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San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) Addressing Homelessness: Workforce Challenges & Building System Capacity Presentation to the SDHC Board of Commissioners May 5, 2022

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SDHC – Building System Capacity

Introduction

2018: Housing First Analysis in Bridge Shelters

- Need for increased positions per site [and higher level case management](#) and housing specialist positions.

2019: Staffing Challenges

- Conversations with providers made clear that attracting and retaining staff was becoming an increasing challenge.
 - SDHC began reporting on the challenges of attracting key skilled workforce into the additional Bridge Shelter positions funded in 2018.
 - SDHC partnered with San Diego City College to develop the Homelessness Program for Engaged Educational Resources ([PEER](#)) to help build workforce capacity.



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Introduction (Continued)

2020/2021: During the COVID-19 pandemic, homelessness service providers experienced sudden and significant staffing shortages.

- SDHC and the City of San Diego focused efforts on supporting agencies to maintain basic operations.
 - Operation Shelter to Home launched in collaboration with the County of San Diego, Regional Task Force on Homelessness and San Diego Convention Center.

2021/2022: The “mass resignation” and two years of high-intensity work situations for frontline staff contributed to homelessness and social service sectors experiencing *increasing challenges* in ability to recruit and maintain a skilled workforce.

2018-2022: Right-Sizing Legacy Contracts

- Case Management Positions in targeted grants.
- Right-sizing Alpha Project Family Shelter, PATH Connections Shelter and Paul Mirable Center Interim Shelter, operated by Father Joe’s Villages.



SDHC – Building System Capacity Workforce Challenges

- Shortages of nearly 200,000 social work positions nationally by 2030 and more than 33,000 positions in California. ([U.S. Social Worker Workforce Report Card: Forecasting Nationwide Shortages](#))
 - California received a “C” in 2012 and was projected to receive a “D” by 2030
- In 2021, more than 47 million Americans voluntarily quit their jobs — an unprecedented mass exit from the workforce. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- The majority of workers who quit a job in 2021 said low pay (63 percent), no opportunities for advancement (63 percent) and feeling disrespected at work (57 percent) were reasons they quit. ([Pew Research Center](#))
- San Diego service providers voiced concerns amid ongoing challenges ([Voice of San Diego](#)).
- Not just short-term turbulence provoked by the pandemic, but a continuation of a long-term trend that began more than a decade ago. (Harvard Business Review)
 - Five main factors are at play in this trend: retirement, relocation, reconsideration, reshuffling, and reluctance.
 - ***The Great Resignation was no anomaly; the forces underlying it are here to stay.***



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Workforce Challenges (Continued)

- Need is growing faster than capacity. Opioid epidemic causing increasing pressure. Aging population is increasing geriatric care needs. ([Social Work Today](#))
- Survey from first wave of pandemic: 26.21 percent of social workers surveyed met the diagnostic criteria for PTSD and 16.22 percent reported severe grief symptoms. ([National Library of Medicine](#))
 - 99.19 percent reported average to high compassion satisfaction, but 63.71 reported average burnout and 49.59 percent reported average secondary trauma.
- “Will worker shortage disrupt California homeless strategy?” ([CalMatters](#))
 - “We have all this money. Can we really do this if we don’t have the people?” —*A senior legislative representative with the California State Association of Counties*
 - “Until...funding is commensurate to offer living wages across positions in the sector, it’ll be hard to train our way out of this crisis.” —*A senior legislative advocate on homelessness at Housing California*
 - “When you have a case manager who is trying to help you create long-term goals, but they’re only staying for three to six months, it prevents you from actually being able to follow through.” —*UCLA graduate student and study co-author*



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Staffing Vacancies in Homelessness Services Sector

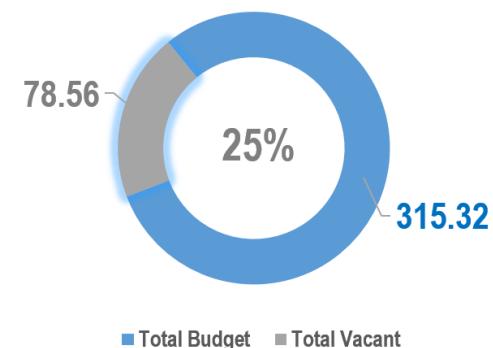
As of March 31, 2022

- 25 percent vacancies across all positions in homeless shelters and outreach programs
- 6 percent vacancies in direct service positions in supportive services programs
- 22 percent vacancies across all positions in rapid rehousing programs

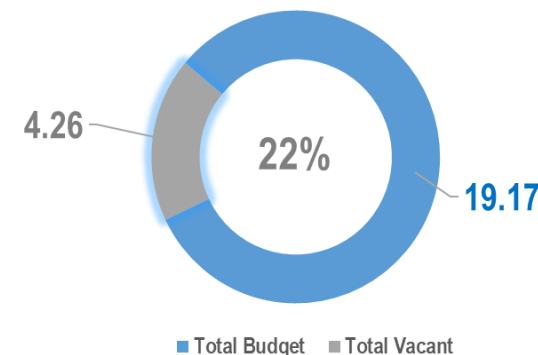
Highest percentage of staff vacancies in direct service positions in shelters = 34 percent vacancies

- Positions include case manager, housing navigator and residential coordinator

Budget vs. Vacant
***Entire Portfolio (All Positions)**

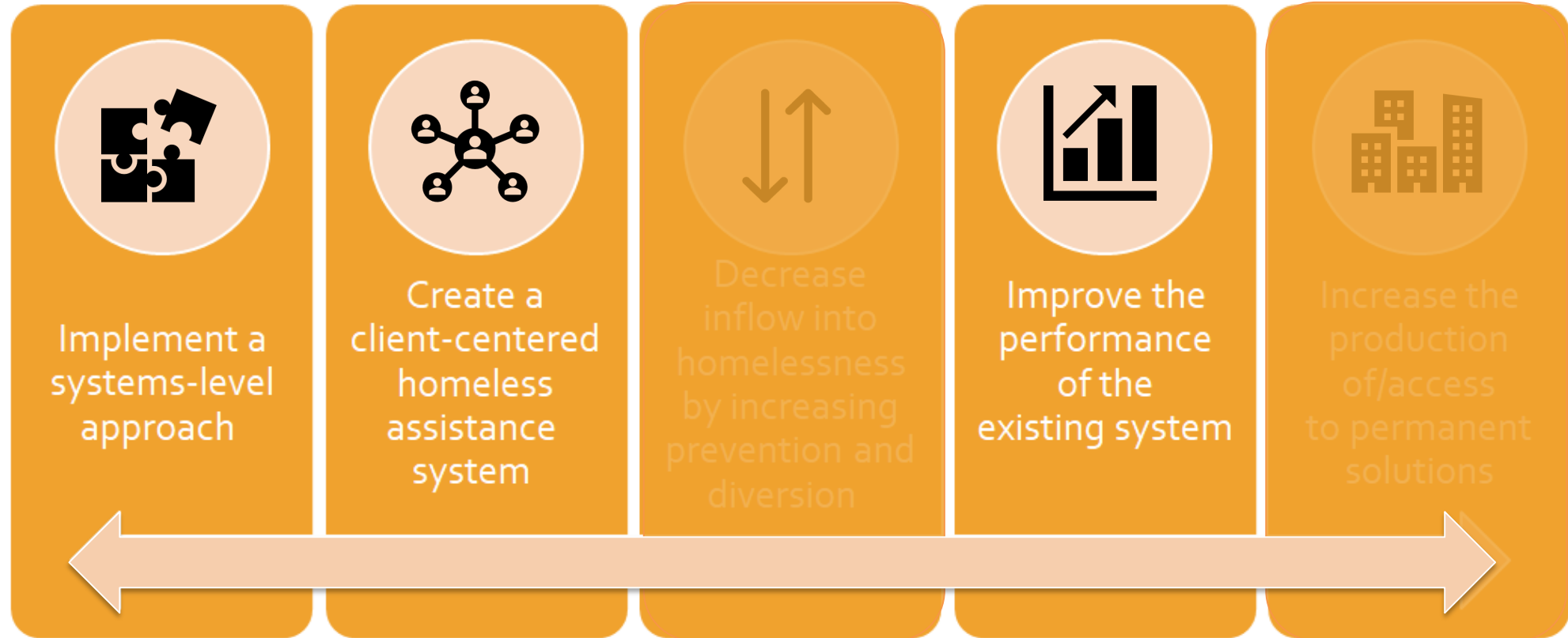


Budget vs. Vacant
***RRH Direct Service Positions**



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Alignment – Community Action Plan Foundational Strategies



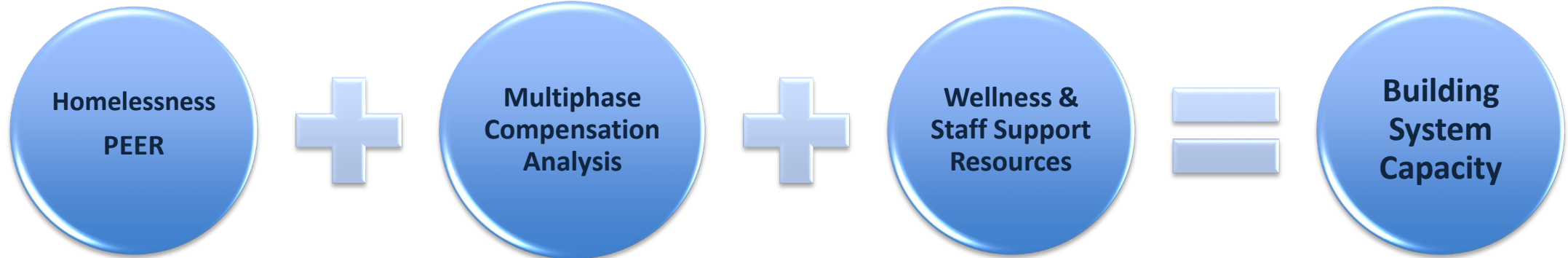
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System-Informed Approach

System-Informed Approach

Front Line Staff Advisory Group

Provider Leadership Advisory Group



SDHC – Building System Capacity Homelessness PEER

Homelessness Program for Engaged Educational Resources (PEER) – Partnership with San Diego City College

- Workforce development and educational program to provide a pipeline for students into employment opportunities in homelessness services.
- The program includes a two-unit course and a dedicated career counselor to work with students on career planning and job placement.
- The first class was on October 13, 2020.
 - With additional funding from City of San Diego, increased class to four times per year
 - Increased resources for career counseling, job search, sector networking
 - To be launched:
 - Field visits and job-shadowing



SDHC – Building System Capacity Compensation Study

Compensation Study

- SDHC contracted with a third-party consultant for a compensation analysis of the Homelessness Services Sector.
 - Conduct a comparison of average market compensation levels in the homelessness support services sector to other geographic areas as well as other key positions in alternate sectors.

Goal

- Re-benchmark frontline and case-management positions:
 - Attract and Retain Staff
 - Reduce Vacancies
 - Increase System Performance

Policy Advocacy

- Local, State & Federal: Increase funding opportunities to support and strengthen existing programs.



SDHC – Building System Capacity Compensation Study (Continued)

Two-Phase Approach

- **Phase 1:** Query market compensation databases for 16 targeted positions across 23 geographic areas (including high cost of living/rental markets)
 - Compare median total compensation as a percentage of the average cost of living across the geographic locations.
 - Compare the existing gaps of individual position compensation levels to cost-of-living levels.
 - Compare homelessness and housing sector compensation to average compensation in other sectors and some targeted crisis response positions.
- **Outcome:**
 - Initial benchmark of key positions throughout the sector
 - Scaled recommendations to remain competitive over time



SDHC – Building System Capacity Compensation Study (Continued)

- **Phase 2:** Leverage Phase 1 analysis to identify targeted areas of focus for Phase 2.
 - Targeted outreach to peer organizations to collect additional information, including non-cash compensation benefits.
 - Will include development of survey and analysis of existing available data.
 - Analysis of ancillary and non-traditional benefits, employment resources and leveraging staff survey currently under development.
- **Outcome:**
 - Final benchmarking of key positions throughout the sector.
 - Identification of opportunities to enhance workforce morale, increase retention through non-traditional benefits, employment resources.



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Wellness & Staff Support Initiative

Wellness & Staff Support Initiative

- **Partnership with San Diego City College School of Social Work** – Inform/support the development of a *Wellness Initiative* for the homelessness services sector to further efforts in strengthening and retaining the workforce.
- **Survey** – What staff need to have a sense of value and support. Finalizing a staff survey with feedback from the Front Line Staff and Provider Leadership Advisory Groups and San Diego Community College District.
- **Recruitment** – SDHC investment to recruit a Human and Social Services Intern to support development of the program.
 - Web-based platform providing information on wellness and self-care resources.
 - Facilitating and leveraging existing clinical and social work staff to provide peer support opportunities.
 - Phase Three Compensation Study – ancillary and non-traditional benefits, employment resources.



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Questions & Comments

