



# County no longer eyeing purchase of Hilltop Marriott to serve homeless

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*Courtyard Marriott at Hilltop is located at 3150 Garrity Way in Richmond.*

## **By Mike Kinney**

Contra Costa County is no longer looking to purchase the 190-unit Hilltop Courtyard by Marriott in Richmond for the purpose of developing permanent housing for previously homeless individuals.

The county had considered applying for funding from the state's new [Project Homekey](#) program to possibly purchase the hotel at 3150 Garrity Way in Hilltop, and also the Surestay Plus Hotel by Best Western in Point Richmond.

While the proposal hadn't yet been publicly vetted, the possibility of the Hilltop Marriott acquisition received pushback within the Hilltop community and on City Council.

The Marriott is currently being leased by the County to house and protect people struggling with homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of a related state funding program called Project Roomkey. In total, Contra Costa County is leasing 602 hotel rooms in hotels countywide, including the Hilltop Courtyard by Marriott.

While the county plans to continue to maintain longterm leases at the Courtyard by Marriott, it no longer plans to pursue purchasing the hotel due to a number of factors, "especially the cost," according to Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia.

"It looks like the Courtyard Marriott and Surestay are just really out of reach with the resources that are available at the state level through the Homekey program," added LaVonna Martin, director of the County's Office of Health & Housing of Homeless.

The County is, however, aiming to purchase a Motel 6 in Pittsburg via the Project Homekey program, Gioia said.

Project Homekey is a new \$1.3 billion state program to partner with counties to acquire and rehabilitate hotels, motels, vacant apartments and other facilities and use them to serve people experiencing homelessness.

Gioia and Martin asked Richmond leaders and officials to help identify other possible sites in the city to acquire through Project Homekey funds, which provide counties with \$100,000 per door.

Project Homekey aims to "allow for the largest expansion of housing for people experiencing homelessness in recent history, while addressing the continuing

health and social service needs of this vulnerable population,” according to the state.

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