



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

News Release

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Media Contact: Maria Velasquez, Senior Vice
President Communications & Legislative Affairs
619-578-7560 mariav@sdhc.org

HOUSING FIRST–SAN DIEGO WILL IMPACT THE LIVES OF UP TO 1,500 HOMELESS SAN DIEGANS BY CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

San Diego Housing Commission's three-year plan commits federal, state and local resources to create permanent supportive housing

SAN DIEGO, CA—Housing First–San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission's (SDHC) three-year homelessness action plan to create additional affordable housing with supportive services, will impact the lives of as many as 1,500 homeless San Diegans.

Downtown San Diego's former Hotel Churchill, which is part of [Housing First–San Diego](#), was the backdrop for today's joint announcement of the five-point plan by San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, City Council President Todd Gloria and SDHC President & CEO Richard C. Gentry, which was attended by partners, working together to end homelessness.

Developed by SDHC and in collaboration with partners, **Housing First–San Diego**:

- 1) Renovates the historical Hotel Churchill to create 72 affordable studios for homeless veterans and former foster youth;
- 2) Makes available up to \$30 million over the next three years to create Permanent Supportive Housing that will remain affordable for 55 years;
- 3) Commits up to 1,500 federal rental assistance vouchers to provide housing to homeless individuals and families;
- 4) Invests up to \$15 million from the federal "Moving to Work" rental assistance program to acquire a property that will set aside 20 percent of its units for permanent supportive housing for homeless San Diegans; and
- 5) Dedicates 25 of SDHC's own affordable units to temporarily provide homes for homeless individuals and families. SDHC is one of the first public housing agencies in the nation to commit affordable rental housing that it owns for this purpose.

"With a focus on programs that deliver results and access to \$30 million in available funds, we expect to see even more bold, imaginative and innovative projects that create opportunities for San Diegans in need," Mayor Faulconer said.

Housing First–San Diego draws upon continued support from the City of San Diego and the private and public sectors to take strides toward the goal of ending homelessness.

"We cannot be America's Finest City with thousands of neighbors sleeping on our streets," said City Council President Gloria. "We are taking a hard look at what is working around the country to solve this problem and realigning our homeless programs to support the Housing First model, permanent supportive housing, and a Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement

system. Our plan will support these efforts as we work collaboratively with community stakeholders to end homelessness.”

The Regional Task Force on the Homeless on January 24, 2014, counted more than 2,400 homeless individuals living without shelter in the City of San Diego – on the streets, canyons, riverbeds or inside their vehicles.

“Today, **Housing First–San Diego**, the San Diego Housing Commission’s Homelessness Action Plan, gets us closer to solving homelessness together in the City of San Diego,” said SDHC President & CEO Gentry.

City Councilmember Ed Harris and SDHC Commissioner Dorothy Surdi also attended today’s unveiling of SDHC’s **Housing First–San Diego**.

Among the partners who participated in the announcement of **Housing First–San Diego**: Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System Director Jeffrey Gering; Downtown San Diego Partnership CEO Kris Michell; Veterans Village CEO Phil Landis; Father Joe’s Villages Vice President Capital Development Bill Bolstad; Funders Together to End Homelessness Board Vice President Michael McConnell; Regional Task Force on the Homeless Board President Thomas Theisen; SDPD’s Homeless Outreach Team Lt. Debbie Farrar; Funders Together to End Homelessness, Nancy Sasaki; United Way of San Diego County CEO Kevin Crawford; LeSar Development Consultants President Jennifer LeSar; and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) CEO Joel John Roberts.

For more information: HousingFirstSanDiego@sdhc.org

Background

Five major components of Housing First–San Diego:

1.

[Hotel Churchill: Moving to Work federal funds](#)

Renovation is underway to transform the former Hotel Churchill into a permanent supportive housing development with 56 units for homeless veterans, eight units for youth aging out of the foster-care system (transitional-age youth) and eight for other adults who need supportive services.

SDHC has committed 72 federal housing vouchers to provide rental assistance to tenants at The Churchill, as it will be called when the \$17 million renovation is complete.

Social services and case management will be on-site, provided for veterans through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

SDHC and its nonprofit affiliate, Housing Development Partners (HDP), are collaborating to preserve this affordable housing.

More than \$8.2 million toward The Churchill project came from the federal Moving to Work rental assistance program. SDHC is one of only 39 public housing authorities in the nation, out of 3,400, to receive Moving to Work status from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a Moving to Work agency, SDHC designs innovative, cost-effective ways of providing housing assistance to low-income families, using a combination of federal

funding allocated to SDHC for public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) rental assistance.

The County of San Diego, through Mental Health Services Act funding, provided \$1.8 million, and Civic San Diego provided \$3 million. An additional \$2.9 million in federal funds come from the federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program grants to the City of San Diego, administered by SDHC. In addition, \$900,000 from the City of San Diego Housing Trust Fund has been committed to the rehabilitation project.

2.

Up to \$30 million to Create Permanent Supportive Housing

Over the next three years, SDHC will make available up to \$30 million in local and federal funds to create Permanent Supportive rental housing units, including units converted from transitional housing. Each supportive unit must remain affordable for at least 55 years.

The first \$10 million of these funds is now available. The application process begins today and will remain open through June 2015. Additional funding cycles will begin November 12, 2015, and November 12, 2016.

Developers are encouraged to include these permanent supportive housing units within developments that create housing for people at a variety of income levels. Proposals must be for 25 units or more, with at least one-quarter of the units dedicated to permanent supportive housing.

Funding is coming from a commitment of federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program grants to the City of San Diego, administered by SDHC, a \$1 million award from the California Local Housing Trust Fund announced just last week, and the city's Affordable Housing Fund.

These funds will be used to offset total development costs in combination with additional sources of funding such as Multifamily Housing Revenue Bonds, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, state Mental Health Act funds and loans from commercial banks. Funders Together to End Homelessness contributed \$240,000 that will be used toward the development's operational expenses.

Foundations and philanthropists are invited to contribute toward each year's funding.

3.

1,500 Federal Rental Assistance Vouchers

SDHC will continue to apply the power of its federal resources by committing a total of 1,500 federal rental assistance vouchers over the next three years to provide rental assistance for homeless individuals and families.

As a Moving to Work agency, SDHC on July 1, 2010, became one of the first public housing agencies in the nation to receive approval from HUD to use federal rental assistance vouchers to provide long-term housing for chronically homeless individuals.

These 1,500 additional federal rental assistance vouchers will begin to go to work early next year and have an estimated annual value of \$15 million. They allow low-income tenants to pay a portion of their income (if any) toward rent, with federal funds paying the remainder of the rent amount.

Some 275 of these federal rental assistance vouchers already are committed to Hotel Churchill and three other major downtown affordable housing developments that will be completed over the next two years: Celadon at Ninth and Broadway, Alpha Square and Atmosphere.

4.

Invest \$15 million in additional Moving to Work funds

SDHC will take advantage of its Moving to Work designation from HUD to invest up to \$15 million for additional housing for low-income San Diegans.

This funding is expected to support acquisition of an existing property of more than 100 units in a partnership with Housing Development Partners. Twenty percent of this property then will be designated as permanent supportive housing for homeless San Diegans.

The Moving to Work designation allows SDHC to design innovative, cost-effective ways of providing housing assistance to low-income families, using a combination of federal funding allocated to SDHC for public housing and Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance.

5.

SDHC Housing Units Dedicated to Homeless San Diegans

SDHC will set aside 25 of its own affordable rental units to temporarily provide homes for homeless individuals and families.

These furnished units, located throughout the City of San Diego, will be set aside, beginning January 1, 2015. SDHC will be one of the first public housing agencies in the nation to commit affordable rental housing that it owns.

This is a continuing commitment of 25 units year-round, valued at close to \$350,000.

These units will have basic furnishings such as beds, a dining table and chairs. SDHC is seeking financial contributions to offset these costs and other related household items. Contact SDHC at HousingFirstSanDiego@sdhc.org

Prospective tenants will be identified in referrals from the new Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement system being utilized by all homeless service providers in Downtown San Diego. Homeless services providers now have the ability to instantly share information to screen homeless individuals, track background information and direct them to the most appropriate housing options.

Housing First–San Diego is part of SDHC’s agency-wide, two-year Strategic Plan, approved by the SDHC Board of Commissioners on January 17, 2014.

For more information about SDHC programs, visit www.sdhc.org

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