



Dos Rios Continuum of Care

2017-2026 HOUSING STRATEGIC PLAN

Changing the path for the homeless in our three counties, the Housing Strategic Plan is a collaborative model to prevent and end homelessness in Colusa, Glenn and Trinity Counties.

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The context in which this 2017-2026 Housing Strategic Plan was developed is one of an unprecedented period of housing need across the nation. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, the affordable housing crisis in the U.S. has become worse. The percentage of renter households that face the monthly difficulty of paying their rent has rising to historically high levels, with even higher income households experiencing a “rent burden.” Not surprisingly, the vast majority of people who have difficulty paying their rent have low incomes of less than \$20,000 per year.

While our economy has improved, the lack of affordable housing developments coupled with income inequality has widened the need for all types of housing and housing support services. It is imperative that we not lose sight of ensuring that the way toward improved lives includes all residents of Colusa, Glenn and Trinity Counties—a culturally diverse populous that represents the fabric of our region. This is, perhaps, one of the most significant challenges that we face as a regional provider of housing and supportive services for those persons that cannot afford to live without additional support.

The Dos Rios Continuum of Care, and its partner agencies, are a safety net, serving primarily people who make 80 percent or less of area median income. The majority are persons that we serve as seniors, have a disability or mental health disorder and who don't have a chance at higher incomes that will keep pace with inflating rental costs, health care costs and costs of living. Those who can work still struggle with child care costs, job skills training, energy costs, healthy food choices and other services that will enable them to break out of the cycle of poverty. It is time to respond to these challenges with unprecedented opportunities for partnerships and collaboration.

To meet this great opportunity, we gathered and engaged our housing steering committees from all three counties, staff from the health and human services departments, law enforcement, community advocates, education advocates, partner agencies, ministerial associations and others. We made surveys available on paper and online, and held three community forums to solicit the thoughts and ideas of our stakeholder groups on how the continuum of care should focus its resources for the next ten years. After drafting a plan that incorporates the feedback that we received, we invited the community to review the final draft plan and to provide another layer of input and detail to the plan.

On June 30, 2017, the Community Action Partnership Board of Directors and the Dos Rios Continuum of Care Board of Directors adopted the 2017-2026 Housing Strategic Plan. Thank you to the dozens of people who took the time to offer their ideas, and dedicated time to housing improvements; this plan is truly reflective of our communities and those that we serve.

As the Dos Rios Continuum of Care works to fulfill the goals and objectives of this Plan, we will grow in the spirit of collaboration that will enrich our planning for the future. By working together within our communities, and regionally, we will advance the mission of the continuum and enhance the lives of hundreds of low-income individuals and families.

Sincerely,

Christine Zoppi, Executive Director
Glenn County Health & Human Services, lead for the Continuum of Care

Executive Summary

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- Bill Wathen, Health & Human Services, Social Services
- Luz Melgarejo, Health & Human Services, Community Action
- Brenda Prather, Public Authority
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- Cindy Holley, Veteran's Services
- Eddy Baker, Office of Education/Foster Youth
- Robin Smith, Office of Education/McKinney-Vento
- Tracey Quarne, Office of Education
- Eloise Jones, Behavioral Health
- Cindy Ross, Behavioral Health
- Keith Corum, Board of Supervisors
- Steve Thalken, Child Protective Services

City of Orland

- Pete Carr, City Manager
- Bruce Roundy, City Council
- J.C. Tolle, Police Department
- Stephen Jahn, First Lutheran Church
- Jason Ross, Real Life Church

City of Willows

- Jason Dahl, Police Department

Trinity County

- Letty Garza, Health & Human Services
- Liz Hamilton, Health & Human Services
- Robin Freeman, Eligibility & Employment Services
- Caedy Minoletti, Human Response Network
- Sandy Bechtold, Community Action Board of Directors
- Anne Lagorio, Behavioral Health
- Patrick Meager, Veteran's Services

Colusa County

- Donna Dennis, Health & Human Services
- Kimberly Vasco, Health & Human Services
- John Loudon, Board of Supervisors
- Connie Rios, Health & Human Services, Public Health
- Ted Mamouelis, Health & Human Services, Public Health
- Don Parsons, Health & Human Services, Veteran's Services
- Maria Arvizu-Espinoza, Colusa County Office of Education
- Lora Ceccon, Colusa County Colusa One Stop
- Jan Morgan, Behavioral Health

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Ensuring the availability of housing for residents of Colusa, Glenn and Trinity County residents has been a long-standing challenge in our communities. To date, we do not have adopted housing policies, programs and practices that have yielded significant results. To realize different results the communities must change their approach to housing, leveraged funding, collaborative partnerships, regional efforts, housing policies, programs and practices.

Presently, the Dos Rios Continuum of Care (“CoC”, “Continuum”, “Dos Rios”) has lacked engagement and guidance in the realm of housing policies, programs and practices, are without a common goal, lack adequate financial means, are reactive in implementation and contain a decision-making structure that does not result in increased housing opportunities and does not encourage cross-program collaboration.

Developing a comprehensive strategy to prevent and end homelessness requires participation by all community partners. The Housing Strategic Plan 2026 is based on the Federal Government’s plan to end homelessness and it sets in motion actions that proactively address the housing needs of the region. It is actionable in its implementation and changes the decision-making approach towards improving housing stability within our communities. The Dos Rios Continuum of Care envisions a housing system that provides housing options for all residents regardless of income, age, life stage or barrier.

The Plan does not specifically target just affordable housing, but emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing options which will have a significant impact on the low-income wage earners in all three counties.

The Plan proposes six Organizational Cornerstones and three Strategic Directions to achieve the long-term goals of increased housing units. The Plan does not prioritize the three strategic directions. The three strategies target different segments of the populations, ensuring that people of all ages and incomes have access to housing options. Each strategy contains a specific action that identifies the kind of action needed for implementation. The action plans contain on-going, short/medium and long-term items so that progress can be made in all phases of the Plan.

Strategies and goals cannot be accomplished without the means for doing so. In this instance, means is an adequate and ongoing source of funding for administration of housing programs, as well as for leverage programs with supportive services. The Plan recommends the use of available Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant and Housing Support Program funds to launch the housing plan efforts. Additional funding sources should be pursued simultaneously.

By achieving the objectives of the Plan, the Dos Rios CoC will expand the housing options available in our communities. The intended result will be an inclusive community accessible by all.

CoC Vision and Mission

Mission Statement

The Dos Rios Continuum of Care is a coalition of organizations that serves as convener and catalyst for safe, decent and affordable housing for all residents in Colusa, Glenn and Trinity Counties, in collaboration with local, regional and state partners.

Vision Statement

The Dos Rios Continuum of Care envisions communities where every person is appropriately and safely housed and provided access to an array of supportive services that will alleviate homelessness through prevention and assistance toward improved health outcomes.

Purpose of the Plan

Organizational Cornerstones

High Quality
Programs

Engaging and
Respectful
Relationships

Partnership and
Coordinated Action

Financial Stewardship

Innovation

Staff Excellence

Strategic Directions

Increase Housing and
Supportive Services

Promote Healthy
Communities

Expand Funding
Sources and
Partnerships

Purpose of the Plan

Purpose of the Plan

The Dos Rios Continuum of Care's Housing Plan is an action-oriented, results-based strategic planning document that is to be used as a decision-making guide for taking critical action steps towards addressing the housing needs in Colusa, Glenn and Trinity Counties. The Continuum believes one of the keys to a vibrant, healthy community is the ability to house its citizens in good, quality short and long-term housing. The purpose of the Plan is to guide resource for future funding and policy decisions for developing affordable housing, housing programs and housing services across the region. The Plan does not contain a prioritized list of action items or a predetermined dollar amount for projects.

The Plan represents a community-wide planning approach that encourages our communities to move further in the direction of broad-based planning and coordinated program development. The Continuum Plan will significantly increase shared knowledge about resources available in our communities, improve program and service coordination, improve assessment, intake and referral networks and will result in the development of new joint projects.

The Plan's goals are to:

- Assess capacity and identify unmet needs. CoC planning provides communities with an opportunity to step back, critically assess capacity, and develop solutions to move persons experiencing homelessness towards permanent housing and self-sufficiency.
- Be proactive rather than reactive. CoC planning helps communities look comprehensively at homelessness from the local perspective and identify need or imminent policy changes. It also helps communities develop the capacity to respond more quickly to these changing needs and circumstances.
- Identify common goals for advocacy. CoC planning helps communities develop a common vision and a set of common goals. The development of a single, coordinated message on needs and approaches to elected officials and funders is extremely important to the success of the Continuum.
- Linking resources. CoC planning helps providers to identify ways to coordinate and link resources to facilitate access for consumers, avoid duplication of effort and promote a more strategic use of funds.
- Encourage community buy-in and access to mainstream resources. CoC planning involves stakeholders outside of the traditional homeless system with the goal of education these stakeholders and getting them to become part of the solution.
- Increase competitiveness for McKinney-Vento homeless assistance funding. CoC planning makes communities highly competitive for homeless assistance funding through HUD. The Plan

Organizational Cornerstones

can also be helpful in leveraging other resources needed to build a comprehensive system to address homelessness.

Organizational Cornerstones

The CoC's organizational cornerstones reflect the Organization's values in action. These reflective qualities helped develop the platform of how the Continuum advances its mission and pursuit of strategic directions. The Continuum's culture is driven by our dedication to excellence that continually strengthens our cornerstones.

High Quality Programs

Quality, value and effectiveness are interrelated aspects to the Dos Rios mission and objectives. The CoC is committed to ensuring that all of our residents and program applicants have access to low barrier services that empower the people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient. Quality programs will improve the conditions in which low-income people live; will enhance the experience that a low-income person has within their community; and will reduce program and administrative costs.

Engaging and Respectful Relationships

The Continuum is committed to providing consistently high-quality service and respectful interactions. The Continuum honors and assists participants in each of our communities through outreach, engagement and service and we recognize the unique needs and strengths of each.

Partnership and Coordinated Action

The Continuum engages in partnerships, provides services and leverage resources beyond core housing programs. The Dos Rios CoC, and its partners, align programs, funding, and service delivery to accelerate progress towards our strategic direction. Our homeless response system should be driven by coordinated, data-driven decision making that matches our resources to the community need for quality affordable housing and stabilizing supportive services.

Financial Stewardship

The Continuum is committed to proactively managing challenges and leveraging new opportunities in the ever-changing environment. The CoC incorporates financial stewardship into daily practices and long-

Strategic Directions & Key Objectives

term decision-making to allow for more sound business and program management practices that demonstrates a broader impact within our communities.

Innovation

The Continuum actively pursues creative, innovative, resourceful and impactful solutions to expand organizational capacity, improve service and meet citizen and community needs. Dos Rios continually uses high-quality information and effective analysis to plan, implement and evaluate its actions.

Staff Excellence

The Continuum is committed to attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing people whose skills, experience and dedication allow them to be at the top of their game. The Dos Rios CoC invests in a well-equipped workforce and board to support the agency's day-to-day operations.

Strategic Directions and Key Objectives

The Dos Rios Continuum of Care's strategic directions are big picture outcomes that are expected to be the primary focus for the Organization over the next ten years. The key objectives are actionable and guide policies, procedures and investments in pursuit of strategic directions.

Increase Housing and Supportive Services

The Continuum cultivates additional resources and partnerships by employing strategies which have the largest impact on increasing affordable housing choices in our communities; allowing us to serve more people, meet funding thresholds, and improve outcomes.

- Establish a Governance Structure that enables strategic implementation and complies with HEARTH Act requirements. Create a CoC Governing Board; develop a Housing First Approach for program access; implement virtual and actual access points for services; develop, pilot and implement a coordinated assessment process; develop a vulnerability assessment tool; implement policies and procedures to support system-wide transformation and accountability.
- Create More Affordable Housing. Create partnerships that share common interests/outcomes, prioritize strategies, leverage funding and resources to enable additional rental assistance funding and housing units for those in need of affordable housing.

Strategic Directions & Key Objectives

- Establish Short-Term Housing Options. Create relationships with non-profit partners to establish emergency shelter and/or transitional housing as a stepping stone towards rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing for people with a disability.
- Outreach and Engagement. Create partnerships with behavioral health and law enforcement to support funding and staffing to conduct year-round outreach to homeless persons; over time, through repeated counseling and dialogue, outreach workers gain the trust of street clients and are able to guide them into the appropriate housing and programs.
- Develop Funding Applications. Ensure that strategic objectives are met by engaging in funding applications that fill a housing, supportive service or administrative gap. Housing applications should leverage funding from known sources such as Whole Person Care, No Place Like Home, Mental Health Services Act, Community Services Block Grant, Community Development Block Grant and other sources of public funding.

Promote Healthy Communities

The Continuum uses housing as a platform to improve quality of life by enhancing health, supportive services, skills development and other services to improve long-term outcomes. The Continuum invests in safe, quality housing and links program participants to program services, mainstream resources, community benefits and employment opportunities that are designed to meet their unique needs.

- Connect People to Opportunity. Invest in partnerships that create and support access to transportation, educational outlets, healthy living, income opportunities and engagement opportunities.
- Strengthen Community Service. Facilitate effective, supportive relationship and respectful interactions among program participants, community-based organizations, county/city partner agencies, and advocacy agents so that people feel connected, enabled, and valued in the community in which they live.
- Create and Promote Quality Housing. Invest in, and provide, safe, accessible, sustainable and healthy living environments that contribute to the overall housing stock of each of our communities.
- Link to Mainstream Benefits. Through the coordinated assessment process, connect all program participants, especially those that are veterans, seniors or disabled, to the mainstream services that they need, and facilitate access to other housing choices along a continuum of care, as appropriate.

Strategic Directions & Key Objectives

Expand Funding Sources and Partnerships

The Continuum, and each of its partners, agrees to committing staffing, programs, services and funding towards collaborative efforts that will reduce individual and family homelessness by addressing the cause of homelessness, by providing safe and stable housing and through the provision of supportive services, such as mental health support, substance abuse support, job training, education, child care, and other services to support persons in their journey to self-sufficiency.

- **Become Housing Ready.** Develop and implement all threshold documentation required for the Continuum to apply for, and obtain, homeless services funding. The Continuum shall be prepared to apply for all funding streams and not allow any allocated/Balance of State funding to remain on the table.
- **Housing Matters.** Strengthen and expand the partnerships with service providers and housing developers to address the dual stigmas of homelessness and mental illness. Capitalize on the forthcoming funding opportunities around building stable housing environments couple with mental health services, primary health care, alcohol and drug services, case management and social services. Housing is the essential platform that promotes positive outcomes in education, employment and physical and mental health, x
- **Outreach and Engagement.** Expand the communication efforts across the region; coordinate a resource directory; identify gaps and need for funding; expand the number of agencies/entities that apply for funding in support of self-sufficiency programs. Build on proactive communications strategy to improve relationships with residents, the general public, County governments and stakeholders.
- **Housing Element.** Encourage and support implementation of housing plans and programs as noted in the Housing Element for each county. Specifically, working with non-profit developers and stakeholders to establish and implement strategies to assist in the development of housing affordable to extremely low-income households, as well to seek out funding specifically targeted for the development of low-income housing. Build the interest of developers to invest in local development of low-income housing.
- **Increase Leadership and Collaboration.** Strengthen the capacity of and private organizations by increasing knowledge about collaboration, homelessness, and successful interventions to prevent and end homelessness.
- **Collective Impact.** Provide fully transparent leadership in planning, policy making and implementation of each community's response system to homelessness. Be guided by the mission of ending homelessness in its coordination and utilization of public and private resources.