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## **Burbank Housing and Oakmont Village Association Collaborate to Bring Additional EVA to Surrounding Community**

**Santa Rosa, CA – March 26, 2024** – Oakmont Village Association and Burbank Housing announced that following close collaboration, the two organizations have reached an agreement on the construction of a fire apparatus access road, commonly referred to as an emergency vehicle access (EVA) route, as part of the development of the Southeast Santa Rosa (SESR) housing project (formerly known as Elnoka). The EVA will provide an additional means of ingress and egress through the future project which can also be used for evacuations, providing greater access to critical neighborhood exit routes on Montgomery Drive and Highway 12, during public emergencies.

This EVA will provide a third point of emergency access for fire apparatus and emergency vehicles and can help facilitate public evacuations, coordinated by public safety officials including law enforcement and fire, when conditions warrant its use. “The proposed installation of an additional fire apparatus access road would exceed the minimum California Fire Code requirements for the SESR project. This effort can improve emergency vehicle access during critical incidents, enhancing the safety of the public in and around the area,” said City of Santa Rosa Fire Chief Scott Westrope.

“Through close collaboration with Burbank Housing, we have been able to secure another long sought-after EVA, the next step towards fulfilling this critical community need. This agreement will enable another means of emergency access to be constructed, potentially giving local residents and the greater community an additional means of ingress and egress in the event of an emergency. We are pleased with this outcome and appreciate the collaborative relationship we have built with Burbank,” said Christel Antone, General Manager of Oakmont Village Association.

Larry Florin, President and CEO of Burbank Housing, echoed these sentiments saying, “While Burbank Housing’s core mission is to provide critically needed housing in our community, we recognize this project also offers an opportunity to build greater disaster resiliency in our community by addressing another important need – one that has the potential to improve public safety and save lives. We are proud of the relationship we have built with Oakmont and see this as yet another great example of what we can achieve when we work together as a community.”

Burbank Housing acquired the SESR property in early 2023, for the development of critically needed housing. Since acquiring the property, Burbank has been actively working with City and County staff, Oakmont and the adjacent neighbors to address long-standing issues of concern including evacuation planning, weed abatement, vegetation management and bike/trails planning. The housing project will be designed with two access points as required by Fire Code, as well as the EVA. When not in use during public emergencies, the EVA is anticipated to be utilized for recreational purposes offering greater connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout Sonoma Valley.



Burbank Housing is in the preliminary planning phase for the SESR project and anticipates initiating the City's review process approximately summer 2024. Once the project is approved by the City, the EVA will be constructed as part of the greater housing project.

To stay apprised of the latest developments on the SESR housing project visit:

<https://www.burbankhousing.org/spotlight/sesr/>.

**About Burbank Housing**

Burbank Housing is the North Bay's leading affordable housing nonprofit. Since 1980, the organization has built, preserved, and managed safe, affordable rental and for-sale homes in the North Bay. It currently provides homes to over 9,400 people across more than 135 communities and has built over 1,000 ownership homes. Burbank Housing also has more than 730 affordable housing units in the construction and predevelopment stages.

