



City Council Meeting
Public Comments
January 7, 2026

Board or Commission for Public Comment City Council

Email laurahunter744@gmail.com

Council Meeting Date January 7, 2026

Item # public comment

Subject Plan for Use of HOME funds

Position No Position

First and Last Name Laura Hunter

Are you an Escondido Resident? Yes

Comments

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

Happy New Year. I understand that the Council will be developing a plan for the use of HOME funds at the January 28 meeting.

I ask that the Council develop a clear plan for the \$348,546.75 in HOME funds that must be spent by September 30, 2026 that is the most effective possible. Please remember these are funds that will be LOST if not expended by the city and this is funding we desperately need for housing our most vulnerable community residents. We have significant housing need in our city and I urge the Council to ensure these funds are used in ways that are most effective, needed, and meaningfully address housing needs in our community.

Since the Council has not been requiring deed restricted affordable housing as part of the market-rate projects you have approved, expanding or further promoting the First-Time Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance program may not be effective. Many income-qualified households still cannot afford to purchase homes locally, even with assistance.

I support the recommendations that have been made for use of these funds by the public and encourage the Council to consider alternatives that better reflect demonstrated community need, such as:

- Using HOME funds for rental assistance or rental subsidies to help people stay housed;
- Expanding rental assistance beyond seniors to include all income-qualified individuals and families;
- Structuring rental assistance based on household income, rather than a flat amount; and
- Partnering with local service providers, such as Interfaith Community Services, to help ensure funds reach people transitioning from temporary to permanent housing.

These funds represent an important opportunity to support Escondido residents who are struggling with housing costs and I believe the use as outlined above would be more effective.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

Laura Hunter

Board or Commission for Public Comment City Council

Email lrichards111@yahoo.com

Council Meeting Date 1-28-26

Item # unknown

Subject HUD Funds Use

Position In Favor

First and Last Name Lisa Richards

Are you an Escondido Resident? Yes

Comments

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers,

I am a resident of Escondido writing in advance of the January 28, 2026 agenda item regarding the City's use of HUD HOME funds.

I am concerned that \$348,546.75 in HOME funds remain at risk of being returned to HUD if not spent by September 30, 2026, and I urge the Council to ensure these funds are used in ways that meaningfully address housing needs in our community.

Based on current housing prices in Escondido, expanding or further promoting the First-Time Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance program may not be the most effective use of these funds. Many income-qualified households still cannot afford to purchase homes locally, even with assistance.

I respectfully encourage the Council to consider alternatives that better reflect demonstrated community need, such as:

- Using HOME funds for rental assistance or rental subsidies to help people stay housed;
- Expanding rental assistance beyond seniors to include all income-qualified individuals and families;
- Structuring rental assistance based on household income, rather than a flat amount; and
- Partnering with local service providers, such as Interfaith Community Services, to help ensure funds reach people transitioning from temporary to permanent housing.

These funds represent an important opportunity to support Escondido residents who are struggling with housing costs. I am concerned that without a more targeted approach, this funding may be returned to HUD without helping the people who need it most.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide public comment.

Sincerely,

Lisa Richards