



California Human Development

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

California Human Development, Integrity Housing and Phoenix Development Company combine to build Sonoma County's first affordable farmworker family housing complex

**Construction begins soon on Ortiz Family Plaza in Santa
Rosa**

Santa Rosa, CA (May 16, 2016) – An affordable housing development to meet the needs of Sonoma County's changing farmworker population is coming soon to Santa Rosa. The above named development team announces the closing of financing for the 30 unit Ortiz Family Plaza to be located in Santa Rosa's Larkfield-Wikiup region. Construction is set to begin early next month.

"Ortiz Family Plaza will provide the men and women who harvest Sonoma County's bounty with clean, safe and affordable homes to rest and raise their families," says CHD CEO Christopher Paige. "Moreover, it will provide stability for work-authorized farmworkers who play a crucial role in the Sonoma County economy," he adds. "These are much-needed affordable homes for people who live here year-round and whose children are growing up here."

A 2015 survey by the Sonoma County Health Department shows the profile of county farmworkers is changing, with nearly 90% now living in Sonoma County permanently. It shows farmworkers spend up to 60% of their income on rent and it identifies affordable housing as a critical need. A subsidy from the U.S. Department of Agriculture allows Ortiz Family Plaza to help fill this need by capping rents for farmworker residents at 30% of income.

“Ortiz Family Plaza offers a significant solution to the lack of affordable housing in Sonoma County” says Efren Carrillo, chair of the Board of Supervisors. “Most of the men and women who work the vineyards and fields of our county live here permanently, many in crowded, substandard conditions. It’s a problem to be solved and Ortiz Family Plaza offers an important step forward.”

In development since 2009, Ortiz Family Plaza involves a wide combination of support from federal, state and local government, as well as private foundations, businesses, and individuals. The nearly \$11 million complex is financed with U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development loan funds; Sonoma County Community Development Commission funds; Federal and State \ tax credits ; tax exempt bonds issued by California Housing Finance Agency; and contributions from: Marv Soiland; American Ag Credit; the Sonoma County Community Foundation’s Mayflower Fund, Paul Hobbs Winery Fund, and Anonymous Fund; the Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation; and Jackson Family Wines & Enterprises.

Loren Brueggemann, President of Phoenix Development Company, states that, “this was not the most complicated financing structure we have encountered, but it is one that is right near the top. However, due to the desire of all of the funders to see this project’s success we were able to push through many obstacles. We also received significant help from Sonoma County’s PRMD staff through the deferral of entitlement fees to permanent loan and in their expeditious handling of permitting. ”.

“We are pleased to provide financing from the County Fund for Housing to enable construction of critically needed homes for farmworker families,” says Kathleen Kane, executive director of the Community Development Commission. “As noted in the County’s 2014 Housing Element, a growing number of migrant workers no longer leave during the non-farm season, instead staying in the area and working at a variety of other jobs. In the 2012-13 school year, there were 2,672 children from year-round migrant families in the school system countywide, with the largest concentrations in three areas, one of which is the north county. Ortiz Family Plaza will provide the stable and safe living environment that is a key to their health and wellbeing, and an important factor in their ability to perform to their potential.”

To be located on a long vacant 1.78-acres parcel at 5360 Old Redwood Hwy, Ortiz Family Plaza will feature two-story buildings creating 30 two-bedroom, one-and-a-half bathroom apartments. The buildings will encircle a community center with laundry facilities, a management office, kitchen, covered patio,

BBQ/picnic area, a playground, community gardens, and a teen recreational area. In keeping with CHD's holistic approach to housing development, onsite services such as English as a Second Language, citizenship workshops, financial literacy classes, health services outreach, mentoring programs, computer classes, educational and after school programs, and nutrition programs will be offered. Phoenix Development, Integrity Housing and CHD formed a partnership to develop, own and manage the project; Sonoma County-based Exchange Bank is the construction lender and California Community Reinvestment Corporation and USDA are the permanent lenders.

Ortiz Family Plaza is named in honor of George Ortiz, who founded California Human Development in 1967 along with Lou Flores, Aurelio Hurtado, and Gerald Cox. Mr. Ortiz is a leading advocate for farmworkers throughout Northern California and a longtime Sonoma County resident.

About CHD

California Human Development (CHD) is a community-based non-profit organization and a leader in the War on Poverty for nearly 50 years. Inspired in service to our state's farmworkers, today CHD serves people of low income from many walks of life—giving 25,000 people a year in 31 Northern California counties a hand up to the American Dream. Training and jobs, affordable housing, immigration assistance, disABILITY services, green energy services, and drug-free living programs empower people to overcome barriers and create opportunities to end to poverty.

About Phoenix Development Company; please go to our website at www.phoenixdevco.com

About Integrity Housing; please go to our website at www.integrityhousing.org

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