



COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF SOLANO
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

CAP Solano JPA
Special Projects: City
Manager’s Office,
City of Fairfield
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2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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Introduction from the Chair

Dear Community Stakeholders:

2015 was a year of considerable change and accomplishment for the Community Action Partnership of Solano Joint Powers Authority (CAP Solano JPA). As the local Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)-Eligible Entity, CAP Solano JPA significantly increased both the amount of overall CSBG funding received by Solano County and the proportion allocated toward services for people in poverty. To guide its work, CAP Solano JPA contracted for a comprehensive homeless point-in-time count and prepared an in-depth community action plan to use as a road map for addressing homelessness and poverty for the cities, County, and stakeholders throughout the region. CAP Solano JPA was advised by a newly convened Tripartite Advisory Board, representing public, private, and low-income sectors.

In addition, CAP Solano JPA established a new collaborative structure with the Housing First Solano Continuum of Care (CoC), for which it serves as the Collaborative Applicant and Homeless Management Information Systems Lead. CAP Solano JPA provided the funding for CoC staff, increasing the CoC's capacity to make structural and programmatic advances to address homelessness in Solano County. This coordination has ensured increased efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the common goals of preventing and ending homelessness and reducing poverty in Solano County.

The members of the CAP Solano JPA Board are grateful to Solano County community stakeholders for their support, without which we would not have been able to attain such success. We look forward to continuing to build partnerships with other agencies and community members in ensuring that all families and individuals in Solano County have equal access to resources that lead to and support self-sufficiency in 2016 and beyond.

Sincerely,



Dawn La Bar
Chair, Board of Directors
Community Action Partnership of Solano, Joint Powers Authority

1. Community Action Partnership of Solano, Joint Powers Authority (CAP Solano JPA) Summary

A. Community Action Agency Overview

CAP Solano JPA is a combined governmental agency formed by a memorandum of understanding between the Cities of Benicia, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun, Vacaville, and Vallejo and the County of Solano to coordinate efforts to reduce poverty and homelessness in Solano County. Representatives from these governments serve on the CAP Solano JPA Board and meet on at least a monthly basis to fulfill their duties as Solano County's Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)-Eligible Entity and Community Action Agency.

CAP Solano JPA Vision:

All families and individuals in Solano County have equal access to community resources that lead to and support self-sufficiency.

CAP Solano JPA Mission:

To strengthen agencies working to end poverty and homelessness. The objective is to provide services and resources in coordination with existing service providers, including but not limited to non-profit organizations and faith-based providers, to promote and encourage self-sufficiency for the most vulnerable members of the community

1. Needs Assessment and Community Action Plan

As part of its duties as the CSBG-Eligible Entity, CAP Solano JPA conducted a community-wide needs assessment and drafted a Community Action Plan for 2016 and 2017 for CSBG funding. CSBG funds may be used to support activities that assist low-income families and individuals, homeless families and individuals, migrant or seasonal farm workers, and elderly low-income individuals and families by removing obstacles and solving problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency.

The county-wide needs assessment was conducted by CAP Solano JPA staff in the spring of 2015, resulting in a final report and Community Action Plan submitted to the state of California on June 30, 2015. The needs assessment methodology included paper and online English and Spanish surveys distributed widely to providers and consumers, low-income consumer focus groups at key services providers in different cities, broadly publicized community forums, data gathering

at public meetings, and interviews of key stakeholders identified by CAP Solano JPA and Tripartite Advisory Board leaders; a primary emphasis of the process was including the voice of low-income persons. In addition, the needs assessment incorporated data and analysis from numerous public economic, housing, employment, and other government-issued reports.

The needs assessment revealed that even though Solano County’s overall poverty rate was on par with state and national rates, several sectors of the population have been left behind, including single mothers and racial and language minorities. In addition, there are considerable pockets of poverty in cities such as Vallejo and Fairfield, which also have a higher concentration of homeless persons.

While the County has recovered to some degree from the 2008 recession, many low-income individuals and families are still struggling financially due to significant cuts in public support and weaker employment opportunities. The recovery of the housing market has resulted in a very low rental vacancy rate, exacerbating the pressure on households in poverty.

Primary causes of poverty in Solano County identified by providers & consumers:
1) High cost of housing,
2) Lack of employment opportunities
3) Lack of education and training for jobs, and
4) Mental and other health issues

Primary challenges facing Solano County residents in poverty identified by providers & consumers:
1) Lack of affordable housing
2) Homelessness
3) Inadequate transportation
4) Lack of childcare and afterschool programs
5) Mental health issues
6) Lack of awareness of resources
6) Poor credit, rental, work histories and/or criminal records

As a result of the needs assessment, CAP Solano JPA chose to prioritize 2016 and 2017 CSBG funding for increasing access to permanent housing, including financial assistance, housing search assistance, and supportive services for housing. The second funding priority area is increasing access to employment, including both employment search assistance and job training and education.

These priorities are laid out in the 2016-2017 Community Action Plan (CAP), which serves as a two-year roadmap for how the CAP Solano JPA plans to deliver Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)-funded services. The CAP identifies and assesses poverty related needs and resources in the community and establishes a detailed plan, goals, and priorities for delivering those services to individuals and families most affected by poverty. The CAP is required by the federal Community Services Block Grant Act and California Government Code 12747.

As part of the Community Action Plan, the 2016-2017 Community Services Block Grant / National Performance Indicators Projections is a series of charts summarizing CAP Solano JPA's priority objectives and specific outcome goals. CAP Solano JPA will use these objectives and goals to prioritize CSBG funding allocation over the next two years.

2. Community Services Block Grant Allocations and Outcomes

In 2015, CAP Solano JPA distributed a total of \$298,986 to community partners to provide direct services. This direct service funding constituted nearly 50% of CAP Solano JPA's 2015 budget, compared to 17% and 14% in 2014 and 2013.

(The remaining budget was allocated as follows: 42% went toward completing the Needs Assessment and Community Action Plan, providing staffing for CAP Solano JPA and the Tripartite Advisory Board, writing the annual federal Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program application and coordinating the local competition, and Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) support; 4% toward HMIS (HMIS) software; and 3% toward fiscal administration and grant monitoring.)

a. Emergency Funds

Through rebuilding trust with the state agency that distributes CSBG funding to counties, the new CAP Solano JPA leadership was able to reclaim \$71,380 in 2014 CSBG funding that would otherwise have been forfeited because it had not been disbursed within the appropriate timeframe.

This Emergency Funding was distributed as follows:

Organization	Award	Number Served	Program Description
Caminar Solano	\$10,900	8	Permanent supportive housing: Rental assistance, deposit assistance, utility payments
Community Action North Bay	\$25,480	9	Permanent housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	\$10,000	5	Permanent housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
Salvation Army	\$25,000	43	Emergency housing: Emergency financial assistance for housing, transportation, & utilities

b. Annual Allocation

CAP Solano JPA distributed \$152,606 in direct services funding through its 2015 Annual Allocation as follows:

Organization	Award	Number Served	Program Description
A Place-2-Live, Inc.	\$25,000	563	Outreach, permanent housing financial assistance, job training, & referral to supportive services
Berkeley Food & Housing Project	\$16,757	63	Employment assistance for veterans: job training, job search assistance & referrals
Caminar Solano	\$17,091	18	Permanent supportive housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
Community Action North Bay	\$30,000	6	Permanent supportive housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
Fighting Back Partnership	\$25,000	71	Emergency housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
Global Center for Success	\$11,000	8	Housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
House of Purpose	\$11,000	5	Permanent supportive housing: Financial assistance & supportive services
Mission Solano Rescue Mission	\$16,758	34	Transitional housing: Financial assistance & supportive services

c. Discretionary Fund Targeted Initiatives Grant

In July 2015, CAP Solano JPA applied for and was awarded \$75,000 by the State for a competitive Discretionary Fund Targeted Initiatives Grant to provide homeless services.

After conducting a Request for Proposals, CAP Solano JPA established a memorandum of understanding with Community Action North Bay to provide rapid re-housing and homeless prevention services to low-income and extremely low-income families and individuals in Solano County to help them achieve stable housing. These services include financial assistance for rapid re-housing and homeless prevention, as well as housing search and case management services.

This grant has been in operation, with Community Action North Bay providing services, since mid-2015. Outcomes will be made available after the project is completed on June 30, 2016.

B. Tripartite Advisory Board

In March 2015, a new Tripartite Advisory Board (TAB) was convened to guide the CAP Solano JPA Board in its capacity as the community action agency. The TAB is responsible for assisting the CAP Solano JPA Board in conducting a community needs assessment, clarifying CAP Solano JPA’s mission, supporting long-range strategic planning and annual planning, assisting CAP Solano JPA in implementing its programs, and evaluating the performance of CAP Solano JPA initiatives under CSBG funding. The TAB meets on a quarterly basis.

The TAB consists of members from the public (elected officials or their representatives), private, and low-income sectors. Scott Tonnesen is the Chair, and County Supervisor Erin Hannigan is the Vice Chair. The following are the current TAB members:

Sector	First Name	Last Name	Organization
Elected Official	Erin	Hannigan, Vice Chair	County Board of Supervisors
Elected Official	Tom	Bartee	Assemblyman Bill Dodd
Elected Official	Dee	Gilliland	City of Vacaville
Elected Official	Vacant		
Private	Scott	Tonnesen, Chair	Superior Home Loans
Private	Joanie	Erickson	Solano Coalition for Better Health
Private	Laura	Escobar	United Way
Private	Kay	Tracy	Private Social Security Attorney
Low-Income	Lisa	Martin	California Tribal TANF Partnership
Low-Income	Paul	Newman	Mission Solano
Low-Income	Patrick	Stasio	Solano County
Low-Income	Keetra	Welling	Community Action North Bay

C. Grant Writing Workshop

In response to community requests for technical assistance with grant writing, CAP Solano JPA staff organized a grant writing workshop on December 14, open to all Solano County community members. Thirty-eight (38) individuals representing non-profit organizations and government agencies of all sizes and issue areas attended. The two-hour workshop included a panel discussion, grant writing exercise and group discussion, and audience question and answer.

The Grant Writing Workshop panelists included:

- ❖ Debbi Davis, CEO/Executive Director, Children’s Nurturing Project
- ❖ Laura Escobar, Director, Safety Net Programs, United Way of the Bay Area
- ❖ Connie Harris, Chief Executive Officer of Solano Community Foundation
- ❖ Dawn La Bar, Chair, Community Action Partnership of Solano Joint Powers Authority; Legislative / Special Projects Manager, City Manager’s Office, City of Fairfield

3. Housing First Solano Continuum of Care (CoC) Report

A. Collaboration with CAP Solano JPA

Housing First Solano Continuum of Care (CoC) is the coordinating body for efforts to address homelessness in Solano County. CAP Solano JPA serves as both the Collaborative Applicant and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead for the CoC.

For this reason, CAP Solano JPA provides funding for Housing First Solano CoC staff to ensure that it has the necessary capacity to discharge its duties in these capacities.

Collaborative Applicant Duties:

- **CoC administration**
- **Creating and operating a coordinated entry system**
- **Engaging the private sector on behalf of the CoC**
- **Promoting the visibility of the CoC**
- **Coordinating the CoC Annual Competition**
- **Making recommendations regarding performance measurements and improving outcomes**
- **Coordinating the Point-in-Time Count**

In 2015, Housing First Solano CoC strengthened its collaboration with CAP Solano JPA by creating seats on its board for the jurisdictions represented on CAP Solano JPA through a Memorandum of Understanding. This coordination has enabled the two organizations to work more efficiently and effectively in distributing funding, supporting programs, and implementing policies and frameworks to end homelessness and poverty in Solano County.

B. CoC Achievements

Funded by CAP Solano JPA, the new Housing First Solano CoC staff helped administer the CoC, including supporting the CoC General Membership meetings, CoC Board, and all Committees, including the Coordinated Entry Workgroup.

CoC accomplishments, facilitated by the Housing First CoC Staff, include:

- ✓ Drafted a governance charter to improve the structure of the CoC
- ✓ Created a Performance and Evaluation Committee that began the process of developing performance measures. A JPA Board member participated in that Committee and the JPA will continue to support that process
- ✓ Increased visibility of the CoC and efforts to address homelessness and poverty through presentations at the County Board of Supervisors, local city councils, City County Coordination Council, City Managers' meeting, and other regional homeless groups
- ✓ Facilitated the Continuum of Care Program annual competition, including the Review and Rank process, technical review of all project applications, and preparation of the CoC Application and the Consolidated Application
- ✓ Completed the Grant Inventory Worksheet and Housing Inventory Count process required by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ✓ Obtained a competitive grant for SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) Technical Assistance for the CoC, which provided training and support to agencies to improve SSI/SSDI and health insurance application outcomes
- ✓ Drafted CoC-wide written standards for homeless programs
- ✓ Obtained vets@home technical assistance through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to address veteran homelessness

C. Homeless Management and Information Systems (HMIS)

In 2015, under the leadership of the new HMIS administrator funded by CAP Solano JPA as HMIS Lead, Housing First Solano CoC expanded and strengthened the use of HMIS among CoC agencies. The HMIS administrator designed and implemented new trainings and training guides, provided on-call assistance including during the annual CoC Program Competition, organized a user group, and created a system for referrals.

HMIS Administrator accomplishments include:

- ✓ Helped users improve system-wide data quality by nearly 30%, from 58% of elements complete to 87% of elements complete
- ✓ Collected up-to-date Privacy and Security agreements from users
- ✓ Implemented new HUD data standards by the roll-out date of Oct. 1, 2015
- ✓ Started participation in HUD's annual Annual Homeless Assessment Report count
- ✓ Provided on-call and regularly scheduled training for new users and those who wanted a refresher on HMIS use
- ✓ Held bi-monthly user group meetings that drafted updated HMIS Policies & Procedures

D. 2015 Homeless Point in Time Count

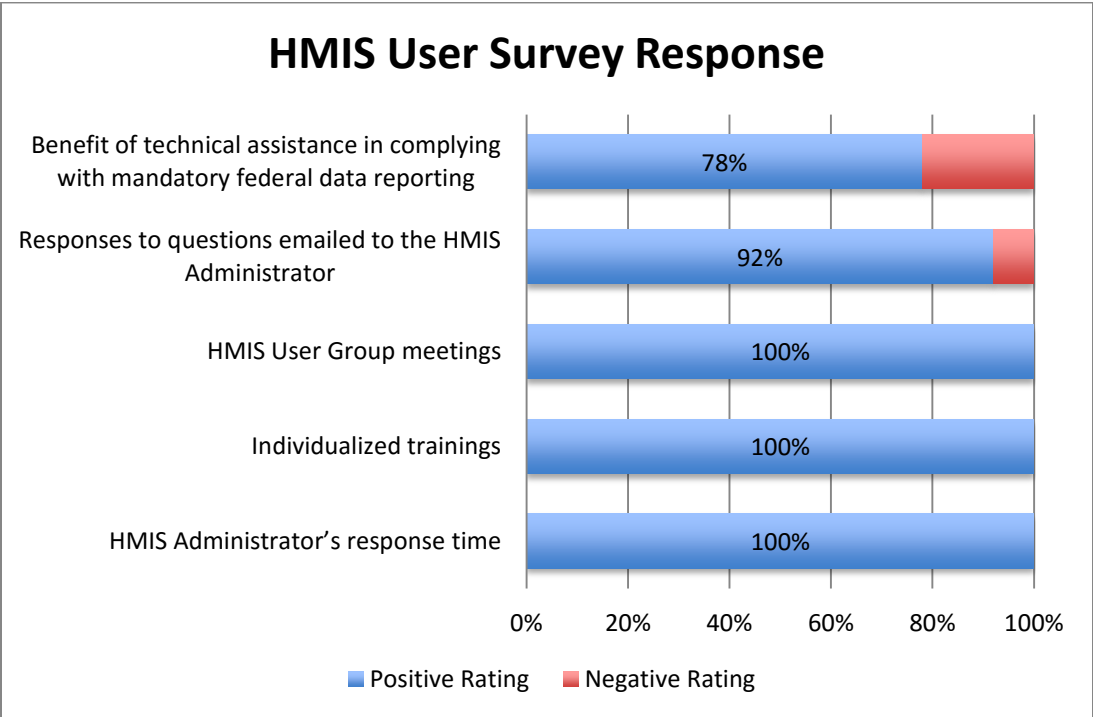
For the annual homeless point-in-time (PIT) count required by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, CAP Solano JPA hired Applied Survey Research to facilitate a comprehensive community-wide census and analysis of the results. The Point-In-Time survey was administered to 360 unsheltered and sheltered homeless persons across Solano County on January 30, 2015. A report describing and analyzing the profile of these individuals and households was widely disseminated across the County to improve efforts to address homelessness.

E. CoC Survey Feedback

CAP Solano JPA staff conducted a survey of CoC member agencies in October 2015 to obtain feedback on CAP Solano JPA’s performance as HMIS Lead and Collaborative Applicant. Fifteen (15) individuals responded to the survey.

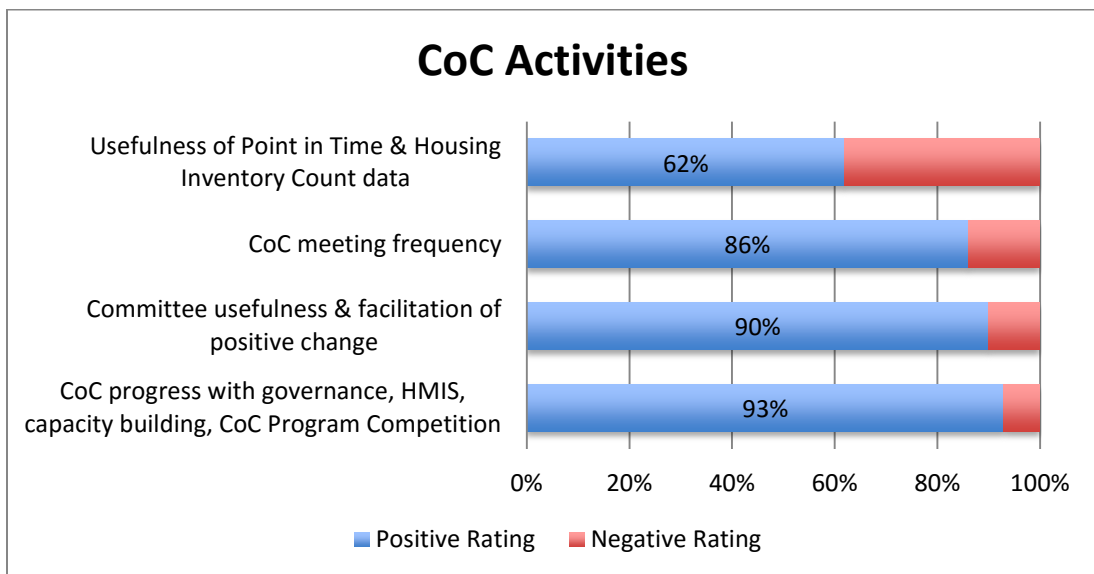
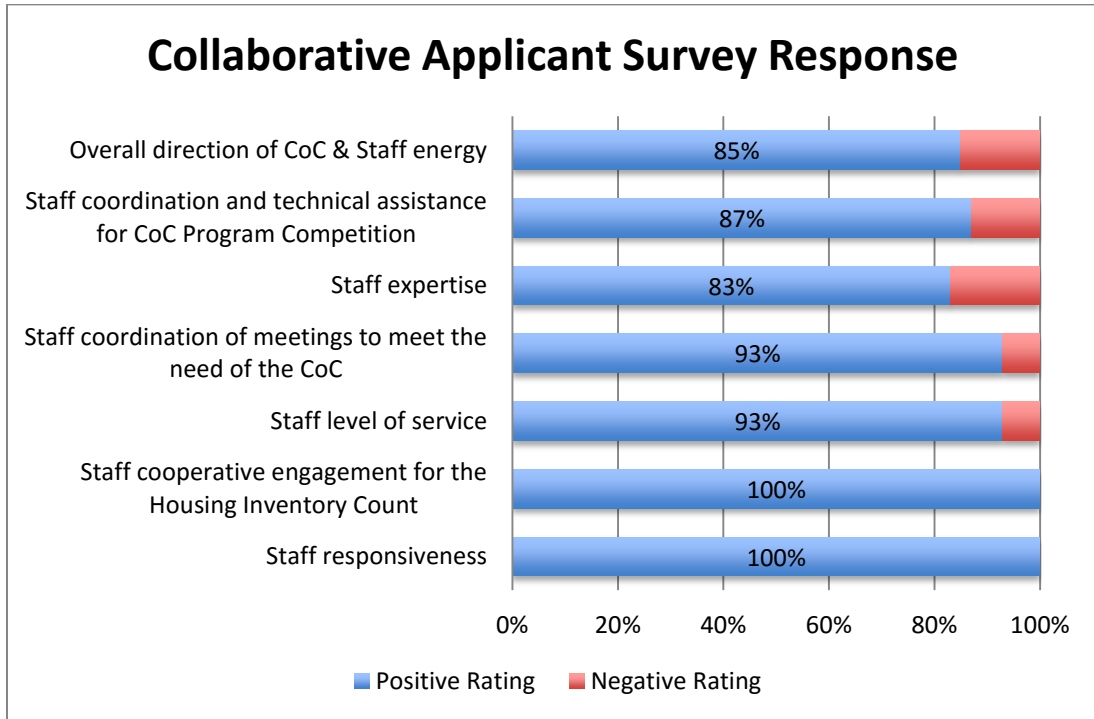
1. HMIS Lead

HMIS User Survey respondents were consistently positive in their rating of CAP Solano JPA Staff as HMIS Administrator in 2015.



2. Collaborative Applicant

The respondents were also overwhelmingly positive in their assessment of CAP Solano JPA Staff as the Collaborative Applicant and their coordination of CoC Activities.



Conclusion

CAP Solano JPA is proud of its accomplishments in 2015, made possible in partnership with an expanded cohort of community stakeholders. In 2016, CAP Solano JPA will build upon these accomplishments through expanding funding for direct services provided through community partners; increasing regional collaboration; addressing the housing crisis and creating self-sufficiency through employment; and supporting Housing First Solano Continuum of Care in its mission to end and prevent poverty and homelessness in Solano County.

We hope you will join in our efforts as we serve and strengthen our community!