

50 Years of Making Homes and Growing Communities

This month marks our agency's 50th anniversary! To commemorate this landmark year, we have a variety of events and initiatives planned to celebrate the positive and lasting impact our work has with families throughout Santa Clara County. Our agency would not be what is it today without the hard work of our employees (*both past and present*), our numerous dedicated community partners, and the 8,000 landlords participating in our Section 8 program.

Our 50th year is also the perfect time for a refreshed new look and logo, new tagline and – as we have sought to do with our programs – a “streamlined” new name: Santa Clara County Housing Authority. We want people to know we are a housing authority, and our jurisdiction is the entire county! Our new tagline – *making homes, growing communities* – captures the essence of our agency's mission.

We have tremendous local commitment to solving our housing crisis. Santa Clara County voters recently passed a \$950 million affordable housing bond. This game-changing dollar amount will be funding new development of permanent affordable housing for the most vulnerable, including those without shelter, veterans, disabled, seniors and foster youth. At the same time, community coalitions are making great strides toward the goal of housing all of our county's homeless veterans and the nearly 7,000 people living on our streets, along our creeks and in shelters.

While we carry this unprecedented momentum forward, we are keeping a watchful eye on Congress. Preparing for whatever may come our way, our Board has set aside a modest reserve fund of \$20 million. We look forward to working with the new administration on initiatives that will continue making more new homes and growing Silicon Valley communities. *Thank you for partnering with us!*

Katherine Harasz, *Executive Director*

Celebrating Our Accomplishments

Established by the Board of Supervisors on March 13, 1967, the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara opened its doors with nine employees and enough funding to assist 300 families. Half a century later, our staff of 145 employees has the capacity to assist more than 17,800 families through federal housing subsidies.

A pioneer among housing authorities in the use of low-income housing tax credits to develop affordable housing, the agency has built and/or renovated more than 2,700 units and received numerous awards. We're currently building 180 affordable housing units in two transit-oriented developments in downtown San José.

In 2008, the agency was chosen by Congress to be part of America's housing policy lab, the Moving to Work (MTW) program. A distinction granted to less than one percent of the nation's housing authorities, MTW status in this progressive program has enabled us to transform our voucher program and operations and successfully navigate increasingly difficult economic times.

Loving Appointed Commissioner



We are delighted to welcome Jennifer Loving to our Board of Commissioners. Loving comes to us from the public-private partnership Destination:Home, where she has been executive director since 2010. Throughout her 20-year career, she has spearheaded efforts to better serve the needs of homeless individuals and families. Loving helped develop the county's first Housing First program for homeless families. She oversaw the development and implementation of the 2015-2020 Community Plan to End Homelessness as well as Home Not Found, the most comprehensive cost-of-homelessness study completed in the United States. In 2016, Loving facilitated the release of The Silicon Valley Triage Tool, an open-source, predictive forecasting tool for supportive housing. Loving was recently appointed by State Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de León to the new California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council. “We, the Board of Commissioners, will benefit greatly from her knowledge and experience,” said Chair Kathy Espinoza-Howard.

An active community partner, our agency is helping to house the county's nearly 7,000 residents who are without permanent, stable shelter through the 2015-2020 Community Plan to End Homelessness. We've been twice awarded "Change Makers of the Year" by the Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits for our work with the All the Way Home campaign to end veteran homelessness and with the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park in Palo Alto.

As the county's largest provider of affordable housing assistance, we are continually creating innovative ways to increase housing options and self-sufficiency for low-income residents while streamlining the administration of our housing programs. For a comprehensive look at all we've accomplished and what we're planning, we invite you to view the [MTW Annual Plans and Reports](#) on our website.

Meet Our Staff: Policy Team

The work of our Policy Team is integral to administering the county's federal Housing Choice Voucher (*Section 8*) program and to developing other affordable housing programs. With 56 years of combined housing programs experience, our eight-member Policy Team provides expert analysis based on knowledge of federal and state subsidized and affordable housing programs and regulations. They not only write the agency's housing policies, procedures and administrative plans but also create new, innovative ways to streamline agency procedures while increasing affordable housing options and self-sufficiency for our county's low-income residents.



Policy Team left to right: John Lo, Janine Burrier, Amanda Gallo, Aimee Escobar, Michelle Jaramillo, Leif Christiansen, Ron Babiera and Felipe Casas.

A huge part of their job is developing the agency's MTW annual plan and MTW annual report as required by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This agency roadmap and report card is the result of an intricate, ongoing 11-month process that includes everything from public outreach and hearings to inter-agency coordination, data analysis and regular communication with HUD. The draft MTW 2018 annual plan, due to HUD in April, marks our tenth year as an MTW agency. Building upon our previous nine years of MTW activities and administrative streamlining, this year's plan focuses on increasing housing choice through updated landlord incentives plus a greatly enhanced family self-sufficiency program called Focus Forward.

Another great example of the Policy Team's work involves the release of up to 1,000 project-based housing vouchers (PBVs) plus an additional 200 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers to selected developers and property owners through a competitive request for proposals process. This long-term policy initiative (*launched in 2015*) intends to increase the county's affordable units through streamlining the competitive PBV process. So far the agency has conditionally awarded a total of 747 PBVs to qualifying housing developers for units targeting special needs populations such as seniors, veterans, the disabled, unsheltered or chronically homeless. While we know the availability of PBVs will not instantly produce more affordable homes, the development of new housing that stays affordable over time is good housing policy and critical to helping solve our county's housing crisis. The Policy Team's outstanding job in communicating this PBV initiative earned us HUD's 2017 Public Housing Authority of the Year Special Award for our PBV program!