

## **For Immediate Release**

August 5, 2021

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### **Chaffee Housing Authority Seeks New Board Members, Launches Survey to Hear from Locals Experiencing Housing Insecurity**

Chaffee County currently is in the grip of a housing crisis, where 75% of renting households are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than half of their income on housing. The newly formed Chaffee Housing Authority (CHA) is now seeking input from the Chaffee County community about their challenges with housing, to help inform a strategic plan for the organization. To share your experiences and opinions on where the CHA should focus, access the survey in English (<https://tinyurl.com/44ht26dj>) or Spanish (<https://tinyurl.com/4wfafpam>). The CHA is particularly interested in hearing from those who have faced challenges with buying, renting, or maintaining secure-housing for themselves and their families. The survey's definition of "housing" also includes campgrounds, cars, co-housing, and shelters. The survey will remain open until August 31.

The survey is one of the CHA's activities to inform its 5-year plan, which is currently being developed. In addition to the survey, the CHA will also update the County's "Housing Needs Assessment," which provides a snapshot of the current housing market, demographic trends, and helps set affordable housing production goals. Focus groups with employers will also be part of the input process. The CHA plans to share out results from those activities with the public as they are available.

The CHA is also seeking interest from the public to fill two vacant seats on its Board of Directors. One seat represents the Town of Buena Vista, and the other is a county-wide At-Large Alternate position. Qualifications for these positions include being at least 18 years old, a full-time resident of Chaffee County, and having interest in and support for creating safe, stable, and accessible housing for Chaffee County residents. The application can be found at [www.housinghealthchaffee.org/cha](http://www.housinghealthchaffee.org/cha) and the deadline is August 27. Desirable qualifications for these vacancies include experience in one or more of the following:

- Strategic Planning
- Organizational start-up
- Housing and Mixed Use Development;
- Fiscal Oversight and Organizational Management;
- Marketing and Communications;

The Chaffee Housing Authority was formed in late 2020 to help address Chaffee's housing challenges. It is financially supported by Salida, Buena Vista, and the County. Even though the CHA works closely with local governments, it is an independent public organization with its own Board of Directors. [Learn more about the Board of Directors, and which jurisdictions they represent](#). The CHA evolved from the Chaffee County Office of Housing, which was established in 2018 and has played a leadership role in many local efforts, including the [Housing + Health](#) initiative, the planning of [Jane's Place](#), and the creation of a [Rental Deposit Guarantee Program](#).

Housing authorities have been operating across the US since the 1930s and are focused on ensuring that housing is available to community members who need it, especially those with lower incomes, as well as

the local workforce. Housing authorities can develop, own and/or operate housing facilities and programs that support low- to moderate-income households and employees within their service areas. Housing Authorities also educate the communities on Fair Housing and Landlord Tenant laws, and advocate for resources through state and federal partnering agencies.

While the CHA develops its long-term plan, it is already actively supporting local projects that can help ease the crisis for locals. One of the examples is [Jane's Place](#), an innovative and flexible housing project near the heart of downtown Salida that will bring 17 housing units and a commercial, non-profit development center to the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Highway 291.

To take the survey (English & Spanish version), apply for the Board of Directors, or learn more about the CHA, visit [www.housinghealthchaffee.org/cha](http://www.housinghealthchaffee.org/cha)