

Frequently Asked Questions from Below Market Rate Homebuyers

1. I know there are below market rate (BMR) houses available for sale in the County. What are the pros and cons of purchasing one of these homes?

- **Answer:** Good question! One of the major pros of purchasing a BMR house in the County is having the opportunity to purchase a house in Contra Costa, when you would never be able to purchase a market rate house in the area. Think carefully about the commitment you will be making; when purchasing a BMR house, there is a term of affordability that must be met. This term could be anywhere from 20 years all the way up to 45 years. If you know that you want to live in the area for many years to come, and wouldn't be able to purchase a house in the area without assistance then this is a great program for you. Otherwise this might not be the best option for you.

2. What if I wish to sell my BMR house before the term of the Purchase Agreement has expired?

- **Answer:** If you wish to sell your BMR house before the term of affordability has expired, you (the homeowner) will need to send a letter to the County stating that you wish to sell your unit. The letter will need to state the address of the property, the date of the purchase, the purchase price among other things. A complete list will be in the Buyers Resale Agreement, which will be one of the many documents signed and recorded when you purchase the house. The County will then send you (the homeowner) a letter stating what the County wishes to do in regards to your house. The County has two options to choose from; they will either opt to purchase your house and resell to another income qualified buyer or you (the homeowner) will be able to sell your home to another eligible buyer. Either way, the home sales price will not exceed the Maximum Sales Price, which is explained in the Buyer's Resale Agreement.

3. Can I refinance if I live in a BMR house?

- **Answer:** You can refinance if you live in a BMR house. However, there are some specific rules that must be followed in order to be able to do so. The County has to agree/subordinate to whatever it is you (the homeowner) and your lender is proposing. The first step would be for you (the homeowner) to send a letter to the County. The letter should state the property address, contact information from the lender and title officer as well as loan amount and terms. The County will then send a letter either approving or denying the refinance request. The County will only agree/subordinate to a 30-year fixed loan and will only agree/subordinate to first loans only. No seconds/equity lines of credit are allowed (whether or not the County/Agency is agreeing).