

# **San Francisco Interagency CRA Roundtable**

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# Community Housing Opportunities Corporation (CHOC)

a non-profit Affordable Housing Corporation  
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# Introduction to CHOC

Since its inception in 1984 (as Davis Community Housing), Community Housing Opportunities Corporation (CHOC) has sponsored the development of over 1400 units of affordable housing, including the communities in Yolo, Sacramento, Solano, and Contra Costa counties. As a non-profit affordable housing developer CHOC has concentrated on multi-family housing, and continues to serve families, seniors, and populations with developmental delays at 30 properties.

## **CHOC's Mission is:**

*To increase the availability of affordable housing and to improve the quality of life for very low-, low- and moderate-income families.*

# What We Do

- **Development**
- **Community Development**
- **Children and Family Services**
- **Property Management**

# Development

- CHOC has developed over 1400 units of affordable housing for low, very-low and moderate income families in Sacramento, Yolo, Solano and Butte Counties.
- Current pipeline is reaching beyond current geographic boundaries in collaboration with other non-profit housing developers.
- Re-syndication and refinancing of tax credit properties
- CHOC is often invited to do work in other geographic areas - currently we are exploring opportunities in Marin County and Alameda County.

# Development

- 680 Corridor projection-identified as ‘under represented’; Concord, Clayton, Antioch are specifically suited to CHOC’s business lines of community development; single, multi-family affordable mixed-income housing; mixed-use development (specializing in TOD/TAD, livable, walkable communities; open-space & recreation –parks/playgrounds, community gardens; health and nutrition; energy efficiency and sustainability, green jobs creation; energy savings assistance program; children and family services including financial sustainability through higher education, self-employment opportunities, homeownership, and most importantly empowering families to use their voices to participate and advocate on their own behalf – socially, financially, and politically. CHOC’s 2014 goals include expansion of these services in Contra Costa County.

# Community Development (in Expansion mode )

## Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP)

- CHOC's Energy Savings Assistance Program (contracted with PGE and RHA) has weatherized 4000 units of low income families in the ESAP program. The program provides energy education and weatherization measures to help participants save on their energy bill and reduce their overall gas and electric usage, helping us create safe, healthy and greener communities, while putting additional money in the pockets of family.
- The program helps us further our commitment to creating green jobs in our communities. Our State certified Energy Specialists and Weatherization Specialists are trained and certified by PGE at their training site in Stockton CA. To date the program employs more than 30 full-time individuals from the community in all green jobs paying livable wage and generous benefits.



# Children and Family Services (C&FS)

- Building self-sufficiency and capacity for our residents is the singular focus of our unique and effective Family Services Program. This program provides afterschool enrichment activities, computer and financial literacy classes, emergency food, and health and wellness programs to families at all sites. A recent focus of C& FS services has been to provide more hands on intervention and direct interface with residents to help residents weather the economic challenges and stay housed.

# Children and Family Services (C&FS)

- CHOC's Children and Family Services program offers an empowerment based service delivery model, working closely with each client towards the goal of family self sufficiency. Social Work interns from Sacramento State University provide intervention and support to residents; and the involvement in Rapid Re-Housing and the Homeless Prevention Program provide for permanent housing to those who would be homeless. The service coordinator provides continued assessment of the family's current challenges and needs. The economy is in recovery. Interest rates are rising. Stock market is up. Corporations are reporting that returns and earnings are high. Yet, to quote our Family Service Coordinator, "Our families are having to make do in ways never seen before.". They are living beyond the fringes of poverty.

# C&FS Re-Housing and Housing Stabilization

CHOC has offered an IDA program in collaboration with NeighborWorks. In partnership with United Way, Bank On, Credit Unions and Banks, CHOC has offered more than 400 residents financial literacy training and home ownership preparation. With CHOC's assistance families have moved from renting to buying a home, and many more are on the path to home ownership.

CHOC is now focused on bringing those services to Solano County with a re-housing emphasis to address a large unmet need of Solano County residents, where a high percentage of foreclosures have occurred, placing Fairfield and Vallejo areas in a high priority category for foreclosure prevention assistance. With returning veterans (Travis Air Force Base), as well as an unidentified low-income population, Solano is in need of an organized housing stabilization and homeownership program. CHOC has the expertise to construct infrastructure to serve this unmet need.



*SAFE Credit Union Shares Tips and In Home Buyer Preparation with CHOC residents at Acacia Meadows*



## **Housing Stabilization**

SAFE Credit Union Shares Tips and Tool for Budgeting and Credit (Financial Literacy) with CHOC residents at Acacia Meadows

# Property Management

- Sterling Asset Management Company is a subsidiary corporation of CHOC that provides property management for CHOC's assets.
- CHOC oversees and handles all asset management
- 1397 multifamily units currently under management
  - 2 senior projects and two properties for residents with mental health diagnosis

# Long Term Sustainability

## How Banks Can Help

- CHOC is currently working on expansion of ESAP, which means new green jobs, at above livable wages (avg. \$20+hr), and generous benefits. The expansion requires relocation of our current ESAP warehouse/office. We are leasing facilities in Vacaville but the program could be stabilized through acquisition of warehouse/office space. We need an acquisition loan. We currently run 7 vans. This expansion requires purchase of 3-5 additional vans and equipment. Program building/space requirement is approx. 10,000ft<sup>2</sup>.

# Long Term Sustainability

## How Banks Can Help

- Make loans to non-profit affordable housing agencies to allow their work to continue (the costs of Homelessness far exceed the costs of keeping families in homes through affordable housing)
- Establish credit lines for non-profit affordable housing agencies to respond to the 'credit crunch' non-profit affordable housing developers are feeling – using their own cash to fill the gap left by dissolution of Redevelopment Agency funds (RDA)

# Long Term Sustainability

## How Banks Can Help

- Affordable housing developers need access to economic capital in order to address the needs of low, very low and moderate income families (without housing families are in a state of disequilibrium –children cannot learn and adults have difficulty focusing at work)
- Closing the gap in financial products and services for low income communities
- Support inclusionary housing, green elements and environmentally sound housing development
- Support permanent source initiatives (currently AB391)
- Support philanthropic investments

# Long Term Sustainability

## How Banks Can Help

- Summary:

The non-profit developer is restricted on the amount of earnable developer fee, expected to defer a great portion of that, guarantee construction loans, performance, and any cost overruns and/or funding gaps. Once placed in service, the non-profit is then required to ensure compliance with all governing agency covenants, partnership agreements, and financial obligations including operating deficit guarantees.

Banks are telling us:

that we are less complex; more transparent; easier to do business with..... but how? Government channels providing capital are very scarce.

# Long Term Sustainability

## How Banks Can Help

- **Our question to Banks:**

Please tell us what you can do to help affordable housing be sustained and serve populations in need.

Organizations such as CHOC are the bridge between the equilibrium of families and the services that you can offer.

If our agencies are not healthy, neither are the families, and a critical opportunity is lost.

Their American Dream is in your hands- the hands of the lender.

When We Work Together, We Have a Better Chance.

THANK YOU!



# **Contact Information**

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