialists have received training in the identification of lead hazards, proper methods of paint stabilization, interim control, abatement procedures and testing/clearance reports to ensure compliance with all lead hazard reduction requirements during rehabilitation activities. With HUD's implementation of the Title X lead-safe housing rules in 2000, Sonoma County submitted a Transition Implementation Plan that detailed a lack of capacity in all

areas relating to the elimination of lead-based paint hazards. Subsequent to that submission, the Commission, in conjunction with the Sonoma County Department of Health Services and Santa Rosa Junior College, sponsored training for both Certified Lead Supervisors and Certified Lead Construction Workers. Currently the California Department of Health Services lists over thirty-five Certified Supervisors and seventy-five Certified Workers in the North Bay area. The Commission also ensures compliance with lead hazard reduction requirements by subrecipients of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding used to acquire and/or renovate existing buildings for housing or to undertake residential service activities through regular monitoring of those activities. In addition, the Commission provides links to additional information regarding lead-based paint and lead hazards on its website at <http://www.sonoma-county.org/cdc/cdotherrresources.htm>.

Housing

Housing Needs (91.205)

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Housing Needs response:

*Please also refer to the Housing Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook

1. Describe the estimated housing needs projected for the next five year period for the following categories of persons: extremely low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families, renters and owners, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, including persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, single persons, large families, public housing residents, victims of domestic violence, families on the public housing and section 8 tenant-based waiting list, and discuss specific housing problems, including: cost-burden, severe cost-burden, substandard housing, and overcrowding (especially large families).

The following analysis of the estimated housing needs projected for the next five years for various categories of households relies primarily on the Sonoma County Housing Element Technical Report dated February 21, 2008 and the 2007 -2014 Sonoma County Housing Element itself, finalized and adopted by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in 2009. The Technical Report was prepared for the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) by Economic and Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) in preparation of the State-required Housing Element of the General Plan for the planning period 2007-2014. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) provides estimated housing production goals for Bay Area jurisdictions by income class, called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), and these production targets are a crucial component of each jurisdiction's Housing Element.

The Technical Report projected a growth in total number of households of 6% between 2005 and 2010 and a growth in number of households of 10% between 2005 and 2015 for Sonoma County overall.

Extremely low-income families (incomes between 0% and 30% of median area income (MAI), adjusted for household size)

The 2007-2014 RHNA does not use the classification of "extremely low income". However, for planning for the unincorporated area of the County only, PRMD took half the RHNA production goal for the next category, "very low income", as the production goal for extremely low income households. Applying that same convention for the Urban County yields a production goal of half of 1,202 units or 601 units. Based on an estimate of available resources, targeting 10% of that total for development assistance with federal CDBG and HOME funds would be reasonable and would equal 60 units or 12/year for the five year Consolidated Plan period.

Very Low-income families (incomes between 30% and 50% of MAI)

The RHNA projects that 1,202 affordable housing units are required to meet the need for very low-income households in the Urban County area. Because half of this target is shifted to the “extremely low income” category above, the same yearly target is generated in this category: Targeting 10% for CDBG and HOME fund assistance yields 60 units or 12 units/year.

Low-income families (incomes between 50% and 80% of MAI)

The RHNA projects that 806 affordable housing units are required to meet the need for low income households in the Urban County area. Targeting 10% generates a 5-year goal of 81 units or 16/year.

Moderate-income and Above-Moderate Income families (incomes over 80%)

For households in the moderate and above moderate-income level, ABAG estimates 3,163 units will be needed between 2007 and 2014. Neither CDBG nor HOME funding will be used to support unit production in this income category.

Renter Households

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s *Out of Reach 2009* report, 36% of Sonoma County’s 172,403 households are renters. The same report calculates that 53% of those renters are unable to afford the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom unit. The unit production targets for extremely low-income, very low-income and low-income units outlined above total 40/year for five years, or 201 in total. These are all projected as rental units.

Owner Households

The California Association of Realtors (CAR) tracks residential real estate sales in detail and also provides and regularly updates a First-Time Homebuyer Affordability Index. According to CAR data, the historic high for the median sales price of a Sonoma County single-family home was \$503,560 in 2007. For the four quarters in 2009, the median sales price was roughly half that amount, ranging from \$213,044 to \$257,940. This dramatic drop in prices, coupled with historically low interest rates for home mortgages, allowed the “affordability index” to rise from the all-time low of 25 in 2006 to 63 in the first quarter of 2009. These figures represent CAR’s estimated percent of households that can afford a home priced at 85% of the median sales price using industry standard mortgage underwriting criteria. Thus, ownership programs are a low priority for the foreseeable future because the unmet need for renter households is so much greater. Further, the deductibility from taxable income of mortgage interest and property taxes paid is a form of government housing subsidy that is already in place to benefit home-owners.

Elderly households (aged 65 years or older)

Using State Department of Finance data, EPS states that the County can anticipate an increase of 35,000 elderly individuals from 2000 to 2020 and this will have a significant impact on the appropriateness of the existing and future housing stock to meet the needs of aging individuals. According to the 2000 Census data, 23% of cost-burdened households in the County are elderly with roughly 50% renters and 50% homeowners.

According to the County Area Agency on Aging, *Area Plan Update 2007-2008*, “The significant lack of affordable housing is one of the major barriers to keeping seniors in the community. As people age their housing needs change. There is a critical shortage of affordable housing options for seniors and disabled adults in Sonoma County. Waiting lists for affordable housing continue to increase as the demand outpaces the supply and the senior population grows.” Affordable housing built as rental units would help alleviate the high cost burden of housing for the elderly population.

Persons with disabilities, including persons with HIV/AIDS and their families

The 2000 Census shows that over 16% of all County residents are disabled; 54,239 or 14.7% are between the ages of 5 and 64 and an additional 21,149 are elderly (almost 36% of the elderly population). Non-elderly disabled individuals are nearly twice as likely to live below the poverty level as the general non-elderly population. The same Census data demonstrates that disabled elderly are significantly more likely to live below the poverty level than the elderly population as a whole.

The HIV Comprehensive Plan for Sonoma County dated January 1, 2009 states that Sonoma County has the seventh highest cumulative incidence rate of AIDS cases of the 58 counties in California in 2007. As of June 30, 2008, there were at least 1,125 persons living in Sonoma County who have been diagnosed with HIV or AIDS. It is estimated that at the end of 2007, there likely were between 1,931 and 2,202 people living with HIV disease in the County based on a national estimate that assumes that 24-27% of persons who are HIV positive are unaware of their infection.

For the purposes of this Plan, all persons living with HIV/AIDS are considered to have incomes below 80% of MAI, as no further break-out for extremely low- or low-income levels is available for these households.

Approximately 25-30% of persons living with HIV reside in the rural, western portion of the County where housing is generally less expensive. The local HIV housing needs assessment indicates that women experience limitations in access to services due to housing instability. Fifty-one percent said they live with children, and 70% of those said they live with more than one child. Due to larger household size, HIV+ women may need larger, and therefore, more expensive units.

Of the persons living with HIV or AIDS, access to affordable housing is their primary housing need. For those experiencing cost burden, rent subsidies and the availability of subsidized accessible units will help to reduce the incidence of cost burden. For those in need of supportive services, rent subsidies can be combined with supportive services that enable them to live as independently as possible.

Homelessness is a significant problem for people living with HIV/AIDS; 3.5% of those utilizing Ryan White Primary Care services report homelessness at time of intake. A local housing needs assessment done in 2006 showed 47% of HIV+ women surveyed had experienced homelessness at least once in their lives. Additionally, 75% of these women reported having moved in the last three years.

Single persons

Neither the Housing Needs Table nor the CHAS Data information identifies housing needs for single person households; however, the "Special Tabulations of 2000 Census Data" available on the huduser.org website identified 24,179 single person households living in the Urban County in 2000. That figure included 13,800 owner households and 10,379 renter households.

Large families

From 2000 Census data, large families, those with 5 or more household members, make up 10.6% of total family households. Of those, 41.6% rent homes and 58.4% own their homes. The ownership rate for large families is less than the percentage for all households. Data available countywide through the American Community Survey indicate that 6.1% of all County families lived below the poverty line in 2006 while 10.8% of large families lived below the poverty line. The Housing Needs Table lists 3,882 "Large Related" households that are comprised of 5 or more

members that have incomes not exceeding 80% of MAI. Of these households, 83.5% have one or more housing need, 51.7% are cost burdened, and 21.4% experience severe cost burden. The total number of “Large Related” households includes 2,478 renter households and 1,404 owner households. A slightly greater percentage of owners than renters (85% vs. 82.6%) are experiencing at least one of the three identified housing needs.

Public housing residents

There are no public housing units in the Urban County.

Section 8 tenant-based rental assistance

The County administers the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and the locally-funded Mobile Home Space Rent Program countywide – except in the City of Santa Rosa, which operates its own Housing Authority – and provides additional rental assistance through the Shelter Plus Care and HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance programs in all areas of the County, including the City of Santa Rosa. As of May 1, 2010, 2,772 households are assisted with County Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, and an additional 243 households are assisted under the other programs.

Currently, the Sonoma County Housing Authority has approximately 9,290 households on its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher waiting list. The Housing Authority has completed a preliminary screening of the people on the waiting list and determined that 4,310 are families with children, 3,406 of the families have a member with a disability, and an elderly person heads 1,037 of the households. Over 80% (7,498) of the households on the waiting list fall into the extremely low-income category; the remaining households on the waiting list include 1,792 very low-income households.

Cost burdened and Severe cost burden

When a household must pay more than 30% of monthly income for housing costs (rent plus utilities for renters, and mortgage, real estate taxes and insurance for owners), the household is said to have a housing cost burden. If households spend 50% or more of income on housing costs, they are considered to be severely cost burdened. According to the 2006 American Community Survey, nearly 45% of owners and nearly 60% of renter households in Sonoma County were considered cost burdened in 2006. Nearly 20% of owners and 30% of renters were severely cost burdened. Over 43% of seniors are cost-burdened. Since 2006, housing prices have fallen dramatically whereas rents have remained relatively flat. See further discussion in the *Renter Household* and *Ownership Household* sections above. The incidence of severe cost burden is concentrated in the extremely low-income category of households. Rent subsidies and subsidized rental housing units can provide relief to renter households. Down-payment assistance through deferred payment subordinate loans and other affordable ownership housing programs for first-time homebuyers can help homebuyers to be less burdened by monthly housing costs.

Farm workers

The State Employment Development Department estimated just under 5,000 farm workers living in Sonoma County in 2005, an estimated 1,500 of whom are migrant workers. While the median wage is about \$9 per hour, the motivation to save as much of their paychecks as possible and to send their earnings home to support families often leads migrant farm workers to seek out the lowest-cost alternative for housing. The County has produced 427 agricultural employee units and beds from 2000 through September 2007 in the unincorporated County and now a total of 883 such beds are available. Despite this production and other farm worker housing resources, reports of overcrowded homes, apartments and motel rooms are common.

Substandard housing

The Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2003 reported that 1,573 (0.8%) of the estimated 189,818 housing units in Sonoma County lack complete kitchen and/ or complete plumbing facilities.

Overcrowding (especially large families)

Using 2000 Census data, EPS found that the incidence of overcrowding (more than 1.01 persons per room) has increased from 1990 to 2000 for both owners and renters, but particularly for renter households. Rental households are three times more likely to be overcrowded than owner households. Renter-occupied units are more than six times more likely to be severely overcrowded (more than 1.5 persons per room) than owner-occupied units. The Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2003 reported that 6,650 (3.5%) of the housing units in Sonoma County are overcrowded with at least 1.01 persons per room. The consequence of the major economic recession and housing market collapse that began in 2007/2008 on the incidence of overcrowded housing conditions has not yet been measured. In general, rent subsidies and restrictions can assist renter households to afford larger, more modern, and better maintained rental units. Housing rehabilitation loan and grant programs can provide affordable funding to upgrade substandard rental and owner-occupied units.

2. To the extent that any racial or ethnic group has a disproportionately greater need for any income category in comparison to the needs of that category as a whole, the jurisdiction must complete an assessment of that specific need. For this purpose, disproportionately greater need exists when the percentage of persons in a category of need who are members of a particular racial or ethnic group is at least ten percentage points higher than the percentage of persons in the category as a whole.

The following information is from the HUD-provided CHAS data:

Percent of Renter Households with Any Housing Needs

% of Median Area Income	All Renters	Hispanic Renters	Black Non-Hispanic Renters	Native American Non-Hispanic Renters	Asian Non-Hispanic Renters	Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic Renters
0-30%	77.1%	89.7%	80.6%	54.1%	68.2%	Not Available
31-50%	79.0%	86.1%	66.7%	87.5%	69.2%	100.0%
51-80%	57.6%	70.3%	38.6%	4.4%	75.0%	100.0%
Over 80%	17.5%	54.2%	30.8%	15.7%	24.9%	9.5%
All	47.9%	72.5%	44.0%	33.1%	50.2%	34.5%

Percent of Owner Households with Any Housing Needs

% of Median Area Income	All Renters	Hispanic Renters	Black Non-Hispanic Renters	Native American Non-Hispanic Renters	Asian Non-Hispanic Renters	Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic Renters
0-30%	70.8%	86.8%	100.0%	88.2%	89.5%	100.00%
31-50%	58.2%	71.3%	77.8%	100.00%	49.1%	Not Available
51-80%	52.5%	74.2%	60.0%	67.9%	60.3%	100.0%
Over 80%	23.5%	43.0%	32.4%	32.1%	30.9%	69.2%
All	38.6%	55.9%	43.0%	45.9%	37.0%	85.7%

Extremely low-income families (incomes between 0% and 30% of MAI)

Among renters at the extremely low-income level, only Hispanic households have a disproportionate housing need when compared to the needs of all the renter households with incomes at or below 30% of MAI. Among owners in the same income category, all five reported racial and ethnic groups have a disproportionate housing need. The disproportionately affected groups are Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Native American Non-Hispanic, Asian Non-Hispanic, and Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic households.

Low-income families (incomes between 30% and 50% of MAI)

Among renters at the low-income level, only Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic households have a disproportionate housing need when compared to the needs of all the renter households with incomes between 30% and 50% of MAI. Among homeowners in the same income category, Black Non-Hispanic, Hispanic and Native American Non-Hispanic households have a disproportionate housing need.

Moderate-income families (incomes between 50% and 80% of MAI)

Among renters at the moderate-income level, Hispanic, Asian Non-Hispanic, and Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic households have a disproportionate housing need when compared to the needs of all the renter households with incomes between 50% and 80% of MFI. Among homeowners in the same income category, Hispanic, Native American Non-Hispanic and Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic households have a disproportionate housing need.

Priority Housing Needs (91.215 (b))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Priority Housing Needs response:

- 1. Identify the priority housing needs and activities in accordance with the categories specified in the Housing Needs Table (formerly Table 2A). These categories correspond with special tabulations of U.S. census data provided by HUD for the preparation of the Consolidated Plan.**

The Housing Needs Table, included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, provides a quantitative measure of the Urban County’s housing needs. They can be summarized as follows:

Among the 18,722 low/moderate-income renter households included in the Housing

Needs Table, 60.5% experience cost burden.

Among the 19,146 low/moderate-income owner households included in the Housing Needs Table, 55.2% experience cost burden.

The incidence of overcrowding and substandard housing occurs less often than does cost burden for all the household categories covered in the Housing Needs Table. The incidence of these problems occurs in only 6.1% of all low/moderate-income households (less than 80% of MAI). Seventy-five percent (75%) of the low/moderate-income households in overcrowded or substandard units are renter households.

Of the 8,606 lower-income (less than 80% of MAI) households with a disabled household member, 59.7% are experiencing one or more housing problems.

Of the 1,931-2,202 persons living with HIV or AIDS, access to affordable housing and supportive services are their primary housing needs.

For the 61,186 households living in housing units built prior to 1979, control of lead based paint used in the units is a key housing need.

2. Provide an analysis of how the characteristics of the housing market and the severity of housing problems and needs of each category of residents provided the basis for determining the relative priority of each priority housing need category.

Note: Family and income types may be grouped in the case of closely related categories of residents where the analysis would apply to more than one family or income type.

Decent, safe, and affordable housing for lower-income residents and persons with special needs is a critical need in the Urban County. The greatest need is for affordability, as detailed elsewhere in this document. Housing issues in the form of the presence of lead-based paint, substandard conditions, and over-crowding are issues in this housing market as they are in all housing markets. However, as one of the least affordable housing markets in the country and as part of the San Francisco Bay Area, Sonoma County's greatest need by virtually any measure is affordability, particularly for lower-income households. For this reason, housing affordability is a top priority, especially for renter households since lower-income households are much more likely to be renters than owner-occupants.

The Urban County does provide funding in support of affordable housing ownership projects and also, in support of housing preservation for owner-occupied, single-family and mobile homes, principally through the long-standing Housing Rehabilitation program. Nevertheless, expanding and preserving the stock of affordable rental housing units through new development and at-risk preservation finance, as well as tenant-based rental assistance programs, continues to be the highest priority area for housing.

The Urban County and its participating jurisdictions, community-based nonprofit housing and service providers, and a number of private sector organizations and individuals, are all committed to working together to meet the identified housing needs of the Urban County's lower-income households. Despite this commitment, the level of need continues to outstrip the resources available in the Urban County to meet the housing and supportive service needs of the Urban County's lower-income households.

3. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.

The response to this question is covered under *General Section* of this Plan.

4. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

The response to this question is covered under *General Section* of this Plan.

Housing Market Analysis (91.210)

*Please also refer to the Housing Market Analysis Table in the Needs.xls workbook
3-5 Year Strategic Plan Housing Market Analysis responses:

1. Based on information available to the jurisdiction, describe the significant characteristics of the housing market in terms of supply, demand, condition, and the cost of housing; the housing stock available to serve persons with disabilities; and to serve persons with HIV/AIDS and their families. Data on the housing market should include, to the extent information is available, an estimate of the number of vacant or abandoned buildings and whether units in these buildings are suitable for rehabilitation.

Supply: The Housing Market Analysis table, included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, incorporates 2000 U.S. Census data from the CHAS Data Book and counts a total of 97,862 housing units in the Urban County in 2000. The 64,701 ownership housing units represents 65% of the Urban County's housing market, with 33,161 rental units making up the balance.

At 53% of the total housing stock, units of 3 or more bedrooms make up the largest single size of units. Within the occupied rental unit total, the largest percentage of units (40%) are 2-bedroom units, while units of 3 or more bedrooms make up the largest percentage (67%) of occupied ownership housing units.

Among the vacant rental units, 0- and 1-bedroom units comprised the largest category of vacant units at 43% of all vacant rentals, while units of 3 or more bedrooms composed the largest percentage (48%) of vacant ownership housing units.

The more recent California Department of Finance data included in the Sonoma County 2009 Economic & Demographic Profile (Profile) of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board and Workforce Investment Board, reported a total of 195,517 housing units in Sonoma County in 2007. These figures cover all areas of Sonoma County, including the Urban County jurisdictions, as well as the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma. The average annual rate of increase in housing stock from 1991 to 2007 was 1.15% whereas the corresponding increase in population averaged 1.42% per year. This rate difference suggests upward pressure on the cost of housing since population has increased more rapidly than the increase in housing stock.

Within the 7 cities and the unincorporated areas of the County that make up the Urban County jurisdiction, the Profile reported 110,930 housing units, after deletion of the data for the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma. The Urban County total included 87,368 single family units, 15,784 multiple family units, and 7,778 mobile homes.

Urban County – Total Housing Units 2007

Jurisdiction	Single Family Units	Multiple Family Units	Mobile Homes	Total Housing Units
Cloverdale	2,682	443	209	3,334
Cotati	2,210	736	121	3,067
Healdsburg	3,546	937	99	4,582
Rohnert Park	9,361	5,611	1413	16,385
Sebastopol	2,283	1,032	62	3,377
Sonoma	3,671	1,072	437	5,180
Windsor	7,616	715	822	9,153
Unincorporated	55,999	5,238	4,615	65,852
Totals:	87,368	15,784	7,778	110,930

Single family homes make up 79% housing stock in the Urban County. Only Rohnert Park, the location of Sonoma State University, has a multiple family housing inventory greater than 50% of the single family housing stock. In second position, Sebastopol's multiple family housing units equal 45% of the number of single family units in that city. This disparity may reflect a historic preference for single family homes in these communities and an earlier period of inexpensive land suitable for (single-family) housing development.

Due to the collapse beginning in 2007/2008, the housing market is highly volatile and thus, up-to-date data difficult to obtain and harder to interpret. With that limitation noted; the following highlights are drawn from the EPS Sonoma County Housing Element Technical Report.

Overcrowding: Defined as more than one person per room, overcrowding as a housing condition is primarily a rental housing problem. Rental households are more than three times as likely to be overcrowded as owner-occupant households. Rental households are more than six times as likely to be severely overcrowded as ownership units (i.e., more than 1.5 persons per room). These are 2000 figures; how the housing market collapse has influenced these figures, and for how long, is unknown.

Cost Burdened: According to U.S. Census data, specifically the *2006 American Community Survey* data set, 59.9% of county-wide renters are cost-burdened (spending greater than 30% of gross income on housing) versus 44.7% of owners. Extremely cost burdened is defined as spending greater than 50% of gross income on housing and the respective figures are 19.5% for owner-occupants and 30.1% for renters. Not surprisingly, the percentages climb for lower-income classifications. For renters with household incomes under \$20,000/year, the cost burdened figure is 90.2%.

Housing Unit Type: County-wide, 76.1% of the housing stock is of the single family variety using 2000 Census data. Attached units (2 to 4 units per structure) account for another 6.4% and multi-family (5 or more units per structure), 11.3%. Mobile homes are 5.9% and the remaining 0.3% is "other".

Demand: The low vacancy rates identified in the Housing Market Analysis table suggest a strong demand for both rental and ownership housing in the Urban County in 2000. Units of 3 or more bedrooms appear to have been the unit sizes in greatest demand in both the ownership and rental housing markets. While units of that size make up 26% of the rental housing market and 67% of the ownership units, only 20% of the vacant rental units and 48% of the vacant ownership

units were composed of units in that size category, suggesting a strong demand for those units.

California law requires each Council of Government (COG) periodically to identify and distribute the housing needs for its region. In 2008, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) prepared the 2007-2014 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the nine-County San Francisco Bay Area that includes Sonoma County and its incorporated jurisdictions. The RHNA process identified affordable housing needs across a range of income categories and assigned quantified housing objectives to each jurisdiction. See Question 1 in this section for more discussion and the table below for a summary of RHNA targets for each jurisdiction in the Urban County.

Jurisdiction	Total Projected Need	Very Low ¹	Low ¹	Moderate ¹	Above Moderate
Cloverdale	417	71	61	81	204
Cotati	257	67	36	45	109
Healdsburg	331	71	48	55	157
Rohnert Park	1,554	371	231	273	679
Sebastopol	176	32	28	29	87
Sonoma	353	73	55	69	156
Windsor	719	198	130	137	254
Unincorporated	1,364	319	217	264	564
Total:	5,171	1,202	806	953	2,210

¹ Very low-income is at or below 50% of MAI, low-income is at or below 80% of MAI and moderate-income is at or below 120% of MAI.

Condition: The Housing Market Analysis table lists 1,017 substandard units in the Urban County in 2000, slightly more than 1% of the 97,862 units included in the table. Substandard units lack complete kitchen and/or plumbing facilities. The table estimates a cost of more than \$25 million to correct these substandard conditions.

The U.S. Census Bureau’s American FactFinder data, relying on 2000 Census data, identified 61,186 units in the Urban County built prior to 1979, representing 63.5% of all the housing units in the Urban County. This figure provides an estimate of the number of housing units that may have been painted with lead based paint before the paint was removed from the market in 1978. Although lead based paint is not necessarily an indicator of a substandard housing condition if it is controlled, it can become a health hazard, particularly for children, if it is allowed to chip and flake.

Cost of Housing:

Rental Housing: The CHAS Data Book *Housing Problems* for the Urban County, based on 2000 Census data, indicates 74% of renters in the extremely low-income range ($\leq 30\%$ MAI) are cost-burdened and of those, 85% are spending more than half their gross household income of housing costs. The very low income range ($\geq 30\%$ MAI & $\leq 50\%$ MAI) has corresponding percentages of 70% and 43%. For all renters in all income ranges, the figures are 38% and 47%.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s *Out of Reach 2009* report on rental housing affordability, the fair market rent of a two-bedroom apartment in Sonoma County in 2009

was \$1,296/month, a 42% increase since 2000. The annual income needed to support that rent level and not be cost-burdened is \$51,840 or 65% of the MAI. The report indicates the median renter household income in Sonoma County is \$48,574 and further estimates that 53% of Sonoma County renters cannot afford the two-bedroom FMR level of rent.

Ownership Housing: The collapse of the for-sale housing market starting in 2007/2008 has had the effect of dramatically lowering the price of for-sale housing. See also discussion in Question 1 of this section. The high number of foreclosed upon houses on the market and the changes in the mortgage underwriting have created an uncertain and unsettled market that will not likely find a new equilibrium for a number of years. Still, as noted above in Question 1, the affordability of for-sale homes in the region is far greater than it has been for many decades.

Housing Stock Available for People with Disabilities:

There are no statistics available regarding the number of privately owned rental and ownership units that are accessible to people with disabilities. The CHAS Data Book using 2000 Census data does indicate that 15,812 households exist in the Urban County where at least one household member has a “mobility or self-care limitation”. One-third of those are in the rental housing category and the other two-thirds in the owner-occupant category. Of the total 15,812 units, 43% have at least one member that is 62 years of age or older. The income breakdown for these households is as follows: extremely low-income – 19%; very low-income – 15%; low-income – 20%; moderate and above moderate income – 46%.

Housing Units Available for People with HIV/AIDS and Their Families:

The Housing Needs Table and this analysis treat persons with HIV/AIDS as a separate category of persons with special housing needs. The Table includes the figure of 1,152 persons living with HIV/AIDS in Sonoma County that the Sonoma County Department of Health Services reported in its June 30, 2004 report entitled, “Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS in Sonoma County Annual Report”. That figure includes 759 persons living with AIDS and 393 persons living with HIV.

The housing needs of persons with disabilities and HIV/AIDS are similar to those of the elderly. A survey of many nonprofits and social service agencies indicated the need for low-cost, accessible housing close to public transportation, shopping and medical facilities. The provision of accessibility modifications in the existing housing stock, as well as new accessible housing units for disabled households is a growing need as more disabled persons are striving to lead independent and productive lives.

2. Describe the number and targeting (income level and type of household served) of units currently assisted by local, state, or federally funded programs, and an assessment of whether any such units are expected to be lost from the assisted housing inventory for any reason, (i.e. expiration of Section 8 contracts).

Assisted Rental Housing Developments

Developments receive assistance in the form of favorable development or permanent financing and/or regulatory incentives from Urban County jurisdictions and/or from other public and private sources. As a condition of receiving such assistance, project developers and owners are required to target a pre-determined number of units to households at specified income levels and, in some cases, to households from specific special needs subpopulations. Regulatory agreements restrict rents for these units to levels that are affordable to the targeted households. The time period covered by these agreements varies, but generally range from 20 to 55 years.

The following table lists the rental housing developments located in the Urban County, by jurisdiction, that were assisted by local, state and/or federal funds and that remain restricted

under related affordability covenants and regulatory agreements as of April 2009. The Commission and partner jurisdictions systematically monitor the expiration dates of the affordability restrictions in order to intervene prior to the expiration to extend the term of affordability.

City of Cloverdale

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Cloverdale – Duplex Units	All Ages	8	0	2	1999	2019
Oak Meadows Apartments	All Ages	15	0	2	2006	2051
Quincy Court	All Ages	6	0	2	2006	2051
Divine Apartments	Senior 55+	32	12	19	1989	2035
Cloverdale Garden Apartments	Senior 62+ or Disabled	34	33	0	1991	2041
Vineyard Manor	All Ages	36	10	25	1991	2041
Kings Valley Senior Apartments	Senior	98	0	98	Project Based Section 8	n/a
Totals:	n/a	229	55	148	n/a	n/a

City of Cotati

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Marvin Gardens	All Ages	37	37	0	1982	2012
Wilford Lane Apartments	All Ages	36	25	10	2003	2058
Charles Street Village	Senior	48	47	0	2001	2031
Totals:	n/a	121	109	10	n/a	n/a

City of Healdsburg

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Canyon Run Apartments	All Ages	51	14	36	2001	2021
Oakgrove Apartments	All Ages	81	40	41	1999	2055
Harvest Grove	All Ages; Farm Labor	44	43	1	1996	2021
Parkland	Senior	23	22	1	1999	2038
Fitch Mountain Terrace I	Senior 62+, or Disabled	40	40	0	1986	2099
Fitch Mountain Terrace II	Senior 62+, or Disabled	20	6	14	1990	2089
Riverfield Homes	All Ages	18	17	1	1995	2025
Totals:	n/a	277	182	94	n/a	n/a

City of Rohnert Park

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Aaron House Rehab	Affordable, Disabled	6	6	0	1991	-
Altamont Apartments	Senior	230	31	70	1991	2021
Arbors	All Ages	56	33	22	2007	2062
Centerville	Family	11	5	6	2007 – 2008	2037 – 2038
Copeland Creek Apartments	Affordable, Senior 55+	170	17	153	2007	2062
COTS	Family	5	5	0	1999-2003	Ongoing
Crossbrook Apartments	s	226	0	45	1995	2025
Edgewood Apartments	Affordable, All Age	168	0	67	1996	2026
Las Casitas	Affordable, Mobile Home Park	126	25	38	2001	2031
Marchesiello	Affordable	20	0	7	2006	2061
Muirfield Apartments	Affordable, Disabled	24	0	23	1996	2039
Oak View Senior Living	Senior, Disabled	207	4	37	2005	2025
Park Gardens II	Affordable	20	1	2	2008	2038
Rancho Feliz	Affordable, Mobile Home Park	297	60	118	2003	2058
Redwood Creek	All Ages	232	0	35	2006	2035
Santa Alicia Gardens (The Gardens)	All Ages	20	8	12	1996	2026
Tower Apartments	All Ages	50	0	20	1993	2033
Valley Village	Affordable, Mobile Home Park	235	57	57	2005	2060
Vida Nueva	All Ages	24	23	0	2007	2062
Total:	n/a	2223	275	808	n/a	n/a

City of Sebastopol

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Bodega Hills Apts.	All Ages	24	23	0	1998	2053
Gravenstein North I Apts.	All Ages	18	12	6	1987	2012
Gravenstein North II Apts.	All Ages	42	9	33	1988	2018
Burbank Heights	Senior 62+, Mobility Impaired	138	138	0	1975	2015
Burbank Orchards	Senior 62+, Mobility Impaired	60	60	0	1991	2031
Petaluma Avenue Homes	All Ages	45	45	0	2009	-
Totals:	n/a	327	287	39	n/a	n/a

City of Sonoma

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Firehouse Village	All Ages	30	9	21	2002	2057
673 1 st Street West Apts.	Senior	8	0	8	1996	2025
Donahue Apartments	Senior	10	0	10	1996	2025
Maysonnave Apartments	Senior	9	0	9	1996	2026
Sonoma Creek Apartments	Senior	34	20	14	1987	2099
Village Green II	Senior	34	34	0	1983	2099
Cabernet Apartments	Senior 62+	7	0	7	1988	2018
293-291 West MacArthur	-	4	0	1	2003	2033
London Condo	-	1	0	1	2003	2033
Remembrance	-	5	0	3	2002	2058
Tarassa (Eastside Estates)	-	11	0	6	2003	2033
Vintage Sonom – Jones, Engler, Brockman	-	10	0	5	2003	2033
Totals:	n/a	163	63	86	n/a	n/a

Town of Windsor

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Forest Winds	All Ages	48	47	0	1994	2022
Prune Tree Apartments	All Ages	9	0	2	-	-
Windsor Park Apartments	All Ages	80	80	0	2000	2030
Winter Creek apartments	All Ages	41	24	16	2003	2058
Bell Manor II	Senior	42	0	42	1982	2033
Vinecrest Senior Apartments	Senior	60	59	0	1998	2047
Totals:	n/a	280	210	60	n/a	n/a

County of Sonoma – unincorporated area

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Carillo Place Apartments	All Ages	68	41	26	2002	2057
Casablanca Apartments	All Ages	14	1	13	1994	2014
Chelsea Gardens Apartments	All Ages	120	120	0	1977	2053
Creekside Apartments	All Ages	86	0	17	1986	2007
Faught Court Townhomes	All Ages	9	1	0	1994	2024
Feeney Apartments	All Ages	8	0	4	1994	2024
Larkfield Oaks	All Ages	56	34	21	2006	2036
Lavell Village	All Ages	49	13	36	1995	2054
Meadowview Apartments	All Ages	72	8	0	1992	2012
Newmark Apartments	All Ages	13	0	2	1990	2010
Newmark II	All Ages	10	1	0	1991	2021
Parkwood Court Apts.	All Ages	40	4	0	1991	2011
Quail Knoll Apts. North	All Ages	14	1	0	1991	2010
Quail Knoll Apts. South	All Ages	18	2	0	1991	2010
Sea Ranch I	All Ages	14	8	6	1986	2024
Sea Ranch II	All Ages	31	0	31	1993	2049
Sonoma Valley Apts.	All Ages	16	0	16	1991	2021
Springs Village	All Agres	80	48	32	2005	2060
Verano Avenue Apts.	All Ages	5	0	3	1994	2014
Vineyard Creek Apts.	All Ages	232	47	0	2007	2037
West Avenue Apts.	All Ages	40	012	28	1987	2017

County of Sonoma – unincorporated area (continued)

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Willow Gardens Apts.	All Ages	7	0	2	1991	2010
Woodstone Commons	All Ages	2	0	2	2006	2061
Oak Tree Apartments	Senior	18	0	6	1986	2011
Oak Ridge Apartments	Senior – Disabled	23	23	11	2007	2062
Totals:	n/a	1,057	364	256	n/a	n/a

All Communities and Unincorporated area

Community Name	Household Type	Total Units	MAI 50%	MAI 80%	Affordability Start	Affordability Expires
Grand Total:	n/a	4,677	1,545	1,501	n/a	n/a

3. Indicate how the characteristics of the housing market will influence the use of funds made available for rental assistance, production of new units, rehabilitation of old units, or acquisition of existing units. Please note, the goal of affordable housing is not met by beds in nursing homes.

While the current state of the local, state and national economy has invariably influenced the housing market, the use of funds available will likely continue to be best utilized serving the lower-income population. This goal should be uppermost no matter how the economy adjusts over the next five years. Using ABAG’s targeted number of affordable homes for their 2007-2014 planning period and a realistic determination of the amount of funding available, the CDC will address the identified need to make existing rental units affordable to the County’s lower income residents, thereby reducing their cost burden, and will continue to allocate approximately 45% of the annual HOME allocation to provide monthly rental subsidies to approximately 60 households at any given time, including elderly, persons with HIV or AIDS, and families moving from homelessness into transitional and permanent housing. The rental assistance to the persons moving into transitional housing stabilizes their housing situations and enhances their chances for success in the accompanying self-sufficiency program.

To address the identified need to make existing ownership units affordable to the County’s lower-income residents, thereby reducing their cost burden, the Urban County will continue to use CDBG and other funds, as they become available, to assist new lower-income first-time home buyers to purchase new and resale units in specific subdivisions throughout the County.

The Urban County is likely to have unmet housing needs for lower-income households. A top priority is the allocation of HOME and CDBG funds to assist development of approximately 200 new rental units (see discussion under Question 1). This will help address that unmet need by financing acquisition and development costs and attracting the other funding required to complete the financing for the development of those units. A secondary priority is assisting lower-income first-time home buyers and the 5-year target for that objective is 100 units.

The fact that 63.5% of the housing units in Sonoma County were built prior to 1979 suggests a strong need for funding to rehabilitate units to preserve them as habitable dwellings. Another indication of the need for funds to rehabilitate units in the Urban County is the increasing elderly population who, by having their own home made accessible and energy efficient, can maintain an

independent, affordable lifestyle. The Urban County expects to rehabilitate approximately 200 units over the next five years.

Affordable Housing Agreements and/or project-based rental assistance contracts require several existing housing developments in the Urban County to remain affordable for a specified period of time. The Urban County's HOME and CDBG policies make HOME and CDBG funds available to the owners of such developments to finance rehabilitation of their developments when they agree to continue the affordability of the developments. In addition, eligible buyers of at-risk developments can obtain HOME and CDBG funding to acquire and/or rehabilitate "at-risk" properties that will remain affordable. Preventing the loss of housing units that currently qualify as affordable, decent, safe, and sanitary addresses the identified needs of reducing housing cost burden, the incidence of overcrowding, and the incidence of substandard housing and is an important objective of the Urban County.

Specific Housing Objectives (91.215 (b))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Specific Housing Objectives response:

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve over a specified time period.

From July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2015, the Urban County plans to increase the housing stock affordable, accessible and available to lower-income residents of Sonoma County, including special needs subpopulations, by assisting in the development of 300 new rental and ownership housing units.

The specific mix of new rental and ownership units to be developed will depend on the needs of the income groups to be targeted by the assistance and the development opportunities available to meet those needs. Because higher levels of subsidies are required to develop housing that is affordable to lower income groups, the specific income groups to be targeted will depend on the level of subsidies available to housing developers in the County during the 5-year period.

The level and type of available financing will also impact the actual number of units completed each year and during the entire 5-year period, as well as the number of units that will qualify as "affordable housing" under Section 215 of Title II of the National Affordable Housing Act (NAHA), which defines units as affordable only if their rent levels or purchase prices do not exceed levels that are generally less than current Fair Market Rents and median purchase prices in Sonoma County.

Assisted housing developments, including those with supportive services, will be located throughout the Urban County, depending on the cost and location of available sites suitable for construction of multi-family rental units and higher density single-family or planned unit development ownership housing.

Over the next 5 years, the County will use Section 8, HOME, Shelter Plus Care and/or other funds to provide tenant-based, monthly rental subsidies to make market rate housing units affordable to over 3,015 households at any given time. Of these, it is expected that approximately 44% will be extremely low-income families, over 18% will be elderly households and approximately 37% will be disabled households, including persons with HIV/AIDS and their families. Some of the assisted households will also include other types of special needs households.

Over the next 5 years, the County will use CDBG, redevelopment and/or other funds to provide comprehensive rehabilitation and targeted hazard mitigation assistance to make needed repairs and improvements to 200 units of conventional single- and multi-family housing and mobile homes owned and/or occupied by low-income households. The occupants of some of these rehabilitated housing units will also include special needs households.

2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are

reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the strategic plan.

For affordable housing projects in general, local government is often looked to as a “gap” financier to provide funds to achieve final feasibility for projects that have acquired commercial mortgage and tax credit equity commitments and, perhaps, other public sources of debt or grant funding. The Commission routinely fills these *pro forma* “gaps” causing projects to move forward and by doing so, leverages three to ten dollars from other sources for every dollar of provided “gap” financing. The Commission also routinely commits funds early in the pre-development process, thereby enabling the sponsor to be more competitive in seeking funding from other sources because a commitment of local public dollars can be demonstrated.

Federal Resources

HUD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Rental Subsidies, operated by the Commission's Housing Authority operates this program, provides approximately \$23 million annually in rental subsidies to approximately 2,770 very low-income families each year.

HOME Program funds, received since FY 1992-93. are to be used for affordable rental housing projects, through funding of new development, acquisition/rehabilitation of existing developments, or through tenant-based rental assistance..The County receives approximately \$1.2 million each year and the program requires a 25% local match of funds.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), received since FY 1982-83 and averaging approximately \$2 million annually, is used mainly for housing or housing related activities.

Emergency Shelter Grants Program (ESG) is used for the administration and operation of emergency shelters, essential services for homeless persons, and homeless prevention programs. The County has received an average ESG allocation over the last five years of just over \$88,000 and it is anticipated under the HEARTH Act that this allocation will increase. The County will continue to use these funds for shelter operations, but anticipates increasing funding to expanded homelessness prevention activities.

McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Since 1997, Sonoma County's Housing Authority and nonprofit agencies have received funding under the Supportive Housing and Shelter Plus Care programs. Currently, the total funding coming into the County from this source is approximately \$2 million per year. Under the HEARTH Act, the County expects to continue to receive McKinney Vento funding for our SHP and S+C programs.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits has provided a large portion of financing for rental projects in Sonoma County over the past few years. Through this program, private investors receive federal tax credits and other tax benefits in consideration for the equity financing they provide to rental projects targeted to extremely-low and low-income persons.

HUD Section 811/202 provides long term financing for disabled and elderly rental housing.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Since 2000, the Commission has administered the elevation program, prioritizing assistance to properties owned and/or occupied by lower-income households.

Rural Development (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture) is a program that provides financial assistance for development of rental and ownership housing affordable to farmworkers and other low-income households.

Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco Affordable Housing Program (AHP) awards loans to developers of affordable rental and ownership housing. The FHLB awards AHP loans generally in the range of a few hundred thousand dollars to the developer and forgives the loan after a specified period of compliance with the AHP affordability requirements.

State Resources

Farm Worker Housing Grant and Loan Programs are usually used in conjunction with Rural Development programs.

Tax-Exempt Bond Financing from the California Housing Finance Agency provides loan financing to rental projects that also receive 4% federal low-income housing tax credits to encourage the development of affordable housing. This source of funds is used extensively in Sonoma County.

California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) provides below-market rate first mortgages and subordinate financing to eligible homebuyers.

Housing Enabled by Local Partnerships (HELP) Program, administered by CalHFA, awards 10-year low-interest rate loans to local jurisdictions to finance development of affordable housing. The County Fund for Housing received a \$750,000 HELP loan to develop an affordable housing complex, and upon repayment, funds have been re-loaned to help develop other affordable housing complexes.

Multifamily Housing Program, administered by State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), assists rental housing developments that will be affordable to extremely low- and low-income households.

Building Equity and Growth In Neighborhoods Program (BEGIN) funds from State HCD are used to provide mortgage and downpayment assistance to first-time homebuyers.

Local Housing Trust Fund Program funds, also from State HCD, provides matching grants to local housing trust funds.

Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP), through State HCD, provides funds for capital costs to create or improve emergency homeless shelters and to pay operating costs for homeless shelters.

Local Resources

2-1-1 System Is an Information and Referral hotline and website, made possible by a four-way funding partnership that includes the County of Sonoma, the local United Way, the Volunteer Center and the Community Foundation Sonoma County, allows callers and internet users to find out where to get food, shelter, clothing, counseling, mental health aid, alcohol treatment, transportation, elder care, or job search assistance information.

Cities provide funding to nonprofit agencies to operate programs that assist their low-income and homeless residents. A typical source of capital funding is from each jurisdiction's redevelopment agency, required to be set aside for affordable housing.

County Departments, including the Health and Human Services departments, offer grants to nonprofit agencies and local jurisdictions to operate supportive services programs that provide assistance to lower-income and homeless residents of the County.

County Fund for Housing (CFH) is a pool of funds available for loans to developers of affordable rental and ownership housing in the unincorporated areas of the County. The County Board of Supervisors allocated the initial \$1.1 million to establish the fund. Additional funds come from the State of California, including the CalHFA HELP loan and HCD's LHTF grant, both described above. In-lieu fees from County Inclusionary and Workforce housing requirements, provide an on-going stream of revenue into the CFH. The Commission administers the CFH for the County, making the loans available on an "over-the-counter" basis throughout the year.

In Lieu Fees are charged by jurisdictions with inclusionary housing, and in some cases workforce housing requirements and paid by developers in lieu of making a portion of a market rate development affordable. The jurisdictions use the in lieu fees to assist development of affordable units in other developments.

Redevelopment Housing Set Asides are a minimum of 20% of tax increment revenues set aside for affordable housing by the County's three redevelopment areas and the redevelopment project areas in the Urban County's seven participating cities.

Private Resources

Local Lenders provide construction and, in some more limited cases, permanent financing for affordable housing developments.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) provides short-term and long-term loans to developers of affordable housing.

HCA Homeless Prevention Fund was established by a private individual and is administered by Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County. This fund provides short-term financial assistance to lower-income persons needing assistance to avoid loss of their housing.

Homeless Prevention Program (SCAYD) offers financial assistance in the form of loans to residents of the Rohnert Park and Cotati.

Community Foundation Sonoma County provides grants to nonprofit agencies to operate programs that provide services to lower-income and homeless residents, with an emphasis on services to teen mothers and other families with children.

United Way provides grants to nonprofit agencies to operate programs that provide services to lower-income and homeless persons.

Organizational Resources

Organizational resources are as important as financial resources in ensuring that housing and homeless assistance projects and activities will be carried out successfully. Primary resources in this category include governmental agencies, community-based nonprofits, religious organizations, and members of the private sector.

Technical Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives of the seven participating cities of the Urban County, will continue to review and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on issues relating to the distribution of funds within their jurisdictions.

Community Development Committee will continue to recommend policies and programs, review and prioritize HOME, ESG, and CDBG proposals for funding and review program performance.

Community Development Commission will continue to operate countywide housing projects and administer the federal housing and homeless programs made available to the County of Sonoma.

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors takes actions addressing needs in the unincorporated areas. The final authority to approve CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding for housing and community development projects is vested in the Board of Supervisors.

County and City Departments, such as Public Works, Permit & Resource Management, General Services, Emergency Services, Water Agency, and Regional Parks work closely with Commission staff, as well as with building and planning departments within the cities. Coordinating resources is crucial to the success of all programs.

Continuum of Care Planning Group, comprised of a broad range of public, private nonprofit and for-profit entities, as well as private citizens, meets to discuss, develop and implement homeless prevention and intervention goals. As discussed in the *Homeless* sections of this Consolidated Plan, the Continuum of Care addresses the full spectrum of shelter, housing and service needs for all homeless subpopulations in Sonoma County.

Nonprofit Organizations have the capacity to purchase land, obtain financing, develop and manage a variety of housing types, playing a key role in the development of affordable housing. Because the Board of Supervisors has not granted the County the authority to build or own housing, these organizations fill that void and are essential to the development of affordable housing in the County.

Sonoma County is home to a host of community-based nonprofit organizations that use CDBG, HOME and ESG funding, as well as funding from many other sources, to provide emergency,

transitional and permanent supportive housing and supportive services for the County's homeless subpopulations. Brief descriptions of most of these organizations are found in the *General – Managing the Process* section of this Consolidated Plan.

Private Sector, for-profit developers have successfully built affordable housing in Sonoma County. They are able to tap into some HUD financing programs and tax credits and use the County's density bonus programs to create rental and ownership housing affordable to the County's low/moderate-income families.

Sonoma County Task Force for the Homeless is a central clearing house for information about local shelters, for periodic needs assessment and to disseminate information on funding. The Task Force convenes meetings of housing and service providers to facilitate information sharing and coordination of services and provides financial assistance to providers.

Religious Organizations located throughout Sonoma County provide varying levels and types of services and financial assistance to low-income and homeless persons, taking an active role in recruiting their members to volunteer at the local shelters and other facilities serving the homeless.

Needs of Public Housing (91.210 (b))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Needs of Public Housing response:

In cooperation with the public housing agency or agencies located within its boundaries, describe the needs of public housing, including the number of public housing units in the jurisdiction, the physical condition of such units, the restoration and revitalization needs of public housing projects within the jurisdiction, and other factors, including the number of families on public housing and tenant-based waiting lists and results from the Section 504 needs assessment of public housing projects located within its boundaries (i.e. assessment of needs of tenants and applicants on waiting list for accessible units as required by 24 CFR 8.25). The public housing agency and jurisdiction can use the optional Priority Public Housing Needs Table (formerly Table 4) of the Consolidated Plan to identify priority public housing needs to assist in this process.

There are no public housing developments in the Urban County.

As of March 26, 2010 there were 9,290 people on the Sonoma County Housing Authority's (SCHA) Section 8 tenant-based program waiting list. Of these, 4,310 were families with children, 1,157 were elderly families, and 3,406 were families with at least one disabled member. The SCHA does not maintain a waiting list for the HOME-funded Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBA) or Shelter Plus Care programs. As HOME TBA and Shelter Plus Care funds become available, the Housing Authority contacts the appropriate service provider for a referral to the Housing Authority for rental assistance. HOME TBA funds are used for households living in an emergency or transitional shelter, seniors, and people with disabilities including those with HIV/AIDS, former foster youth and, if applicable, people displaced by a locally declared disaster. Shelter Plus Care funds are used for people with HIV/AIDS, mental illness or a physical disability, and for homeless, disabled youth, including youth who are aging out of the foster care system.

Public Housing Strategy (91.210)

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Public Housing Strategy response:

- 1. Describe the public housing agency's strategy to serve the needs of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families residing in the jurisdiction served by the public housing agency (including families on the public housing and section 8 tenant-based waiting list), the public housing agency's strategy for addressing the revitalization and restoration needs of public housing projects within the jurisdiction and improving the management and operation of such public housing, and the public housing agency's**

strategy for improving the living environment of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate families residing in public housing.

There are no public housing developments in The Urban County.

The Sonoma County Housing Authority's (SCHA) strategy to serve the needs of lower-income families residing in the jurisdiction relies upon the funds available for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance, Shelter Plus Care Vouchers and the Mobile Home Space Rent Assistance Program. Those programs are designed to assist as many eligible families with children, seniors, and persons with disabilities as funding will permit. The HOME TBA and Shelter Plus Care programs are designed to include supportive services to address the specific needs of the assisted households, including those with mental illness, physical disability and/or HIV/AIDS, seniors and youth aging out of the foster care system.

Tenant-based assistance provides a rental subsidy voucher directly to a renter household that generally may use the voucher to rent a housing unit in standard condition on the open market. Under these programs, the assisted tenant may apply the voucher to another unit when the tenant moves.

The Project-Based option within the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance programs allows for the Housing Authority to "attach" some vouchers to selected units for typically 10 years. The SCHA implemented the Project-Based Voucher Assistance Program in 2004 and has earmarked 75 vouchers for Project-Based rental assistance. Currently, counting three projects currently assisted (Daniel Drive, Petaluma - 5 units; Fitch Mountain Terrace II, Healdsburg - 10 units; and Divine Senior Apartments, Cloverdale - 20 units) and three more in the development stage (Windsor Redwoods, Windsor - 16 units, Fife Creek Commons, Guerneville, - 12 units, and Logan's Place, Petaluma - 12 units), all 75 vouchers are committed. Under this program, the voucher remains with the unit and assists each eligible tenant who resides in the unit.

Eligible families entering any of the SCHA assistance programs must currently be very low-income (at or below 50% of Median Area Income (MAI), adjusted for household size).

Annually, over the next five years, the SCHA plans to employ the resources available from the various federal and local programs to provide rental assistance to approximately 3,015 households at any given time.

2. Describe the manner in which the plan of the jurisdiction will help address the needs of public housing and activities it will undertake to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership. (NAHA Sec. 105 (b)(11) and (91.215 (k))

Not applicable. The Sonoma County Housing Authority does not own any public housing.

3. If the public housing agency is designated as "troubled" by HUD or otherwise is performing poorly, the jurisdiction shall describe the manner in which it will provide financial or other assistance in improving its operations to remove such designation. (NAHA Sec. 105 (g))

Not applicable.

Barriers to Affordable Housing (91.210 (e) and 91.215 (f))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Barriers to Affordable Housing response:

1. Explain whether the cost of housing or the incentives to develop, maintain, or improve affordable housing are affected by public policies, particularly those of the local jurisdiction. Such policies include tax policy affecting land and other property, land use controls, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limits, and policies that affect the return on residential investment.

There are many factors that affect the cost and production or maintenance of housing affordable for lower-income families. California law requires all local governments to describe governmental and non-governmental constraints to the production of affordable housing in their General Plan Housing Elements. An analysis of these factors can aid jurisdictions in developing programs that reduce the adverse affects of these constraints on the supply and cost of housing. The following table summarizes a number of potential barriers to affordable housing derived from the Housing Elements of the 8 Urban County jurisdictions. The table identifies the barrier, the impact and some possible solutions or mitigation measures.

Barriers To Affordable Housing

Barrier	Impact	Possible Solution/Mitigation
Review Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can create excessive delays, increasing construction costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline process. • Give priority to affordable housing. • Allow project approvals at staff level for smaller projects.
Fees and Other Exactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive impact fees can drive up the cost of housing and prohibit the construction of affordable units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waive or reduce impact fees. • Defer impact fees. • Finance fees with local funding.
Density Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When sites are zoned low density residential, developers are likely to build single family homes creating an imbalance between development of single family and high density rental housing and will be unable to capture the economies of scale that make homes more affordable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that an adequate supply of land is zoned medium to high density to encourage rental housing and attached ownership housing development. • Grant density bonuses.
Codes and Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unnecessary codes can increase the cost of new housing development. • Could increase number of homeless if code enforcement causes substandard units to be vacated. • Article 34 of the State Constitution requires voter approval for low-income rental housing development and is a potential barrier to development of such units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that adopted codes meet the community's needs without unnecessarily adding cost to development. • Offer attractive financing to property owners to rehabilitate their homes. • Pursue code compliance only in event of complaint. • Place an Article 34 referendum on the ballot to secure, as needed, voter approval for affordable rental housing.

Barriers To Affordable Housing - continued

Barrier	Impact	Possible Solution/Mitigation
Growth Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By restricting development, could inflate land values and increase housing development costs. • Limits production of affordable housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt an Inclusionary Housing Policy, requiring a percentage of affordable units in each development or payment of an "in lieu" fee. • Increase allowable densities in zoning code.
Wastewater Treatment Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits the number of new residential units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofit existing homes & businesses with low-flow fixtures. • Upgrade wastewater treatment capacity.
Other Infrastructure in Support of Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If required infrastructure, such as water, streets, and sidewalks, is not available, housing construction cannot occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use local, State and/or federal funds to create or upgrade infrastructure to allow housing development.
Zoning/Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictive zoning can create a lack of affordable units. • Excessive zoning of sites for higher tax revenue commercial uses can remove the sites from the inventory available for housing development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require appropriate development based on zoning, i.e. if high density residential, require maximum density development. • Create housing opportunity areas. • Encourage "performance planning" via Planned Unit Developments. • Allow mixed use residential development in commercial zones.
Development Funds for Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of readily available funding can delay and increase the cost of affordable housing development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate non-set aside redevelopment funds, HOME and CDBG funds to affordable housing development. • Establish locally-funded housing trust funds.

Most local government policies are enacted to protect and further the public welfare. For instance, building codes and subdivision standards are required by State law for the protection and general welfare of the community. Development impact fees are recovered from the developer to assure that the public costs of new developments are paid by that development. In the "post-Prop 13" era, this recovery effort is increasingly assertive and therefore, expensive to developments of all kinds. While recognizing the changing need of public policies, we need to review them periodically to determine whether they have become excessive or represent an unnecessary constraint on the development or maintenance of affordable housing.

2. Describe the strategy to remove or ameliorate negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing, except that, if a State requires a unit of general local government to submit a regulatory barrier assessment that is substantially equivalent to the information required under this part, as determined by HUD, the unit of general local government may submit that assessment to HUD and it shall be considered to have complied with this requirement.

The response to Question 1 above discusses the role of the General Plan Housing Element in identifying the constraints that Urban County jurisdictions have identified and examples of some of the ameliorating actions they have undertaken or are considering in response to those constraints.

The following list provides specific examples of actual public policies and mitigating activities that have occurred in one or more of the Urban County's local jurisdictions. This listing is intended to illustrate the range of actions being taken to reduce or eliminate the barriers identified in Question 1 above and is not intended to be an exhaustive recitation. A complete description and analysis of each jurisdiction's plans and efforts in these areas is available in the General Plan Housing Element for each jurisdiction, which may be obtained by contacting the planning department of the jurisdiction.

Fees and Other Exactions

- Deferral of impact, inspection and permit fees until housing units are sold or ready for occupancy as a means of providing assistance to developers of affordable housing.
- Development of Affordable Housing In-Lieu Fee schedules commensurate with the community impact and cost of affordable housing development.

Density Standard

- Zoning a sufficient portion of land in the Medium-High Density Residential, High Density Residential, mixed use/commercial, and other designations to provide the sites suitable for the production of needed housing affordable to lower-income households.
- Consult with residential builders and property owners on an on-going basis to determine what future incentives may be needed to ensure wider use of existing density bonus programs.

Codes and Enforcement

- Increase the maximum residential building height limit, if needed, in any zone where multifamily housing is allowed.
- Adopt Code to provide individuals with disabilities reasonable accommodation in rules, policies, practices and procedures in regard to relief from the various land use, zoning, or building laws that may be necessary to ensure equal access to housing.
- Consider revising existing regulations in order to allow long term occupancy of travel trailers and/or recreational vehicles in existing campgrounds, in compliance with State and local codes and regulations.
- Establish procedures to allow illegal units to be legalized rather than destroyed in exchange for affordability restrictions.

Growth Management

- Support the highest appropriate density to encourage greater housing production at reduced cost for land designated for residential development within Urban Growth Boundaries.
- Implement exemptions from Growth Management Ordinances for housing projects affordable to lower-income households.
- Review growth management plans annually to determine, in part, whether priority should be given to specific housing types to achieve a balanced land use and housing program and to ensure internal consistency with the jurisdiction's General Plan.

- Monitor growth control provisions to assure they do not preclude the jurisdiction from meeting its affordable housing goals and objectives.

Other Infrastructure in Support of Housing

- Design and implement capital improvement plans for infrastructure upgrades that support housing density in general and affordable housing in particular.
- Use an inter-jurisdictional approach in solving regional infrastructure problems including transportation, water supply, sewage treatment, as well as open space preservation.

Zoning/Land Use

- Revised Zoning Ordinances to increase the maximum allowable lot coverage by deleting parking and driveway space from the calculation of lot coverage.
- Adoption of Inclusionary Housing Ordinances that require below-market rate housing to be included as part of residential projects.
- Adoption of Zoning Ordinances that ensure that supportive housing and other group living situations with more than six beds are able to be located with a minimum of regulatory barriers.
- Adoption of Zoning Ordinances that promote higher densities, which helps to reduce per-unit land costs.
- Adoption of policies that integrate affordable housing with market rate housing wherever possible in order to provide diversity in housing options to residents.
- Adoption of policies that promote preservation of mobile homes as type of housing.
- Adoption of Zoning Ordinances that allow for second dwelling units on owner-occupied lots with single-family, detached homes, subject to appropriate standards.

Homeless

Homeless Needs (91.205 (b) and 91.215 (c))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Homeless Needs response:

*Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook

Homeless Needs— The jurisdiction must provide a concise summary of the nature and extent of homelessness in the jurisdiction, (including rural homelessness and chronic homelessness where applicable), addressing separately the need for facilities and services for homeless persons and homeless families with children, both sheltered and unsheltered, and homeless subpopulations, in accordance with Table 1A. The summary must include the characteristics and needs of low-income individuals and children, (especially extremely low-income) who are currently housed but are at imminent risk of either residing in shelters or becoming unsheltered. In addition, to the extent information is available, the plan must include a description of the nature and extent of homelessness by racial and ethnic group. A quantitative analysis is not required. If a jurisdiction provides estimates of the at-risk population(s), it should also include a description of the operational definition of the at-risk group and the methodology used to generate the estimates.

The 2009 Homeless Census and Survey, completed by Applied Survey Research with the assistance of many individuals and agencies throughout Sonoma County, can be found at http://www.sonoma-county.org/cdc/cdhomeless_count.htm. Briefly, the results are as follows:

Census Component	Findings
Street enumeration	2,222
Shelter enumeration	1,025
Jails, Hospitals, and rehabilitation facilities	43
Total Count	3,290
Total HUD Approved Count	3,247

Results of the Count revealed the need for additional shelter beds for single individuals countywide and a redistribution of family beds to beds for singles. The high number of homeless found in the West County also confirms the need for basic services and shelter in that area.

The need for new transitional housing beds to stabilize single adults countywide has grown considerably. Needed services for this population include mental health, substance abuse, and veteran’s services. In West Sonoma County, interim family housing with access to mental health and substance abuse treatment for families is needed.

Additional permanent supportive housing units are needed countywide for families and single adults with disabilities. Services for the family beds should be for mental illness, physical disabilities, chronic illness or HIV, and veteran’s services. The services for single adults in permanent supportive housing need to address mental illness, co-occurring substance abuse, physical disabilities, chronic illness, and/or living with HIV.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data has also shown that a large number of homeless veterans are not receiving services. The Continuum of Care Planning Group’s Homeless Veterans Committee is developing strategies and partnerships to increase homeless

veterans' access to services and is committed to working closely with local Vet Connect event coordinators.

A significant number of homeless youth documented through the Count has also highlighted the need for increased services for homeless and runaway youth in Sonoma County.

There is also a large at-risk population of people who may become homeless. The Count revealed that overall, survey respondents most frequently cited loss of job or unemployment (34%) as the primary event or condition that led to their current episode of homelessness. Other common causes of homelessness were alcohol or drug use (16%), an argument with family or friends who asked them to leave (8%), and domestic violence (7%). The inability to maintain adequate employment leaves many at risk of homelessness. Families and individuals dependent on a variety of government assistance programs, including TANF, GA, SS, SSI, and VA, may be at-risk of losing their housing as welfare reforms have tied eligibility to work requirements and are imposing sanctions for non-cooperation. The limits on the amount of time that someone can receive unemployment support is also increasing the risk of homelessness. Low-income households that lack adequate coping skills, the ability to maintain self-sufficiency, or adequate support systems, are all at risk of becoming homeless.

According to the Count, Whites/Caucasians comprised 66% of Survey respondents, Hispanic/Latino respondents comprised 14%, American Indian/Alaskan Native respondents comprised 8%, and Black/African Americans comprised 6% of Survey respondents. In the overall Sonoma County population, according to the 2000 Decennial Census, 76% of residents were White/ Caucasians, 17% were Hispanics/Latinos, less than 2% were American Indian and Alaskan Native, and 1% were Black/African American. This suggests an over-representation in the homeless population of the American Indian/Alaskan Native and Black/African American populations, and an under-representation of the Hispanic/Latino and White/ Caucasian populations. No Asian or Pacific Islander or Other Races were identified in the Count.

Priority Homeless Needs

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Priority Homeless Needs response:

1. Using the results of the Continuum of Care planning process, identify the jurisdiction's homeless and homeless prevention priorities specified in Table 1A, the Homeless and Special Needs Populations Chart. The description of the jurisdiction's choice of priority needs and allocation priorities must be based on reliable data meeting HUD standards and should reflect the required consultation with homeless assistance providers, homeless persons, and other concerned citizens regarding the needs of homeless families with children and individuals. The jurisdiction must provide an analysis of how the needs of each category of residents provided the basis for determining the relative priority of each priority homeless need category. A separate brief narrative should be directed to addressing gaps in services and housing for the sheltered and unsheltered chronic homeless.

Eighty-eight percent of respondents to the Commission's Needs Assessment survey ranked homeless families and individuals as their highest priority. In addition, 75% of respondents ranked Homeless Shelters and 78% ranked Permanent Supportive Housing as their highest priorities. Feedback obtained from the Citizen's Participation process indicated the community's homeless priorities. These included transitional housing and supportive services county-wide and particularly in Sonoma Valley, homeless prevention in the form of early elementary reading and social skills, more permanent supportive housing, emergency shelters and transitional housing for Veterans that provide Vet-specific services, more services for homeless with special needs, and high impact funding for homeless programs.

Part 3 of the Continuum of Care Homeless Population and Subpopulations chart, included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, identifies the County's relative priorities in the areas of homeless emergency shelters, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing. The *Homeless Strategic Plan* section outlines the County's plans for addressing the priority needs identified in the areas of day center services, emergency shelter, transitional housing, supportive services, and homeless prevention. The *Specific Housing Needs Objectives* section addresses the permanent supportive housing needs of homeless persons. The *Community Development* section discusses the Specific Objective of facilitating economic integration and self-sufficiency for the County's lower-income residents, including homeless individuals and families.

As detailed in the *General* Section of this Plan, the identification of priority needs was based upon data from varied sources, including the Sonoma County Housing Element Technical Report, the 2000 U.S. Decennial Census and the specific subsets of that census data prepared for HUD, the data included in the Count, the 2007 10 Year Homeless Action Plan, a housing market analysis, along with consultation with various agencies, municipal governments and County departments. In addition, priority needs were identified at a public Needs Assessment Forum attended by representatives of public and nonprofit organizations assisting the low/moderate-income and homeless residents of Sonoma County.

The *General* Section of this Plan includes a full description of the process used to identify priority needs and to designate the relative priority level of those needs.

The *Homeless Strategic Plan* section includes a full discussion of the County's strategy to address the unmet housing and service needs of the chronically homeless.

2. A community should give a high priority to chronically homeless persons, where the jurisdiction identifies sheltered and unsheltered chronic homeless persons in its Homeless Needs Table - Homeless Populations and Subpopulations.

The priority need of chronically homeless persons is reflected in the Continuum of Care Homeless Population and Subpopulations Chart included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, and in the discussion in the *Homeless Strategic Plan* section of this Plan.

Homeless Inventory (91.210 (c))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Homeless Inventory response:

The jurisdiction shall provide a concise summary of the existing facilities and services (including a brief inventory) that assist homeless persons and families with children and subpopulations identified in Table 1A. These include outreach and assessment, emergency shelters and services, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, access to permanent housing, and activities to prevent low-income individuals and families with children (especially extremely low-income) from becoming homeless. The jurisdiction can use the optional Continuum of Care Housing Activity Chart and Service Activity Chart to meet this requirement.

Sonoma County recognizes the concept of a "continuum of care" that includes all of the myriad needs of homeless people and works to coordinate available resources to address those needs. A fully developed continuum of care system to assist homeless persons is comprised of five fundamental components: 1) outreach and assessment; 2) supportive services, including homeless prevention activities; 3) emergency shelter; 4) transitional housing; and 5) permanent supportive housing.

Outreach and assessment and supportive services including homeless prevention are listed in the Inventory of Services and Agencies in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section. Please see the attached Housing Inventory in the *Additional Files* section of this plan for a comprehensive list

of emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing beds. Because homelessness is a need that crosses jurisdictional boundaries and requires regional solutions, the lists are countywide, including the Urban County and the separate HUD entitlement cities of Petaluma and Santa Rosa.

Homeless Strategic Plan (91.215 (c))

3-5 Year Homeless Strategic Plan response:

- 1. Homelessness— Describe the jurisdiction's strategy for developing a system to address homelessness and the priority needs of homeless persons and families (including the subpopulations identified in the needs section). The jurisdiction's strategy must consider the housing and supportive services needed in each stage of the process which includes preventing homelessness, outreach/assessment, emergency shelters and services, transitional housing, and helping homeless persons (especially any persons that are chronically homeless) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. The jurisdiction must also describe its strategy for helping extremely low- and low-income individuals and families who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless.**
2. The County recognizes the concept of a “continuum of care” that includes all aspects of homelessness and that uses a collaborative approach resulting in a set of goals that are shared by a broad range of participants, including governmental jurisdictions, community-based organizations, businesses, civic groups, faith-based groups, housing developers, funders, homeless individuals and representatives of the broader community.

The Sonoma County 10-Year Homeless Action Plan (<http://www.sonoma-county.org/cdc/pdf/cofctenyearactionplan.pdf>), and all information included in the discussions about homelessness throughout this Consolidated Plan, reflect the demographics, needs and available shelter, housing and services in all three HUD entitlement jurisdictions covering all geographic areas of Sonoma County. The 10-year Plan is the County's strategic plan for addressing and preventing homelessness. The Commission is the lead agency for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care planning process.

Homeless prevention services are provided to people who are at risk of becoming homeless due to financial emergencies, chronic problems, or traumatic events occurring in their lives. In some cases, homeless prevention assistance may take the form of a one-time payment for delinquent rent or a security deposit to obtain permanent housing. In other cases, homeless prevention assistance may require more intensive financial resources to address underlying needs such as substance abuse or domestic violence issues.

The actual amount and types of homeless prevention assistance to be provided to at-risk persons will be affected by the types and levels of financial resources that are made available during the 5-year period of this Plan.

Permanent supportive housing represents one component of a fully developed continuum of care system for homeless persons, as well as a housing solution for non-homeless people with special needs. The County's specific objective for assisting permanent supportive housing development is discussed in the *Specific Housing Objectives* section of this Plan and the aforementioned 10-year Homeless Action Plan.

- 3. Chronic homelessness—Describe the jurisdiction's strategy for eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. This should include the strategy for helping homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. This strategy should, to the maximum extent feasible, be coordinated with the strategy presented Exhibit 1 of the Continuum of Care (CoC) application and any other strategy or plan to eliminate chronic homelessness. Also describe, in a narrative, relationships and efforts to coordinate the Conplan, CoC, and any other strategy or plan to address chronic homelessness.**

4. The 2009 Homeless Census and Survey found that 30% of Sonoma County's homeless population could be considered chronically homeless. 82% of the chronically homeless respondents were unsheltered and 80% had two or more disabling conditions. 42.6% of the chronically homeless were veterans.

The 10 Year Homeless Action Plan includes specific steps to create effective resources to help chronically homeless people become housed. These include:

- Creating 110 "gateway" beds linked to mental health or substance abuse treatment: 75 beds with mental health services, and 35 substance abuse treatment beds.
- Diverting chronically homeless repetitive misdemeanor offenders from jail into housing and treatment through the Court Homeless Protocol.
- Housing hundreds of homeless veterans by linking them with treatment, and creating 116 new transitional beds and 137 permanent supportive housing units for veterans with disabilities.

Continuum of Care Planning Group committees and partner organizations are linking people who are homeless with resources, working to expand mental health and substance abuse services, developing re-entry services to break the cycle between jail and the street, connecting homeless veterans with services, and building Sonoma County's integrated health resources for homeless individuals and families. Efforts include:

- Joint outreach in parks and on the street by community health outreach workers from at least 7 organizations.
- Provision of mental health services to individuals in homeless shelters and service centers by Sonoma County Mental Health and various non-profit agencies.
- Court Homeless Protocol re-entry program to divert homeless individuals from jail and help them resolve their homelessness.
- Veterans served through Sonoma County Vet Connect, a weekly 3-hour drop-in program initiated by homeless veterans.
- Funding for health care staff serving the homeless in Santa Rosa, Petaluma, and Guerneville.

5. Homelessness Prevention—Describe the jurisdiction's strategy to help prevent homelessness for individuals and families with children who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

The 2009 Homeless Census and Survey found that 53% of Survey respondents were experiencing their first episode of homelessness.

Sonoma County's 10 Year Homeless Action Plan includes two goals for preventing homelessness:

- Reducing the number of people becoming homeless upon discharge from public institutions by 80%, by developing and implementing protocols to assist people in finding housing when discharged from public institutions (jails, prisons, mental health institutions, hospitals, and foster care) under the leadership of a Homeless Prevention Council.
- Reducing the number of people becoming homeless through loss of tenancy by 5% per year, by providing Rental Assistance with Financial Education and Case Management.

Utilizing data stored in Sonoma County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), it is possible to specify targets in preventing new homelessness. The goal of reducing discharges from public institutions into homelessness by 80% over the next 10 years is now refined. In 2008, approximately 116 individuals reported becoming homeless on release from jail, foster care,

hospitals, and substance abuse or mental health treatment facilities; the revised goal is that by 2016 no more than 23 individuals would become homeless in this way.

Towards that end, discharge planning efforts are underway with each of the public systems involved. In the case of the foster care system and mental health treatment, documents have been drafted describing the scope of the challenge and the partnerships needed to address the issues are being formed.

The goal of reducing the number of people losing their housing for reasons that are not related to underlying special needs, is now refined: the target is approximately 40 fewer individuals each year who enter the homeless services system due to lost housing. Toward that end, in 2008 United Way agreed to convene community planning to build financial stability among working families in Sonoma County; the County Economic Assistance Division provided information on TANF homeless prevention benefits, and the Sonoma County Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program increased Earned Income Tax Credits to Sonoma County's low-income families by 29%.

The Sonoma County Continuum of Care Planning Group (CCPG) will continue its progress in accomplishing these goals to prevent homelessness.

In addition to CCPG efforts to prevent homelessness, the County of Sonoma is a recipient of Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program funds. In a joint partnership with the City of Santa Rosa, the County has contracted with Catholic Charities to administer this program countywide. When the funding is expended, an anticipated increase in ESG funding will be used to maintain Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Services in some form for those at-risk for homelessness.

6. Institutional Structure—Briefly describe the institutional structure, including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions, through which the jurisdiction will carry out its homelessness strategy.

The Commission works in conjunction with the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma, and a broad coalition of community-based organizations and individuals, as the Continuum of Care Planning Group (CCPG) (see Inventory of Services and Agencies in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files*).

The CCPG is comprised of representatives from the nonprofit, governmental, housing development, faith-based, business, advocacy, homeless and general communities. In addition to meeting to share information, discuss emerging issues, plan solutions, monitor progress on established goals and action steps, prioritize community needs and McKinney-Vento proposals, and prepare the annual Continuum of Care funding submission, the CCPG's various participants are responsible for implementing the Action Steps set forth in the 10-Year Homeless Action Plan.

Currently, eight CCPG Committees are conducting the work of the CCPG:

- 1) The Training Partnership Committee is a consortium of organizations engaged in training, technical assistance, and capacity-building, whose goal is to improve quality of Continuum of Care efforts and increase the capacity of Continuum of Care participating agencies to meet 10 Year Homeless Action Plan goals;
- 2) The HMIS Implementation Group is responsible for implementation of, and data quality assurance for, the federally mandated Homeless Management Information System;
- 3) The Continuum of Care Evaluation Committee is an impartial group dedicated to reviewing the performance of Continuum of Care-funded projects, recommending project priorities, and determining sanctions for under-performing projects;
- 4) The Ending Family Homelessness Committee is a Community Foundation-led effort to improve outcomes in ending family homelessness;
- 5) The Homeless Veterans Committee is developing strategies and partnerships to increase homeless veterans' access to service;

- 6) The Mental Health/AODS Committee is developing strategies and partnerships to link homeless with mental illness, alcohol, or other drug problems, and those with co-occurring disorders to appropriate services and housing;
- 7) The new Improving Access to Mainstream Services Committee will convene County and agency staff regularly to strategize improved linkages for homeless clients; and
- 8) The CCPG Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the Sonoma County Community Development Commission, cities of Petaluma and Santa Rosa, the United Way, the Sonoma County Task Force for the Homeless, the Community Foundation Sonoma County, the Director, or appointee, of the Sonoma County Department of Human Services as an ex-officio and non-voting member of the Committee, and elected at-large members, plans the CCPG meetings, reviews committee actions, reviews Continuum of Care funding proposals, and takes any other actions necessary to accomplish the goals and action steps in the Continuum of Care Plan.

In addition to the County's participation in, and collaboration with, the CCPG, the County's homelessness strategy is carried out in part by multiple County departments, the seven Urban County participating municipalities, and various nonprofit agencies receiving CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding (listed in each year's Consolidated Plan *Action Plan*). A host of other public and private organizations (also listed in each year's *Action Plan*) contribute to this effort through the provision of financial and organizational resources that are coordinated with the CDBG, HOME, ESG, and other McKinney-Vento funding for projects.

Together, the Commission, the CCPG, the County departments, the municipalities, the funded agencies, the agencies providing other resources with which the CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding is coordinated, and the community-based agencies, constitute the institutional structure through which the Urban County implements the homelessness strategy.

7. Discharge Coordination Policy—Every jurisdiction receiving McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), Supportive Housing, Shelter Plus Care, or Section 8 SRO Program funds must develop and implement a Discharge Coordination Policy, to the maximum extent practicable. Such a policy should include “policies and protocols for the discharge of persons from publicly funded institutions or systems of care (such as health care facilities, foster care or other youth facilities, or correction programs and institutions) in order to prevent such discharge from immediately resulting in homelessness for such persons.” The jurisdiction should describe its planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how the community will move toward such a policy.

The Sonoma County Health and Human Services (HHS) Coordinating Committee meets periodically to discuss policies and protocols that can be successfully implemented to ensure that, to the extent practicable and where appropriate, the discharge of persons from publicly funded institutions or systems of care does not immediately result in homelessness. The HHS Coordinating Committee is an inter-departmental group comprised of the County departments of Health Services (Divisions of Alcohol and Other Drug Services, Mental Health, Prevention and Planning, Public Health), Child Support, Human Services (Divisions of Adult & Aging Services, Economic Assistance, Employment & Training Services, Family, Youth & Children's Services), Probation, County Administrator's Office, and the Community Development Commission (Housing Authority, Redevelopment Agency and Community Development Division).

Because these departments administer or contract for services with systems of care and publicly funded institutions, such as foster care, youth facilities, mental health treatment facilities, domestic violence programs, homeless shelters, and substance abuse treatment facilities, their coordinated involvement is important to assess current discharge policies and protocols and to recommend new or revised policies and protocols to prevent homelessness upon discharge where feasible. Numerous County agencies have developed and implemented protocols in the area of discharge planning, often in cross-department and public/private collaborations. Several of these efforts are described further below.

The Sonoma County Human Services Department offers two programs designed to provide youth aging out of foster care with the skills needed to avoid homelessness. The Independent Living Skills Program (ILP) facilitates housing and life skills development for youth aging out of foster care. ILP provides housing search services as well as assistance with housing move-in costs for approximately 60% of the County's youth who are aging out of foster care. The Department's Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) places youth ages 16-17 into a quasi-independent living situation rather than traditional foster care through a contract with Redwood Children's Services. THPP provides services, classes and one-on-one mentoring as well as shelter, with the goal of transitioning foster youth from a THPP apartment to a nearby independent apartment.

Mental health service providers or social workers discuss discharge plans with mental health patients. A financial counselor is available to assist patients to apply for SSI and other resources, and a range of referrals are made available prior to discharge. Patients who would be homeless on discharge are referred to comprehensive treatment services, housing assistance, independent living skills coaching, and employment development services.

The Sonoma County Housing Authority has established a number of preferences for admission to the federally funded Section 8 program, as well as to its Shelter Plus Care and HOME tenant-based rental assistance programs. Several of these preferences are targeted to groups of people who are involved in the County's systems of care. Examples of such preferences are for victims of domestic violence, persons with disabilities and/or seniors, veterans and veterans' families, families and individuals who are involuntarily displaced by natural disasters, emancipated foster youth, homeless families and individuals transitioning from shelters to self-sufficiency, and persons with HIV/AIDS. By implementing these admission preferences for these target groups, the Housing Authority facilitates provision of monthly rental subsidies that make decent, safe, and sanitary housing affordable and available to people who may otherwise become homeless upon leaving their institution or system of care.

A range of effective diversion programs have been, and are continuing to be, developed to effectively move homeless people with special needs out of local criminal justice facilities and into appropriate services and housing. The County of Sonoma, as outlined in the Sonoma County Strategic Plan (<http://www.sonoma-county.org/strategic>), endeavors to enhance the capacity of County programs and community systems to more effectively meet the changing needs of individuals, families, and communities in Sonoma County by following the concept of "*upstream investments*". Upstream investments are defined as opportunities to intervene with individuals before they become involved with the juvenile or adult justice system. The Commission and the Continuum of Care Planning Group, by prioritizing homeless and supportive housing programs, are supporting this concept.

Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG)

3-5 Year Strategic Plan ESG response:

(States only) Describe the process for awarding grants to State recipients, and a description of how the allocation will be made available to units of local government.

Not applicable to Urban County.

Community Development

Community Development (91.215 (e))

*Please also refer to the Community Development Table in the Needs.xls workbook

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Community Development response:

1. Identify the jurisdiction's priority non-housing community development needs eligible for assistance by CDBG eligibility category specified in the Community Development Needs Table (formerly Table 2B), – i.e., public facilities, public improvements, public services and economic development.

The Community Development Needs Table, included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, details the County's estimated non-housing community development priority needs eligible for CDBG assistance, including the areas of public improvements, public facilities, public services and economic development.

2. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.

One of the major demographic changes in Sonoma County, as identified in the Sonoma County Strategic Plan, adopted by the Board of Supervisors in July 2008, is the growing population over the age of 65. During the development phase of this Consolidated Plan, a continuing effort was underway on the part of all Sonoma County jurisdictions to obtain sufficient funds to implement mandated ADA transition plans through completion of access modifications to public facilities and infrastructure throughout the county. The needs of an aging population coupled with the need for necessary ADA upgrades dovetail well with CDBG eligibility criteria.

Secondly, Finding Four in the 2008 Sonoma County Strategic Plan states that, among other infrastructure needs, wastewater treatment will be in an unacceptable condition in the next five to seven years. Therefore, both ADA and wastewater improvements are a priority for the 2010 Consolidated Plan.

Because the local priority need for public services is in the areas of homelessness and housing-related services, the discussion of assigning public service priority needs is included in those sections of this Strategic Plan.

3. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

The national economic downturn has affected local governments' ability to pay for public infrastructure improvements as construction costs have risen and property taxes and other public sector revenues have declined. While market fluctuations are considered normal, if adequate funding cannot be found, even high priority needs may have to remain unmet.

Lack of available funding is the chief constraint in addressing the needs identified in the Community Development Needs Table. Funding recommendations must be made based on perceived levels of relative importance, which often collide with daily realities. For example, much emphasis is placed on providing services to youth to break the future cycle of homelessness, yet it is not clear if it is effective to provide the services to those that are not also adequately housed in safe and decent housing. It may be that more of the limited resources should be allocated to affordable housing before allocating funds to youth services. As discussed earlier in this Plan, permanent housing with supportive services has proven to be the most effective answer, yet lack of funding for administration of the supportive services often restricts their implementation. In general, the lack of available funding for operations and supportive

services is greater than the dearth of funds for facilities and other capital improvements and this systemic funding imbalance is a significant obstacle to meeting underserved needs.

4. Identify specific long-term and short-term community development objectives (including economic development activities that create jobs), developed in accordance with the statutory goals described in section 24 CFR 91.1 and the primary objective of the CDBG program to provide decent housing and a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

NOTE: Each specific objective developed to address a priority need, must be identified by number and contain proposed accomplishments, the time period (i.e., one, two, three, or more years), and annual program year numeric goals the jurisdiction hopes to achieve in quantitative terms, or in other measurable terms as identified and defined by the jurisdiction.

For all non-housing community development specific objectives, the actual number, types and locations of projects will depend upon the level and sources of funds that become available during the 5-year period of this Plan.

It is the Commission's goal to assist approximately 5,600 individuals annually with homeless and other public services. As part of that effort, some CDBG funds will be used to facilitate economic integration and self-sufficiency for lower-income persons through self-sufficiency programs and through job training and economic development activities to increase job opportunities.

In addition, CDBG funds will be used to construct, renovate, or install access modifications to meet the special needs of the persons with disabilities and the elderly, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in approximately three public facilities annually, including but not limited to public parks, restrooms, youth centers, senior centers, fire stations, libraries, and community recreation facilities.

Finally, over the next 5 years, the County will use CDBG funds to preserve predominantly lower-income neighborhoods and to improve the quality of neighborhood-based living, including but not limited to construction or reconstruction of storm/flood drain improvements, water and sewer improvements (connecting water and sewer lines to new or existing affordable housing developments, sewer mains, and rural water facilities), streets, streetlights, ADA-compliant sidewalks, curbs and gutters (either non-existent or in need of reconstruction) to serve approximately 1,500 individuals and households annually.

Antipoverty Strategy (91.215 (h))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan Antipoverty Strategy response:

1. Describe the jurisdiction's goals, programs, and policies for reducing the number of poverty level families (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually). In consultation with other appropriate public and private agencies, (i.e. TANF agency) state how the jurisdiction's goals, programs, and policies for producing and preserving affordable housing set forth in the housing component of the consolidated plan will be coordinated with other programs and services for which the jurisdiction is responsible.

As detailed throughout the discussions about the priority needs identified by the County, and the goals and objectives established to address those needs, the County hopes to reduce the number of poverty-level families by targeting CDBG, HOME, ESG, and local funds to projects that will provide services to foster self-sufficiency, in conjunction with the provision of housing, shelter and other public facilities. The overriding goal of the County is to provide the environment and tools necessary to enable all County residents to realize a greater degree of economic stability.

While the County does not have the resources to directly elevate the incomes of poverty level persons, it can and does act to reduce the housing costs for these individuals. The Commission implements the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, HOME-funded Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program, Shelter Plus Care Program, and Mobile Home Space Rent Assistance Program, all of which serve this purpose. Similarly, as detailed in the Housing section of this document, 3,046 rental housing units throughout the Urban County are rent restricted under a long-term affordable housing contract as of April 2009 and many more are in the planning and development stage. Lower-income households residing in rental housing with below market rates then have more income available for meeting other financial obligations.

The Commission also makes CDBG funding available to municipalities and nonprofit agencies to operate programs that work to reduce the number of persons living below the poverty level through economic development and employment training activities.

The Commission administers a Family Self-Sufficiency Program designed to assist lower-income families receiving Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance to develop skills to become financially independent. In addition, all local nonprofit agencies serving homeless people offer some level of supportive services to program participants, ranging from family counseling to job skill development, all of which are intended to promote self-sufficiency and prevent a return to poverty and homelessness.

Homeless prevention and transitional housing activities are designed to keep lower-income people from becoming homeless and to help them find and retain permanent housing. The County regularly provides CDBG, ESG, and County funds to nonprofits providing homeless prevention and transitional housing programs.

The County is an active participant in the continuum of care planning work with the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma, and many nonprofit housing and service providers. Through the Sonoma County Continuum of Care planning process, the County Housing Authority and local nonprofits have been successful in receiving approximately \$2 million a year in competitive funding from HUD to provide permanent supportive housing for persons with disabilities, transitional housing, and supportive services. All of these activities work to reduce the number of poverty-level households.

Local nonprofit agencies offer shared housing opportunities for persons who might not otherwise be able to afford housing. Supportive services and counseling in areas such as life skills, parenting, and financial management are often provided in tandem with the shared housing. By pooling household expenses and receiving needed services, lower-income households sharing living arrangements are able to work towards greater self-sufficiency.

The Commission has prepared a Section 3 Affirmative Action Plan to ensure that employment and other economic opportunities generated by certain federally funded projects are, to the greatest extent feasible, directed to lower-income persons, particularly those who are recipients of government assistance for housing, and to business concerns that provide economic opportunities to lower-income residents of the the Urban County. The plan covers all CDBG and HOME-funded projects that include the construction, reconstruction, conversion or rehabilitation of housing, and other CDBG and HOME-funded construction of public buildings or improvements, where the level of CDBG and HOME funding for the project is \$200,000 or more.

The following are additional County operated programs that provide a crucial component to the County's overall antipoverty strategy.

SonomaWORKS

The SonomaWORKS Program, administered by the County Department of Human Services, is a comprehensive, welfare-to-work program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families applicants and recipients providing employment and training services, cash assistance, and supportive services that include child care, transportation, and mental health and substance abuse services.

Job Link

Job Link is an employment and training one-stop career center open to the public. A variety of community partners are located on-site provides access to the Department of Rehabilitation, Employment Development Department, Santa Rosa Junior College, Veterans Programs, Human Services Department, Experience Works, and Goodwill Industries. Referrals are available to other partners off-site. Job Link provides free workshops for job seekers and career changers, including resume writing, job search, interviewing, and self assessment. In addition, a computer lab with software for job search, career and educational planning and a bilingual resource room with job openings and computer are available. The Resource Center has a career reference library, additional computers, telephone banks, fax and copier machines.

Local Workforce Investment Board

The Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) is a policy body that provides oversight and special grants to ensure access to workforce and education activities. The WIB members represent community based organizations, labor, education, economic development and housing agencies, and public interest groups. Additionally, a Youth Council oversees the Youth Education and Employment Services program. To help ensure effective coordination between the Commission's programs and the job development/training activities overseen by the WIB, the Commission's Executive Director has a seat on the Board and Youth Council.

Economic Assistance Division

The Economic Assistance Division provides assistance to obtain food, shelter, medical and dental care, and other supportive services for low-income families with children, those disabled or unemployed, and children in foster homes. This Division facilitates applications for incapacitated General Assistance clients to assist them in applying for, and approval of, SSI at a faster pace.

2. Identify the extent to which this strategy will reduce (or assist in reducing) the number of poverty level families, taking into consideration factors over which the jurisdiction has control.

To the extent allowed by the level of funding and economic conditions (housing market, job opportunity rate, health care systems, the willingness of the target populations to utilize the preferred assistance, etc.), the Urban County will strive to stabilize lives and increase job skills and employability of poverty level families. By funding the maximum number of programs possible with the available resources, the Commission assists many agencies and the participating municipalities to operate programs that contribute to the reduction of the number of persons living below the poverty level.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Coordination (91.315 (k))

3-5 Year Strategic Plan LIHTC Coordination response:

1. (States only) Describe the strategy to coordinate the Low-income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) with the development of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income families.

Not applicable to the Urban County.

Non-Homeless Special Needs

Specific Special Needs Objectives (91.215)

3-5 Year Non-homeless Special Needs Analysis response:

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve over a specified time period.

Many non-homeless persons need supportive housing and services to enable them to live independently and to avoid homelessness or institutionalization. This is particularly true for the elderly, persons with physical, mental, or developmental disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, victims of domestic violence, parolees, veterans, teens living on their own, children leaving group homes or aging out of foster care, people transitioning from welfare to work, farmworkers, non-English speakers, illiterate adults, and substance abusers. The supportive housing and services required by these special needs subpopulations often overlap the housing needs and supportive services identified and addressed in other areas throughout this Strategic Plan. As such, the County does not identify specific priorities and objectives for non-homeless special needs populations, but rather includes them with a broad-based array of objectives in the *Housing, Homeless, and Community Development* sections of this Plan. The Commission works very closely with an active Community Development Housing Organization (CHDO) that has been, and continues to be, supported operationally through the use of HOME funds and that is working with several non-profit service agencies in planning and developing supported housing for those agencies' clientele. Also, the County Housing Authority operates the HOME TBA and the Shelter Plus Care programs in conjunction with several non-profit agencies to provide not only the physical housing, but also the support for the individuals living with disabilities and illness, or who require other types of support.

2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the strategic plan.

The Urban County will administer housing, homeless, and non-housing community development programs, either directly through the Commission or through funding provided to other governmental or nonprofit agencies, that will benefit lower-income households, including households with one or members who have special needs. Federal, State and local public and private sector resources that are expected to be available for these purposes are detailed in the *Specific Housing Objectives* section of this Plan.

Non-homeless Special Needs (91.205 (d) and 91.210 (d)) Analysis (including HOPWA)

3-5 Year Non-homeless Special Needs Analysis response:

*Please also refer to the Non-homeless Special Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Estimate, to the extent practicable, the number of persons in various subpopulations that are not homeless but may require housing or supportive services, including the elderly, frail elderly, persons with disabilities (mental, physical, developmental, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families), persons with alcohol or other drug addiction, victims of domestic violence, and any other categories the jurisdiction may specify and describe their supportive housing needs. The jurisdiction can use the Non-Homeless Special Needs Table (formerly Table 1B) of their Consolidated Plan to help identify these needs.

*Note: HOPWA recipients must identify the size and characteristics of the population with HIV/AIDS and their families that will be served in the metropolitan area.

Special Needs Subpopulations

Elderly Households

The Sonoma County Housing Element Technical Report reports that 13% of the countywide population is aged 65 or older and by 2020, this percentage is expected to increase to 17%. The County can anticipate an increase of 35,000 elderly individuals from 2000 to 2020. This population experiences high rates of chronic illness and disability, and places a high demand on programs that serve seniors (for example, seniors are placing a growing demand on the In-Home Supportive Services program, which grew by 60% between 2001 and 2006). The County Area Agency on Aging, Area Plan Update 2007-2008 states: *As people age, their housing needs change. There is a critical shortage of affordable housing options for seniors and disabled adults in Sonoma County. Waiting lists for affordable housing continue to increase as the demand outpaces the supply and the senior population grows.* Most elderly persons living in the Urban County are on fixed incomes, such as pensions, social security, and personal savings. According to the Housing Element Technical Report, 5.7% of individuals countywide are below the poverty level and 65 years of age or older. According to the 2000 Census, 22,703 households with at least one person age 65 or older are cost-burdened. Approximately 46% are renters and 54% are home owners. In 2010, these percentages are likely higher.

Persons with Disabilities and HIV/AIDS

Data from the 2000 U.S. Census available in the CHAS Data Book, and included on the Housing Needs Table reported 8,606 lower-income households with a disabled member. Of that total, 5,137 or 60% of the households are experiencing at least one of the housing problems that the census data measured. The incidence of housing problems declines as income increases, with the 3,077 extremely low-income households having the highest percentage (72%) of households experiencing housing problems. The 2009 Sonoma County Homeless Count indicated 27% of respondents had a physical disability.

The County Health Services Department, Mental Health Division estimates that approximately 9,000 County residents suffer debilitating mental disorders. As noted in the *Homeless* section of this Plan, assistance to those with mental illness is a high priority in the 10 Year Homeless Action Plan and an additional 75 beds with mental health services are needed. In the 2009 Sonoma County Homeless Count, 30% of homeless respondents self-reported they have a mental illness. Further analysis of the Count data suggests the actual figure may easily be twice that percentage.

The Housing Needs Table and this analysis treat persons with HIV/AIDS as a separate category of persons with special housing needs. The Table includes the figure of 1,132 persons living with HIV/AIDS in Sonoma County that the Sonoma County Department of Health Services reported in its June 30, 2008 report entitled, "Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS in Sonoma County Annual Report". That figure includes 859 persons living with AIDS and 277 persons living with HIV, but these figures are considered low as they only represent persons first diagnosed with HIV or AIDS in Sonoma County. This County had the seventh highest prevalence of people living with AIDS of all 58 California counties in 2007. Three percent of respondents to the 2009 Homeless Count said they have an HIV/AIDS related illness.

The housing needs of persons with disabilities and HIV/AIDS are similar to those of the elderly. A survey of many nonprofits and social service agencies indicated the need for low-cost, accessible housing close to public transportation, shopping and medical facilities. The provision of accessibility modifications in the existing housing stock, as well as new accessible housing units for disabled households is a growing need as more disabled persons are striving to lead independent and productive lives.

Alcohol or Other Drug Addiction

Forty-two percent of individuals responding to the 2009 Homeless Count stated they were suffering from some sort of substance abuse. The prevalence of alcohol or other drug addiction and mental illness is significant and treatment capacity for lower income households far less than the need. Exacerbating the lack of treatment capacity is the fact that public funding availability is shrinking in response to current economic conditions. It is not considered likely that this situation will improve to previous levels during this Consolidated Plan five-year period.

Large Family Households

A household that includes five or more members is considered a large family household. The 2000 Census American FactFinder data indicates that 10,140 households in the Urban County had 5 or more people, representing 10.5% of all households in the Urban County.

The Housing Needs Table includes housing needs data for lower-income “Large Related” households that are comprised of 5 or more members. The Table reports that there are 3,882 Large Related households in the Urban County with incomes not exceeding 80% of MFI, including 2,478 renter households and 1,404 owner households.

The Housing Needs Table also reports that 3,240 or 83% of the Large Related households were experiencing one or more housing needs. A slightly greater percentage of owner than renter “Large Related Households (85% vs. 83%) were experiencing a housing need.

The primary housing need of these households is cost burden. More than 62% of the Large Related households experiencing a housing need were paying more than 30% of income for housing costs. The remaining 1,233 or 38% of the Large Related households experiencing a housing need were experiencing overcrowding and/or incomplete kitchen or plumbing facilities. Of the Large Related households experiencing these latter two housing needs, 958 or 77% of them were renter households.

Single Parent Households

The 2000 Census data counted 9,663 households in the Urban County headed by a single adult with children. That figure includes households headed by one natural parent, a relative of the children, a foster parent or a legal guardian. Such households represented 30% of the 33,160 households with children in the Urban County. Women headed 69% of the single parent households. According to the 2000 Census data, approximately 27% of single-headed households Countywide (including cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma) have incomes below poverty level and are less likely to own their own homes. As a result, affordable rental housing and affordable nurturing day care are primary needs of these families.

Farm Workers

According to the Sonoma County Housing Element Technical Report, Sonoma County farms and ranches employ just under 5,000 individuals, as estimated 1,500 being migrant farm workers. The County has produced 427 agricultural employee units and beds from 2000 through September 2007 in the unincorporated areas and now has a total of 883 such beds. Despite such production and other farm worker housing resources, reports of overcrowded homes, apartments and motel rooms are common. Housing for farm workers will continue to be a significant special need in the unincorporated County. There is also a need to provide supportive services for this population. Migrant farm workers’ service needs include education, vocational and social skills, training and counseling.

2. Identify the priority housing and supportive service needs of persons who are not homeless but may or may not require supportive housing, i.e., elderly, frail elderly, persons with disabilities (mental, physical, developmental, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families), persons with alcohol or other drug addiction by using the Non-homeless Special Needs Table.

As discussed under Question 1 above, the development of more units of housing appropriate and affordable to populations with special needs is an important need. In addition, these special needs populations require supportive services to help them live as independently as possible. The Non-Homeless Special Needs Table, included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files* section of this Plan, shows the priority housing and supportive service needs for these populations. Where relevant information is available, the Table also indicates the needed units of housing with service need, the currently available units of housing with services, and the gap or unmet need yet to be addressed.

3. Describe the basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs.

The response to this question is covered under the *General Section* of this Plan.

4. Identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

The response to this question is covered under the *General Section* of this Plan.

5. To the extent information is available, describe the facilities and services that assist persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, and programs for ensuring that persons returning from mental and physical health institutions receive appropriate supportive housing.

Permanent supportive housing is provided in conjunction with case management and supportive services targeted to the specific needs of the residents to enable them to achieve as high a level of self-sufficiency as possible while recognizing that the nature of their illnesses or disabilities will prevent them from moving on to independent living. Permanent supportive housing programs may be provided in a group home setting or services may be delivered on a scattered-site basis in subsidized housing units throughout the community. Please refer to the Housing Inventory: Permanent Supportive Housing chart, as well as the Inventory of Services and Agencies included in the *Strategic Plan Additional Files*.

6. If the jurisdiction plans to use HOME or other tenant based rental assistance to assist one or more of these subpopulations, it must justify the need for such assistance in the plan.

Currently, the Sonoma County Housing Authority has 9,290 households on its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list. The Housing Authority has completed a preliminary screening of the people on the waiting list and determined that 4,310 are families with children, 3,406 of the families have a member with a disability, and an older person heads 1,157 of the households. Over 80% (7,498) of the households on the waiting list fall into the extremely low-income category; the remaining households on the waiting list include 1,792 very low-income households. Given the fact that it will be years before these households are able to receive rental assistance through the Voucher program, and the identified need to assist special needs households to alleviate cost burden and severe cost burden, overcrowding and substandard housing conditions, the Urban County will continue to dedicate approximately 45% of each annual HOME Program allocation to Tenant Based Rental Assistance to provide rental housing assistance to populations with special housing needs. Currently, the populations with the most urgent special housing needs are seniors, persons with disabilities, persons and families leaving emergency homeless shelters, youth transitioning from foster care and persons with HIV/AIDS. These are among the groups most vulnerable to unaffordable and substandard housing options.

Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)

3-5 Year Strategic Plan HOPWA response:

Specific HOPWA Objectives

3-5 Year Specific HOPWA Objectives response:

Not applicable to The Urban County.

Other Narrative

Include any Strategic Plan information that was not covered by a narrative in any other section.