

**For Immediate Release:**

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## **The Santa Clara County Housing Authority receives \$24 million to preserve mobile home community in Palo Alto for affordable housing**

**SAN JOSE, CA**— The Santa Clara County Housing Authority is pleased to announce a significant milestone in its efforts to preserve and improve the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, in Palo Alto, CA. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) issued the first-ever round of awards from a pioneering state program, called the Manufactured Housing Opportunity & Revitalization Program (MORE), which is designed to improve health and safety conditions at mobile homes parks across California.

“This is a big win for our community. It proves that collaboration really can be the key to success,” said Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian, who championed the County/City/Housing Authority partnership to “Save the Buena Vista” in 2017. “From the beginning, the Housing Authority and their team have been determined to ensure that Buena Vista remains an affordable community in a great neighborhood and school district. I am really gratified by this award from the state, which will let us preserve and improve this very special neighborhood.”

The Santa Clara County Housing Authority received the largest funding award through the MORE Program of all 25 projects throughout the state for Buena Vista Mobile Home Park in the City of Palo Alto, totaling \$24,595,646. The Housing Authority previously received a grant of \$5 million from the State of California’s CalHome program which enables low- and very low-income households to become or remain homeowners.

“Mobile home parks are a critical resource for providing low-income Californians the security of homeownership, but a lack of economic resources too often allows mobile homes and park infrastructure to fall into disrepair,” said HCD Director Gustavo Velasquez. “I am grateful that nearly \$30 million in funding through HCD’s new MORE Program and CalHome can help hundreds of residents at Buena Vista start fresh in new homes with up-to-date infrastructure and amenities.”

Currently, Buena Vista has over 260 residents, including 67 children and 52 seniors. Originally built in the 1920s as an “auto camp” for visitors along El Camino Real, in the 1950s it evolved into a mobile home park. Over the years, Buena Vista has naturally grown into affordable housing for low-income families, with a mix of both renters and homeowners who own their own mobile home.

The Housing Authority, along with the City of Palo Alto and the County of Santa Clara, purchased the property in 2017 and has since worked diligently to preserve the affordable housing in one of the most cost-prohibitive and highly resourced cities in the Bay Area. This funding award is a significant milestone in the redevelopment of the community, whereby a bulk of Buena Vista will remain a mobile home park with brand-new, high-quality mobile homes for all existing homeowners, and

carving out a portion of the property to become a rental apartment building serving both existing renters, as well as additional income-qualified renters in the community.

Housing Authority Executive Director, Preston Prince, says “In my 30 plus years of experience building affordable housing, this has been one of the most complicated deals I’ve ever been part of, because of the aging infrastructure, the replacement of the current mobile homes, and the lack of resources available to preserve mobile home parks. We are thrilled to receive this MORE award, this unique program gets us one step closer to providing these residents with a new community and opportunities they very much deserve.”

“The state funding award, coupled with City, County and Housing Authority investment will advance this important affordable housing project preserving and rehabilitating the mobile home spaces at Buena Vista for the Buena Vista community and Palo Alto residents,” said Lydia Kou, Palo Alto mayor. “The City has been and continues to be a leader in producing and preserving affordable housing in Santa Clara County using a thoughtful step ladder approach that addresses the needs within the Palo Alto community. Buena Vista has always been a tight-knit affordable housing community within our city, and we are committed to supporting Buena Vista families thrive here in Palo Alto.”

This substantial grant comes as a testament to the Housing Authority's dedication to ensuring the availability of affordable housing and homeownership options, particularly in high-demand areas like Palo Alto. The grant will enable the Housing Authority to undertake comprehensive improvements, addressing essential infrastructure needs, replacing aged and outdated homes, enhancing community amenities, and implementing sustainable and energy-efficient practices. The funding will play a pivotal role in the preservation and improvement of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, benefiting both current and future residents.

“As a resident of Buena Vista for over 20 years, I am ecstatic about what's to come” says Park resident Melodie Cheney, “For years, we have been advocating for the improvement of the Park and I feel like it's finally happening, and I am very thankful to the Housing Authority for providing us support through this process and making our dreams a reality.”

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#### **About Santa Clara County Housing Authority**

The Santa Clara County Housing Authority is the county's largest provider of affordable housing assistance, helping make rental housing safe and affordable for approximately 22,000 low-income households, serving 44,000 individuals, 9,000 children and 12,000 seniors. The Santa Clara County Housing Authority supports low-income residents through a robust array of programs focused on affordable housing, educational attainment, health and wellness, as well as economic opportunities. Designated a Moving to Work agency by Congress, Santa Clara County Housing Authority also builds safe and healthy communities through land acquisition and new construction, affordable housing preservation, and the expansion of permanent supportive housing. The Housing Authority owns and manages more than 2,400 units in its housing portfolio and has close to 1,000 units in its development pipeline. As a key partner in the community's effort to end homelessness, the Housing Authority provides rental assistance for more than 2,700 formerly unhoused individuals and families. For more information, visit [www.scchousingauthority.org](http://www.scchousingauthority.org).