



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOUSING COMMISSION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET

MEETING DATE: July 9, 2021

HCR21-051

SUBJECT: Approval of an Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Agreement with People Assisting The Homeless (PATH) for the City of San Diego Coordinated Street Outreach Program

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): Citywide

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Homeless Housing Innovations Division

CONTACT/PHONE NUMBER: Lisa Jones (619) 578-7696

REQUESTED ACTION:

Authorize an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement between the San Diego Housing Commission and People Assisting The Homeless (PATH) to incorporate up to an additional \$1,000,000 in City General Funds.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF KEY FACTORS:

- The proposed actions referenced in this report will allow the Housing Commission to amend the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement with PATH to provide for the ongoing operation of the City of San Diego (City) Coordinated Street Outreach Program.
- PATH has been selected through a competitive Request for Proposal process to operate the City's Coordinated Street Outreach Program.
- This innovative program aligns with national best practices and functions to strategically engage individuals prioritized for housing through the regional Coordinated Entry System in addition to focusing outreach resources in a neighborhood-based approach.
- The primary role is to strategically engage individuals prioritized for housing through the regional Coordinated Entry System and to facilitate permanent housing placements and provide housing-focused case management.
- A secondary function focuses outreach resources in identified concentrations of unsheltered individuals with an emphasis on diverting individuals from the homelessness response system and/or meeting basic needs, providing connections to bridge housing, emergency shelters and supportive services.
- The City's Community Action Plan on Homelessness identifies Coordinated Street Outreach as a critical function of the City's Crisis Response System and necessary to achieving the goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 50 percent.
- The City of San Diego initially made available \$1,500,000 from the Homeless Strategies Department – HHAP for operations. This action will increase the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement budget by \$1,000,000 from the City General Fund.



REPORT

DATE ISSUED: July 1, 2021

REPORT NO: HCR21-051

ATTENTION: Chair and Members of the San Diego Housing Commission
For the Agenda of July 9, 2021

SUBJECT: Approval of an Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Agreement with People Assisting The Homeless (PATH) for the City of San Diego Coordinated Street Outreach Program

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

REQUESTED ACTION:

Authorize an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement between the San Diego Housing Commission and People Assisting The Homeless (PATH) to incorporate up to an additional \$1,000,000 in City General Funds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission) recommend that the Housing Authority of the City of San Diego (Housing Authority) take the following actions:

- 1) Authorize an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement between the Housing Commission and People Assisting The Homeless (PATH) to incorporate up to an additional \$1,000,000 funded through an allocation from the City of San Diego Homeless Strategies Department General Fund to the Housing Commission, under the terms set forth in the Coordinated Street Outreach Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of San Diego and the Housing Commission;
- 2) Authorize the Housing Commission's President & Chief Executive Officer (President & CEO), or designee, to execute all documents and instruments necessary and/or appropriate to implement these approvals, in a form and format approved by General Counsel, and to take such actions necessary and/or appropriate to implement these approvals; and
- 3) Authorize the Housing Commission's President & CEO, or designee, to substitute funding sources and/or increase compensation by not more than 20 percent of the total agreement amount for the proposed agreement, if necessary, without further action by the Housing Commission's Board of Commissioners (Board), but only if and to the extent that funds are determined to be available for such purposes.

SUMMARY

The proposed actions referenced in this report will allow the Housing Commission to amend the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement with PATH in amounts referenced within this report to provide for the ongoing operation of the City of San Diego (City) Coordinated Street Outreach Program.

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Program Overview

As part of the City's and the Housing Commission's comprehensive approach to addressing homelessness, PATH has been selected through a competitive Request for Proposal process to operate the City's Coordinated Street Outreach Program. This innovative program aligns with national best practices and functions to strategically engage individuals prioritized for housing through the regional Coordinated Entry System in addition to focusing outreach resources in a neighborhood-based approach, identifying concentrations of unsheltered individuals with an emphasis on diverting individuals from the homeless response system and fostering connections to permanent housing placements, while meeting basic needs and providing connections to bridge housing, emergency shelter and other supportive services.

The approval of this program in October 2020 marked a new approach to conducting homeless outreach in the City of San Diego by addressing gaps in the existing system and deploying outreach resources in alignment with the goals of the City's Community Action Plan on Homelessness. City-funded outreach activities are coordinated through a Special Programs Manager and dedicated senior outreach coordinator, staffed by the Housing Commission. This provides the infrastructure necessary to direct rapid response teams and support ongoing neighborhood-based outreach and case management. These are two service elements that separate the program from other outreach efforts and strengthen the depth and level of outreach across the City. This program also aligns and coordinates other City-funded and partner-funded outreach resources to create a systems-level approach. The Rapid Response Team focuses on responding to stakeholder referrals and facilitating problem-solving engagements in areas with high concentrations of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The Mobile Homelessness Response Team provides intensive Street-Based Case Management and System Navigation services through a neighborhood-based deployment process. Both of these functions address gaps in the current provision of outreach services and are critical elements to the successful implementation of a client-centric and housing-focused outreach strategy.

The City's Community Action Plan on Homelessness identifies Coordinated Street Outreach as a critical function of the City's Crisis Response System and necessary to achieving the goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 50 percent. The Coordinated Street Outreach Program is an important component of progress toward that goal, and the overarching principles and strategies identified within the action plan for a more comprehensive, humane and effective approach to addressing homelessness in San Diego.

Operator Experience

PATH has 37 years of operational and programmatic experience and locally has been engaged in serving the highest-acuity San Diegans experiencing homelessness. The organization serves 1,100 people in the County of San Diego annually, helping clients develop stable, independent lives through permanent homes and wraparound supportive services.

Since 2013, the organization has operated Connections Housing, a City-funded program in downtown San Diego that functions as a one-stop supportive service and residential community that provides space for several agencies in a single location to meet the varying needs of the clients they serve. Connections Housing includes 73 permanent supportive housing units for which the Housing Commission provides federal rental assistance through rental housing vouchers, 150 beds of interim housing through a contract the Housing Commission administers on behalf of the City, a federally qualified health center, a food

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service program, case management services, and the PATH Depot, a robust hub of homelessness services and resources.

Over the last three years, PATH San Diego has operated a street outreach program funded through the County of San Diego, which focuses on engaging and housing unsheltered individuals who were frequent users of the healthcare system. PATH mobilizes teams composed of personnel with either a Master's or Bachelor's Degree in Social Work or related fields, as well as those with mental health experience and substance use disorder certifications. This allows the team to facilitate field-based assessments, housing connections, and connections to healthcare. Outreach teams build relationships over extended periods of time and foster client interest through various engagement strategies, including service connections and assistance in meeting basic needs.

In 2018, PATH San Diego partnered with stakeholders in the Mid-City area, including North Park Main Street, City Heights Business Improvement District (BID), Price Philanthropies, City Heights Community Development Corporation, as well as the offices of then-San Diego City Council President Georgette Gómez and then-City Councilmember Chris Ward to develop a pilot program that would employ a neighborhood-specific outreach strategy, which allowed outreach staff to focus more attention on smaller geographic areas. The program initially launched in City Heights and North Park communities and was successful in placing more than 50 individuals into interim and permanent housing in its first year of operation.

Program Design

The Coordinated Street Outreach Program implemented two main functions to actively engage individuals or households who are experiencing homelessness. The primary role is to strategically engage individuals prioritized for housing through the regional Coordinated Entry System and to facilitate permanent housing placements and provide housing-focused case management. A secondary function focuses outreach resources in identified concentrations of unsheltered individuals with an emphasis on diverting individuals from the homelessness response system and/or meeting basic needs, providing connections to bridge housing, emergency shelters and supportive services.

Two distinct yet complementary teams will be enhanced with the additional funding. Each has a specific focus, set of duties, and outcomes:

Mobile Homelessness Response Team

Facilitates ongoing intensive engagement and connections to supportive services for unsheltered individuals identified as prioritized for permanent housing resources. Contractor staff will provide street-based case management services for prioritized clients with an emphasis on fostering positive exits from homelessness to permanent and longer-term housing opportunities. Outreach services will employ problem-solving practices, leveraging internal and external resources, in an effort to quickly resolve prioritized clients' instance of homelessness as well as to lead system navigation efforts, on an as-needed basis, to address any barriers clients may be experiencing in obtaining housing.

Rapid Response Team

Works closely with Program Supervisor(s), Housing Commission staff and City staff to focus outreach activities in areas with high concentrations of individuals experiencing unsheltered

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homelessness as well as coordinating timely responses to various stakeholder referrals. This immediate response is orientated toward brief engagements and rapid housing-focused problem solving, improving the client's sense of safety and assisting in meeting basic needs.

The City's Coordinated Street Outreach Program also supports regional efforts to employ best practices by taking action on the practices outlined in the "Policy Guidelines for Regional Response for Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness and Encampments" adopted by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH).

Multidisciplinary teams consisting of peer-support specialists, outreach specialists trained in street-based case management, and clinical-level staff are leveraged to address clients' needs, emphasizing transitions from homelessness directly to safe, stable housing opportunities. Program staff also actively engage community stakeholders to foster trusting relations and open lines of communication while being proactive in addressing any potential or realized community concerns.

General Standards

Service description and delivery methods include the following standards:

- Shelter diversion counseling
- Crisis intervention
- Intake process and eligibility criteria
- Prioritization of entries, including clients identified as prioritized for or matched to subsidized housing resources and/or enrolled in a permanent housing intervention (rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing) or in the process of identifying permanent housing
- Street-based case management, including assessment, development of housing plan, case note documentation, and issuance of RTFH-approved triage tool for all program clients, when needed and appropriate.
- Housing location and connections to system navigation
- Supportive services referrals
- Basic needs
- Program exit procedures/termination policies

The following criteria may not be used to determine Coordinated Street Outreach Program eligibility and continued enrollment:

- Sobriety and/or commitment to be drug-free
- Requirements to take medication if the resident has a mental illness
- Participation in religious services or activities
- Payment or ability to pay
- Identification

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The new program began ramping up operations in December 2020, which included conducting training and continuing recruitment into 2021. The program was fully staffed as of March 2021. Between March and April, the program has experienced the following outcomes;

- 177 Individuals served by the Mobile Homelessness Response Team
- 156 Individuals served by the Rapid Response Team

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- 23 Exits to Permanent or Longer-Term Housing
- 63 Placements into Shelter
- 476 Instances of Supportive Services provided;
 - Accessing Documents & Benefits
 - Food & Nutrition resources
 - Hygiene, Clothing and Sleeping resources
 - Transportation
 - Acquisition of Identification and/or Social Security Card
- 21 Instances of Supportive Service Referrals;
 - Employment Services
 - Legal Services
 - Medical Services
 - Mental Health Services
 - Substance Use Services

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPACT

As San Diegans continue to live in a City-declared housing emergency “shelter crisis,” the need for immediate housing assistance is critical to the well-being of community members. The Coordinated Street Outreach Program serves this purpose by connecting unsheltered individuals and families with interim housing resources and supportive services. Households participating in this program represent some of San Diego's most vulnerable citizens, as 100 percent of participants are homeless, with low to moderate incomes.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The City of San Diego initially made available \$1,500,000 from the Homeless Strategies Department – HHAP for operations. This action will increase the Fiscal Year 2022 operating agreement budget by \$1,000,000 from the City General Fund.

FUNDING USE	FY 2022 (Current- HHAP)	FY 2022 (Amended – City General Fund)	TOTAL
Housing Commission Administration	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$125,000
PATH Operating Contract	\$1,425,000	\$950,000	\$2,375,000
	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,00	\$2,500,000

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/CONTRACTING/EQUITY ASSURANCE

PATH is a local nonprofit. As a nonprofit, PATH is not subject to the requirement to submit a Workforce Report.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION

One June 11, 2019, the City Council authorized the redirection of \$1.6 million in State Homeless Emergency Aid Program funds originally intended for outreach fund the operations of an additional bridge shelter (R-312516.)

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On June 8, 2020, the City Council took action as part of the Fiscal Year 2021 City budget approval to allocate \$1,500,000 from the City General Fund for the purpose of providing Coordinated Street Outreach services in the City of San Diego (R-313071).

On June 16, 2020, the City Council authorized the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of San Diego and the Housing Commission for Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) Block Grant Funded Programs, including the appropriation of \$250,000 in HHAP funds to cover a two-year period, for the purpose of creating a Senior Outreach Coordinator position that would be employed through the Housing Commission (R-313113).

On October 27, 2020 the City Council authorized the execution of an operating agreement between the San Diego Housing Commission and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) for the operation of the City of San Diego Coordinated Street Outreach Program as well as a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission for the oversight and administration of the City's Coordinated Street Outreach Program (R-2021-178)

KEY STAKEHOLDERS and PROJECTED IMPACTS

Stakeholders for this project include residents, clients, civic institutions and businesses as well as PATH as the sub-recipient administering the program. The program is expected to have a positive impact on the community, as it will provide citywide outreach services with the goal of facilitating permanent housing placements and connections to supportive services.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The activities described in the report are not a project as defined in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15378(b)(5) as they are administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment and, therefore, are not subject to CEQA pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines. Nevertheless, they would be categorically exempt under multiple separate provisions of CEQA, including Section 15301 for existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of the existing use. This determination is not appealable and a Notice of Right to Appeal the Environmental Determination (NORA) is not required. Processing under the National Environmental Policy Act is not required as no federal funds are involved in this action. The parties agree that the provision of any federal funds as the result of this action is conditioned on the City of San Diego's final NEPA review and approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Jones
Executive Vice President Strategic Initiatives
San Diego Housing Commission

Approved by,



Jeff Davis
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
San Diego Housing Commission

Docket materials are available in the "Governance & Legislative Affairs" section of the San Diego Housing Commission website at www.sdhc.org