

The Homekey Program

Homekey is a statewide effort to rapidly sustain and expand the inventory of housing for persons experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Homekey presents an opportunity for state, regional, and local public entities to develop a broad range of housing types, including but not limited to hotels, motels, hostels, single-family homes and multifamily apartments, adult residential facilities, and manufactured housing, and to convert commercial properties and other existing buildings into permanent or interim housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Homekey Hacienda Heights Overview

In November 2020, the County of Los Angeles (County) was awarded Homekey Round 1 funding by the State of California Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) to purchase a Motel 6 property located in Hacienda Heights. This was one of ten sites that the County was awarded funding to purchase across the region. The County purchased the site in order to convert it into Permanent Supportive Housing, which provides people experiencing homelessness with rental subsidies and supportive services. Because the state required that the site be occupied almost immediately upon purchase, and to continue providing much needed interim housing during the COVID-19 pandemic, the County decided to temporarily operate the site as interim housing until it could be renovated to become permanent housing – its intended permanent use.

Interim Housing Operations at Homekey Hacienda Heights

Currently, the Homekey Hacienda Heights site, also known as “Home at Hacienda,” provides interim housing (or shelter) to people experiencing homelessness. The site is overseen by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), which has contracted with Volunteers of America Los Angeles (VOALA), a homeless services provider, to operate programming onsite. The site is staffed with client service managers and case managers, nursing staff, and 24-hour security. The site has been operating as interim housing for more than two years, first as a Project Roomkey site, and, beginning in January 2021, as a Homekey site. Nearly 400 individuals experiencing homelessness have been served at Home at Hacienda since it became a Homekey site.

Ramp down of Interim Housing operations at Homekey Hacienda Heights

In order to safely and efficiently convert Home at Hacienda into Permanent Supportive Housing, the site must be vacated prior to the start of construction. To accommodate this, the interim housing program at the site will end on May 31, 2023. The County, LAHSA, and VOALA will work together to identify alternative interim or permanent housing options for every participant at the site, so they do not return to the streets.

Conversion to Permanent Supportive Housing

As originally planned and committed to the State as a part of the County’s Homekey award, the site must be converted to permanent supportive housing. In Spring 2022, the County initiated a

competitive solicitation process to identify qualified developers to own, renovate, and operate its Homekey Round 1 sites, including Homekey Hacienda Heights. Through this process, Women Organizing Resource, Knowledge and Services (WORKS) was selected by a panel of experts who reviewed the submitted proposals. The County will transfer ownership of Homekey Hacienda Heights to WORKS prior to the start of construction. WORKS will renovate the property and operate it as PSH. Formed in 1998 by a small group of women committed to meaningful action to help disadvantaged families and communities, WORKS has extensive experience in affordable housing, community development, finance, and advocacy.

Planned Construction at Homekey Hacienda Heights

WORKS will convert the interim housing property into approximately 142 residential units plus two manager’s units. Each residential unit will serve as long-term housing with supportive services for people experiencing homelessness. WORKS’ architectural plan includes green features including rooftop and carport solar panels, increased use of site trees for shading along with attractive landscaping, attractive and secure fencing, additional shaded structures, and other energy-saving improvements. The remodeled development will be known as 7th Avenue Village.

Construction Timeline

Construction for this project will begin in July of 2023 and is expected to take approximately 16 months. The first residents are expected to begin moving in in December of 2024, with full occupancy anticipated for June 2025.

| July 2023 | March 2024 | November 2024 | March 2025 | June 2025 |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Construction Start | 50% Complete | 100% Complete | 50% Occupancy | 100% Occupancy |

Permanent Supportive Housing Operations – Supportive Services

Once 7th Avenue Village becomes operational as long-term housing in December 2024, extensive supportive services will be provided to ensure tenants have the resources they need to stabilize and remain housed. WORKS will tap Housing Works as the lead service provider at the site. Housing Works has been providing supportive services in the County since 2003 working closely with the County Department of Health Services as an approved Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS) provider. WORKS and Housing Works have collaborated for over a decade on long-term housing developments to provide permanent, stable, well maintained, service-enhanced housing in an environment that is supportive, respectful, and promotes the well-being of its tenants.

Working with the Community of Hacienda Heights

WORKS is committed to working closely with members of the community of Hacienda Heights to ensure that the site they develop will be an asset to not only its future residents, but to residents and business owners in the surrounding area. WORKS will focus on maintaining an attractive, safe and secure community for the benefit of the residents and the community and building the best community connections to support residents’ life success.

As of the 2022 homeless count, there were 174 unhoused people in Hacienda Heights, with roughly 32% unsheltered. WORKS and the County are working to make sure that, when 7th Avenue Village begins to lease up tenants, people experiencing homelessness in Hacienda Heights and the surrounding areas who meet the eligibility requirements for service-supported housing and are interested will be contacted for tenancy.

WORKS will be hosting a community meeting open to all to provide information and hear feedback about the proposed rehabilitation on Thursday, May 4, from 6 to 7 pm at the Hacienda Heights Community Center, and will keep the community informed about progress and timeline.

For further information, please contact admin@worksusa.org.