



February 13, 2018

Message from the President & CEO



Richard C. Gentry
President & CEO

With tax season underway, the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) announced a collaborative initiative to help low-income families prepare and file their taxes for free and potentially add up to thousands of dollars to their refund through tax credits.

In addition, I am pleased to share with you recent SDHC partnership efforts to address homelessness, including an annual one-day resource fair for homeless San Diegans and the groundbreaking for new permanent housing with supportive services for homeless Veterans.

I invite you to read more about these initiatives, as well as additional SDHC activities.

SDHC Collaboration – Free Tax Prep San Diego

The Free Tax Prep San Diego initiative aims to raise awareness and utilization of Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites and Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) for eligible workers in the San Diego region.

SDHC Chairman of the Board Frank Urtasun was joined by U.S. Representative Scott Peters, California State Senator Toni Atkins, San Diego County Supervisor Greg Cox, San Diego City Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry, Bob Annibale, Global Director of Citi Community Development and Inclusive Finance, and me for a news conference to announce Free Tax Prep San Diego.



Free Tax Prep San Diego
Announcement News Conference
February 9, 2018

This initiative is a collaboration among SDHC, the San Diego City-County Reinvestment Task Force, the San Diego EITC Coalition, and the founding corporate partner Citi Community Development.

[Read the News Release](#)

The 12th Project Homeless Connect – Downtown San Diego

Many of the 845 homeless individuals who attended The 12th Project Homeless Connect Downtown San Diego made obtaining housing assistance a priority.



The 12th Project Homeless Connect
Resource fair in Downtown San Diego
January 31, 2018

Project Homeless Connect is a one-day resource fair for homeless San Diegans.

Participants were able to access service providers at 90 booths and receive assistance from more than 400 volunteers.

Staff from the programs of SDHC's **HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO** homelessness action plan, as well as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program, were on-site to offer assistance.

Representatives from the Regional Task Force on the Homeless also helped attendees complete an assessment that is an essential step in identifying housing opportunities.

This is the eighth consecutive time that SDHC was the lead organizer of Project Homeless Connect. Our major organizing partners are the City of San Diego, Father Joe's Villages, Family Health Centers of San Diego, and Interfaith Shelter Network.

[Read the News Release](#)

"WeAllCount" – Annual Point-in-Time Count

I was among the hundreds of volunteers who participated in this year's annual Point-in-Time Count of homeless individuals, which took place in the early morning hours of January 26.



"WeAllCount"
Annual census of homeless individuals
January 26, 2018

Also volunteering this year were U.S. Representatives Susan Davis and Scott Peters; California State Assemblymember Todd Gloria; San Diego County Supervisors Greg Cox and Ron Roberts; San Diego City Councilmembers David Alvarez and Chris Ward; and Senior Advisor on Homelessness Coordination for the San Diego Mayor's Office Jonathan Herrera.

The count is essential to securing about \$20 million in Federal Continuum of Care funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for local homelessness programs, of which SDHC will administer about \$3.4 million for permanent supportive housing programs.

The Regional Task Force on the Homeless organizes the annual count. Results from the count are anticipated to be released this spring.

Groundbreaking – Apartments to Serve Homeless Veterans

The transformation of a vacant lot into 52 new permanent supportive housing units for homeless Veterans is now underway.



The Lofts at Normal Heights Groundbreaking
52 permanent supportive housing units for homeless Veterans
January 11, 2018

The SDHC partnership development known as The Lofts at Normal Heights is supported by SDHC's **HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO** homelessness action plan.

The new studio and one-bedroom rental apartments will be affordable for 55 years to homeless Veterans with income up to 50 percent of the San Diego Area Median Income.

Residents will also receive supportive services.

[Read the News Release](#)

Third & Final City Temporary Bridge Shelter Opens

The City of San Diego's third and final Temporary Bridge Shelter opened its doors on January 4, 2018, providing up to 150 beds for homeless families and single women.



Temporary Bridge Shelter Opening
Up to 150 beds for homeless families and single women
January 4, 2018

San Diego Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer, City Councilmember Chris Ward, Father Joe's Villages President & CEO Deacon Jim Vargas and I spoke at a news conference about the opening.

It is one of three Temporary Bridge Shelters that together provide up to 700 beds for homeless San Diegans. The other two shelters opened in December:

- 16th Street and Newton Avenue: Up to 350 beds for single adults. Operated by Alpha Project.
- 2801 ½ Sports Arena Boulevard: Up to 200 beds for Veterans. Operated by Veterans Village of San Diego.

These shelters align with SDHC's **HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO** homelessness action plan by providing a safe place to stay – or a "bridge" – for individuals or families who are enrolled in a permanent housing program, but have not yet moved into a permanent unit while they await permanent housing placement.

SDHC is providing more than \$6.5 million in funding for operations of the three shelters through June 30, 2018. We also invested an additional \$1.1 million toward start-up costs to help ensure that the shelters opened as quickly as possible.

[Read the News Release](#)

I invite your comments.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Gentry
President & Chief Executive Officer
San Diego Housing Commission

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