



SAN DIEGO  
HOUSING  
COMMISSION



## UPDATE ON REGIONAL EFFORTS TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS Compassionate and Coordinated Action

### ITEM SUMMARY/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report serves as an update on the regional efforts to address homelessness and the City of San Diego's role in them. This update also includes potential new and expanded programs that the City Council may wish to consider for City involvement and funding. Long-term strategies and shorter term initiatives are discussed, as is the overall need for more permanent supportive housing throughout the region.

### INTRODUCTION

According to the 2016 Point-in-Time Count, 8,692 homeless individuals and families live in the San Diego region, an estimated 4,940 of them unsheltered. The City has taken action to help address this challenge through the implementation of policies and the dedication of personnel and financial resources to related programs.

#### Housing First

Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer and the San Diego Housing Commission, with the support of the City Council, announced HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO, a three-year Homelessness Action Plan in November 2014. The Plan is deeply rooted in the national “housing first” model of addressing homelessness by connecting homeless individuals with housing as quickly as possible and providing supportive services as needed to improve housing stability. A February 10, 2017 report to the San Diego Housing Commission Board of Commissioners stated progress made under the Plan to date:

- Provided housing opportunities for close to 3,000 homeless San Diegans including veterans, families and individuals, far exceeding HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO's initial goal of assisting 1,500 homeless individuals in the City;
- Invested approximately \$64.4 million in federal, state, and local funds to create 523 permanent supportive rental housing units through new construction and acquisition;
- Awarded 1,853 federal housing vouchers to affordable housing developments and homeless service agencies; and
- Developed unique partnerships with San Diego State University and the Monarch School to house youth and families experiencing homelessness.

#### Connections Housing Downtown San Diego

In 2013, the City, San Diego Housing Commission, and many service providing partners opened Connections Housing, a service and residential community designed to reduce street homelessness in Downtown San Diego neighborhoods by helping people who are living on the street move into permanent housing. Connections Housing, operated by People Assisting the Homeless (PATH), provides 223 housing units, including 73 units of permanent supportive housing, a health center, and

numerous social services all located in one building. In Fiscal Year 2016, the Interim Housing Program at Connections Housing:

- Served 532 unduplicated clients;
- Helped 351 (79 percent) of the 443 clients who exited the program transition to permanent or more stable housing; and
- Reduced street homelessness in the surrounding neighborhood by 67 percent.

#### Permanent Shelter

The Year-Round Permanent Interim Housing Program located at Father Joe's Villages has provided for a sustained expansion of services and consistent housing. In 2015 the City transitioned its interim housing facility from a 16-week winter tent to a 350-bed year-round indoor housing facility. The program opened on April 1, 2015, and the transition was fully implemented on July 1, 2015. In Fiscal Year 2016:

- 1,801 unduplicated clients were served;
- 1,688 clients exited the program, and of that total, 859 (51 percent) left for permanent or more stable housing; and
- 1,495 clients who exited (89 percent) left with one or more source(s) of income during the reporting period.

#### Housing Our Heroes

At its core, Housing Our Heroes is a collaborative landlord-outreach effort. Since its launch just a year ago, the program has successfully assisted 854 homeless veterans to secure permanent housing subsidies, including 256 who have been matched with a rental subsidy and are currently exploring their housing options. There are 157 units currently available through the initiative. The program is making progress toward providing permanent housing opportunities to homeless veterans, with 324 unique landlords are participating so far in this initiative. This participation reflects a shared commitment by private market landlords to end veterans' homelessness. Housing Our Heroes is a great illustration of using limited public resources effectively to collaborate with community partners and make a positive difference in the lives of those who have served the country.

#### Homeless Outreach Team and Serial Inebriate Program

In the City's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) program, San Diego Police officers patrol with County of San Diego Health and Human Service specialists and Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) clinicians to work with the City's chronic homeless population. The Serial Inebriate Program (SIP) conducts outreach on the streets and in jails to chronically homeless individuals charged with public intoxication. SIP aims to reduce the revolving door wherein chronic, homeless alcoholics go in and out of detoxification centers, county jails, and hospital emergency rooms. The program includes 32 beds with case management and treatment funded by the County.

While these and other City-supported projects and programs, including those funded through the competitive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation process, have delivered positive results, homelessness has grown and continues to be a concern for San Diegans. In the 2015 City of San Diego Resident Satisfaction Survey, 61 percent of San Diegans surveyed were dissatisfied with the City's efforts to address homelessness; only 16 percent expressed any level of satisfaction.

Homelessness is a concern beyond the City limits, so the City has increased its active participation in regional efforts in recent years, including shared leadership with the Regional Task Force on the Homeless for the San Diego region, formerly the Regional Continuum of Care Council.

It is important to acknowledge that regional partners are engaged in many efforts that address homelessness, but this document focuses on those that work in direct collaboration with the City of San Diego.

Based on extensive conversations with local stakeholders and research into national best practices, additional prospective efforts are included in this report to complement the City's work to date on homelessness and strengthen the region's ability to end the cycle of homelessness for more people.

## **BACKGROUND**

The reasons why San Diego continues to have the fourth largest homeless population in the nation are almost as numerous as the number of individuals. Over the course of several years, a number of major policy changes and significant events have contributed to San Diego's current situation.

- The State's elimination of the redevelopment program in 2012 drastically cut a needed funding stream for the construction of affordable housing. Prior to the end of redevelopment, the City had tens of millions of dollars each year dedicated to building affordable housing.
- The Great Recession left many low-income earners and those already homeless with a host of new financial, health, housing, and transportation obstacles. This left many individuals and families with ongoing challenges in obtaining or maintaining stable housing.
- People are spending a greater portion of their income on housing, and shelter has become unaffordable for more members of the San Diego community. San Diego renters spend a bigger part of their income on housing than those in Boston, San Francisco and New York City.<sup>1</sup> The region is also experiencing historically low vacancy rates<sup>2</sup> which drives up rental costs.
- Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) housing units were lost as properties were renovated for other purposes. There remains a net loss of units despite the construction of new and replacement units. SROs can serve as a housing option for those at the lowest income levels.
- San Diego is 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the number of homeless individuals, yet the amount of federal funding for this region is 22<sup>nd</sup> in the United States. This low amount of federal support and funding disparity remains a huge barrier in mitigating the magnitude of our homeless population.

One could characterize it as the perfect storm for the region's lowest income community members. The effects can be seen in San Diego and throughout California. Although it is a crisis felt in cities all over the nation, California and the west coast have been hit extraordinarily hard.

This statewide homeless crisis did not start overnight and cannot be solved overnight, but the San Diego region is tackling it through a coordinated and collaborative approach.

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<sup>1</sup> Governing.com "Housing Affordability Burden for U.S. Cities" analysis of US Census data

<sup>2</sup> For 2016, the San Diego region had the lowest residential rental vacancy at 3%.(US Census Bureau Rental Vacancy Rates for the 75 Largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas)

Regional partners<sup>3</sup> have been developing more holistic methods aimed at maximizing and integrating current programs, as well as ensuring there is shared accountability for measurable results. The region is committed to Housing First, a proven model for long-term success; nonetheless, individuals experiencing homelessness and impacted neighborhoods need help today. Therefore, a multi-pronged approach is necessary.

## **LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES**

### Long-Term System Transformation

Addressing homelessness more effectively throughout the region requires partnerships driven by a collaborative commitment to cost-effective solutions and system accountability. The Regional Task Force on the Homeless is working to develop feasible, innovative and creative strategies, together with accompanying financing options, to dramatically increase the supply of housing, services, and subsequent coordination necessary to prevent and reduce homelessness in San Diego. The resulting framework is expected to be complete by the Fall 2017, and the City Council may want to consider further action based on its recommendations.

### *Ecosystem*

Working collaboratively will establish a clear system flow for how an individual accesses services and housing in the region and how each step in the service delivery pathway is accountable to the system. An ecosystem comprised of all elements of services and housing will serve as the blueprint for access to fulfill the needs of someone who is homeless. Elements include:

- Coordinated entry into the region's system of support via outreach workers, law enforcement, 2-1-1's call center, walk ins and one or more support services assessment center;
- Housing and services tailored to each individual's needs provided by organizations throughout the region;
- Individual case navigation by individuals working at the support service assessment centers and the service providers where clients are referred will be critical to the ecosystem's efficacy; and
- Regular reporting of information (client information, bed availability, changes in status of clientele, etc.) by service providers in real-time will maximize the many resources currently being deployed on behalf of the homeless.

This ecosystem is about establishing a systematic infrastructure to move those experiencing homelessness into permanent housing. Ideally, long-term system transformation in San Diego will ensure homelessness is the exception, not the rule. For these reasons, the City provided early investment in the Regional Task Force on the Homeless' work on the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and is very supportive and eager to collaborate on the Coordinated Entry System.

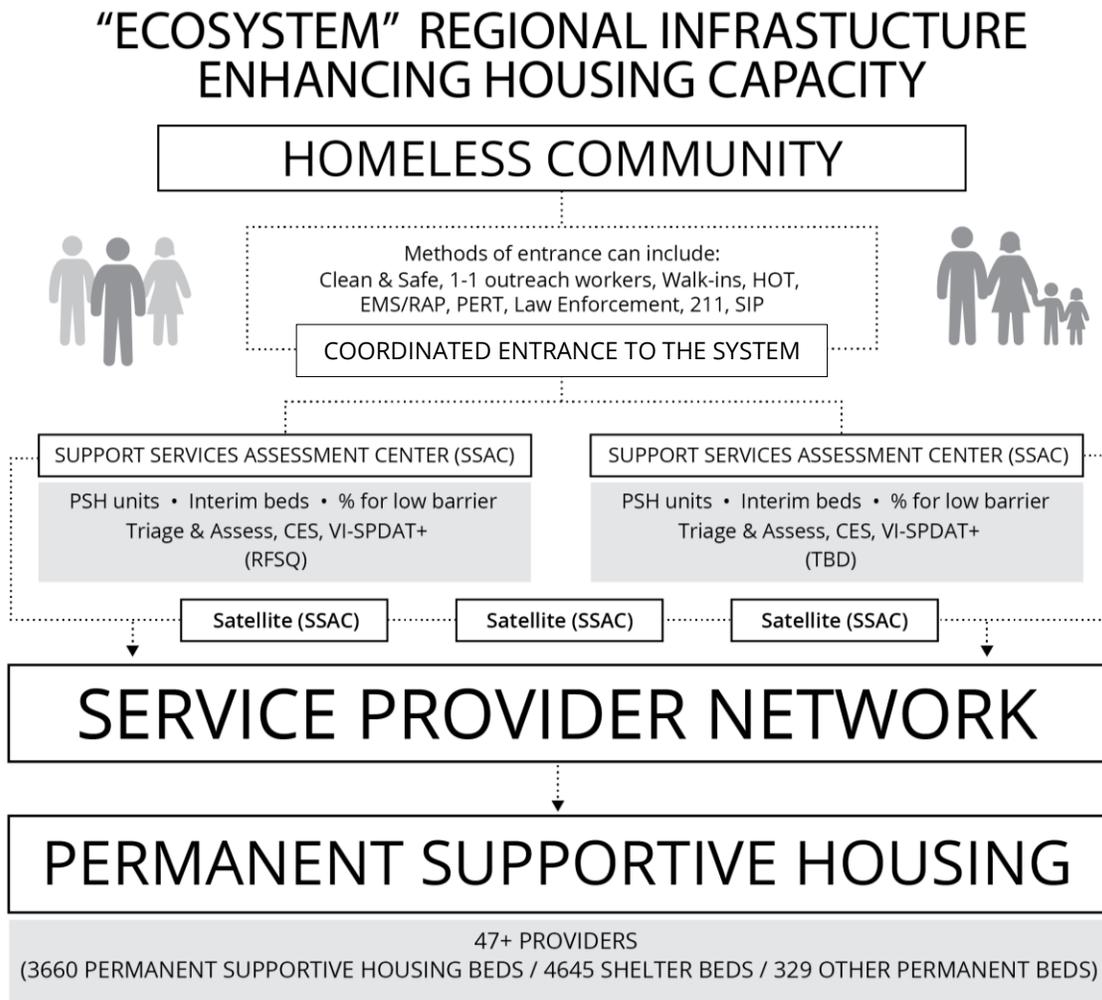
Robust daily use of the HMIS and Coordinated Entry System is essential to overall system impact. Compliance by providers in using the HMIS will determine the difference in the strength of how the region is able to analyze and deploy resources for specific use to help an individual. By collecting and

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<sup>3</sup> City of San Diego, County of San Diego, San Diego Housing Commission, Regional Task Force on the Homeless, charitable foundations, service providers, advocacy organizations, private sector entities, and cities across the region.

tracking client-level data, centralized data on bed availability and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals, families who are homeless and persons at risk of homelessness, the information system not only assists in the collaborative communication necessary to make meaningful progress on addressing homelessness, it also complies with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's data collection, management, and reporting standards. Under this model, when an individual seeks assistance from any service or housing provider using HMIS in the region, that provider will have access to data and the service history of the individual, enabling a more informed, thoughtful and smarter decision making process for the next step necessary to help that person towards a stable path and permanent housing. In addition, the ability to share information between providers will prove invaluable and be a great cost-saving tool when analyzing needs.

An ecosystem effectively utilizing the Coordinated Entry System will enhance the collective impact of all providers addressing homelessness. The region has a wide variety of support services available to homeless community members; within this service network, the path toward stable housing can often appear complex. A well-functioning ecosystem will be person-centered, and therefore different from systems modeled around services offered by providers. The ecosystem fosters and facilitates a path to housing stability that is focused on the individual.



(Data source: 2016 Housing Inventory Count)

An ecosystem establishes a framework for fully realizing the region's shared aspiration of quickly connecting individuals and families in need of housing to the appropriate services in a meaningful, standardized, accountable, trackable and measurable method. An ecosystem that will be effective over time has to live on through leadership transitions in elected officials, government agencies and executives of service providers.

A proposed regional ecosystem does not sit on top of the service network nor does it establish policy that turns away from investments in the most effective housing solutions like Housing First, rapid re-housing, landlord engagement, and other interventions proven to be cost-effective.

#### New Permanent Housing Inventory

For the vast majority of persons experiencing homelessness, affordable housing, typically secured with a federal rental housing voucher from the San Diego Housing Commission or other subsidy, is sufficient to ensure housing stability. However, long-term subsidies with intensive supportive services are sometimes necessary for individuals to succeed in housing on their own.

In the effort to reduce chronic homelessness, the creation of further permanent supportive housing is critical. To assist the region in meeting this need, the San Diego Housing Commission will invest up to \$20 million in "Moving to Work" and other local funds to acquire Single Room Occupancy hotels or other similar property types with a minimum of 200 units in total. Housing vouchers and rental subsidies will be made available as needed. In addition, \$30 million will be made available through a Notice of Funding Availability for developers to create new permanent supportive housing. These funds, along with federal housing vouchers, will result in the creation of another 300 units.

The target population for permanent supportive housing is chronically homeless individuals with an identified special need who have been identified through the Regional Task Force on the Homeless' Coordinated Entry System and determined to be best served through this model. Once a person experiencing homelessness secures permanent housing, services are often a determining factor of housing retention. If those supportive services are not tailored to the specific needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, then individuals are at risk of returning to homelessness.

As efforts are made to increase the supply of permanent supportive housing in the region, additional efforts to secure more privately owned rental units must continue. The City has a four percent rental vacancy rate, creating a highly competitive rental market. Since many individuals experiencing homelessness have additional barriers, such as a limited income, previous evictions and/or inadequate credit, they experience extreme challenges in identifying and securing safe, affordable housing. Through an expanded landlord engagement program, the San Diego Housing Commission will increase the number of available, privately owned rentals for all persons experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

By expanding upon Housing Our Heroes<sup>4</sup>, the landlord outreach program, to serve all homeless subpopulations, the San Diego Housing Commission program will assist in housing at least 3,000 individuals over three years by increasing the permanent housing resources offered by the San Diego Housing Commission's comprehensive landlord incentive and benefits program. This will result in

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<sup>4</sup> Operated by the San Diego Housing Commission in partnership with the City, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and landlords, 854 veterans have received housing subsidies (as of March 10, 2017).

additional permanent housing options available to those experiencing homelessness within the City. The pilot program will run from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2020 at which time it will be evaluated for future direction.

Beyond the new permanent housing units referenced above, other entities have shared they are planning local affordable housing development. The City and San Diego Housing Commission are working with leading service providers on their potential expansion, growth and new initiative plans for greatly needed permanent housing. It is anticipated that an additional 1,000 units will be added to the permanent housing inventory over the next five to seven years.

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
170 PSH units*	341 PSH units*	SSAC units (TBD) + 84 PSH units*	814 PSH units	172 PSH units

\*SDHC voucher allocations and planned Project One For All housing placements

A recent opportunity to fund affordable housing is the Notice of Funding Availability using one-time Housing Successor Entity funds released by Civic San Diego on behalf of the City. The opportunity closes on April 28, 2017 and will fund up to \$25 million in affordable housing projects. Proposals for projects that provide permanent supportive housing, veteran housing and non-emergency shelter for homeless may be given preference. The funds may not be used for transitional housing.

As long-term planning is underway, implementation of short-term initiatives is necessary to help the most vulnerable individuals with immediate needs. Working collectively, the aim is to take compassionate and coordinated action to immediately reduce the number of homeless individuals on the street, consistent with the Housing First model.

The proposed short-term strategies aim to establish prevention and diversion services to mitigate the inflow of newly homeless individuals and families, and scale existing programs that will help to immediately reduce the number of unsheltered homeless San Diegans.

#### Prevention and Diversion

For many families and individuals, homelessness can be avoided with the right support. The cost of services necessary to assist people who have fallen into homelessness are much higher than the costs associated with prevention. Furthermore, the service costs necessary to help people back into housing and to overcome the economic, social, mental and physical damages caused by experiencing homelessness are much higher than the costs of preventing its occurrence.

San Diego is in need of added prevention and diversion services to help reduce its homeless population. According to the 2016 Point-in-Time Count, roughly 2,500, or 51 percent, of unsheltered homeless individuals were experiencing homelessness for the first time. The cost savings generated by an efficient prevention and diversion program could allow the reallocation of time and resources toward other types of projects, such as adding to the housing inventory and addressing the needs of persons with more severe housing barriers

In partnership with key stakeholders, including the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, 2-1-1 San Diego and emergency shelter operators, the San Diego Housing Commission will create and

implement a prevention and diversion program to assist approximately 1,050 households to remain permanently housed over a three-year period. Assistance provided through prevention will help families maintain their current housing situation, while diversion will aid families in staying out of the shelter system by identifying alternative permanent housing options with the necessary supports. Elements of the program will follow the core principles of homeless prevention outlined and proven to be successful by the National Alliance to End Homelessness and offer counseling, mediation and financial resources.

The target population for this program will be individuals and families at risk of homelessness who will be assisted through connection to resources. These efforts will fill funding gaps in current programs and the homeless services system, as well as reduce the number of people becoming homeless and thus the demand for temporary beds. The program will run July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2020, at which time it will be evaluated for future direction.

#### *Scaling the SMART Pilot Program*

Low-level misdemeanor offenders cycle through the criminal justice system without access to services, coordination of care or meaningful incentives to use service providers. A lack of housing stability may impact their ability to complete treatment.

The County of San Diego, in partnership with the City of San Diego, submitted a grant application for state Proposition 47 grant funds to support an expansion of the current SMART pilot. If awarded the San Diego Misdemeanants At-Risk Track (SMART) program intends to expand up to 100 beds over the next year, and potentially 250 beds over 3 years. Operated by the City Attorney's Office, SMART diverts chronic misdemeanor offenders out of the criminal justice system, particularly those who are otherwise resistant to intervention, to a case manager and offers individualized treatment. Treatment is currently provided by Family Health Centers of San Diego through an existing county contract. The San Diego Housing Commission currently administers City of San Diego funding for 10 SMART program beds in temporary housing that are provided by the San Diego Second Chance Program, a nonprofit organization that provides transitional housing, supportive services and job readiness training.

In addition to supportive services for SMART participants, the County proposes to expand and enhance the availability of substance abuse treatment services for misdemeanor offenders through the use of anticipated Proposition 47 grant funds. The service model for these individuals will also include case management and referrals to supportive services in the community. The funding will support a network of community based providers offering mentoring, vocational, transportation and other services to meet people's needs, including rapid rehousing and housing navigation resources.

#### Immediate Intervention

##### *Launching the Moving On Program*

In San Diego, the availability of permanent supportive housing is scarce, as noted throughout this update. As a result, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, in partnership with its members, has been working to prioritize and target permanent supportive housing resources to those most in need. At the same time, some homeless families and individuals currently residing in permanent supportive housing find they no longer need the high-intensity services offered but do still require a long-term subsidy to maintain permanent housing.

To free up capacity within existing supportive units and help current tenants remain stably housed, the San Diego Housing Commission and County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services are partnering to provide tenants who wish to move on with Tenant-Based Federal Housing Choice Vouchers.

As one of the San Diego Housing Commission's "Moving to Work" initiatives, the "Moving On" program provides affordable housing solutions to formerly homeless persons transitioning from permanent supportive housing. Moving On supports participants who have successfully stabilized and are able to live more independently using federal rental assistance while accessing community based resources, as needed. Additionally, the program frees up limited permanent supportive housing resources for vulnerable homeless individuals in need. The program will provide rental assistance to approximately 25 individuals in the first year of implementation and will expand to serve up to 50 individuals by the third year of implementation.

#### *Expanding the Rapid Re-Housing Program*

The 2016 Annual Point-in-Time Count for San Diego estimates more than 5,000 individuals in the City are without permanent housing resources. Based on reports through the Coordinated Entry System, at least 50 percent of those individuals are in need of rapid re-housing. While current funding from the City and San Diego Housing Commission is significant, it does not meet the projected demand for rapid re-housing placements. Additional resources will increase the number of individuals able to exit from shelters and places not meant for human habitation into safe, affordable homes.

Rapid re-housing provides services and temporary rental assistance to individuals and families who become homeless because of an unexpected life experience, such as a job loss, domestic violence or a medical crisis. To further support permanent housing placements, the San Diego Housing Commission will add new rapid re-housing resources to the Coordinated Entry System through a Moving to Work initiative entitled "Moving Home." It will provide funding to house approximately 600 households experiencing episodic and short-term homelessness who need Housing First-focused rapid re-housing.

Households assisted through the Moving Home program will be served using national best practices for rapid re-housing established by the National Alliance to End Homelessness and U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. In addition, participants will have immediate access to housing opportunities identified through the San Diego Housing Commission's landlord engagement program. The target population is homeless individuals and families who have been assessed using the Coordinated Entry System and determined to be best served by this housing intervention.

Additionally and as part of its Moving Home program, the San Diego Housing Commission will launch a Rapid Re-housing Plus Pilot to provide extended rental assistance and case management services for those families who require support beyond the standard federal assistance. Traditional rapid re-housing programs funded through federal grant programs allow for two years of assistance per household. In the current economic climate faced by many families in San Diego, two years is sometimes insufficient to achieve housing stability. Through this new pilot program, the San Diego Housing Commission will commit 25 Short-Term Transitional Subsidies to homeless individuals and families currently receiving rapid re-housing assistance who have a demonstrated need for this level of support beyond the two-year timeframe. The San Diego Housing Commission will partner with local rapid re-housing providers to identify eligible participants.

To assist in the effort to quickly identify affordable units for rapid re-housing participants, the San Diego Housing Commission will increase the number of rental units it owns that are set aside as permanent housing units for individuals identified through the Coordinated Entry System as needing rapid re-housing. Under HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO, the San Diego Housing Commission set aside 25 of its rental units year-round to provide furnished apartments for homeless individuals and families. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2018, the set aside will increase to 50 units to help homeless San Diegans get back on their feet and move on to renting an apartment of their own.

All three program elements will run July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020, at which time it will be evaluated for future direction.

#### *Coordinated Outreach for Coordinated Entry*

Coordinated and active street outreach is a critical component in connecting homeless individuals with needed resources and housing. One-to-one street outreach focuses on individuals currently experiencing unsheltered homelessness to connect them with housing resources and decrease the amount of time they are living on the street. It is a personal and more direct way of working with individuals who tend to refuse or turn down offers of service. Active street outreach is a critical component in developing strong relationships and trust with unsheltered homeless individuals. This trust in turn serves as the foundation for moving individuals and families out of homelessness and into stable, permanent housing, as illustrated in the ecosystem.

The current landscape for street outreach within San Diego consists of multiple stakeholders engaging in outreach, yet lacks a coordinated, systematic approach. Agencies such as Alpha Project for the Homeless and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) conduct daily outreach during weekdays within Downtown San Diego and surrounding areas, including North Park and Hillcrest. Additionally, the San Diego Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) together with the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) provide outreach and engagement services throughout the region. Additional support and coordination among existing efforts are needed for San Diego to address homelessness and the demand for existing resources, such as emergency shelters.

Consistent with the Regional Task Force on the Homeless' Coordinated Entry System, the use of an enhanced, comprehensive and coordinated outreach system will:

- Connect individuals and families experiencing unsheltered homelessness to available housing resources;
- Incorporate data-driven strategies into existing outreach efforts so resources are used efficiently;
- Measure the effectiveness of outreach interactions by tracking accepted and declined offers of shelter or other assistance;
- Connect those performing outreach with information on real-time opportunities and availability, and leverage existing outreach efforts to close gaps in service delivery; and
- Work directly and strategically with those who have been known to "turn down" services.

#### *Creating a Support Services Assessment Center*

It is difficult for some experiencing homelessness to know the services available to meet their specific needs. Setting up a primary entry point to make it abundantly clear how one can secure housing support and services is imperative.

As part of the overall ecosystem, one initial Support Service Assessment Center is envisioned as an enhanced commitment to implement the Coordinated Entry System developed by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless. To ensure a person-centric system is easily accessible, there is a “no wrong door” philosophy. It would function as an entry point for triage, assessment and on-site services, as well as providing some permanent housing and bridge housing for those being assessed, consistent with the Housing First philosophy.

When providers begin to develop a direct relationship with clients in the first few hours of the clients’ arrival, there is an increased likelihood in the successful engagement with the system as clients move more quickly toward stable housing and engage in services at a higher rate. A Support Service Assessment Center would quickly assess clients in a compassionate, standardized way to directly place them into the most appropriate housing intervention to obtain the services they need as soon as possible. The Support Service Assessment Center would enhance the region’s capacity to rapidly respond to those facing housing instability.

The City has issued a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) as an initial step toward the development of the Support Service Assessment Center. Should the City decide to move forward with a Request for Proposals, the City Council will be asked to consider reallocating \$12.5 million in Community Development Block Grant funds for proposals to leverage with other private and public resources to maximize collective impact and create the Support Service Assessment Center.

#### *Expanding Mental Health Outreach Services*

Based on the 2016 Regional Task Force on the Homeless Point-In-Time Count survey, 14.4 percent of the unsheltered population reported that they struggle with mental illness.

The San Diego Housing Commission is partnering with the County of San Diego on two critical programs. For Project One for All, the Housing Commission is allocating 733 housing vouchers to people who are homeless, have a serious mental illness and are receiving treatment services through the County’s Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). A key component of Project One for All is outreach and engagement. To meet those needs, the County has expanded the number of homeless outreach workers who provide outreach and engagement throughout the region to people who are homeless and may have a substance abuse problem or serious mental illness. In addition, HHSA has implemented a “Home Finders” project which provides intensive outreach, case management and housing navigation services for individuals who have a serious mental illness.

Project 100 includes a partnership between the San Diego Housing Commission and the County and provides permanent supportive housing to 100 individuals with substance abuse and/or a serious mental illness, paired with intensive treatment services.

#### *PERT Clinicians*

There are 16 Psychiatric Emergency Response Teams (PERT) currently assigned to the City of San Diego. PERT teams consist of a County-funded mental health clinician paired with a San Diego police officer to assist people with a serious mental illness. The PERT Coordinating Council will be reviewing data to determine the potential assignment of ten additional PERT clinicians.

### *Establishing a 24/7 Hotline for Shelter Bed Availability*

There is currently no reliable source to call to obtain accurate information on the real-time availability of beds for people who are unsheltered.

The City is working towards a partnership with 2-1-1 San Diego, a local information and referral agency, as well as the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, to establish a 24/7 hotline for emergency shelter bed availability. Through this effort, 2-1-1 San Diego would have real-time updates for available shelter beds via a centralized system and can provide each of their callers with appropriate bed referrals.

### *Enhancing the Family Reunification Program*

Homeless individuals who are reconnected with reliable and committed support systems experience greater housing stability.

In partnership with the County and private funders, the Downtown San Diego Partnership will seek to enhance its Family Reunification Program. The program connects unsheltered homeless individuals with their most reliable and desired support network. Over the course of six months, the goal is for 400 unsheltered individuals to reunite with family and friend support networks as a means to housing stability.

Programmatic enhancements include phone interview follow-ups with clients and their responsible support person at six-month, one-year and two-year intervals to ensure the reunited individuals maintain housing stability. At each of these intervals, the Downtown San Diego Partnership will report if individuals remain housed, are employed and/or actively engaged in services.

### *Renovating the Neil Good Day Center*

More than 600 individuals use the Neil Good Day Center on a daily basis as a point-of-entry to a variety of homeless services in San Diego. The facility also provides homeless individuals with access to mail services, a laundry facility, showers, and a safe environment away from the city streets during the day.

The facility improvements will include upgrades and expansion of the shower facilities, an additional computer lab, and client intake space through interior re-configuration, and new client lockers and storage facilities through exterior re-configuration. According to the current service provider, approximately 6,000 individuals are served per year. The upgrade will significantly increase its service capacity. Renovation work is expected to begin in August of 2017. The project duration is expected to be completed within 11 months.

### *Adding Immediate Beds to Provide Safety Off the Streets for the Unsheltered*

Across the San Diego region, 4,940 homeless individuals are unsheltered. There are many extremely vulnerable individuals sleeping and living on the streets that need immediate shelter, triage and assessment, physical and mental healthcare, and housing support.

While the region continues efforts to increase the supply of permanent housing units, the City is working on a public/private partnership to establish approximately 200 immediate beds for the next two years for some of San Diego's most vulnerable men and women. Although these beds are not permanent and do not end individual homelessness, the goals are to provide an option for individuals

until permanent housing options are expanded, to reduce the harm individuals may experience while sleeping on the streets, and to ensure they are aware of the supportive services available.

## **CONCLUSION**

The opportunity for consensus and collaboration has never been greater as can be seen by the very nature of this coordinated document. It is critical for the region to create more permanent supportive housing and to continue the implementation of the Housing First model working together. This unprecedented partnership across the region will help the region act with a sense of urgency as it moves forward to mitigate the adverse effects of homelessness.

Just as housing options and services are limited, so too are personnel and financial resources to address the challenges of homelessness. The City, County, San Diego Housing Commission, Regional Task Force on the Homeless, and the region's service providers must remain vigilant in collecting data on all programs and projects and ensure all funds directed toward homelessness are yielding measurable results.

As illustrated by the major shifts in homeless-related service offerings throughout the last decade, the effective and ineffective experiences locally and in cities throughout the nation must inform the approaches taken by this region. By measuring results, leaders and service providers in the San Diego region will be making informed decisions about what programs work, which should be considered for expansion, which may be changed for greater impact, and which might need to be reconfigured or discontinued. Much progress has been made to date; nonetheless, more must be done in both the longer-term and short-term to ensure all San Diegans have access to housing stability. This report provides updates on a few of those longer-term and short-term initiatives. By embracing a regional framework, the region's efforts to reduce homelessness can be sustained over time. These efforts should be anchored by collaboration and coordination, and the impacts must be measured by consistent and strong data to ensure accountability, informed assessment, and further deployment of resources.