

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Leadership Council for the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness

From: Implementation Team

Date: March 18, 2021

Subject: Summary of Activity for the Meeting of February 19, 2021

The meeting of the Leadership Council for the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness (Action Plan) was held on February 19, 2021 via teleconference.

This memorandum summarizes the discussion that occurred, questions raised, and actions taken.

The members of the Leadership Council are identified in the table below.

All members were in attendance.

City of San Diego	Mayor	Mayor Todd Gloria
San Diego City Council	Council President	Council President Jennifer Campbell
County of San Diego	Chair, County Board of Supervisors	Supervisor Nathan Fletcher
San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)	President and Chief Executive Officer	Richard C. Gentry
Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH)	Chief Executive Officer	Tamera Kohler
Philanthropic Organization	Lucky Duck Foundation	Peter Seidler
Individual with Lived Experience	Voices of Our City Choir	John Brady
Business Representative	SDG&E	Mitch Mitchell

The members of the Interagency Implementation Team are identified in the table below.

All members were in attendance.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)	Executive Vice President of Strategic Initiatives	Lisa Jones
City of San Diego	Chief of Homelessness Strategies & Housing Liaison	Keely Halsey
Regional Task Force on the Homeless (RTFH)	Chief Executive Officer	Tamera Kohler

The agenda included the following main topics:

- Remarks on First-Year Activities
- Discussion and Direction

This was the first meeting with Mayor Todd Gloria and Council President Jennifer Campbell, who are new members of the Leadership Council. New Policy Liaisons to the Implementation Team were also

introduced. Sarah Dawe, Policy Advisor for Supervisor Fletcher, will participate in a policy liaison role, and Molly Chase, Senior Director of Policy for SDHC, will participate on an ad hoc basis as appropriate.

Two guests were asked by the Leadership Council to join the meeting held on the 19th; Ann Oliva, Visiting Senior Fellow from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and chief author of the Action Plan, and Matthew Doherty, Special Consultant to Mayor Gloria.

Remarks on First-Year Activities

Ann Oliva reviewed information on activities conducted during calendar year 2020 to implement the goals outlined in the Action Plan, and shared remarks and insight on the City's progress. Specific activities were mentioned that were prioritized in the Action Plan but for which action may not have occurred in the past year. The reviewed activities are noted in the text below. These items were discussed with the context and understanding that the City's priorities shifted to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic which affected the San Diego region throughout calendar year 2020.

Several items were also highlighted for the Leadership Council's consideration. The pandemic's impact on employment is currently being reviewed at a national level, especially as a resource for youth. A difficult labor market for youth as the economy recovers from the pandemic may affect progress toward ending youth homelessness. The experience with Operation Shelter to Home also identified that the City of San Diego appears to be seeing a significant percentage of people experiencing homelessness with high needs. The City needs to continue to consider the level of resources and supportive services required to sufficiently meet this need. It was also recommended that the Leadership Council and Implementation Team revisit and analyze system data to potentially revise targets in a post-pandemic environment, as changes may have occurred that Action Plan assessments and projections in 2019 did not encompass.

1. Implement a Systems-Level Approach to Homelessness Planning

Remarks: The regular, ongoing participation of the Leadership Council and Implementation Team working collaboratively toward the Action Plan's goals reflects progress in implementing a systems-level approach to homelessness planning. . This level of formal collaboration between these key agencies did not exist before the Action Plan. Action also has occurred at a systems level around coordinated outreach and coordinated entry that improves the system and encourages the City's homeless crisis response system to *operate as a system*.

Remarks also noted prioritized areas that still need to be implemented include strategic communications of progress toward the Action Plan goals and joint budgeting and fundraising to support the activities outlined in the Action Plan. It was noted, that as the Implementation Team always looks to prioritize available funding towards services and programs, the Team determined that the best approach to strategic communications is to utilize the existing communications expertise at the main agencies to draft a communication strategy and implement a working group.

The Implementation Team communicated during the meeting that this was a key focus that had been identified for 2021, and a strategic communications plan was currently being developed by a working group created in January, consisting of members from the Mayor's Office, RTFH, and SDHC.

2. Create a Client-Centered Homeless Assistance System

Remarks: Work and emphasis has occurred around equity, which supports creating a client-centered homeless assistance system. The RTFH's Ad Hoc Committee on Addressing Homelessness Among Black San Diegans demonstrates this. The Ad Hoc Committee's purpose is to explore the factors contributing to disparities among Black persons experiencing homelessness, engage in dialogue with community stakeholders, and develop a series of recommendations to better address the impacts of systemic racism and its effects within the homeless crisis response system.

Areas that still need ongoing focus were noted around enforcement and engagement between police and people experiencing homelessness, and institutionalizing ways to partner with people with lived expertise.

Brief discussion ensued about the engagement with the HEAL network and other advocacy groups of persons with lived experience, the pending client-survey product and the Neighborhood-Based Coordinated Outreach program and regional Outreach Standards.

3. Decrease Inflow Through Increase of Prevention and Diversion

Remarks: The City of San Diego implemented a COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance program in calendar year 2020 to assist households who were negatively impacted by COVID-19. This was a significant activity implemented to prevent housing displacement and inflow into homelessness. Significant improvements have been made in implementing a flexible funding pool to provide targeted assistance, and a diversion screening tool was created to better serve clients newly experiencing homelessness. All of these activities made a positive impact in decreasing inflow into homelessness.

Strategizing how to collaborate across mainstream systems, such as the child welfare system, to prevent inflow into homelessness is an area that still needs focus.

4. Improve Performance of the Existing System

Remarks: Significant improvements were made to the coordinated entry system last year, which greatly improve system performance. Operation Shelter to Home's success in moving persons from unsheltered to housed, as well as improvements in the utilization of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VAISH) vouchers, also advanced improvements in system performance. Further accomplishment under this strategy is the implementation of the coordinated outreach program, which reflects the policy to reduce the burden on police to be among the top providers of outreach and shifting that responsibility to a greater force of service provider outreach workers.

The Implementation Team briefly spoke about how the improvements and practices piloted through Operation Shelter to Home would transition to the City's and SDHC's new Homelessness Response Center and Bridge Shelters, including client-centered practices such as centralized shelter intake and system navigation activities.

Necessary work remains to be done regarding integration with the County on services.

Discussion from the County included the County creating a dedicated office of homelessness solutions to improve the level of coordination and integration between the City and the County and to be engaged in a more substantive way. The County is also committed to continuing the work around behavioral health, care coordination, and permanent supportive housing.

5. Increase the Production of/Access to Permanent Solutions

The hotel acquisition project utilized available funding to bring 332 additional Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units online quickly to increase production of and access to permanent solutions. The targeted outreach and Call to Action to landlords last year was a good effort, and should be revisited again this year to continue to work towards the Action Plan's goals.

Necessary work remains to be done regarding development and understanding of the pipeline over the next 10 years and a coordinated effort on funding to meet the development goals.

The Implementation Team is currently developing a pipeline report that may be used for conversations on development and funding goals. This reporting data will also be included in the next phase of the Community Action Plan dashboard, the current version of which is available on SDHC's website.

Discussion

Strategic Communication

The Implementation Team reported that a strategic communication plan is currently being developed by a working group consisting of members from, Mayor's Office, RTFH, and SDHC. The communications plan will propose a strategic communications effort demonstrating the commitment of the Leadership Council and Implementation Team to strong, transparent communication to the public and community stakeholders about the successes, challenges, and progress toward the Action Plan's goals. The Action Plan dashboards will also support this effort. The updated dashboards are anticipated to go live toward the end of March and will include additional metrics for reporting on system performance and progress toward the three-year goals, as well as enhancements on the overall design and usability of the dashboard.

The Leadership Council emphasized the importance of strategic messaging to ensure that progress on the Action Plan's goals, as well as challenges/barriers to progress, are conveyed effectively and accurately to the community.

Regional Plan on Homelessness

The Leadership Council discussed the importance of developing a Regional Action Plan on Homelessness and how the City's Action Plan could be used as the basis to develop a regional plan. During the development of the City's Action Plan, a regional level analysis was conducted to understand the level of need and available resources, with the understanding that the City has the largest concentration of persons experiencing homelessness. The extensive engagement that took place during the development of the Action Plan also included service providers/stakeholders from the County to obtain a holistic understanding of the homeless crisis response system in the San Diego region. A similar process of assessment, input gathering and development of needed actions to support near-term and longer-term goals should be followed to develop the regional plan to achieve consistency across both Action Plans in methodology, language and overall approach.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will occur in mid-to-late April 2021, depending on most members' availability.