



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### HOUSING COMMISSION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET

MEETING DATE: September 9, 2021

HCR21-090

SUBJECT: Approval of the Contract between the San Diego Housing Commission and Alpha Project for the Homeless to operate the City of San Diego Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): Citywide

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Homeless Housing Innovations Division

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

#### REQUESTED ACTION:

Approve an operating agreement with Alpha Project for the Homeless in the amount of \$1,717,332 for a nine-month term from October 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, with a one-year option for renewal, for the operation of the City of San Diego Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program located at 3220 Sports Arena Blvd., San Diego, 92110.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF KEY FACTORS:

- The San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission) administers the contracts for the City of San Diego's (City) Homeless Shelters and Services Programs.
- On April 19, 2021, Mayor Todd Gloria announced a proposed investment of more than \$10 million in America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to create additional crisis response and investments in shelter and longer-term housing options to address unsheltered homelessness.
- The City Council approved the City budget, including this proposed investment, in June 2021.
- This investment included approximately \$7.5 million to support development and expansion of harm reduction strategies for persons with substance abuse challenges and to implement additional shelter beds for high-need populations, including persons experiencing Substance Use Disorder and co-occurring conditions.
- The proposed actions referenced in this report will allow the Housing Commission to enter into an Agreement with Alpha Project to provide for the operation of the Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program at 3220 Sports Arena Blvd., San Diego, 92110, for the initial operating term of October 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.
- In conjunction with the County of San Diego's Behavioral Health Services, the Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program will provide safe, low-barrier shelter, as well as specialized stabilization and supportive services for adults age 18 or older experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the City of San Diego who are also experiencing co-occurring substance use and mental health conditions, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with a maximum capacity of 50 persons at given time.



## REPORT

**DATE ISSUED:** September 2, 2021

**REPORT NO:** HCR21-090

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

**SUBJECT:** Approval of the Contract between the San Diego Housing Commission and Alpha Project for the Homeless to operate the City of San Diego Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** Citywide

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

*Seven-day advance notice of San Diego Housing Commission hearing of the following matter has been provided to the Housing Authority Members pursuant to the provisions of San Diego Municipal Code Section 98.0301(e)(4)(a)(b).*

Approve an operating agreement with Alpha Project for the Homeless in the amount of \$1,717,332 for a nine-month term from October 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, with a one-year option for renewal, for the operation of the City of San Diego Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program located at 3220 Sports Arena Blvd., San Diego, 92110.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission) Board of Commissioners (Board) take the following actions:

- 1) Authorize the Housing Commission to enter into an agreement with Alpha Project for the Homeless in the amount of \$1,635,555 for an initial nine-month term of October 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, with a one-year option for renewal, contingent on funding being made available for that purpose through the City of San Diego's Fiscal Year 2023 budgeting process, to provide interim shelter and supportive services at the City of San Diego's Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program at 3220 Sports Arena Blvd., San Diego, 92110, for persons experiencing homelessness. Funding will consist of \$1,717,332 in City General Funds for the initial operating term, which includes \$81,778 for Housing Commission administration;
- 2) Authorize the Housing Commission's President & Chief Executive Officer (President & CEO), or designee, to execute all documents and instruments that are 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;
- 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

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for the proposed agreement, if necessary, without further action by the Housing Commission Board or the Housing Authority, but only if and to the extent that funds are determined to be available for such purposes.

## **SUMMARY**

The Housing Commission administers the contracts 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. An MOU between the City and the Housing Commission for the continued provision of Homeless Shelters and Service Programs effective July 1, 2015, with options through June 30, 2019, was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners and by the Housing Authority and City Council. A third MOU between the City and the Housing Commission for the provision of Homeless Shelters and Service Programs, including the City's Interim Shelter Program, effective July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2024, (including options) was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners on May 3, 2019, and the Housing Authority on June 25, 2019 (Resolution No. HA-1821).

The proposed actions referenced in this report will allow the Housing Commission to enter into an Agreement with Alpha Project for the Homeless (Alpha Project) in amounts referenced within this report to provide for the operation of the Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program located at 3220 Sports Arena Blvd., San Diego, 92110, for the initial operating term of October 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.

On April 19, 2021, Mayor Todd Gloria announced a proposed investment of more than \$10 million in America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to create additional crisis response and investments in shelter and longer-term housing options to address unsheltered homelessness. The City Council approved the City budget, including this proposed investment, in June 2021. This investment included funding of approximately \$7.5 million to support development and expansion of harm reduction strategies for persons with substance abuse challenges and to implement additional shelter beds for high-need populations, including persons experiencing Substance Use Disorder and co-occurring conditions.

In support of this investment, the Leadership Council for the City's Community Action Plan on Homelessness tasked a multiagency working group to develop a strategy for the City, County and other agencies to work together to strengthen and implement harm reduction programming for persons experiencing homelessness who have Substance Use Disorder in the City of San Diego. This working group included staff from the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, Housing Commission and the Regional Task Force on Homelessness.

The model developed in partnership with the County's Fiscal Year 2022 investments and emerging focus around harm reduction pairs outreach and engagement with care-coordination services and low-barrier access to shelter, safe haven and housing with the goal of improving client wellness and stability, and transitioning them to housing that best meets their needs.

The Harm Reduction Interim Shelter will utilize Alpha Project as the shelter operator.

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### **Program Overview**

In conjunction with the County of San Diego's Behavioral Health Services, the Harm Reduction Interim Shelter Program will provide safe, low-barrier shelter, as well as specialized stabilization and supportive services for adults age 18 or older experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the City of San Diego who are also experiencing co-occurring substance use and mental health conditions, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with a maximum capacity of 50 persons at given time.

As part of the collaboration, the County of San Diego will provide a diverse portfolio of supportive services, utilizing practices aligned with harm reduction and trauma-informed principles, including but not limited to: case management, care coordination, peer support services, substance abuse treatment, medication-assisted treatment, mental health services and access to public benefits.

Alpha Project will manage day-to-day shelter operations, including the provision of residential services, on-site security, ancillary facilities and site management. Alpha Project will also provide housing navigation services aimed at reducing the amount of time a person experiences homelessness by providing the necessary supports to exit the client to permanent or longer-term housing. Alpha Project will also staff a Substance Use Disorder Specialist on-site to ensure that shelter operations follow a client-centered and harm reduction based approach. This staff member will work closely with the County case management team to ensure continuity of service.

### **Operator Experience**

Alpha Project has extensive experience operating shelter programs, permanent supportive housing projects and residential treatment programs for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The organization provides services for more than 4,000 men, women and children per day with assistance in breaking the cycle of homelessness through its various shelter, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing programs, and other supportive service programs.

Alpha Project operates Casa Raphael, a state-licensed and certified residential treatment program for men in recovery from substance abuse. The program offers an intensive 12-week environment in which residents participate in an evidence-based practice curriculum. The program provides housing, food, recovery workshops, case management, mental health counseling, access to healthcare, work, financial assistance, and other support services. The program is primarily supported by the County of San Diego, as well as private donations, including new and gently used clothing for men.

In addition to the more than 20 years of experience working directly with persons experiencing homelessness, Alpha Project has operated one or more of the City's Bridge Shelter Programs since the programs' inception in 2017, providing shelter and supportive services to successfully transition clients to both permanent and longer-term housing options.

### **Program Design**

Alpha Project, in coordination with the County of San Diego's Community Harm Reduction Team (C-HRT) program, will provide shelter and comprehensive housing navigation and basic needs support to adults experiencing homelessness, identified by the C-HRT as experiencing substance use and co-occurring conditions.

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*Program Components:*

- 1) Housing First program utilizing harm reduction principles and practices with low barriers to entry and operations;
- 2) Housing-focused program that aims to resolve clients' homelessness as quickly as possible while also meeting clients' basic needs;
- 3) Participation in intakes, screenings, assessments, and case conferencing or other integral components of the Coordinated Entry System (CES) as established by RTFH community standards and policies;
- 4) Access to housing navigation services, including but not limited to:
  - a. A formal intake and move-in process, as defined by Program policies and procedures;
  - b. Self-sufficiency needs assessment, as established by the Subrecipient based on best practices for the population served, or as established by RTFH community standards and policies;
  - c. Development of client housing plan, including stabilization strategies and client goals and objectives;
  - d. Coordination with and referrals to County, State, and Federal programs, as well as nonprofits and social service agencies, as appropriate;
  - e. Assistance in locating safe and affordable permanent or other longer-term housing for clients, including determining diversion opportunities or housing interventions outside of CES;
  - f. Assistance with housing applications and supportive and subsidized housing paperwork;
  - g. Advocacy for clients with prospective landlords;
- 5) Access to supportive services, including but not limited to:
  - a. Health, wellness and recovery activities;
  - b. Benefits assistance
  - c. Transportation Assistance;
  - d. Life Skills
- 6) Basic Services, including but not limited to:
  - a. Appropriate 24-hour residential services and staffing;
  - b. A maximum of 50 beds and other residential furnishings for single adults and couples experiencing homelessness;
  - c. Three meals per day;
  - d. Showers, wash stations, restrooms, laundry facilities and/or laundry services, and belongings storage for clients in environment that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);
  - e. Routine operating and client supplies, including but not limited to hygiene products, basic medical supplies, and cleaning supplies;
  - f. Telephone access and message services, including an ADA-compliant telephone;
  - g. Mail services;
  - h. Access to testing for communicable diseases provided directly by the City or County of San Diego.

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Funding Summary

<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>FY 2022*</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>
General Fund/ARPA	\$1,717,332	\$2,078,199
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,717,332</b>	<b>\$2,078,199</b>

\*Indicated amounts are pro-rated for the nine-month operating term in Fiscal Year 2022 and include startup costs.

**CONTRACTOR SELECTION PROCESS**

On May 11, 2021, the Housing Commission issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) seeking to increase the capacity of the existing shelter system within the City of San Diego, in particular to expand its ability to serve special populations such as those with substance use disorder, veteran status, single women, those in need of respite care, or other sub-populations, potentially in smaller scale that supports the unique needs of these populations.

The RFQ was posted and made available for download on the PlanetBids website through both the Housing Commission’s and the City of San Diego’s portals. More than 555 notifications were sent through the PlanetBids system. Sixteen bidders downloaded the solicitation from the Housing Commission’s portal, and 13 bidders downloaded the solicitation from the City of San Diego’s portal.

At the RFQ closing on May 31, 2021, qualifications were received from two respondents, Alpha Project and Father Joe’s Villages. A source selection committee evaluated, scored and ranked the responses based on the following criteria: Agency Profile, Capacity and Readiness, Service Delivery Model & Qualifications, and Equity & Inclusion. Both respondents were determined to be qualified, with Alpha Project being selected as providing the best overall value to the Housing Commission.

**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 shelter serves this purpose by providing interim shelter services and a pathway to housing to persons experiencing homelessness. Participants 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 has made available \$1,717,332 in City General Funds for operations in Fiscal Year 2022.

<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>	<b>FUNDING BY USE</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>
General Fund	Alpha Project Operating Contract	\$1,485,554
	Start Up Costs	\$150,000
	SDHC Administration	\$81,778
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,717,332</b>

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**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING AND EQUITY ASSURANCE**

Alpha Project is a local nonprofit organization. As a nonprofit, Alpha Project is exempt from the requirement to submit a Workforce Report. The Housing Commission included a requirement in the RFQ for prospective firms to include a description of how they would address racial equity and inequities for the target population(s), including any local disproportionate impact of COVID-19 and homelessness by race and other protected classes. The requirement was a part of the scored evaluation criteria. Alpha Project’s many programs and positions are available to all persons in need regardless of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender or sexual orientation. They promote and support diversity, equity and inclusion through training and are committed to fostering and preserving a culture of equity and inclusion for staff and program participants.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION**

On June 25, 2019, the Housing Authority approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission for the provision of Homeless Shelters and Services (HA-1821).

**KEY STAKEHOLDERS and PROJECTED IMPACTS**

Stakeholders for this project include individuals experiencing homelessness, the County of San Diego and Alpha Project as the subrecipient administering the program. The program is expected to have a positive impact on the community as it will provide shelter and services for up to 50 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness at any given time.

**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, this action would be exempt under the provisions of CEQA, 14 CCR § 15061(c) because the activity is covered by the common sense exemption in which CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

Federal funds constitute a portion of the project’s funding. Final NEPA approval was obtained from the City of San Diego on August 31, 2021. 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*

Lisa Jones  
Executive Vice President Strategic Initiatives  
San Diego Housing Commission

Approved by,

*Jeff Davis*

Jeff Davis  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
San Diego Housing Commission

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Docket materials are available in the “Governance & Legislative Affairs” section of the San Diego Housing Commission website at [www.sdhc.org](http://www.sdhc.org).