For Immediate Release
November 14, 2017

City and County Unveil Innovative Housing Units to Reduce Homelessness

RICHMOND, Calif. – In a bold move to reduce homelessness, City of Richmond and Contra Costa County officials on Tuesday, Nov. 14 will showcase a MicroPAD supportive housing unit, a 160-square-foot prefabricated dwelling that can serve as an affordable, scalable and livable supportive-housing option for the area’s homeless residents.

Tuesday’s press conference, with Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia, Richmond Mayor Tom Butt and officials from Contra Costa Health, Housing, and Homeless Services, will talk about how these units can effectively move homeless individuals into supportive housing. The City and the County are actively looking for an appropriate location to site this housing.

“After speaking to many homeless individuals, I’ve heard them express a strong desire to move into individual housing units instead of shelters. These innovative units will help us more effectively get individuals off the streets and into supportive housing” said Supervisor John Gioia.

The County is expected to lease each housing unit for about $1,300 per month, recouping a portion of that rate through the collection of tenant rent payments and a homeless assistance grant from HUD. Additionally Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH), Housing Choice Vouchers and other funding may be used.
“We can’t expect to make a significant impact on the growing homelessness issue using make-shift arrangements. Our homeless population needs serious housing options that are efficient and sizeable to foster long term success,” said Mayor Tom Butt. “A MicroPAD development in Richmond would be a real and sustainable solution, directly benefiting our most vulnerable individuals and families.”

Innovative solutions to the worsening homeless crisis in the Bay Area are vital to successfully moving people into housing. Last year, more than 6,100 homeless men, women and children in Contra Costa County utilized County homeless services, and the overall number of homeless residents is much higher. Soaring rents and inadequate housing supply exacerbate the problem.

Tuesday’s event comes amid Homeless Awareness Month in Contra Costa County. MicroPAD is an example of many potential possibilities the County and City are exploring to address the needs of homeless populations. The MicroPAD model provides individual dwellings complete with shower, bed and kitchenette within a 160 square-foot living space. The units can be stacked requiring minimal acreage and sited with convenient support services, enhancing access and usability.

In addition to the showcase, community members are invited to attend the free screening of the film “Storied Streets”, which highlights stories of homeless individuals throughout the United States. The screening will be held at the Nevin Community Center in Richmond on Wednesday, November 15 from 6:30 -8:30 pm. A facilitated discussion will follow the movie where attendees will be invited to speak on their own personal experiences with homelessness and provide community driven solutions for serving our homeless population.

###