



SAN DIEGO  
HOUSING  
COMMISSION

## INFORMATIONAL REPORT

**DATE ISSUED:** September 1, 2016

**REPORT NO:** HCR16-079

**ATTENTION:** Chair and Members of the San Diego Housing Commission  
For the Agenda of September 9, 2016

**SUBJECT:** The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative Progress Update

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** Citywide

### **NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE HOUSING COMMISSION**

#### **SUMMARY**

In March 2016, with a long-standing commitment to homeless military Veterans, the San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission), in partnership with the City of San Diego (City), launched The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative to provide housing opportunities for up to 1,000 homeless Veterans in the city within one year. The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative is an initiative of HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO, the Housing Commission's landmark three-year Homelessness Action Plan (2014-17). This report provides an update on progress to-date for The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The San Diego City Council (City Council) and the Housing Authority of the City of San Diego (Housing Authority) on March 1, 2016, (report HAR16-006) approved funding for The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative.

The initiative will invest approximately \$12.5 million in Federal, City and Housing Commission resources to provide housing opportunities in the city (ZIP Code 92037 and ZIP Codes that begin with 921, excluding 92118) for Veterans who are living on the streets or in shelters.

The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative's four program components are:

1. Landlord Outreach – "Housing Our Heroes" Program
2. Rapid Re-Housing Assistance
3. Housing Commission Federal Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers
4. Housing Commission Federal Housing Vouchers with Supportive Services

#### **Landlord Outreach – "Housing Our Heroes" Program**

Landlords who rent their units to homeless Veterans are important partners in The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative. A low rental vacancy rate and tight competition for affordable and market-rate apartments make it difficult for homeless Veterans to obtain rental housing.

Through the "Housing Our Heroes" landlord outreach program, Housing Commission has helped to expand units available for homeless Veterans by engaging with landlords and offering incentives to

those who participate in The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative. Examples of the "Housing Our Heroes" outreach and engagement efforts include:

- 18 informational meetings with agencies, apartment association groups, and nonprofits
- A mailer to 10,000 landlords, real estate and business groups; and
- 77 letters mailed to nonprofits, public entities, schools and additional service providers.

Table 1 below demonstrates the success of these efforts, combined with the incentives in recruiting landlords from March 1, 2016, to August 31, 2016.

**Table 1: Housing Our Heroes Overview**

Program Activity		Totals
1.	Housing Placements	313
2.	Unique New Landlords	198
3.	Incentive Payments	247
4.	Security Deposits	119
5.	Utility Deposits	19
6.	Application Fees	24
7.	Contingency Fund Claims	1
8.	Hotline Calls	426
9.	Service Provider Partners	14

Of those numbers, the Housing Commission is also a landlord to 19 homeless Veterans in The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative who are living in Housing Commission rental properties.

The majority of the homeless Veterans who have secured housing through the "Housing Our Heroes" Landlord Outreach Program are between the ages of 40 and 65, followed by 25 to 40 years of age. Homeless Veterans older than 65 represent less than 10 percent, and those 18 to 24 years of age make up less than 1 percent.

### **Rapid Re-Housing Assistance with Supportive Services**

The Initiative's Rapid Re-Housing program assists homeless individuals and families obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible through short-term financial assistance, such as moving costs and short-to-medium rental assistance, as well as supportive services.

Recipients of this type of assistance typically become homeless because of an unexpected life experience, such as a job loss, domestic violence, or a medical crisis. Through The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative, any Veteran experiencing homelessness is eligible regardless of military discharge status.

The Housing Commission will administer \$1,967,250 in Rapid Re-Housing funds to serve approximately 215 Veterans through recent agreements with sub-recipients:

- Alpha Project for the Homeless to serve 50 Veterans;
- St. Vincent de Paul Village to serve 55 Veterans; and

- Veterans Village of San Diego to serve 110 Veterans.

### **Housing Commission Federal Housing Vouchers with Supportive Services**

The Housing Commission has committed 100 Federal Housing Vouchers, along with funds to support case management to ensure that homeless Veterans are properly assessed with the appropriate rental housing and services. Housing combined with supportive services such as mental health counseling; substance abuse treatment programs; and independent living skills classes help homeless Veterans begin to rebuild their lives. The Federal Housing Vouchers with Supportive Services Programs will be administered by Housing Commission and operated through recent agreements with:

- St. Vincent de Paul Village (40 vouchers)
- Veterans Village of San Diego (60 vouchers)

### **Housing Commission Federal VASH Vouchers**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers program provides rental assistance to chronically homeless Veterans with an honorable discharge and a disabling condition. Through the initiative, Housing Commission committed 300 of its existing Federal HUD VASH vouchers. The Housing Commission partners with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) San Diego Healthcare System to provide the vouchers along with intensive supportive services. The VA provides clinical health and case management services to VASH voucher recipients.

The local VA identifies Veterans who qualify for VASH vouchers. Housing Commission confirms their eligibility and enrolls them in the VASH voucher program.

As of August 31, 2016, the Housing Commission has successfully housed 159 homeless Veterans with VASH vouchers.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Housing Commission is making progress toward achieving its goal of providing housing opportunities for 1,000 homeless Veterans by March 2017.

At a July 20, 2016, news conference about The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative, Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer shared the story of Luis, a 20-year Navy Veteran who asked to only use his first name to provide privacy for his family. Luis and his wife lost their jobs and were evicted because they fell behind on their rent. The couple and their three children – ages 8, 17, and 20 – became homeless and lived in their vehicle for two weeks, then in motels.

Now with a roof over their heads, Luis, a former Navy cook, as well as his wife and eldest daughter have found jobs. Luis said all he needed was this “chance” to get back on his feet.

Respectfully submitted,

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Approved by,

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Hard copies are available for review during business hours at the security information desk in the main lobby and at the fifth floor reception desk of the San Diego Housing Commission offices at 1122 Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101 and at the Office of the San Diego City Clerk, 202 C Street, San Diego, CA 92101. You may also review complete docket materials in the "Public Meetings" section of the San Diego Housing Commission website at [www.sdhc.org](http://www.sdhc.org)