

**HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE A UNIQUE  
PANELIST LINK BY EMAIL. PLEASE USE THIS LINK TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING.**



*Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 and the findings made by CVAG, this meeting will only be conducted via video/teleconferencing.*

## **HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2023  
10:00 a.m.**

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public may use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82258374909?pwd=cE1aWnpFVS9EZVFUcmtxODNWTkY0QT09>

**Password: 169052**

**One Tap Mobile: +16699009128,,82258374909#**

**Dial In: +1 669 900 9128**

**Webinar ID: 822 5837 4909**

**Password: 169052**

***This will provide listening access and ability to address the  
Homelessness Committee when called upon.***

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONNECT VIA DIAL IN OPTION, PLEASE CALL 760-346-1127.**

Public comment is encouraged to be emailed to the Homelessness Committee prior to the meeting at [cvag@cvag.org](mailto:cvag@cvag.org) by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the committee meeting.

Comments intended to be read aloud should be no more than 300 characters.

**THIS MEETING IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.  
ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA.**

**UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED, ALL ACTION ITEMS WILL BE PRESENTED TO  
THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR FINAL APPROVAL.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair John Peña, Councilmember, City of La Quinta
2. **ROLL CALL** –
  - A. **Member Roster** P4
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

This is the time and place for members of the public to address the Homelessness Committee on agenda items. At the discretion of the Chair, comments may be taken at the time items are presented. Please limit comments to three (3) minutes.
4. **CHAIR / COMMITTEE / CVAG STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS**
5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**
  - A. **Approve the November 16, 2022 Homelessness Committee Meeting Minutes** P5
6. **DISCUSSION / ACTION**
  - A. **Partnership with Inland Counties Legal Services** – Marsha Johnson, ICLS Practice Group Director P9

**Recommendation:** Information
  - B. **CV Housing First: 2022 Year in Review** – Erica Felci and Ivan Tenorio P11

**Recommendation:** Receive and file the quarterly report for the CV Housing First program, representing clients served through calendar year 2022
  - C. **CV Housing First Program in 2023**– Erica Felci P15

**Recommendation:** Endorse the CV Housing First strategy for 2023 and direct the Executive Director to coordinate with Riverside County and other partners to 1.) identify opportunities to purchase a multi-unit property that could be purchased for the program's long-term needs and 2.) return to the Homelessness Committee with recommendations for how to address the funding gaps between clients' vouchers and rising rental costs
7. **INFORMATION**
  - A. **Attendance Record** P18

- B. Ex Officio Updates
- C. Unaudited Financial Statement for CV Housing First Program through December 2022 P19
- D. Alan Seman Bus Pass Program - 2022 Annual Report P20
- E. Update on the State's Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court P23

8. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

This is the time and place for members of the public to address the Homelessness Committee on items of general interest within the purview of this committee. Please limit comments to two (2) minutes

9. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Upcoming Meetings:

The next meeting of the **Homelessness Committee** will be held on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. with additional meeting logistics to be announced.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, February 27, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

**ITEM 2A**

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Homelessness Committee  
Member Roster  
2022- 2023**



<b>VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	Councilmember John Preckwinkle III
City of Blythe	Councilmember Johnny Rodriguez
City of Cathedral City	Mayor Pro Tem Mark Carnevale
City of Coachella	Councilmember Denise Delgado
Desert Healthcare District	Director Carole Rogers, RN
City of Desert Hot Springs	Councilmember Jan Pye
City of Indian Wells	Mayor Donna Griffith
City of Indio	Councilmember Waymond Fermon – <b><u>Vice Chair</u></b>
City of La Quinta	Councilmember John Peña – <b><u>Chair</u></b>
City of Palm Desert	Mayor Pro Tem Karina Quintanilla
City of Palm Springs	Councilmember Christy Holstege
City of Rancho Mirage	Councilmember Lynn Mallotto
Riverside County – District 4	Supervisor V. Manuel Perez
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians	Vice Chair Joseph Mirelez
<b>Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members</b>	
Pedro S.G. Rodriguez, Executive Director, Coachella Valley Housing Coalition	
Darla Burkett, Executive Director, Coachella Valley Rescue Mission	
Vacant, Executive Director, Home Aid Inland Empire	
Samuel Hollenbeck, Chief Executive Officer, Martha's Village and Kitchen	
Vacant, The Salvation Army	
Angelina Coe, Executive Director, Shelter from the Storm	
<b>Additional Support Staff</b>	
Carrie Harmon, Assistant Director Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solutions	Dr. Conrado Bãrzaga, CEO, Desert Healthcare District
Tanya Torno, Principal Development Specialist, Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solutions	Marcus Cannon, Behavioral Health Services Supervisor, Riverside University Health System-Behavioral Health

<b>CVAG Staff</b>
Tom Kirk, Executive Director
Erica Felci, Assistant Executive Director
Ivan Tenorio, Management Analyst

## **ITEM 5A**

### **Homelessness Committee Meeting Minutes November 16, 2022**



The audio file for this meeting can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - The November 16, 2022 meeting was called to order by Homelessness Committee Vice Chair John Peña, City of La Quinta, at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom videoconference, pursuant to AB 361 and the guidelines for virtual public meetings.
2. **ROLL CALL** - Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

#### **Members Present**

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians  
City of Blythe  
City of Cathedral City  
Desert Healthcare District  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
City of Indian Wells  
City of Indio  
City of La Quinta  
City of Palm Desert  
City of Rancho Mirage  
Riverside County – District 4

Councilmember John Preckwinkle III *(arrived at 6C)*  
Councilmember Johnny Rodriguez *(arrived at Item 4)*  
Councilmember Mark Carnevale  
Director Carole Rogers, RN *(arrived at Item 4)*  
Councilmember Jan Pye  
Councilmember Rob Bernheimer  
Mayor Waymond Fermon, Vice Chair  
Councilmember John Peña, Chair  
Councilmember Karina Quintanilla  
Mayor Charles Townsend  
Greg Rodriguez, Housing & Workforce Solutions

#### **Ex-Officio Members Present**

Shelter from the Storm

Angelina Coe

#### **Members and Ex-Officios Not Present**

City of Coachella  
City of Palm Springs  
Coachella Valley Housing Coalition  
Coachella Valley Rescue Mission  
Martha's Village and Kitchen

Mayor Pro Tem Josie Gonzalez  
Councilmember Christy Holstege  
Pedro S.G. Rodriguez  
Darla Burkett  
Samuel Hollenbeck

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

### **4. CHAIR / COMMITTEE MEMBER/CVAG STAFF COMMENTS**

## **A. Grand Opening of Veterans Village in Cathedral City**

Assistant Executive Director Erica Felci highlighted the recent grand opening of the Veterans Village housing project and shared a video of a veteran who was housed after CVAG's case management. Councilmember Mark Carnevale provided additional project highlights and urged other communities to support similar projects.

Ms. Felci acknowledged the Committee's outgoing members as a result of the recent Council elections and thanked them for their leadership. She also shared that Palm Desert Mayor Pro Tem Sabby Jonathan asked staff to share his appreciation as he could not attend the meeting. Brief member comment ensued.

Councilmember Karina Quintanilla noted her work on the Palm Desert's homelessness taskforce, her request that she be Mr. Jonathan's successor on the committee, and noted more must be done to address challenges for veterans housing.

Greg Rodriguez, Deputy Director for Government Affairs and Community Engagement for the County's Housing and Workforce Solutions, also praised the outgoing Committee members and lauded members' work to also address affordable housing shortages.

Mayor Charles Townsend made departing remarks and thanked Mayor Pro Tem Jonathan, the Committee's former Chair, for his leadership and dedication. Councilmember Carnevale echoed the sentiments expressed for departing members and expressed excitement for fresh leadership.

Mayor Waymond Fermon highlighted the City of Indio's new resource pamphlet and efforts to make the information available online. He also asked that a future meeting include information on efforts to address homeless along the railroad tracks.

Councilmember Carnevale announced he was working with businesses to roll out anti-panhandling signage.

## **5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**IT WAS MOVED BY MAYOR TOWNSEND AND SECONDED BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR RODRIGUEZ TO:**

- A. Approve the September 21, 2022 Homelessness Committee Meeting Minutes**
- B. Receive and file the quarterly report for the CV Housing First program, representing clients served in the third quarter of 2022**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 8 AYES, 2 ABSTENTIONS AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT ON ITEM 5A AND 10 AYES AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT ON ITEM 5B.**

<b>Councilmember John Preckwinkle III</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
<b>Councilmember Johnny Rodriguez</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Mark Carnevale</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Josie Gonzalez</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
<b>Director Carole Rogers</b>	<b>AYE</b>

Councilmember Jan Pye	AYE
Councilmember Rob Bernheimer	AYE
Mayor Waymond Fermon	ABSTAIN ON 5A/ AYE ON 5B
Councilmember John Peña	AYE
Councilmember Karina Quintanilla	ABSTAIN ON 5A/ AYE ON 5B
Councilmember Christy Holstege	ABSENT
Mayor Charles Townsend	AYE
County staff Greg Rodriguez	AYE

## 6. DISCUSSION / ACTION

### A. REAP 2.0 Housing Infill Project Scoping – Peter Satin

Regional Planner Peter Satin provided the staff report and detailed next steps for the REAP process. Member discussion ensued, including noting that it could tie into other funding opportunities.

**IT WAS MOVED BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER QUINTANILLA TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO APPLY FOR THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS' REGIONAL EARLY ACTION PLANNING (REAP) 2.0 PROGRAM FOR A PROJECT THAT ASSESS PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY AVAILABILITY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND A MICRO-HOUSING PILOT PROJECT**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 10 AYES AND 3 MEMBERS ABSENT.**

Councilmember John Preckwinkle III	ABSENT
Councilmember Johnny Rodriguez	AYE
Councilmember Mark Carnevale	AYE
Mayor Pro Tem Josie Gonzalez	ABSENT
Director Carole Rogers	AYE
Councilmember Jan Pye	AYE
Councilmember Rob Bernheimer	AYE
Mayor Waymond Fermon	AYE
Councilmember John Peña	AYE
Councilmember Karina Quintanilla	AYE
Councilmember Christy Holstege	ABSENT
Mayor Charles Townsend	AYE
County staff Greg Rodriguez	AYE

### B. Federal and State Legislative Advocacy for 2023 – Emmanuel Martinez

Senior Programs Manager Emmanuel Martinez provided the staff report and noted staff would take feedback on the homeless and affordable housing section of the draft 2023 Federal and State Legislative Platform through next week.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

### C. Statewide Pause on Funding for Homelessness Services – Erica Felci

Mr. Rodriguez provided the staff report and an overview of ongoing conversations with the Governor's office. Member discussion ensued, with staff addressing questions on the impact in the region.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

**7. INFORMATION** – The following items were provided for the Committee's information.

**A. Attendance Record**

**B. Ex-Officio Update**

**C. Unaudited Financial Statement for CV Housing First Program through September 2022**

**D. SB 535 and California Climate Investments - Tribal Designation**

**E. Launch of Countywide "Faces of Fentanyl" Campaign**

There were no ex-officio updates.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Upcoming Meetings:

The next meeting of the **Homelessness Committee** will be held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom webinar.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, December 5, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

**10. ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chair Peña extended appreciation to outgoing members, wished the Committee a Happy Thanksgiving and adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Erica Felcí*

CVAG Assistant Executive Director



## **ITEM 6A**

# **Coachella Valley Association of Governments Homelessness Committee February 15, 2023**



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Partnership with Inland Counties Legal Services

**Contact:** Ivan Tenorio, Management Analyst ([itenorio@cvag.org](mailto:itenorio@cvag.org))

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### **Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** The CV Housing First Program focuses primarily on providing intensive case management services to the CV200 – a by name list of chronically homeless individuals who are high utilizers of public emergency services and who have frequent contact with law enforcement. These chronically homeless individuals often face difficulty with accessing housing due to barriers such as having no income, not having their vital documents such as a birth certificate or identification, or not understanding how to navigate mainstream benefits such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI).

In order to better address client needs, CVAG staff, based on the direction of the Homelessness and Executive Committee, has established partnerships with organizations that can bolster the services available to the CV 200 clients. One of those partnerships has been with Inland Counties Legal Services (ICLS), and it has been focused on providing legal services to CVHF clients. In April 2022, the CVAG Executive Director was authorized to negotiate a memorandum of understanding with ICLS to accept a three-year grant from the State Bar of California that ICLS had secured for homeless services throughout the region. CVAG's portion of the grant, which totals \$300,000, is largely used to offset costs associated with legal clinics, which are held on a regular basis to provide an opportunity for CV 200 clients to work with legal experts while they are being case managed by CVAG.

Working with ICLS has demonstrated to be a successful way to clearing clients' barriers and streamlining the process of securing permanent housing. One recent example was when CVAG staff and ICLS worked to assist a 65-year-old woman from the City of Coachella who was living in a field near Interstate 10 when CVAG first encountered her. She had been homeless since 2012 due to a mix of financial hardships, family fallout, substance misuse and behavioral health issues. During her case management through CVAG, she worked with ICLS to reinstate her SSDI, obtain a birth certificate, establish food stamps benefit, get medical insurance, and obtain other documents. The result was that CVAG staff could focus on securing her a permanent place to live – and she is counted among the CV 200 clients discussed in Agenda Item 7B who were permanently housed last year.

ICLS is also working with Step up on Second, a non-profit that provides permanent supportive housing solutions, in order to expand homeless services across eastern Riverside County and San Bernardino County.

Marsha Johnson, ICLS' Practice Group Director for Public Benefits and Education, will provide an update to the program and the efforts to improve services offers these services to CVAG's program participants and clients who are referred by other homeless services providers in the desert region.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There are no costs to this update.

CVAG is now entering the second year of a three-year grant with ICLS, which had secured \$1.2 million through the State Bar of California to fund legal aid that addresses homelessness and homeless prevention. ICLS' grant proposal identified \$300,000 for CVAG – or \$100,000 a year – to cover costs associated with the legal clinic. The State provides grant funding to ICLS, and CVAG seeks reimbursement from ICLS for services related to the legal clinics.

## **ITEM 6B**

### **Coachella Valley Association of Governments Homelessness Committee**

**February 15, 2023**



### **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** CV Housing First: 2022 Year in Review

**Contact:** Erica Felci, Assistant Executive Director ([efelci@cvaq.org](mailto:efelci@cvaq.org)) and Ivan Tenorio, Management Analyst ([itenorio@cvaq.org](mailto:itenorio@cvaq.org))

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**Recommendation:** Receive and file the quarterly report for the CV Housing First program, representing clients served through calendar year 2022

**Background:** CVAG is now entering its third year of operating the CV Housing First program with staff. Based on the direction and feedback from the CVAG Homelessness and Executive Committees, the program is focused on the CV 200, a by-name list of chronically homeless individuals residing in desert cities that have frequent contacts with law enforcement and who are likely to be shelter resistant or who have already fallen out of housing. The list was developed in partnership with CVAG's member jurisdictions and local law enforcement.

CVAG staff has committed to adjusting CV Housing First programming based on the data, and provides quarterly updates to its members about the program. The CV Housing First team uses two primary methods to get clients to housing solutions: rapid resolution and crisis stabilization units.

- Rapid resolution is an urgent, cost-saving solution that the Housing First staff use to help overcome the barriers that keep people from getting housing. This could include options such as helping them secure their identifying paperwork, which then can help them qualify for benefits. It also includes sorting out the process for housing, medical, mental health, substance abuse, employment, and mainstream benefits. As noted in a separate staff report, CVAG staff is now utilizing partnerships with organizations such as Inland Counties Legal Services to help maximize resources provided to clients. The rapid resolution totals included in this report include clients funded through CVAG's outreach grant.
- The crisis stabilization units allow CVAG to connect CV 200 individuals to housing. These are apartments and hotel rooms leased by CVAG where clients stay, generally up to 90 days, that keep them off the streets. Through case management and frequent interactions with the team, CVAG is helping them achieve the goal of permanent housing, programs, and family reunifications

With this staff report, CVAG staff is providing a recap of the clients served in 2022. In total, CVAG connected 54 CV 200 clients to permanent housing solutions. Additionally, CVAG housed another 16 non-CV 200 households to permanent housing. This is a notable reduction from the 2021 totals, where 75 CV200 clients were in permanent housing solutions and another 32 non-CV200 clients were housed.

A number of factors contributed to this reduction. First, in reflecting on 2021 figures, it is fair to say CVAG staff had a running start with client management. Many of the clients housed in the first two quarters of 2021 – where a total of 49 clients were housed in six months – benefitted from work that was done under CVAG's previous contractor, the Riverside-based nonprofit Path of Life Ministries. That meant much of the case management work was started or even well underway by the time CVAG staff took over, which

in hindsight meant staff was able to spend less time getting those initial clients a permanent housing solution. This year's quarterly stats are in the range of what was demonstrated in the final two quarters of 2021. CVAG staff works to build relationships with its clients through outreach, with the anticipation that conducting some program coordination in the field will get clients into a pipeline to permanent housing. This year, staff will continue that approach but keep the larger portion of its resources focused on case management.

The type of clients served also is a factor. CV 200 clients are among the toughest cases in the homeless population. Not only does CVAG staff have to convince them to take the help, but then has to work to adjust to being in housing. There is significant time spent with clients to adjust them to following the rules – including those set for CSH units – and to not continuing to live the lifestyle they did while homeless. Staff has also encountered situations where clients get a voucher, but then do not want to accept the permanent housing solution the voucher will fund. In those cases, staff will work to explore some options before ultimately having to make a decision about whether they can be permanently housed.

Another factor is the availability of vouchers. CVAG staff has been contracting directly with a behavioral health specialist in order to help prioritize clients, but it is not uncommon for a client to be waiting for a voucher to be issued. This has resulted in some increased length of stays in the CSH units. CVAG staff aims to have clients permanently housed within 90 days. Yet the program has seen some quarters where the average length of stay exceeded 100 days, in part because clients were just days or weeks away from getting a permanent housing solution so CVAG staff worked with them to do so. But longer stays means fewer clients are getting into the units – impacting the total permanent solutions.

At the same time, and as discussed further in a separate staff report, soaring rent costs often exceed voucher limits. This only adds to the biggest hurdle, which is the availability of affordable housing units and permanent housing solutions. These issues have led to some recommendations for 2023, which staff will further detail in a related report in this agenda packet. Yet despite these challenges, CVAG staff would argue that the housing first model continues to demonstrate long term success: Of the clients permanently housed this year, four individuals fell out of housing – which is on par with what was demonstrated in 2021.

CV Housing First Clients – By the Numbers through December 31, 2022

<b>CV 200 Clients</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Clients housed in Crisis Stabilization Units (CSH)	33	26	30	24	113
Clients being helped through Rapid Resolution (RR)	0	1	1	2	4

Clients returned to the street (failures)	5	13	7	7	32
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Clients moved into permanent housing from CSH (successes)	15	12	10	7	44
Clients moved into permanent housing through RR (successes) *	0	1	1	8	10
<b>TOTAL HOUSED FROM LIST OF 200</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>54</b>

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<b>NON CV 200 Clients</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Households Housed in CSH Units	1	4	1	0	6
Households being helped through RR	6	5	3	0	14

Households returned to the street (failures)	0	3	1	0	4
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Households moved into permanent housing from CSH (successes)	1	1	0	0	2
Households moved into permanent housing from RR (successes) *	6	5	3	0	14
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS HOUSED</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS HOUSED</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>

CVAG staff continues to track program metrics, such as the length of stay in the units. For the fourth quarter, the CV 200 clients who successfully exited the program into permanent housing stayed in a crisis stabilization unit for an average of **92 days**. Those CV 200 clients who exited the program unsuccessfully stayed an average of **82 days**. This is a quicker turnaround than what CVAG reported to the Homelessness and Executive Committees at the end of the third quarter 2022.

As noted in previous reports, CVAG staff also incorporated additional program metrics to track permanent housing resolutions. Knowing the type of housing where clients resolve will help with identifying future opportunities and options for housing, while also highlighting where we face challenges in finding placement for clients. Of the 15 permanent housing resolutions in the fourth quarter, the breakdown of clients' exit destination is as follows:

- Family/Friends – 2
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – 7
- Rental With Ongoing Subsidy (Low Income Senior Housing) – 0
- Rental With Ongoing Subsidy (VASH Voucher) – 2
- Rental With Ongoing Subsidy (Housing Choice Voucher) – 2
- Rental with No Ongoing Subsidy - 1
- Rapid Rehousing - 0
- Shared Housing – 0
- Long-term care facility or nursing home – 1

CVAG continues to find collaborations with other partners throughout the valley. In 2022, CVAG staff worked with Jewish Family Services of the Desert in order to extend the effectiveness of the ongoing legal clinics.

**Fiscal Analysis:** The CV Housing First program, including the staffing and CV 200 program, is incorporated into the CV Housing First budget, which has been funded by contributions from cities, Riverside County, the Desert Healthcare District/Foundation, and grants.

## **ITEM 6C**

# **Coachella Valley Association of Governments Homelessness Committee February 15, 2023**



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** CV Housing First Program in 2023

**Contact:** Erica Felci, Assistant Executive Director ([efelci@cvag.org](mailto:efelci@cvag.org))

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**Recommendation:** Endorse the CV Housing First strategy for 2023 and direct the Executive Director to coordinate with Riverside County and other partners to 1.) identify opportunities to purchase a multi-unit property that could be purchased for the program's long-term needs and 2.) return to the Homelessness Committee with recommendations for how to address the funding gaps between clients' vouchers and rising rental costs

**Background:** CVAG staff now has two years of successful in-house operation of the CV Housing First program. Under the program, the CV Housing First team prioritized services for unsheltered chronically homeless individuals and families – known as the CV 200. This program addresses a distinct need in the Coachella Valley by helping the people with whom law enforcement and code enforcement most frequently encounter, which also helps reduce strain on stretched law enforcement resources and first responders. CVAG's Housing First team regularly coordinates with cities' resources on outreach. The program uses both crisis stabilization units and rapid resolution solutions – combined with intensive case management – to get these clients into permanent housing solutions. In September 2021, the CVAG Executive Committee, at the recommendation of the Homelessness Committee, authorized the Executive Director to continue the program into 2022 and beyond.

A separate staff report provides a look at how many individuals were housed in 2022 and some of the factors that contributed to this year's totals. In total, CVAG connected 54 CV 200 clients to permanent housing solutions. Additionally, CVAG housed another 16 non-CV 200 households to permanent housing. This is a notable drop from the 2021 totals, where 75 CV200 clients were in permanent housing solutions and another 32 non-CV200 clients were housed.

In shaping the program for 2023, CVAG staff followed the direction that was previously provided and reset the CV 200 list – which by the end of 2022 was the CV 146. To complete this, CVAG staff reached out to all the local police departments, code enforcement and other partners to identify what other individuals should be added to the list. CVAG staff also identified individuals who may not need to be on the list, either because they are being helped by other programs or because they have left the Coachella Valley. Much like last year, a few of the 200 spots may remain flexible for member jurisdictions' referrals. CVAG staff also continues to follow the model shaped in its previous agreements with the Desert Healthcare District/ Foundation, which identified opportunities for coordination with healthcare services and hospital discharge planning. Having a few of the 200 spots flexible will provide the CV Housing First staff some flexibility in addressing those cases throughout the calendar year.

CVAG's program has made incredible success with some of the toughest cases among the Coachella Valley's homeless population. However, as further detailed in the year-end report, CVAG staff continues to encounter challenges to housing these individuals, including the availability of vouchers to clients' own willingness to accept the units that are available. Even after repeated outreach, some of the original CV 200 clients have either proven difficult to locate, are not willing to work with the CVAG program to accept services or – once they are in the program – are not willing to accept the permanent housing solutions that are being offered.

At the same time, new challenges have emerged. The booming housing market coupled with the lack of affordable housing has resulted in dramatically increased rental costs. A Redfin report released in January 2022 noted that asking rents nationwide are up 15 percent from a year earlier. In California, it has been noted that some of the largest jumps are occurring in what are typically seen as less costly inland communities – with the report noted that Riverside and nearby areas was at 18 percent. Increasingly, CVAG staff is encountering situations where a voucher has been secured for a client and they are ready to move into a permanent housing solution, but the voucher amount doesn't cover the cost of the asking rent. And some of these costs are relatively minimal: Just recently, staff could not secure a unit in the City of Indio where the client's voucher was for \$1,750 a month and the asking rent was set at \$1,900 monthly.

As CVAG staff looks ahead to 2023 programming, it is seeking the Homelessness and Executive Committee's direction on how to address some of these issues and establish more stability for the program moving forward.

CVAG currently leases apartments and hotel rooms across the Coachella Valley to serve as its crisis stabilization units. As rents have increased, so have CVAG's costs to rent these units. CVAG staff has recently learned that funding may be available for a property investment. This opportunity has led staff to recommend the Executive Director be authorized to explore purchasing a multi-unit property. Such a property could be a duplex, triplex or something of similar size. CVAG's program is designed to space out its crisis stabilization units across multiple jurisdictions and staff does not anticipate changing that model. Owning a property would allow CVAG to limit the number of units it rents annually and reduce the amount of funding spent on renting units. Riverside County staff have recently indicated that funding may be available to CVAG, including through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, that could be used toward such a purchase. With approval from the Committee, CVAG's Executive Director would work with Riverside County staff, including its real estate division, and other partners to identify what properties may be available. Staff would then return with a detailed analysis of not just the property but the long-term costs and benefits of acquiring such an asset.

Additionally, CVAG staff would recommend the Committee provide direction on addressing the funding gaps that clients with vouchers are experiencing in securing housing. For vouchers with federal funding, requirements prohibit an agency from funding the rental gap between the voucher amount and the rent costs. However, landlord incentive programs can be used. In 2021, the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside launched a new landlord incentive program aimed at increasing affordable housing options for Housing Choice Voucher families throughout Riverside County. The program goal is to promote new landlord relationships and further support to existing landlords by offering an incentive payment to participate in the Housing Choice Voucher, a Section 8 tenant-based program. The incentives include a one-time payment of \$2,500 to landlords who are new to the Housing Choice Voucher Program or have been inactive for the last 12 months, or \$500 per unit to existing landlords who lease a unit to a Housing Choice



Voucher participant. There may be an opportunity to further incentivize landlords through CVAG's program, which would help CVAG staff secure units for clients.

The staff recommendation for these ideas would be to provide an endorsement that the concepts should be explored further. Staff would return to the Homelessness and Executive Committees with additional details and seek additional approval before proceeding further.

**Fiscal Analysis:** This informational item has no additional cost. Based on the direction provided, CVAG staff will conduct a full cost analysis and return to the Homelessness and Executive Committees with projected costs.


CVAG's adopted budget for the CV Housing First program identified about \$1.5 million in program expenses for the current fiscal year. This includes 6.5 full-time staff positions and necessary programming to address the CV 200 clients. The budget is funded by contributions from cities, Riverside County and the Desert Healthcare District/Foundation. The Housing First fund had about \$2.5 million in reserves by the end of December 2022, based on the unaudited financial statement.

**ITEM 7A**

COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE  
ATTENDANCE RECORD  
FY2022-2023

<b>Voting Members</b>	<b>JUL</b>	<b>AUG</b>	<b>SEP</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>	<b>JAN</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>APR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>ATTENDED</b>
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Blythe			○		●								1 out of 2
City of Cathedral City			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Coachella			○		○								0 out of 2
Desert Healthcare District			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Desert Hot Springs			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Indian Wells			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Indio			●		●								2 out of 2
City of La Quinta			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Palm Desert			●		●								2 out of 2
City of Palm Springs			●		○								1 out of 2
City of Rancho Mirage			●		●								2 out of 2
County of Riverside			●		●								2 out of 2
<b>Total Attendance Per Meeting</b>			<b>11</b>		<b>11</b>								

<b>Ex Officio / Non-Voting Members</b>	<b>JUL</b>	<b>AUG</b>	<b>SEP</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>	<b>JAN</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>APR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>ATTENDED</b>
Coachella Valley Housing Coalition			○		○								0 out of 2
Coachella Valley Rescue Mission			○		○								0 out of 2
HomeAid Inland Empire			*		*								0 out of 2
Martha's Village and Kitchen			●		○								1 out of 2
The Salvation Army (vacant)			*		*								0 out of 2
Shelter From the Storm			●		●								2 out of 2
<b>Total Attendance Per Meeting</b>			<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>								

No Meeting   
 Vacant \*

Present ●

Absent ○

**COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
HOMELESS & BUS PASS PROGRAM  
UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES  
FOR THE PERIOD FROM JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2022**

**REVENUES**

CONTRIBUTIONS	\$509,349
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>509,349</u>

**EXPENDITURES**

SALARIES AND BENEFITS	375,609	
BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT LEASE MAINTENANCE/RENT	162,460	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	32,401	
MISC SUNDRIES/HOUSING ESSENTIALS	9,707	
RAPID RESOLUTIONS	13,867	
LEGAL SERVICES	477	
PROJECT COSTS/OTHER EXPENSES	48,385	
ELECTRIC (UTILITIES)	44,130	
OFFICE SUPPLIES	4,044	
LOCAL MEETINGS/STAFF MILEAGE	7,538	
MOBILE ACCESS CENTER (MAC)	2,819	
ADVERTISING	3,421	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		<u>704,858</u>
NET INCOME (DEFICIT)		<u>(195,509)</u>

FUND BALANCE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	<u>2,667,083</u>
PRELIMINARY FUND BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31, 2022	<u>\$2,471,574</u>

## **ITEM 7D**

### **Coachella Valley Association of Governments Homelessness Committee**

February 15, 2023



### **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Alan Seman Bus Pass Program 2022 Annual Report

**Contact:** Stephanie Shambow, Program Specialist II ([sshambow@cvag.org](mailto:sshambow@cvag.org))

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#### **Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** Since 2007, CVAG has provided a bus pass program that works in conjunction with non-profit agencies throughout the Coachella Valley to ensure homeless or near homeless individuals can get access to case management services, employment opportunities and medical care. The program is named in honor of Alan Seman, a longtime Rancho Mirage Councilmember and member of CVAG's Homelessness Committee who was a strong advocate for the program.

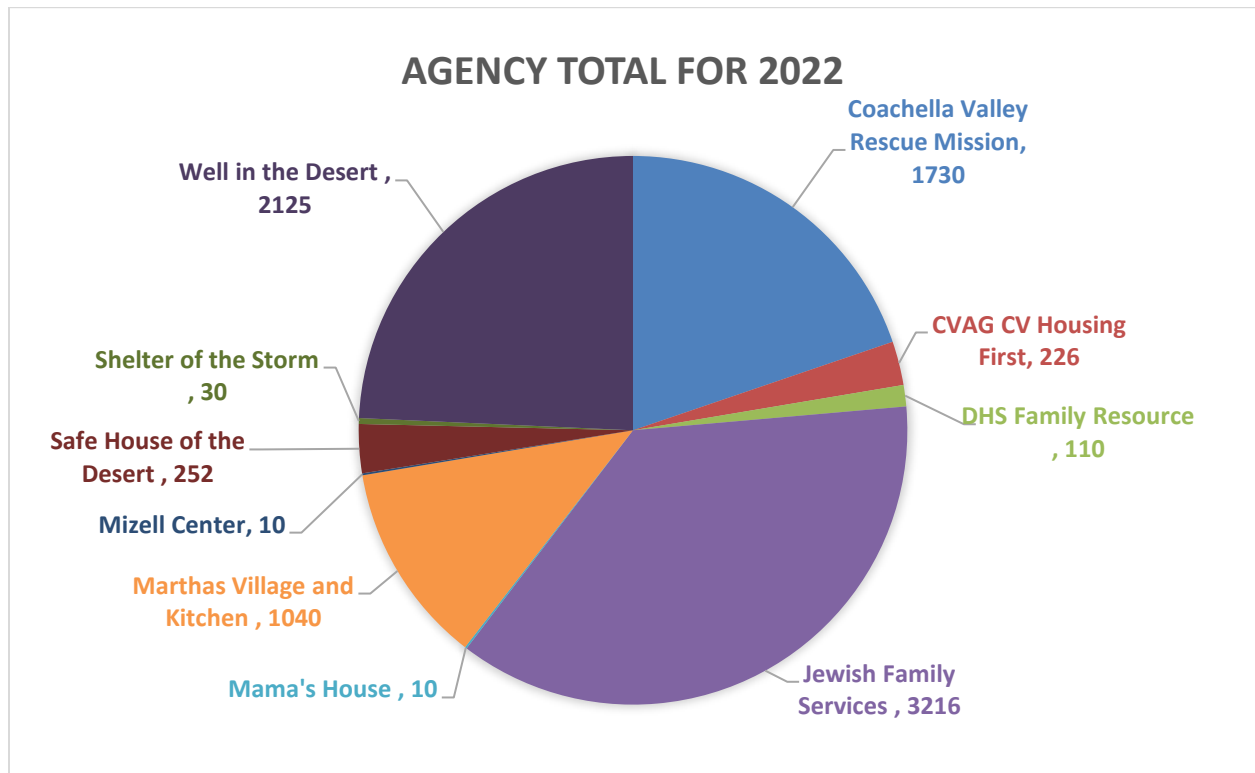
In the 2022, CVAG staff worked with agencies that receive passes through the Alan Seman Bus Pass program to better track how they are being used. The following below are the nonprofit organizations serving people who are homeless, or at risk of being homeless, participated in the program: Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, CVAG's CV Housing First, Desert Hot Springs Family Resource Center, Jewish Family Services of San Diego, Mama's House, Martha's Village and Kitchen, Mizell Senior Center, Safe House of the Desert, Shelter from the Storm and Well in the Desert.

Through this program, a total of 8,749 passes were distributed in 2022, including single day passes for adults, youth, and seniors and 31-day passes for adults and seniors. The uses of the bus passes were to access social services, housing search, and have transportation to the DMV.

**Fiscal Analysis:** The Alan Seman Bus Pass Program is funded through \$3,000 contributions that CVAG member cities contribute annually.

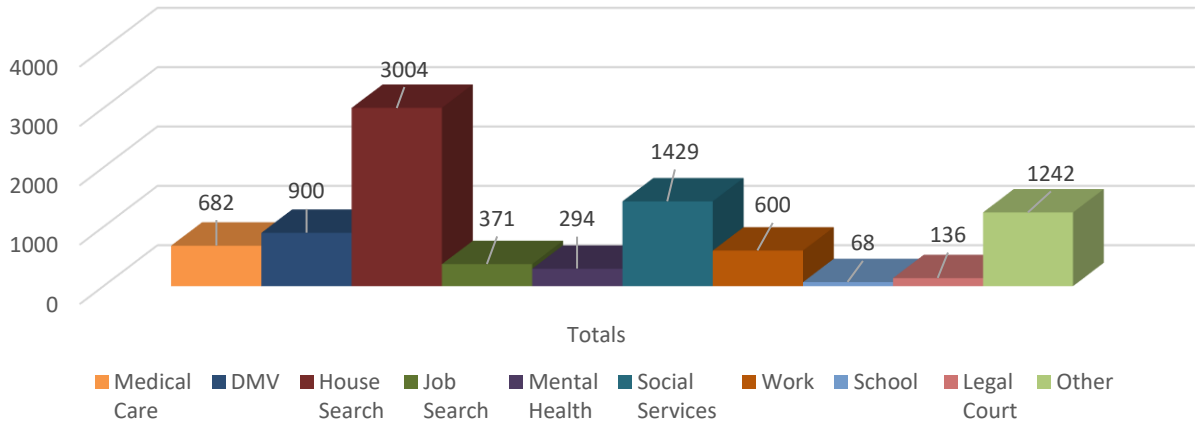
**Attachment:** 2022 Bus Pass Report

# Totals Passes Used by Agencies



Agency	Adult Day Passes	Senior Day Passes	31-Day Adult Passes	31-Day Senior Passes	Totals
Coachella Valley Rescue Mission	1460	270	0	0	1730
CVAG CV Housing First	11	10	201	4	226
DHS Family Resource	110	0	0	0	110
Jewish Family Services	2291	925	0	0	3216
Mama's House	10	0	0	0	10
Martha's Village and Kitchen	1040	0	0	0	1040
Mizell Center	0	10	0	0	10
Safe House of the Desert	252	0	0	0	252
Shelter of the Storm	21	9	0	0	30
Well in the Desert	2100	25	0	0	2125
Totals	7295	1249	201	4	8749

# Top Uses of Bus Passes



## **ITEM 7E**

# **Coachella Valley Association of Governments Homelessness Committee February 15, 2022**



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Update on the State's Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court

**Contact:** Erica Felci, Assistant Executive Director ([efelci@cvag.org](mailto:efelci@cvag.org))

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### **Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** In September 2022, the CVAG Homelessness Committee received an update on the roll out of Gov. Gavin Newsom's Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court. The CARE Court, which was approved by the Legislature and then signed by the Governor on September 14, will allow courts to order CARE plans, which would require counties to provide comprehensive treatment to the most severely impaired and untreated Californians and hold patients accountable to following their treatment plans. The program will not be for every unhoused individual, but it is designed as a way to address those who have severe mental health issues. As described by the Governor's office, *"CARE Court is a paradigm shift; it focuses on providing individuals with mental health and substance use services before they end up cycling through prison, emergency rooms, and encampments. CARE Court prioritizes the sickest Californians, helping many who live on our streets without shelter or medical care."*

Implementation of the CARE Court program officially began in December 2022 and is recapped in this news release from the Governor's Office:

<https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/12/01/governor-newsom-and-counties-begin-care-court-implementation/>

The roll out of the program will be done in phases starting this year. Riverside County is expected to be among one of the first counties to implement the CARE Court. A County-led working group has been working through the logistics, which will include coordination with existing services – such as CVAG's CV Housing First program – to provide client referrals to the program. As details are finalized, CVAG staff will provide additional updates to the Homelessness Committee.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no cost to CVAG for this update