

Ventura Social Services Task Force Minutes - May 6, 2026, ~3:15pm via Zoom

- I. Welcome and Introductions - John Jones/Chair, Judy Alexandre/Vice Chair, Kappy Paulson/Secty, Anna Varella/ Mercy House, Kyler Carlson/Vta Housing, Jenn Harkey/VC Exec Office, Javier Villa Solis/VC Homelessness Services, Kate Mills/ Faith in Action, Emily Bridges/Access Ventura, Nick Deitch/RM Group, Andrea Palmer/Vta City/Housing Brenda Cao/School on Wheels, Suzanne?/VRSI & HVRV(Vets), Jeff Lambert/Vta Housing, Deborah Shriver
- II. Approval of or changes to the minutes of 4/1/2026 A: Judy, S: Jenn
- III. Approval of or changes to the agenda of 5/6/2026 A: Kappy; S Andrea
- IV. Updates from City of Ventura: grants, housing, advocacy needs, actions taken (Andrea Palmer)
 - Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Transition Federal budget includes significant increase in tenant protection voucher funding, intended to help EHV holders remain housed when emergency funding expires later in 2025. HUD guidance delayed. Was expected in April, still pending as of May meeting date • Housing authorities waiting for details on fund utilization Ventura County Housing Authority plan. City not currently in shortfall (unlike other county housing authorities). Can absorb EHV vouchers into regular housing voucher program before reaching shortfall (expected by end of year). Other housing authorities in county unable to absorb vouchers due to existing shortfalls. Absorption strategy contingent on tenant protection voucher funding arrival
 - Valentine Rd 95% occupied as of meeting date with strong community formation, e.g. Residents forming organic community with impromptu barbecues, 15+ residents gathering at community garden area, Mural installation above community garden underway Event planned as celebration of local partners who contributed to project completion
 - Avenue School Site Development - Ventura Housing recently selected by school district as developer for Avenue school site. Currently in negotiations with public action expected soon. Limited details available pending negotiation completion
- V. Updates from the COC: grants, Point in Time count, others (Jenn Harkey)
 - The task force reviewed 2025 Point-in-Time count results showing significant countywide decreases in homelessness across most populations, though senior homelessness remains a critical concern with minimal year-over-year improvement.
 - .i. Homelessness Data & Trends Point-in-Time Count Results Countywide decreases observed across multiple metrics: Significant reductions in overall homelessness numbers countywide
 - .ii. Chronic homeless declined due to permanent supportive housing units coming online with additional funds from the encampment resolution funding with more units coming online at Valentine Rd
 - .iii. Only 30 unhoused veterans currently on countywide waiting list for supportive housing placement, compared to approximately 200 several years ago
 - .iv. Valentine Road project receiving ERF funding for expansion
 - .v. Seniors: Minimal decrease year-over-year, representing ongoing critical need. There is a huge disparity between Social Security income and rent costs creating housing instability. Judy reported weekly increases in seniors at One Stop, contradicting countywide data trends. City-specific data may show different patterns than countywide aggregates.
 - .vi. Youth: Continued coordination with multiple partners on youth-focused coordinated entry model, similar to successful veterans' approach
 - .vii. Collaboration with school districts through assigned liaisons (McKinney-Vento) to identify homeless students. School district homeless data reported separately in final reports, includes doubled-up and at-risk populations beyond HUD definitions. County

Office of Education coordinates with youth providers for homeless student data collection.

- .viii. College Students: • Ventura College launched new program for struggling students with designated support area
 - .ix. Housing Inventory Trends -green line (permanent housing) continuing upward trajectory while shelter decreasing back to pre-pandemic levels.
 - .x. 2020-2025 shelter spike attributable to COVID-era Room Key and short-term motel investments. COVID funding exhaustion returning shelter capacity to pre-pandemic baseline
 - .xi. Ongoing need to offset costs with local resources as HUD makes significant policy changes in the upcoming years
 - .xii. Link to county page (does not include all slides discussed during the meeting) [Ventura County Continuum of Care announces 11.8% reduction in 2026 Homeless Point in Time Count – Ventura County News Channel Website](#)
- Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Transition Federal budget includes significant increase in tenant protection voucher funding, intended to help EHV holders remain housed when emergency funding expires later in 2025. HUD guidance delayed, expected in April, still pending as of May meeting date.
 - Jenn is transitioning to the City of Ventura, with her COC position open for recruitment soon; Kimberly Albers will serve as interim contact. Alicia, Felipe, and Morgan remaining available through COC email inbox.
 - COC preparing for next Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) with no additional updates at meeting time.

VI. Final approval of tenant protections (Andrea or Kristian Nunez)

- \$2.6 million invested in prevention through United Way and Human Services Agency partnerships. New eviction prevention program launching through Ventura County in partnership with Ventura County Legal Aid: Focuses on legal aspects of evictions. Helps people navigate eviction proceedings. Just getting off the ground at time of meeting

VII. Faith-based committee (Judy Alexandre)

- The task force committed to proactive advocacy to expanded winter shelter in anticipation of a forecasted super El Niño, with plans to meet directly with city council members.
- Winter Shelter Planning & Advocacy Climate Forecast & Preparation Super El Niño forecasted requiring proactive preparation for November through March (possibly longer) shelter needs. Temperature and precipitation threshold concerns: Request to shift activation criteria for emergency shelter, recognizing that 40°F in one part of town could be 32°F in another, requiring geographic considerations. Need to address temperature disparities across city geography
- Seeking to grow membership with structured priorities established. Starting a monthly newsletter launching featuring:
 - .i. "Did you know" facts about homelessness. Using biblical foundations from Old Testament as neutral source supporting homelessness work. Hope it serves as a communication tool to increase congregational involvement
 - .ii. Faith-Based Committee Priorities Committee Top advocacy goals:
 - 1.Senior-specific sheltering: e.g. 15–20-unit small community model similar to Dignity Home, Seniors don't do well on top bunks or in mass congregate settings. For example: Two wheelchair users (one electric, one manual) seeking emergency shelter exemplifying acute need. Severely disabled individuals can't function on streets

2. Winter shelter expansion: Open for 3 months continuously. Partner with City of Oxnard as in past years. Open every day to facilitate congregation and service organization meal commitments. Use empty buildings with porta-potties and porta-showers. We acknowledge expense but prioritize meeting ongoing need
3. General shelter expansion -Support for regular shelter capacity increases. Specific focus on populations with severe mental illness who can't function independently

lii City Council Advocacy Strategy Direct meetings with council members planned: John and Judy coordinating meeting schedules with interested task force members. Goal to hear concerns or hesitations upfront from council members. Deborah Shriver identified as potential participant. Participation constraints: Government employees (e.g. Andrea, Javier, Kyler) cannot participate in advocacy meetings with elected officials Anna (Mercy House) needs to check regarding grant restrictions; shelter program manager may be better fit. Nick Deitch willing to support but mindful of meeting load and effectiveness.

Contact John if interested in joining the team

iv. VTTSF approval to co-host with Homes for All a Forum for Ventura City Council candidates (John Jones) The group approved up to \$300 to co-hosting a September 30th candidates forum with Homes for All, at the Church of the Foothills, Focus is on housing and homelessness issues. Vote: Move/Kappy, Second/ Judy

- July 4th booth – Switching from water balloons for environmental reasons. Open to other suggestions to attract interest in addition to spinning wheel. Cornhole toss was suggested

- VIII. Council Housing and Homeless Subcommittee (Judy Alexandre, Andrea) – Did not meet
- IX. Speaker Bureau - (John Jones and Judy Alexandre) Seeking volunteers to present issues to: Service Clubs Chamber of commerce meetings, congregational meetings on homelessness, etc. Focus is on both needs & successes in homelessness response. Lived experience speakers speaking about personal stories are most effective, e.g. Turning Point, LaQuinta or other Ventura Housing residents
- X. "There's No Place Like Home" VHPP program - Saturday April 18 = 1:00 to 3:00 PM - UU Church of Ventura- 5654 Ralston St Fundraising goals met, new volunteers recruited, phenomenal speaker with lived experience & many other recipients were in the audience at almost every table
- XI. Upcoming meetings
 - * May 20 (Wednesday) - 3:00 PM City of Ventura Housing & Homelessness Subcommittee Meeting
 - * May 21 (Thursday) - 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM Ventura County Continuum of Care Alliance Meeting
 - May 29 Valentine Rd Open house – email Jeff Lambert for an invitation
 - May 29th (Friday) - 4:00 PM VSSTF: Faith Subcommittee Meeting by Zoom - Judy Alexandre is contact.
 - September 30th - Candidate's Forum co-hosted with Homes for All. • Location: Church of the Foothills, Focus: housing and homelessness issues Candidates Forum
- XII. Motion to adjourn until 6/3/20226 at 3:15 via zoom (John Jones)