

**DATE:** November 14, 2022

**TO:** Rental Housing Committee

**FROM:** Patricia Black, Senior Management Analyst  
Anky van Deursen, Rent Stabilization Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** Community Outreach and Fiscal Year 2022-23 Communications Plan Overview

**RECOMMENDATION**

Receive an overview of the community outreach and education efforts for the Rent Stabilization Program and provide feedback.

**BACKGROUND**

In October 2020, staff briefed the Rental Housing Committee (RHC) at its request on the Rent Stabilization Program's (Program) outreach to educate and inform the Mountain View community of the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act (CSFRA) as well as COVID-19 emergency eviction protections. The presentation provided an overview of completed tasks and offered a road map of activities to be implemented during Fiscal Year 2020-21. Staff highlighted the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on outreach and education, which required significantly transforming outreach efforts to focus on COVID-19 emergency eviction protections from March 2020 through the end of Fiscal Year 2021-22. Staff noted that the shift in focus may continue throughout Fiscal Year 2020-21 and into Fiscal Year 2021-22, depending on the duration of the pandemic.

Additionally, the RHC was tasked with implementing the Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance (MHRSO) on behalf of the City Council in October 2021. Program staff began administering the MHRSO and performing outreach starting in November 2021.

The ability for community members to access protections available under the CSFRA and the MHRSO, and for landlords and park owners to know their rights, responsibilities, and how to comply with the requirements, are dependent upon the community's knowledge of the laws. Effective communications and outreach are vital in ensuring rights and responsibilities are understood, implemented, and accessed accordingly. All materials and communications provided by the Program, ranging from routine emails to detailed petition forms and workbooks, are created with the intent to maximize understanding of complex laws and to do so as clearly as

possible. Staff also routinely assesses materials and outreach methods to increase engagement and accessibility, including language access.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Summary of Outreach Efforts in Fiscal Year 2020-21 and Fiscal Year 2021-22**

Major outreach efforts completed for Fiscal Year 2020-21 and Fiscal Year 2021-22 included:

- Implementing multi-modal outreach strategies, such as informational videos, social media, webinars, virtual meet-ups, and community meetings;
- Fostering public engagement through the creation of unique community outreach experiences, such as virtual open houses, pop-up events, City-based events, and community organization material distributions;
- Virtually deploying customer service satisfaction surveys for the Eviction Help Center and webinars;
- Broadening multilingual resources, including webpages, webinars, and materials;
- Releasing Phase 3 of the Rent Registry Online Platform to allow tenant petitions to be filed online;
- Expanding the Landlord Rent Registry to allow landlords to register all property information and unit details;
- Developing and starting to implement mobile home rent stabilization outreach;
- Bringing the Mountain View Housing Helpline “in-house” to handle calls and emails directly through Program staff; and
- Providing extensive COVID-19 emergency eviction protections outreach.

#### *COVID-19 Emergency Eviction Protections Outreach*

Outreach efforts focused heavily on providing materials, events, and workshops to reduce evictions related to COVID-19 financial distress, thereby supporting community stability, one of the main goals of the Program, the CSFRA, and the MHRSO. Staff implemented a multi-pronged outreach strategy and partnered with multiple community and grassroots organizations to reach as many tenants and landlords as possible.

Outreach efforts included the following:

- Eviction Help Center Clinics: In response to overwhelming community need, under the direction of the RHC, and with the support of the City Council, the Program opened the Eviction Help Center (now the Housing and Eviction Help Center). These bilingual clinics (in English and Spanish) were originally held to provide one-on-one assistance for tenants and landlords with Statewide Rent Relief applications and legal assistance regarding the eviction process and remaining housed.
  - Staff held 61 Eviction Help Center Clinics, including two pop-up rent relief application events:
    - 832 total clients assisted from August 14, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
    - 343 individual tenant households applied for State Rent Relief at the City's Eviction Help Center.
- Pop-Up Events: Staff held or attended 18 pop-up events, connecting with 830 community members. By attending these community-based events, staff further established connections with the community, reached residents who may be unable or prefer not to attend formal outreach events, such as workshops, and continued to be seen as a trusted source of information. This may have helped further increase the overall volume of resident inquiries over the past two years. Highlights include:
  - City of Mountain View Monster Bash (staff connected with 100 community members).
  - Mountain View Los Altos School District Cafecito (staff connected with 36 community members).
  - Community Services Agency (CSA) Food Distribution at CSA, Castro Mistral Elementary School, and Klein Park (staff connected with 255 community members).
  - City of Mountain View Multicultural Festival (staff connected with 50 community members).
  - CHAC Diaper Distribution (staff connected with 131 community members).
  - First Annual Summer Kick-Off with CHAC and Community Organizations (210 community members participated).

- Workshops and Trainings: Staff held 25 virtual webinars, trainings, and community meetings with a total of 157 community members attending.
  - 12 bilingual webinars were held in English and Spanish.
- Mailings:
  - Staff mailed informational packets to tenants and landlords immediately after landlords filed Termination Notices with the City. Packets included a courtesy letter, a Housing and Eviction Help Center flyer, and an eviction prevention information sheet.
    - 943 targeted informational packets were sent to tenants (with a copy to landlords).
  - Staff designed and mailed three postcards to provide updates about the Statewide Eviction Moratorium, rent relief, and eviction protections to all households in Mountain View (36,082 households) and 655 landlords.

In summary, outreach and education efforts throughout this emergency period incorporated multiple platforms and modes of communication. This range of efforts increased the ability of the Program to connect with harder-to-reach communities and highlighted areas where the Program can continue to develop additional methods of communication or refine the work already implemented. Please reference the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Monthly Status Report (Attachment 1) and the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Eviction Prevention Program Infographic (Attachment 2) for an overview of outreach and education activities performed during the fiscal year.

### **Fiscal Year 2022-23 Communications Plan**

The updated communications plan for Fiscal Year 2022-23 pivots outreach from COVID-19 emergency eviction protections communications and focuses staff's efforts toward an updated communications goal of increasing community awareness and understanding of the tenant protections in Mountain View. This broad goal allows staff the flexibility to appropriately address all of the programs we support, including the CSFRA Rent Stabilization Program, the MHRSO Rent Stabilization Program, Tenant Relocation Assistance, the Housing and Eviction Help Center, and the Mountain View Mediation Program.

Many of the core Communications Plan elements (the goal and objectives) outlined during previous years are carried over to the new Communications Plan with minor modifications. Strategies are updated for Fiscal Year 2022-23 with an emphasis on multi-modal methods of communication.

**Fiscal Year 2022-23 Communications Plan Goals, Objectives and Strategies**

- Goal: Increase community awareness and understanding of the tenant protections in Mountain View.

<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Develop consistent materials that clearly communicate tenant protections, programs, and services.</p>	<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Increase engagement to better inform the community.</p>	<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Improve program efficacy, efficiency, and compliance to increase transparency and foster trust.</p>
<p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and distribute materials to inform the public of the tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities under local law.</li> <li>• Redesign website to improve navigation and functionality.</li> <li>• Continue to refine and implement Mobile Home Rent Stabilization outreach.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide multiple methods for responding to questions and concerns from, and providing information to, community members.</li> <li>• Deliver presentations, workshops, and community meetings.</li> <li>• Engage vulnerable and hard-to-reach community members.</li> <li>• Utilize multiple modes of communication.</li> <li>• Foster relationships with community organizations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate updates and major changes to affected parties.</li> <li>• Evaluate outreach and communication program outcomes.</li> </ul>

Major tasks planned for the fiscal year include:

- Updating materials, such as flyers, brochures, and reports (including the Monthly Status Report), as needed to clearly communicate tenant protections, programs, and services.
  - Monthly Status Report Update Recommendation: Staff proposes adding the following data points based on RHC feedback and presenting reports quarterly (while continuing to compile data on a monthly basis):
    - Registration and fee compliance data (percentage of units registered and percentage of properties paid);
    - Average market rent and vacancy rates per unit for fully covered units based on unit size (studio, one bedroom, two bedrooms, three-plus bedrooms);

- Annual termination data for CSFRA-covered units since the start of the CSFRA and quarterly look back for the current year;
  - Mobile home data, including petitions;
  - Housing and Eviction Help Center data; and
  - Public inquiries over time.
- Distributing targeted mailings:
    - Banked rent increase follow-up packets to tenants;
    - Termination notice follow-up packets to tenants (copy to landlord);
    - New property owner packets;
    - Registration survey packet (hard copy of registration portal) to “small property landlords” with five or fewer units; and
    - Compliance letters for properties out of compliance with the CSFRA or MHRSO to landlords and tenants.
  - Conducting targeted outreach to landlords on registration requirements, program updates, noticing requirements, and compliance requirements.
  - Completing the redesign of the website to help communicate important information more clearly.
  - Continuing to refine and implement Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Program outreach.
  - Engaging vulnerable and hard-to-reach community members:
    - Continuing to expand translated materials and webpages;
    - Distributing materials within the community at high-touch locations, such as Laundromats and grocery stores;

- Connecting with the Chinese-speaking community via the Multicultural Engagement Program and known community members to perform targeted outreach to better inform the community about applicable laws; and
- Developing Realtor-specific trainings and materials.
- Developing and executing a petition process communications plan for capital improvement and joint petitions.
- Completing and releasing Phase 4 of the Rent Registry Online Platform to allow landlord petitions to be filed online; and
- Evaluating outreach and education program outcomes:
  - Assessing fee payment and registration before and after outreach and compliance enforcement; and
  - Comparatively analyzing Monthly Status Reports, Housing and Eviction Help Center data, and customer satisfaction surveys.

Staff anticipates that this broad multi-modal approach will increase the community's understanding of the CSFRA and MHRSO, additional City programs, and other related emergency communications, thereby fostering understanding of the various programs and resources available to community members in Mountain View. During Fiscal Year 2022-23, staff will implement various measurement tools to track and report outreach and education program outcomes.

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- Attachments:
1. Fiscal Year 2021-22 Monthly Status Report (MSR)
  2. Fiscal Year 2021-22 Eviction Prevention Program (EPP) Infographic Report