



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

INFORMATIONAL REPORT

DATE ISSUED: June 3, 2021

REPORT NO: HCR21-068

ATTENTION: Chair and Members of the San Diego Housing Commission
For the Agenda of June 11, 2021

SUBJECT: April 2021 Reporting Update for City of San Diego's
Storage Connect Center I

NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE HOUSING COMMISSION

SUMMARY

The Housing Authority of the City of San Diego (Housing Authority) and San Diego City Council (City Council) require the San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission) to “provide written reports on number of Clients served, utilization rate, any changes to operation, outreach activity, connections to other services and housing, at least monthly and upon request by the Council President/Chair of the Housing Authority” (Housing Authority Resolution HA-1777).

BACKGROUND

The Housing Commission administers the agreements 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 of San Diego (City) that first took effect on July 1, 2010. The Housing Commission and City entered into a separate MOU for the City's Temporary Bridge Shelter Programs, which was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners on November 3, 2017, as well as the Housing Authority and City Council (City Council) on November 14, 2017. On March 20, 2018, the City Council authorized the execution of a First Amendment to the MOU (Resolution R-311627) to also address the duties of the parties concerning the Storage Connect Center (the Center) located at 116 South 20th Street, San Diego, CA 92113. The Housing Commission and City bifurcated the Temporary Bridge Shelter MOU and entered into a separate MOU for the City's Transitional Storage Programs, which was approved by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners on June 12, 2020, as well as the Housing Authority and City Council on June 16, 2020.

As part of the March 2018 approval, the Housing Commission re-allocated up to \$1,068,743 in funding, which included savings realized on start-up and operating costs of the City's Bridge Shelters, to support the Center. This approval supported the oversight and management of the Center, which helps keep homeless San Diegans' belongings off of downtown streets, sidewalks, and storefronts by providing a safe place for individuals to keep their belongings as they look for work, attend classes, meet with a service provider or doctor, or otherwise attend to their personal needs. On February 8, 2019, the Housing Commission approved the execution of the first one-year renewal option of the Agreement with Mental Health Systems (MHS) to operate the Center for a term of July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, with a corresponding budget of \$1,190,828.40.

The recommendations were presented to the Housing Authority for review on March 12, 2019. The Housing Authority approved the execution of the first one-year renewal option of the Agreement with MHS, contingent on the successful presentation of a plan by the City of San Diego to the City Council, regarding identification of an additional storage center site as well as a proposal for a comprehensive community engagement strategy for the implementation of the identified site. The City of San Diego completed this request and sent a status update Memo to the Council in June 2019. The first one-year renewal option of the Agreement was subsequently executed with MHS.

On June 12, 2020, the Housing Commission approved the execution of the second one-year renewal option of the Agreement with Mental Health Systems (MHS) to operate the Center for a term of July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, with a corresponding budget of \$1,249,942.

MONTHLY REPORTING SUMMARY – APRIL 2021

The tables below provide an overview of data captured in the 35th month of operations for the Center, operated by MHS, which opened on June 13, 2018. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The Center has seven inventory specialists on staff, including two bilingual inventory specialists, conducting client intakes and storage bin assignments, as well as assisting clients with ongoing access to containers in a supervised staging area. Pursuant to the Housing Authority's approval of the operating Agreement (Resolution No. HA-1777), the Center provides a maximum of 500 storage bins¹ that can be utilized at any given time. As of April 30, 2021, 459 bins were assigned to clients. In total, the Center enrolled 19 new clients and served 506 total clients throughout the month of April. Of the 506 clients served in April, 453 of them returned to the Center to access their storage bins, and the total number of return check-ins in April was 2,260. Forty-seven clients exited the Center in April.

¹ The Housing Authority and the City Council mandated a maximum of 500 storage units in the March 2018 approval for operation of the Center.

Table One: New Client Enrollments April 2021

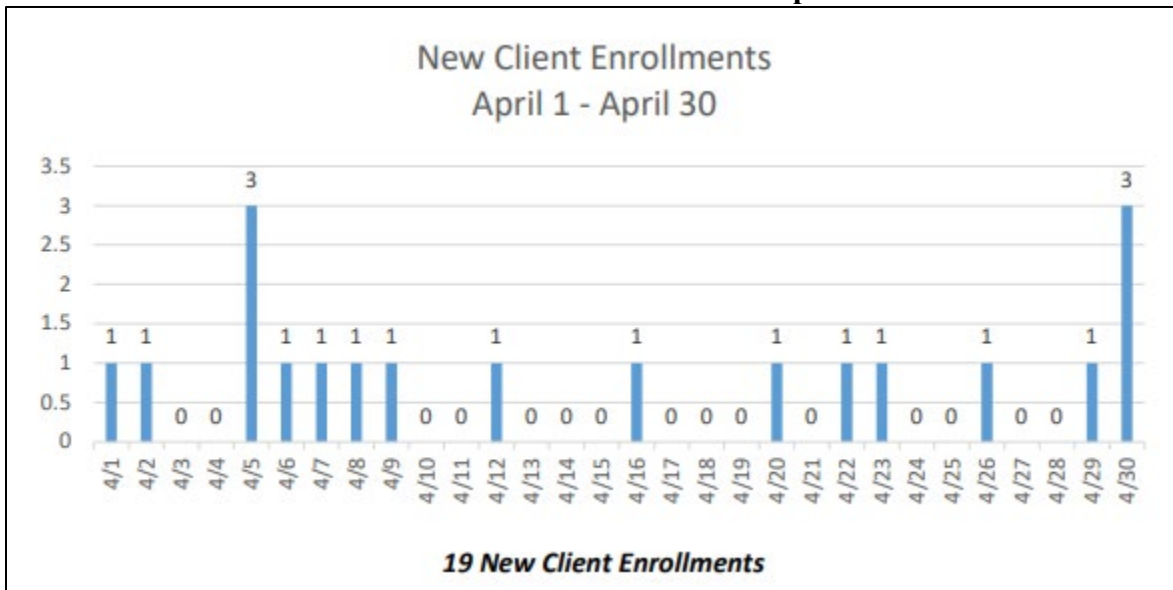


Table Two: Client Return Visits to Access Belongings April 2021

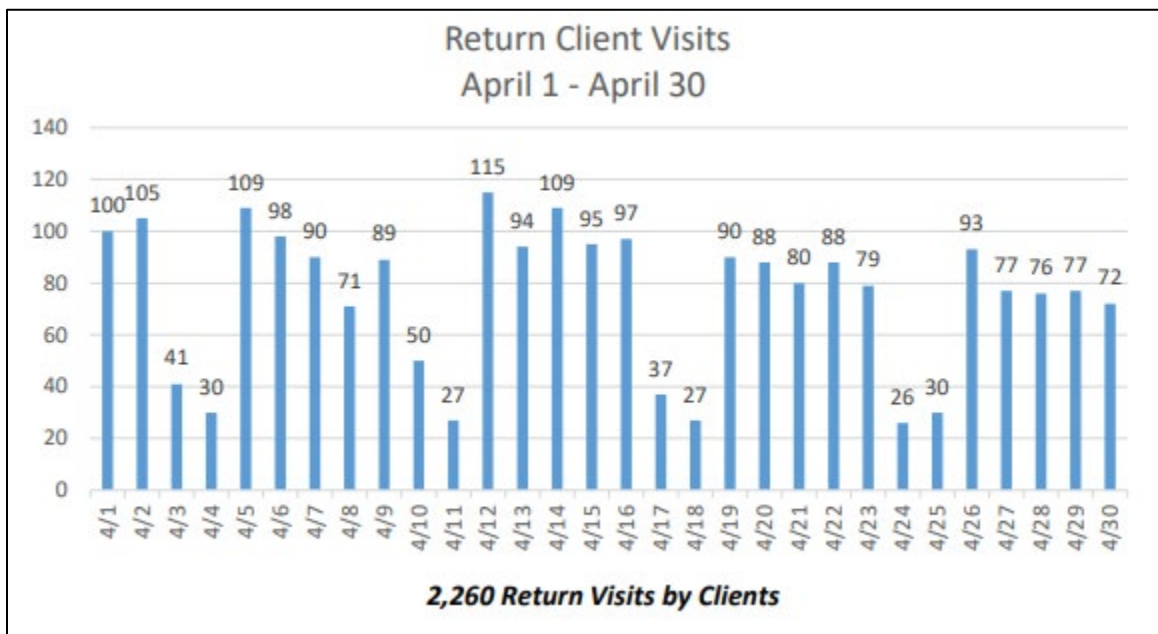


Table Three: Resource Referrals for Enrolled Clients in April 2021

RESOURCE TYPE	TOTAL REFERRALS IN APRIL
Basic Needs	16
Food Assistance	8
Health Care	0
Shelter	3
Housing Search and Information	7
Income Support and Employment	7
Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services	6
Transportation	8
At-Risk Homeless Housing Related Assistance Programs	4
TOTAL RESOURCE REFERRALS	59

Table Four: Summary of Weekday and Weekend Check-Ins Fiscal Year 2021

Summary of Check-Ins: July 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021				
	Weekend	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
July 2020	290	2,475	147	143
August 2020	395	2,166	190	205
September 2020	301	2,060	147	154
October 2020	363	2,273	187	176
November 2020	370	2,125	170	200
December 2020	328	2,443	158	170
January 2021	400	1,924	222	178
February 2021	288	1,848	138	150
March 2021	262	2,135	135	127
April 2021	268	1,992	154	114
Total	3,265	21,441	1,648	1,617
Average Check-Ins	327	2,144	165	162

STORAGE CENTER ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

The Storage Center serves San Diegans who are experiencing homelessness. Of the 1,561 total distinct, unduplicated persons served in the program since the opening of the Center, 45 percent identified as

having a disability, 38 percent experienced chronic homelessness, 31 percent were 55 years of age or older, and 6 percent were veterans.²

Center staff conduct basic outreach activities in the area surrounding the Center. Center staff also act as ambassadors to community members so community members can provide input on areas of need, raise any concerns they may have, and obtain general information about how to contact the facility operator or City services, such as San Diego Police Department (SDPD), Environmental Services Department (ESD), and the Mayor's office or the Housing Commission. In April 2020, Center outreach staff transitioned to also act as Inventory Specialists to provide needed additional operational support. Inventory Specialists are cross-trained to conduct outreach and rotate schedules during slower times of the day to continue to reach out to homeless individuals within the neighboring community and act as ambassadors to community members. The City's Bridge Shelter Outreach teams and the SDPD's Homeless Outreach Team continue to conduct regular outreach activities and provide support to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness throughout the City, including the neighborhood surrounding the Center.

SDPD coordinates ongoing law enforcement and security presence with the Center's security agency and supports the security company in managing the security needs in the direct vicinity of the site, while SDPD focuses on the surrounding neighborhood.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Prior to the opening of the Center, the operator, MHS, sought the input of residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the Center to ensure a successful partnership with the community. A Community Advisory Committee was formed, and a meeting is held monthly with representatives from MHS, the Housing Commission, SDPD, the City's ESD, the Mayor's office and San Diego County Behavioral Health Services in attendance. The most recent meeting was held via telephonic conference in April with 14 representatives in attendance.

The meetings provide community members with an opportunity to share their concerns and ideas with MHS, the City, and the Housing Commission, and allow the project's partners to share information and provide updates to the community. In addition, a summary of the meeting minutes are provided on a monthly basis to the Community Advisory Committee as well as City Councilmembers. Community Meeting Minutes for the April 14, 2021, meeting are attached to this report.

The Housing Commission provides a dedicated phone line that community members can utilize to report concerns or ask questions about program operations. MHS, the Housing Commission, and City services will continue to partner and collaborate with the Community Advisory Committee to ensure the Center takes into consideration the needs and expectations of the surrounding community while continuing to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the City of San Diego.

COVID-19 Mitigation Responses

Beginning in early March 2020, the Housing Commission began sending regular updates to homeless shelters and services providers on ongoing activities of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless

² Some persons may report more than one indicator of vulnerability.

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(RTFH), the Housing Commission, City of San Diego, and County of San Diego to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among homeless shelters and services programs and unsheltered populations. This includes providing updated guidance as it is released from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the County of San Diego related to serving persons experiencing homelessness.

Housing Commission staff began tracking stock levels of critical cleaning supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all City of San Diego homeless shelters and services programs that the Housing Commission administers and began assisting with procuring needed cleaning and PPE supplies to ensure providers could effectively clean and sanitize program spaces in alignment with guidance from the CDC and County of San Diego.

In addition, the City of San Diego print shop started creating bundles of posters and flyers for providers for posting through facilities and delivered material on an ongoing basis to providers as needed. Communication trees were also reinforced between providers, the Housing Commission, the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego, RTFH, and program leadership were encouraged to ensure redundancy is in place at leadership and program management levels (as the Housing Commission carried out internally) in regard to communication and knowledge sharing, in case leadership workforce reduction occurred.

The City of San Diego, RTFH, and Housing Commission staff continue to provide guidance to service providers as needed during this time to support alignment with County Public Health and CDC guidance to protect the health and safety of staff and clients.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Jones
Executive Vice President of Strategic Initiatives
San Diego Housing Commission

Approved by,



Jeff Davis
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
San Diego Housing Commission

Docket materials are available in the “Governance & Legislative Affairs” section of the San Diego Housing Commission website at www.sdhc.org

Homeless Storage Neighborhood Advisory Committee (HSNAC) Community Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2021

Community Representative Attendance*

1. Myron Taylor
2. James Justus
3. Michelle Navarro
4. Candelaria Gomez

Storage Center Staff and Affiliated Partner Staff Attendance*

5. Veronica Aguilar, Mental Health Systems (MHS)
6. Sarah Nudel, Mental Health Systems (MHS)
7. Jennica Valdez, Mental Health Systems (MHS)
8. Erwin Mansala, San Diego Police Department (SDPD)
9. Ricardo Rivas, San Diego Police Department (SDPD)
10. Melissa Kolts, San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)
11. Jessica Adamo, San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)
12. Betsy Knight, Behavioral Health Services (BHS), County of San Diego
13. Kenneth Prue, Environmental Services Department (ESD), City of San Diego
14. Stephanie Estrada, City of San Diego

*Following CDC's safety guidelines for COVID-19, the April 2021 HSNAC meeting was conducted via telephone conference.

Next HSNAC Meeting

Date: Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Location: Telephone Conference

Community Comments

Community Comment: Community representative stated they believe crime is increasing in Sherman Heights and Grant Hill. Community representative stated that he does not have statistics on crime rates in these areas.

SDPD Response: SDPD staff asked for clarification if the community representative has seen crimes being committed or if the crime is homeless related. SDPD stated that the county jails are still under COVID booking restrictions which means SDPD cannot book individuals for quality of life offenses. For those offenders who commit that type of crime the most SDPD can do at this time is issue a citation and take a crime report.

Community Comment: Community representative shared a concern regarding the encampment under the 5 freeway on Commercial Street. The people have taken over a lot of space which community representative thinks is Caltrans jurisdiction on the embankment. Community representative asked if the clean and safe environment that was set up by the City Council is being impacted because of COVID and will the neighborhood see cleaning increase after June 15. Community representative stated that she feel the City is falling short and not living up to their end of the bargain of what they promised with a clean and safe environment when the storage center first opened. Community representative asked if the San Diego Housing Commission has an outreach program to help homeless individuals other than the HOT team.

SDPD Response: SDPD staff informed the community representative that when the jails allow for misdemeanor bookings that will affect more enforcement action. Currently when SDPD is doing homeless quality of life enforcement SDPD has a diversion program in place where they offer the individual a shelter bed, using progressive enforcement, if the persons does not take the shelter bed, SDPD can use jail to leverage the individual to choose a shelter bed. When the jails allow for bookings again, there will be an uptick in enforcement related activities, while also offering shelter beds. SDPD staff stated that the embankments to the freeway do fall under California Highway Patrol and Caltrans to conduct abatements in those areas.

SDHC Response: SDHC staff stated that there are many outreach teams that conduct frequent outreach within the City and engage with persons experiencing homelessness to get them connected with services. The Homelessness Response Center opening soon will help connect people to resources and services.

City Response: City staff stated they will follow up with City staff on this concern and thanked the community representative for being the eyes and ears of the community. City staff also stated that part of Mayor Gloria's commitment on the campaign is to take a more compassionate approach to homelessness and that adequate services are provided. In February, Mayor Gloria stated that the City will use funds grated by the state of California which were previously allocated by the City to serve the homeless population. The San Diego Housing Commission has executed contracts with Urban Street Angels, which provides additional shelter beds for Transitional Age Youth and the Urban Street Angel center downtown to support the hotel voucher program. Mayor Gloria is part of a leadership council that oversees the implementation of the City's Community Action Plan on Homelessness and is committed to investing in programs. City staff stated that there were recent changes to how the Mayor addresses encampments taking a more compassionate approach and the reduction of law enforcement visibility.

Community Comment: Community representative asked if there is outreach between Oceanview and 30th Street about the COVID vaccine and education around the vaccine.

SDPD Response: SDPD staff stated that SDPD can conduct an outreach event in that area.

City Response: City staff reported that the City will pass this information along to City staff who is part of the COVID-19 Response Team and to the City's Senior Homeless Advisor.