



**April 30, 2024**

Dear Supervisor Parlin,

I hope this email finds you well.

Following the receipt of your recent communication, we wish to convey our respect for your perspective on the projects under discussion and appreciation for your response.

I'm writing to offer some clarity on the initiatives, authorized and underway as part of the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) under 2021 Legislation and Community Care Expansion (CCE) Program under AB 172 (2021), aimed at addressing significant infrastructure needs within Native American communities. These groups have been identified as having the least access to essential services and facing one of the highest rates of homelessness among all ethnic demographics. The 2021 Legislation and AB 172 were approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Newsom to expedite the delivery of critical services to unhoused Native Americans, with the broader goal of fostering equality. To facilitate these urgent projects, these laws were purposefully written to exempt them from zoning, CEQA (if certain requirements are met) and any discretionary actions typically enforced by local agencies.

In your response, you mentioned that the email on March 21, 2024, was the first time Native Directions/HomeCA has reached out to your office regarding these initiatives. However, that is not the case. We initially contacted your office on January 26, 2024, (See Exhibit A) by sending a letter titled "Detailed Update on Rescue Community Development Initiatives." This letter was also sent to the other members of the Board of Supervisors and submitted to the Board of Supervisors' Clerk ahead of its January 30<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Additionally, you have been misinformed that "nobody from Native Directions/HomeCA reached out to any department within El Dorado County regarding these projects at all," and that the first communication with El Dorado County was in November 2023, when the County reached out to HomeCA after hearing about the projects from a resident. In fact, we began communication with El Dorado County Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Director Nicole Ebrahimi-Nuyken in August 2022 (See Exhibit A) and maintained communication with Ms. Ebrahimi-Nuyken and Ms. Salina Drennan, El Dorado County Health and Human Services SUD Program Administrator/Manager, throughout 2023.

Our projects took more than a year from awarding the contracts to executing the Program Funding Agreement, after which we began the architectural design process. In January 2024,



following the initiation of this design process, we communicated a status update with Karen Garner, Director of the El Dorado County Planning and Building Department.

To be clear, our intention in reaching out previously was to ensure you and your fellow Board members are fully informed and included in the progress of these essential projects. But it's important to highlight that, while a letter of support from local agencies is commonly a prerequisite for most project applications, tribal projects such as ours require only an endorsement and a letter of support from our tribal council - a milestone we have successfully achieved. Additionally, we have continued to work with state and county officials, fully cooperating with and adhering to the process as set forth by the legislation.

We also believe that it is crucial to engage your office directly, driven by a commitment to transparency and a desire to dispel any misunderstandings or misrepresentations about the projects. We are aware of misinformation and disinformation being shared about these projects in the Rescue community. That's why we felt it was critical to share the fact sheet about these projects so that you, your constituents, and all community members are equipped with accurate information. We are happy to discuss the facts of the project with you in greater detail, at any time, if you are interested.

Having undergone a rigorous application process with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) for our BHCIP projects and with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for our CCE projects, meeting all requirements and provisions, the projects are set to proceed in their carefully selected locations. These sites were chosen not only for their environmental beauty, but because they represent a vital connection to the cultural and spiritual traditions of Native American communities. It is essential that these projects not only provide the communities with the resources they need to thrive, but also offer an opportunity for reconnecting to their ancestral land, as they are the indigenous peoples of California. In addition, among the 18 applications that were submitted to the State, which included projects in Alameda County (4), San Joaquin County (4), and El Dorado County (9), the State only awarded grants to the four projects in El Dorado County.

We are eager to maintain an open and constructive dialogue with your office and propose to send quarterly updates on our projects' progress unless you indicate a preference otherwise.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,

*Patrick Prado*



NATIVE DIRECTIONS, INC.  
THREE RIVERS INDIAN LODGE

HomeCA

Native Directions, Inc. and HomeCA Inc.

cc:

Tiffany Schmid  
El Dorado County Chief Administrative Officer

Olivia Byron-Cooper  
Director, El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency

Karen Garner  
Director, El Dorado County Planning and Building Department

Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, California State Senator, SD 4

Assemblymember Joe Patterson, California State Assemblymember, AD 5

Michelle Baass  
Director, California Department of Health Care Services

Kim Johnson  
Director, California Department of Social Services

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

## EXHIBIT A.

# BHCIP Program and CCE Program Project Timeline

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### March 2022

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc apply for BHCIP/CCE Projects

- Total Applications by County

- Alameda County: 4
- San Joaquin County: 4
- El Dorado County: 9

### June 2022

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc are awarded the BHCIP Launch Ready grant for a “New Tribal Community Wellness Center” (El Dorado County)

### October 2022

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc are awarded CCE grants for “New Tribal ARF Female” and “New Tribal ARF Male” (El Dorado County)

### December 2022

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc are awarded the BCHIP Children and Youth grant for “New Tribal Youth Perinatal Residential SUD” (El Dorado County)

**FACT:** Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc applied for a total of 18 projects from San Joaquin County, Alameda County and El Dorado County. Of the 18 projects, Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc were awarded four grants, all in El Dorado County.

## 2023:

### January 2023

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc begin grant awardee onboarding process for awarded projects.

### September 2023

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc sign Program Funding Agreements with Department of

## **EXHIBIT A.**

Health Care Services (DHCS) and Advocates for Human Potential (AHP) for New Tribal Community Wellness Center and New Tribal Youth Perinatal Residential SUD.

### **October 2023**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc begin contract with ALM Architect to begin conceptual drawings for New Tribal Youth Perinatal Residential SUD and New Tribal Wellness Center.

## **2024:**

### **February 2024**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc sign Program Funding Agreements with California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and Horne LLP for New Tribal ARF Female and New Tribal ARF Male.

### **March 2024**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc begin contract with ALM Architect to begin conceptual drawings for New Tribal ARF Male and New Tribal ARF Female.

## **EXHIBIT A.**

# **Timeline of Communication with El Dorado County 2022 to Present:**

### **August 2022**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc conducted initial outreach to Nicole Ebrahimi-Nuyken, Behavioral Health Director, El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency.

## **2023:**

### **January-February 2023**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc continued communication with Nicole Ebrahimi-Nuyken and reached out to Salina Drennan, SUD Program Administrator/Manager El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency.

### **March 2023**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc held a Microsoft Teams meeting with Salina Drennan.

## **2024:**

### **January 2024**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc reached out to Karen Garner, Director El Dorado County Planning and Building Department.

January 26, 2024

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc sent the first letter titled “Detailed Update on Rescue Community Development Initiatives” to all Board of Supervisors members and submitted it as a public comment for the January 30<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting discussing the projects.

### **March 2024**

Native Directions Inc and HomeCA Inc sent letters and fact sheets to all members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, Fire Chief Cordero, Sheriff Leikauf and Fire Captain Warman.

## **Exhibit A.**

### **Rescue, California Community Facilities**

State Legislation and AB 172 (2021) established two key programs: the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) and the Community Care Expansion (CCE) Program. Both programs represent significant investments toward addressing historically unmet needs of vulnerable Californians, including seniors, those with disabilities and marginalized groups, ensuring care in the least restrictive setting.

Native Directions and HomeCA, tribal and nonprofit organizations located in San Joaquin and El Dorado counties, respectively, have received state grants through State Legislation (2021) and AB 172. These funds are being used to build facilities to serve unhoused and vulnerable Native Americans from throughout California, enhancing the well-being of these populations.

These facilities offer services that are person-centered and culturally competent to facilitate healing. The facilities will be licensed as residential, **not** commercial, and **not** designed for providing medical treatment.

#### **Project #1: Assisted Living Facility**

*3480 Deer Valley Court, Rescue, CA*

This facility will offer assisted living for Native American women ages 18-59, as well as to individuals aged 60 and older who have comparable needs. This facility is tailored to provide a living environment for people who require assistance with daily activities, such as bathing, dressing, walking or mobility and eating, but do not need the intensive medical care provided in nursing homes or hospitals. The facility will prioritize serving vulnerable Native American women who are homeless or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

The facility will consist of a single-story home that will fit seamlessly into the community's existing infrastructure. The house will have 15 bedrooms and 30 beds.

#### **Project #2: Youth Residential Perinatal Facility**

*3335 Deer Valley Court, Rescue, CA*

This non-medical, residential facility will serve up to 16 pregnant youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and may have substance use disorder or may be escaping from a violent environment. If the mothers have children, they may join them at the facility for the healing process.

This facility is a single-story home with 16 bedrooms and is located on 18.9 acres.

These projects embody a holistic approach to supporting Native American communities, balancing the need for essential services with environmental stewardship and community well-being. Through thoughtful planning and implementation, these initiatives are poised to make significant, positive impacts on the lives of many.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Are these facilities only serving individuals from San Joaquin County?**

A: No. Because these facilities are part of a statewide initiative, they will serve Native American individuals from counties throughout California.

**Q: Are these commercial medical facilities?**

A: No and no! No, these are not commercial facilities as both will be licensed as residential facilities and no, these are not medical facilities. These are strictly residential facilities that will provide a variety of daily care to its residents. Any need for medical care, above and beyond administration of prescribed treatments, will be provided outside of these facilities. At the youth perinatal facility, the individuals will not receive prenatal medical care or give birth onsite.

**Q: Are these drug rehab facilities?**

A: No. A drug rehab facility is designed to offer treatment and support for individuals struggling with substance abuse, including *detoxification*, therapy and recovery planning. Rehab facilities focus on helping individuals overcome addiction and may provide both inpatient and outpatient services. **Neither of these facilities fit that description.**

**Q: Why was Rescue chosen as the site for these facilities?**

A: Choosing Rescue as a location for these facilities serving vulnerable native women was a thoughtful and purposeful decision. Rescue was chosen for its rural, peaceful surroundings and the secure environment it offers, all of which are conducive to healing and growth.

**Q: Will these facilities impact traffic in the area?**

A: No, these facilities will not create traffic concerns. There is very minimal impact, if any, anticipated due to the permanent residency of individuals and on-site accommodations for staff.

**Q: Are steps being taken to minimize fire risk?**

A: Yes, fire safety is a top priority and the buildings have been designed to comply with all safety regulations. They feature sprinkler systems and the required safety features. We will ensure that regular drills are conducted to maintain adequate emergency preparedness.

**Q: How will these facilities impact local water supply?**

A: The assisted living facility has a well with 45 GPM on a 10-acre parcel. The perinatal facility has an abundant supply of 80 GPM to support residents and staff.

**Q: Will these facilities place a strain on local resources?**

A: No, these facilities receive funding from the state and will not impinge on or compete for local resources.





**Date: January 26, 2024**

**To the Honorable Members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors: John Hidahl, George Turnboo, Wendy Thomas, Lori Parlin, Brooke Laine**

**Topic: Detailed Update on Rescue Community Development Initiatives**

As we approach the Board of Supervisors meeting on January 30, I am compelled to advocate passionately for the development initiatives in Rescue, specifically designed to support our most vulnerable tribal community members - fragile tribal young mothers and tribal women, many with disabilities, requiring assisted living.

These initiatives, encompassing a 16-bedroom residential facility for pregnant tribal young women and a 15-bedroom assisted living facility for tribal women, at 3335 and 3480 Deer Valley Court, Rescue, respectively, are not just crucial for the individuals they support but are a manifestation of our community's commitment to help rescue these fragile women.

**Please consider the following crucial points:**

- 1. Legal Compliance with AB 172:** These projects are in strict adherence to AB 172, affirming our state's commitment to supporting tribal-specific needs.
- 2. Respectful Residential Design:** The proposed facilities are single-story residential homes, designed to blend into the community seamlessly, upholding its residential character thereby preserving property values in the Rescue area where these homes will be built.
- 3. Culturally Sensitive Tribal Management and Preservation of Native American Values:** By ensuring tribal members exclusively operate and staff these facilities, we are upholding our promise of providing culturally sensitive care. Likewise, rooting these facilities in Native American traditions underlines our dedication to honoring and preserving these cultures.
- 4. Focus on Fragile Tribal Women and Providing a Safe Haven with Minimal Traffic Impact:** These homes are pioneering in our state, catering specifically to fragile tribal women who need to be rescued from undesirable environments. Many of them have disabilities, including physical disabilities that will hinder mobility, thus minimizing any impact on local traffic, which may be a concern by neighbors in the Rescue area. We will be serving the most vulnerable tribal women that may come in different parts of the State.
- 5. Non-Medical, Culturally-Aligned Nature:** In alignment with our agreements with the Miwok Tribe, these facilities are homes first, and not medical buildings, respecting the cultural nuances and expectations of our community.





Exhibit A

NATIVE DIRECTIONS, INC.  
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**6. A Testament to Tribal-Led Collaboration:** Led by Native Directions Inc. and supported by HomeCA, both non-profit corporations, this initiative is a prime example of effective, community-centric collaboration.

**7. Support from Various Government Agencies and Tribes:** We have garnered support from the Department of HealthCare Services (DHCS), Department of Social Services (DSS), Governor's Office and many tribal communities in the State of California and communication with the El Dorado County's Building and Planning, and El Dorado County Health and Human Services, Behavioral Health Director.

It is imperative that we recognize the right of these fragile native women to a home environment and culturally sensitive treatment. We are hoping that the residents of Rescue will help us rescue these fragile tribal women, many with disabilities.

Your consideration of these points is not just appreciated but necessary for the continuation of our community's progress towards inclusivity and respect for all its members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ramona Valadez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ramona Valadez  
Executive Director  
Native Directions, Inc

Cc: Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, Assemblymember Patterson