



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, January 18, 2018

PETALUMA'S HOUSING CRUNCH

PCRC & Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights to Co-Sponsor the State of Housing in Petaluma

Petaluma, CA: Petaluma is fast reaching a crisis due to lack of affordable housing. The number of people barely able to afford a home before the October fires find themselves competing for shelter. While demand for housing is far outpacing supply, many fear that if Petaluma doesn't act now, the situation will only become even more dire. People, with nowhere to go, are joining Petaluma's silent population of the shelterless.

For these reasons, the Petaluma Community Relations Council (PCRC) has teamed up with the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights (SCCHR) to host a two-hour public forum addressing Petaluma's Housing crisis. The meeting will also include a representative from North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP), who will facilitate audience input and discussion.

DATE: Monday, January 29, 2018

TIME: 5:30 PM **

PLACE: Petaluma Regional Library, 100 Fairgrounds Drive, Petaluma, 94952

** Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights will hold its public meeting at 5:30 pm. The public forum on homelessness and housing issues hosted by both SCCHR and PCRC will begin at 6:00 pm.

According to a combined study on poverty in Petaluma, Rohnert Park and Penngrove, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) 2011-2014 report showed the poverty rate at 16%, and deep poverty rate at 4%. The study also cited the Poverty line at \$31,282.

Market participants, Zillow (<https://www.zillow.com/petaluma-ca/home-values/>), recorded in November 2017:

- The median home value in Petaluma: \$675,800
- The median rent price in Petaluma: \$2,650

Trulia: (https://www.trulia.com/real_estate/Petaluma-California/) recorded the following in July-August, 2017:

- The median home value in Petaluma: \$665,000
- The median rent price in Petaluma: \$2,800

Recognizing the immediate and long-term benefits of affordable housing in the Petaluma community, PCRC and the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights will focus on collaboration between local and regional stake holders.

Presenters scheduled to speak:

1. "JAMES," will share the challenges he and others face when it comes to housing.
2. MIKE JOHNSON, COTS, will share his past experiences as a homeless individual, and discuss what the real needs are for the nearly 10% of Petaluma's population who live in poverty. He will also address the stigma attached to being "poor."
3. JANE HAMILTON, Rebuilding Together Petaluma, will address challenges facing seniors in Petaluma.
4. ELECE HEMPEL, Petaluma People Services Center, will speak about Community Development, and Fair Housing issues.

5. SUE CASTELLUCCI, Housing Coordinator, Housing Division, City of Petaluma, will speak about Block Grant Funds, and the city's status as an "Entitlement Community." as well as public/private partnership successes in the past.
6. SONOMA COUNTY SUPERVISOR DAVID RABBITT, District 2, representing Petaluma and Cotati and a portion of Rohnert Park, as well as the unincorporated communities of Penngrove, Two Rock, Bloomfield, and a portion of the unincorporated community south of Sebastopol. Supervisor Rabbitt will address the current housing climate and what the county is planning.
7. GABRIELA ORANTES, North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP), will speak about rent control and facilitate a Q&A, input and discussion for the remaining hour of the PCRC/SCCHR joint public forum.

Each presenter will be granted 6 to 8 minutes to speak, to ensure ample time for community discourse and input.

The January 29th Forum will serve as a spring board for PCRC's long-term commitment to expanding and ensuring continued access to affordable housing in Petaluma.

Contact: estuart@PetalumaCRC.org, Phone: 559-676-9905

###

Formed in 2016, our mission is to serve as a coalition of individuals and groups, promoting the values of respect, appreciation and understanding of diversity among all people in our community. By fostering positive human relations, we identify and confront discrimination, respond to the needs of our community, and serve as a source of information and advocacy.