



MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Michele Byrd

SUBJECT: New Housing Initiatives

DATE: February 19, 2013

City Administrator

Date

Approval /s/ Deanna J. Santana

2/19/13

INFORMATION

The purpose of this information memorandum is to inform the City Council of several new housing initiatives that the City is launching.

New Housing Assistance Center

The new Oakland Housing Assistance Center, a one-stop housing services center, will be opening on February 20 on the 6th floor of 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, the former Municipal Credit Union site. Please join Mayor Quan, the City Administrator's office, and community partners at the **Launch Event on Wednesday, February 20, from 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the new Housing Assistance Center.** The Center's contact information is:

250 Frank Ogawa, 6th Floor
(510) 238-6182, housingassistance@oaklandnet.com

The new Center seeks to streamline City housing services, as well as provide a central portal to meet the housing needs of Oakland residents. The goal of the Center is to improve access to housing-related information and services for Oakland residents and businesses. This includes homeowners in foreclosure, tenants needing legal services and new landlords trying to understand local requirements. The City is also partnering with other public and private agencies to improve access to additional housing resources and services available to Oakland residents.

ONE-STOP HOUSING SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED:

- **Redeploying existing Housing and Community Development resources in a public service-centered physical space.** The Center will be providing all current Housing and Community Development direct services (rent adjustment, residential lending and housing rehabilitation, first time homebuyers' programs), as well as new foreclosure

prevention and mitigation programs funded by the City—the ROOT loan fund program and foreclosure prevention housing services by Community Housing Development Corporation. Private client meeting rooms will enable us to deliver services to residents in crisis with respect and dignity.

- **Coordinated Service Delivery to Ensure Effective Outcomes.** A trained intake specialist will provide guided referrals to non-City provided housing resources including tenant and landlord legal services, Section 8 programs, affordable housing opportunities, housing rehabilitation assistance, County programs for healthy housing resources, energy-efficient improvements and energy bill assistance, emergency and transitional housing, and homelessness prevention services. Rather than having Oakland residents go to multiple agencies trying to determine if they can be helped in the context of multiple and complicated eligibility requirements, a trained intake specialist instead will conduct research and provide matching resources. In addition, the staff will engage in follow-up work with residents who come to the Center in order to track the delivery of actual services and maintain data on service outcomes.
- **Volunteer problem-solving/housing advocates** will be recruited to help Oakland residents with housing problems navigate different agencies and eligibility issues and help ensure a successful outcome.

STAFFING: Preliminary staffing will be provided by a team of existing Housing and Community Development (HCD) staff with subject matter expertise in different housing areas.

FUNDING: HCD staff are funded by existing federal or state related grants. Start-up operational costs, which are minimal as a result of reusing old City furniture and equipment, are supported through donations by other public and private agency partners committed to improving housing services for Oakland residents in need.

People interested in serving as **volunteer housing advocates** should contact Nabihah Azim, nazim@oaklandnet.com or 238-3185.

Foreclosure Prevention Outreach Workers and New Hotline Numbers

As background, in October 2012, the Council approved funding for the City's new comprehensive foreclosure prevention and mitigation plan. As part of the new efforts, outreach workers are visiting households whose properties have received a Notice of Default to notify them about new State rights and protections, as well as new City-funded resources. Residents facing foreclosure should contact the new hotlines:

Homeowners: 510-271-8443 x313 (staffed by Housing and Economic Rights Advocates)
Tenants: 510-TENANTS (836-2687) (staffed by Causa Justa :: Just Cause)

