



INFORMATIONAL REPORT

DATE ISSUED: February 25, 2021

REPORT NO: HCR21-028

ATTENTION: Chair and Members of the San Diego Housing Commission
For the Agenda of March 5, 2021

SUBJECT: January 2021 Reporting Update for the City of San Diego's Bridge Shelter Programs

NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE HOUSING COMMISSION

The San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission) Board of Commissioners' approval (Report No. HCR17-079) and corresponding approvals by the Housing Authority of the City of San Diego (Housing Authority) and San Diego City Council (Report No. HAR17-029) require the Housing Commission to report monthly data of the City of San Diego's Bridge Shelter Programs in an Informational Report at regularly scheduled Housing Commission Board meetings.

BACKGROUND

The Housing Commission administers the agreements for the City of San Diego's (City) Homeless Shelters and Services Programs based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Housing Commission and the City that first took effect on July 1, 2010. The Housing Commission and City entered into a separate MOU for the Bridge Shelter Programs, which was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners on November 3, 2017, as well as the Housing Authority and San Diego City Council (City Council) on November 14, 2017.

As part of the November 2017 approvals, the Housing Commission, City Council and Housing Authority re-allocated up to \$6,530,112 in funding previously allotted to HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO, the Housing Commission's homelessness action plan, to support the City's Bridge Shelters. This approval supported the oversight and management of the Bridge Shelters, operated at three sites within the City, with the goals to address homelessness in the City and combat the regional Hepatitis A outbreak at the time. The Bridge Shelters offer a centralized location and safe place for men, women and children experiencing homelessness to receive temporary housing and appropriate services needed to expedite placement into permanent housing.

A renewal of the MOU between the City and the Housing Commission through June 30, 2019, was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners on May 4, 2018, and by the Housing Authority and City Council on May 22, 2018. A renewal of the MOU between the City and the Housing Commission through June 30, 2020, was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners on May 3, 2019, and the Housing Authority and City Council on June 11, 2019.

The Housing Commission exercised the first option to renew operating agreements with Alpha Project for the Homeless (Alpha Project), Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD), and Father Joe's Villages

(FJV), for the City's three Bridge Shelters, for a three-month term, from July 1, 2018, through September 30, 2018, in accordance with approvals granted by the Housing Authority and City Council on May 22, 2018 (Housing Authority Resolution Number HA-1781). The Housing Commission, City Council, and Housing Authority allocated \$2,500,000 for the costs of the extended terms of the Bridge Shelter Program agreements, to be funded from Housing Commission property reserves.

The Housing Commission exercised the second option to renew operating agreements with Alpha Project, VVSD and FJV for the Bridge Shelters for a nine-month term, from October 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, in accordance with approvals granted by the Housing Authority on September 18, 2018 (Housing Authority Resolution Number HA-1789). The Housing Commission and Housing Authority allocated \$8,482,756 for the costs of the extended terms of the Bridge Shelter Program agreements, to be funded from Housing Commission property reserves. In addition, a third-party evaluator's recommendations to enhance the availability of housing-focused services were incorporated into the nine-month operating agreements approved by the Housing Authority.

On March 19, 2019, the Housing Authority approved an amendment to the second option of the operator agreement with FJV to incorporate the new interim site location, at the San Diego Concourse and parts of Golden Hall, as well as approving an amendment to the MOU between the City of San Diego and the Housing Commission to update the roles and responsibilities related to the interim site location.

On May 3, 2019, and June 11, 2019, respectively, the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners and the Housing Authority authorized the award and execution of operating agreements with Alpha Project, VVSD and FJV for the City of San Diego's Bridge Shelters for a 12-month term, from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020 (Housing Authority Resolution No. HA-1817). The Housing Commission Board of Commissioners and the Housing Authority authorized the expenditure of up to \$11,607,303 for the operations of the Bridge Shelters. Housing Commission property reserves were allocated to fund all three Bridge Shelters, and the Housing Commission's federal Moving to Work (MTW) funds were allocated to fund the Bridge Shelters operated by Alpha Project and VVSD. In addition, on June 11, 2019, the Housing Authority voted to continue operations of the Bridge Shelter operated by FJV at the San Diego Concourse and parts of Golden Hall and to delete from the operating agreement any references to moving this Bridge Shelter to a location at 17th Street and Imperial Avenue.

On October 15, 2019, the Housing Authority approved an amendment to the MOU between the City and the Housing Commission and authorized the award and execution of an operating agreement with Alpha Project for the City of San Diego Bridge Shelter located at 1710 Imperial Avenue for a term of eight and a half months, from October 15, 2019, through June 30, 2020, with two one-year options to renew (Housing Authority Resolution No. HA-1835). The Housing Authority authorized the expenditure of up to \$2,395,863.38 for the operations of the Bridge Shelter from City Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) funds and City Low Income Lease Revenue funds.

On December 10, 2019, the Housing Authority approved an amendment to the MOU between the City and the Housing Commission and authorized an amendment to the agreement between FJV and the Housing Commission to expand the City of San Diego Bridge Shelter program located at Golden Hall (Housing Authority Resolution No. HA-1838). The expansion provided for additional beds for families with children and beds designated for transitional-aged youth (TAY). The Housing Authority authorized the expenditure of up to \$4,176,155.85 for the ongoing operation of the Bridge Shelter from City HEAP

funds, City Low Income Lease Revenue funds, City General Funds, and Housing Commission property reserves.

On June 16, 2020, the City Council approved an MOU with the Housing Commission regarding the administration of Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program funding (R-313113). A portion of HHAP funds are allocated to fund the operation of the City's Bridge Shelter Program. The Housing Authority also approved Resolution HA-1859, authorizing execution of agreements with Alpha Project, FJV and VVSD to operate the City's Bridge Shelters during Fiscal Year 2021. Additionally, the City Council approved Resolution R-313111, authorizing execution of an MOU with the Housing Commission for a one-year term, with two one-year option to renew, to operate the City's Bridge Shelter Program and Resolution R-313112 to remove references to the provision of Transitional Storage Center Services and bifurcate the MOUs.

On September 18, 2020, the Housing Authority approved an amendment to the operating agreement with FJV for the operation of the City of San Diego's Bridge Shelter for Families, Single Women and Transitional-Aged Youth (TAY) at Golden Hall, with expanded capacity to serve 280 additional Single Adults. This item was approved by the Housing Authority on October 6, 2020.

As part of former Mayor Faulconer's effort to increase the opportunity for shelter bed resources outside of the City of San Diego, the Sprung Structure that was located at the initial VVSD Bridge Shelter site was transferred by mutual agreement to the City of Chula Vista. For that reason and due to the reduced number of veterans utilizing the VVSD shelter site at the San Diego Convention Center as part of Operation Shelter to Home, which is described in greater detail on the following pages, (due to increased utilization of both Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing [VASH] vouchers and Supportive Services for Veterans Families [SSVF] programs), as of November 30, 2020, the VVSD Bridge Shelter program located at the Convention Center ceased operations. As part of Operation Shelter to Home, VVSD served 485 clients, of which 183 moved into permanent or longer-term housing, and many others accessed interim housing through the SSVF program. Prior to the November 30, 2020, closure date, shelter and Housing Commission staff ensured that the few remaining residents were transitioned into alternate Operation Shelter to Home programs, and the Housing Navigation Team continues to support their path to permanent housing.

On January 26, 2021, the City Council appropriated an additional \$5,560,358 in Homeless Emergency Aid Program and Community Development Block Grant funds to support the extension of Operation Shelter to Home through March 31, 2021. In addition, the City Council, in its role as the Housing Authority, authorized the Housing Commission to expend \$2,000,000 in federal Moving to Work funds to fund the operator agreements the three Bridge Shelters. These MTW funds partially replace HHAP funds previously allocated to fund the Bridge Shelter operations, thereby making those HHAP funds available to the City of San Diego to support the continuation of Operation Shelter to Home at the Convention Center.

MONTHLY REPORTING – JANUARY 2021

On April 1, 2020, the City of San Diego, in collaboration with the County of San Diego, the Housing Commission, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH), and the San Diego Convention Center, launched Operation Shelter to Home (OSTH). The program temporarily repurposes parts of the San Diego Convention Center as a shelter for single adults experiencing homelessness in the City.

The initial phase of the program moved single adults from the City's Bridge Shelters and Interim Housing Programs into the Convention Center to allow for proper physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, 53 families, consisting of 151 individuals, moved from Golden Hall to motel rooms funded by the RTFH and County of San Diego to facilitate appropriate physical distancing.

OSTH is part of a new, system-wide, coordinated plan to assist sheltered and unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness to remain healthy during the global pandemic, and supports a regional approach to address homelessness during this state of emergency. The program centralized shelter staff from the City's Bridge Shelter Programs, which were experiencing staffing shortages in March 2020 due to the pandemic, into one location to ensure client services were maintained even with interim reductions in staffing levels. OSTH continues to offer clients the same services they received at the Bridge Shelters, including 24-hour security, meals, showers, restrooms, laundry services, case management and housing navigation. OSTH has also provided an opportunity to integrate County of San Diego public health nurses, behavioral health services and primary care services into the shelter setting. Supportive services offered through various organizations are also available throughout the shelter, providing an integrated service-rich environment to support shelter clients during the public health crisis.

Clients moved into the Convention Center in a phased approach to ensure needs and resources were scaled appropriately.

- As of January 31, 2021, the Convention Center has sheltered 3,854 individuals:
 - 765 unduplicated individuals were transferred from City Bridge Shelter Programs and Interim Housing Programs to the Convention Center (20 percent of all individuals served); and
 - 3,089 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the City entered the program through coordinated outreach efforts (80 percent of all individuals served).¹

Between April 1, 2020, and April 8, 2020, 765 single adults from the four Bridge Shelter Programs, as well as a portion of the residents from the City of San Diego Interim Housing Programs, were relocated to the Convention Center to accommodate social distancing and enhance measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

¹ Individuals may have more than one enrollment into the Convention Center, but are counted once here to reflect the number of unduplicated individuals served.

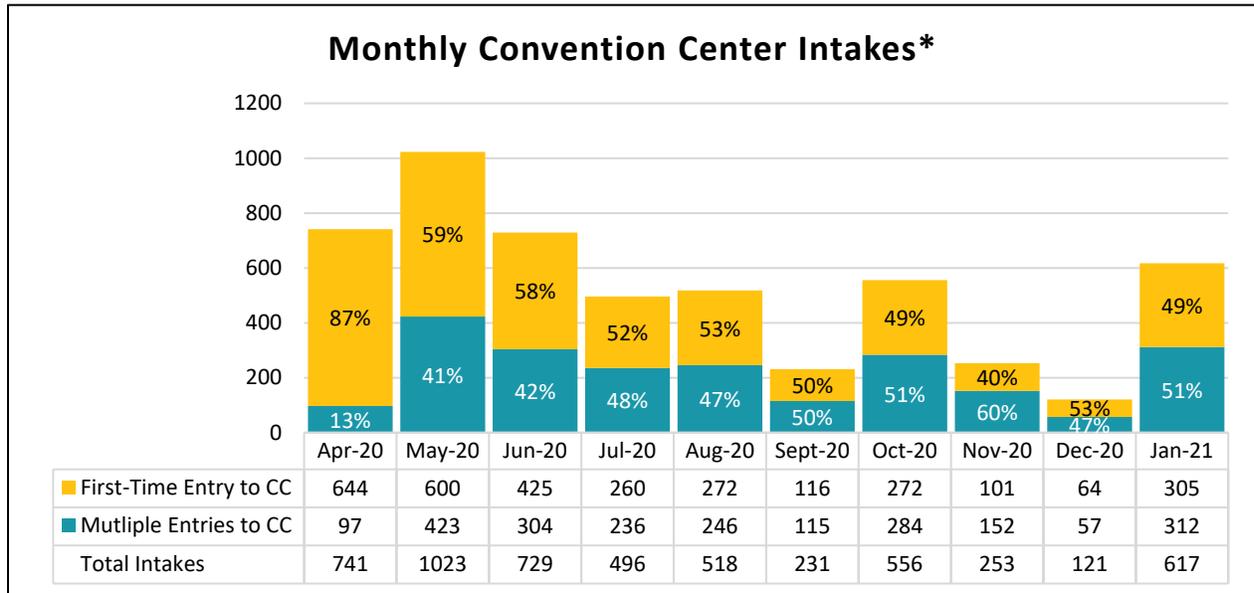
Table One: Phase One – Relocation of Shelter Clients

SHELTER RELOCATION DATA	RELOCATED INDIVIDUALS
April 1, 2020: Newton Single Adult Shelter & Imperial Single Adult Shelter* (Alpha Project)	374
April 5, 2020: Veterans Shelter (VVSD)	154
April 7, 2020: City of San Diego Interim Housing Program (FJV) and Families, Single Women, & TAY Shelter (FJV)	62
April 8, 2020: City of San Diego Interim Housing Program (FJV)	175
Total Intakes - Phase 1	765

*Included individuals being served by SDPD’s Direct Placement Diversion Program (DPDP); the program has been suspended during Osth.

The second phase began on April 10, 2020, when outreach teams began to bring single adults experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the City to the Convention Center. Beginning April 15, 2020, all intakes to Osth were conducted through a centralized intake unit to facilitate a streamlined intake process for clients. The intake process includes COVID-19 symptom screening and additional general health and wellness screenings by County of San Diego public health nurses. Depending on the outcome of the screenings, once screenings are completed, the client is accompanied to their assigned shelter location, which is determined based on client preference and bed availability. During the health screening process, the public health nurses may determine that the client needs to be transferred to a county hotel for isolation, or that the client would be better served at one of the City’s Interim Housing Program due to mobility issues or having high-risk factors for COVID-19 due to age or an underlying health condition. The intake unit then facilitates placement of the client at the Interim Housing Program if the client chooses to go.

Chart One: Phase Two – Monthly Convention Center Intakes



*Note that the numbers presented in the above chart represent intakes, not individuals; one individual may be represented more than once if the person had more than one entry into the Convention Center.

Intakes

In January, the rate of positive COVID-19 cases from mass client and staff testing returned to levels at or below those of the general public. As a result, limited intake activities continued to be conducted on dates on which COVID-19 tests were being offered. This scaled approach positioned operations to safely facilitate placements, while closely monitoring positive case rates. As positive rates continued to decline, and under guidance from on-site County Public Health Officials, normal intake activities resumed on January 11, 2021.

The Housing Commission continues to monitor the shelter population and staffing capacity daily, using that information to make available as many beds as possible to serve individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Housing Exits

Acknowledging the pressures on shelter providers to maintain basic services and support higher numbers of residents in a new environment, the Housing Commission in collaboration with the RTFH, implemented a Housing Navigation Team (HNT) on-site at the Convention Center, led by the Housing Commission’s Homeless Housing Innovations Division staff in cooperation with City and community organizations. The HNT is also providing housing navigation services to households at the City’s Interim Housing Program operated by FJV, Connections Interim Housing Program operated by People Assisting the Homeless (PATH), and families formerly located at Golden Hall who are now residing in hotel/motel rooms and receiving case management services from FJV.

The HNT is focused on identifying the most appropriate housing solution for shelter clients by facilitating daily case-conferencing sessions with shelter case managers, housing resource providers, and community organizations. The HNT is working closely with RTFH to identify resources available through the Coordinated Entry System (CES), such as Rapid Rehousing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). The HNT is also working closely with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to identify appropriate resources for veterans, such as VASH vouchers and SSVF, and is assisting clients in completing applications. Additionally, the HNT is working with the County of San Diego to appropriately identify clients who may be eligible for Project One for All (POFA), a program providing housing and wraparound services to individuals with serious mental illness who are experiencing homelessness. The team is also assisting eligible POFA clients with voucher applications. Additionally, with the valuable support of City librarians, the HNT has provided income development services for clients at Convention Center computer labs. As of January 31, 2021, OSTH has transitioned 1,212 single adults into permanent or other longer-term housing. Of the 1,212 single adults, through January, 256 moved into permanent housing with supportive services operated by PATH and FJV at hotel properties acquired by the Housing Commission. These properties provide participants an apartment to live in and access to an array of supportive services that can help sustain housing stability. The remaining newly acquired units at these properties are anticipated to be occupied in February 2021.

Permanent and other long-term housing includes the following housing intervention types:

- Rental with Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Subsidy, including VASH (veteran resource), POFA Project-Based PSH, and Sponsor-Based PSH
- Rental with Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Subsidy, including SSVF (veteran resource)
- Rental with Other Subsidy, including Grant Per Diem (GPD) Transition In Place (TIP) (Veteran resource), Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, or any other non-PSH or non-RRH housing subsidy
- Rental with No Subsidy
- Living with Friends/Family
- Other Long-Term Housing interventions, including transitional housing, safe haven, host homes, foster care, substance abuse treatment facility, or long-term care facility (nursing home)

Table Two: OSTH Permanent and Other Long-Term Housing Placements through January 31, 2021

Permanent or Other Long-Term Housing Destination	Single Adults	Families
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	653	1
Rental – Rapid Rehousing (RRH)	155	24
Rental – Other Subsidy	85	2
Rental – No Subsidy	67	0
Family/Friends	150	7
Other Long-Term Housing	102	9
TOTAL	1,212	43

On January 31, 2021, 1,062 single adults remained in shelter with OSTH, receiving services and housing navigation support—932 single adults were sheltered at the Convention Center and 130 single adults were sheltered at a City-funded Interim Shelter. Of those 932 individuals, 209 individuals (22 percent) were connected to a housing resource.

Table Three: Sheltered Single Adults Connected to Permanent Housing Resources on January 31, 2021

Permanent Housing Resource	Single Adults Enrolled in a Housing Resource	Single Adults with a Referral to a Housing Resource	Total # of Resource-Connected Single Adults
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	58	67	125
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	36	48	84
TOTAL	94	115	209

Table Four: Expense Actuals Compared to Budget – July 1, 2020 – November 30, 2020

SHELTER	December OPERATING	*ACTUALS THROUGH 12/30/2020	BUDGET THROUGH 12/30/2020	UNDER/ OVER SPENT
Newton Single Adult (Alpha Project)	\$331,316	\$1,993,353	\$3,201,857	\$(1,208,504)
Veterans (VVSD)	\$60,362	\$1,233,432	\$1,955,443	\$(722,011)
Families, Single Women & TAY (FJV)	\$284,237	\$1,436,722	\$2,373,544	\$(936,822)
Imperial Single Adult (Alpha Project)	\$174,735	\$1,112,508	\$1,405,664	\$(293,156)
TOTALS	\$850,650	\$5,776,015	\$8,936,508	\$(3,106,493)
* Actuals do not include some outstanding Fiscal Year 2020 invoices for facilities contracts related to restrooms and showers				

Fiscal Considerations

Across all four Bridge Shelters, the operational expenses incurred from July 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, were \$5,776,015, which is \$3,106,493 less than the allocated budget for this time period. This is predominantly a result of client meal expenses being paid through other funding sources while clients are temporarily located at the Convention Center, as well as personnel costs that were lower than budgeted. As of the final December 31, fiscal reporting period, there were 29 total budgeted positions for case managers, supervising case managers and housing specialists across the Bridge Shelter programs (not including the downstairs Golden Hall Expansion, which will come online when the shelter programs exit the Convention Center), and of those 29 positions, 17 were filled. Recruitment of case managers and supervising case managers continues to be a challenge for the operators. This challenge is due to a combination of factors: potentially a lack of workforce skilled in higher-level case management and supervision classifications, such as Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and of those trained in the field, the unique environment of the shelter sites sometimes does not appeal to everyone. A successful candidate needs to be technically qualified with the right credentials, but also mission-driven and willing to work in unique worksite locations, and availability of skilled staff during the pressures of the pandemic may be a further contributing factor.

OUTREACH ACTIVITY

In April 2020, Bridge Shelter Outreach teams assisted in facilitating relocation of clients from the Bridge Shelters to the Convention Center during the first phase of OSTH. During the second phase of OSTH, Outreach teams have been engaging individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness to offer shelter at the Convention Center or assist in identifying other more appropriate shelter or housing options. The Bridge Shelter Outreach teams collaborate with the San Diego Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) to participate in coordinated outreach events in targeted areas as staffing capacity and resources permit. Outreach activities continue to focus on engaging individuals on the community By Name List and connected to a housing resource. Coordinated outreach efforts facilitated 617 OSTH intakes in January 2021.

COVID-19 MITIGATION RESPONSES

Beginning in early March 2020, the Housing Commission began sending regular updates to homeless shelters and services providers on ongoing activities of the RTFH, the Housing Commission, City of San Diego and County of San Diego to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among homeless shelters and services programs and unsheltered populations. This includes providing updated guidance as it is released from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the County of San Diego related to serving persons experiencing homelessness.

Housing Commission staff began tracking stock levels of critical cleaning supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all City of San Diego homeless shelters and services programs that the Housing Commission administers and began assisting with procuring needed cleaning and PPE supplies to ensure providers could effectively clean and sanitize program spaces in alignment with guidance from the CDC and County of San Diego.

In addition, the City of San Diego print shop started creating bundles of posters and flyers for providers for posting through facilities and delivered material on an ongoing basis to providers as needed.

Communication trees were also reinforced between providers, the Housing Commission, the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego, RTFH, and shelter leadership to ensure redundancy is in place at leadership and program management levels (as the Housing Commission carried out internally) in regard to communication and knowledge sharing, in case leadership workforce reduction occurred.

The City of San Diego, RTFH and Housing Commission staff continue to assistance to service providers during this time to support alignment with County Public Health and CDC guidance to protect the health and safety of staff and clients.

Respectfully submitted,



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San Diego Housing Commission

Approved by,



Jeff Davis
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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.