



INFORMATIONAL REPORT

DATE ISSUED: October 5, 2022

REPORT NO: HCR22-50

ATTENTION: Chair and Members of the San Diego Housing Commission
For the Agenda of October 13, 2022

SUBJECT: July 2022 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 attend to their personal needs, which may include working on housing options, looking for work, attending classes, meeting with service providers, seeking medical care, or other activities such as accessing cleaning or washing facilities. 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. On June 11, 2021, the Housing Commission approved the execution of a six-month Non-Competitive Agreement with MHS to operate the Center for a term of July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021, with a corresponding budget of \$624,971. The Housing Commission awarded the six-month agreement to MHS through a non-competitive process to ensure the continued operation and provision of uninterrupted services for the Center during the pandemic. The Housing Commission determined to temporarily delay the competitive solicitation process known as Request for Proposal (RFP) to increase the number and quality of responses received due to the ongoing strain on staffing resources seen across the homelessness service provider system during the pandemic. The RFP for the Center was released on July 15, 2021, and on September 29, 2021, MHS was notified that their submission for the Transitional Storage Center was recommended for contract award, contingent upon approval by the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners and the Housing Authority.

On November 12, 2021, the Housing Commission Board of Commissioners approved the recommendation of the contract award to MHS for the operation of the Center. The recommendations were presented to the Housing Authority on December 6, 2021. The Housing Authority approved the execution of an initial six-month term of January 1, 2022, through June 30, 2022, with a prorated annual budget of \$624,971, with two one-year options to renew. The Housing Commission entered the First Option to Extend Agreement with MHS, effective July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, with an annual budget of \$1,411,795.00. MHS has informed the Housing Commission that the organization's name changed to "Mental Health Systems (MHS) dba TURN Behavioral Health Services," starting July 1, 2022.

HOUSING COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

This item relates to Strategic Priority Area No. 4 in the Housing Commission's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 – FY 2024: Advancing Homelessness Solutions – Supporting the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness.

MONTHLY REPORTING SUMMARY – JULY 2022

The tables below provide an overview of data captured in July 2022 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's annual operating budget includes 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 storage bins 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.

The Center enrolled 44 new clients and served 527 total clients throughout July. Of the 527 clients served in July, 473 of them returned to the Center to access their personal belongings within their assigned storage bin. The total number of return check-ins was 2,496 and 40 clients exited the Center in July.

Table One: New Client Enrollments July 2022



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 Two: Client Return Visits to Access Belongings July 2022

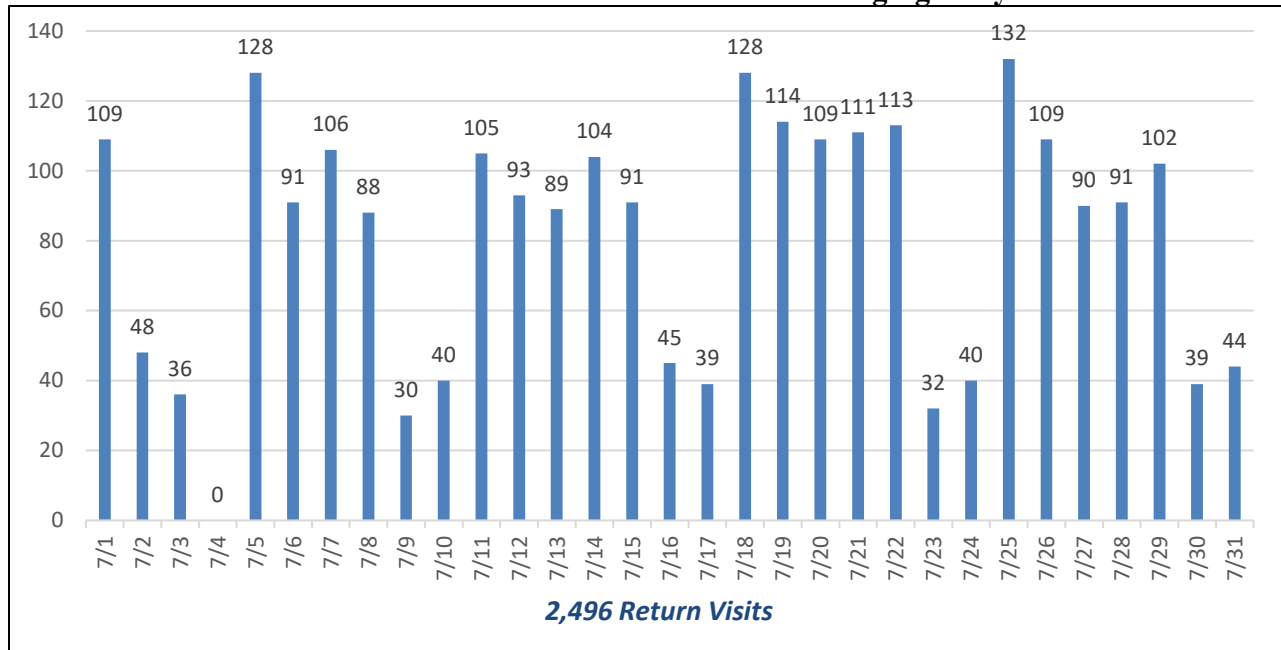


Table Three: Resource Referrals for Enrolled Clients

RESOURCE TYPE	TOTAL REFERRALS IN JULY
Basic Needs	19
Food Assistance	17
Health Care	7
Shelter	15
Housing Search and Information	20
Income Support and Employment	15
Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services	6
Transportation	19
At-Risk Homeless Housing Related Assistance Programs	12
TOTAL RESOURCE REFERRALS	130

Table Four: Summary of Weekend and Weekday Check-Ins Fiscal Year 2023

Month	Saturday	Sunday	Weekend	Weekday
July 2022	194	199	393	2,103

STORAGE CENTER ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

The Center serves San Diegans experiencing homelessness. Of the 2,049 total distinct, unduplicated persons served in the program since the opening of the Center, 55 percent identified as having a disability, 41 percent experienced chronic homelessness, 31 percent were 55 years of age or older, and 7 percent were veterans.²

Center staff members rotate schedules during slower times of the day to reach out to individuals experiencing homelessness within the neighboring community. Staff members 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. The City's 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. Community members from the neighborhood surrounding Storage Connect Center II, located in the Chollas Creek area, started attending the virtual community meeting in June 2021. The monthly community meetings now include residents and community members from both Centers.

The meetings allow community members to share their concerns and allow the project's affiliated partners to share information and update the community. In addition, a summary of the meeting is provided on a monthly basis to the Community Advisory Committee as well as City Councilmembers. The community group met on July 13, 2022, with six community members and 15 Center staff and affiliated partners in attendance.

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 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.

Infectious Disease Mitigation

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


In early March 2020, the Housing Commission began sending regular updates to homeless shelters and services providers on activities of the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (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.

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 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to protect the health and safety of staff and clients, which includes symptoms monitoring for staff and clients, the requirement of enhanced sanitation and cleaning practices, and utilization of personal protective equipment.


In addition to the mitigation efforts for COVID-19, other infectious disease mitigation efforts include posters with information on how to properly wash or clean your hands inside the Client restroom and utilization of hand sanitizing stations. Staff also provide information to Clients verbally, and information is posted on flyers on-site about other infectious diseases, including symptoms, vaccination, prevention, and control.

The Housing Commission continues to require service providers to implement enhanced cleaning measures and the continuation of wearing protective masks.

Respectfully submitted,


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

Approved by,


Jeff Davis
Interim President and 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

**Storage Connect Centers
Community Meeting Summary
July 13, 2022**

Next Community Meeting

Date: August 10, 2022

New Time: 5:30-6:30 PM

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Storage Connect Center I (Sherman Heights) Community Member Attendance

1. James Justus
2. Connie Zuniga
3. Michele Navarro

Storage Connect Center II (Lea Street) Community Member Attendance

1. Denise Padilla
2. Daniele Laman
3. Richard Diaz

Storage Connect Center Staff and Affiliated Partner Attendance

1. Laura Otis-Miles – Senior Vice President, Mental Health Systems dba TURN Behavioral Health Services
2. Shannon Thomason – Vice President, Mental Health Systems dba TURN Behavioral Health Services
3. Jennica Valdez – Program Manager, Mental Health Systems dba TURN Behavioral Health Systems
4. Veronica Aguilar- Program Manager, Mental Health Systems dba TURN Behavioral Health Services
5. Talia Vukovich- Site Supervisor, Mental Health Systems dba TURN Behavioral Health Services
6. Casey Snell – Director of Housing First Administration, San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)
7. Jessica Adamo – Special Programs Manager, San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)
8. Melissa Kolts – Senior Programs Analyst, San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)
9. Betsy Knight – Behavioral Health Program Coordinator, Behavioral Health Services (BHS)
10. Stephen Bilecz – Environmental Services Department (ESD), City of San Diego
11. Lizzie Rodriguez – Council Representative, Councilmember Vivian Moreno, District 8
12. Jefferey Nguyen – Community Representative, Councilmember Sean Elo-Rivera, District 9
13. Lt. Ruben Gutierrez – Neighborhood Policing Division, San Diego Police Department (SDPD)
14. Terry Hoskins - Mid-City Division Community Relations Officer, San Diego Police Department (SDPD)
15. Expedy Tavares – Central Division Community Relations Officer, San Diego Police Department (SDPD)

Open Discussion

Community Member asked about the status of covering the graffiti on Storage Connect Center I's building.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) responded the city of San Diego's Homelessness Strategies and Solutions Department is responsible for coordinating with the vendor to address the graffiti. The city is aware of the graffiti and is obtaining the appropriate vendor to paint over the graffiti.

Community Member shared concerns that the graffiti on Storage Connect Center I may encourage more graffiti and potential gang activity.

Community Member asked if Storage Connect Center I was aware that Family Health Centers was providing homeless services at the library downtown. Community member also asked if the county is placing more porta potties into the Sherman Heights area.

Behavioral Health Services (BHS) responded the necessary information has been previously relayed to community members to request additional portable restrooms.

Community Member stated community members cannot be responsible for requesting porta potties as they are too busy providing food for their families and requested the social workers handle the porta potty placements. Community member shared concern that the community has requested more porta potties for over three years.

Community Member asked about the homeless encampments underneath the 5 freeway on Commercial Street across from Storage Connect Center I. Community member noticed non-climbing fences being installed on Imperial Avenue that enter Caltrans property and asked if similar fences will be installed on Commercial Street. Community member asked if any agencies are working to remedy the encampment under the 5 freeway as it is obstructing sidewalks.

Environmental Services Department (ESD) responded Caltrans is deploying the new cut-resistant/cut-proof fence to replace existing fences. Neighborhood policing provides support in the area everyday but due to tight-staffing and special assignments, sometimes there is not enough coverage in the area. The new cut-resistant fences should have an impact on preventing encampments and people climbing over the fence.

Community Member shared concerns that individuals walking near the encampment or those who must use wheelchairs experience difficulty trying to cross the street because of the obstructed sidewalks.

Community Member asked if community members and service providers are using the Get It Done app to report the graffiti on Storage Connect Center I's building. Community member asked if concerns about the graffiti can be elevated to the mayor's office.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) clarified the department overseeing the request to clean the graffiti on Storage Connect Center I is part of the mayor's office; it is the Homelessness Strategies and Solutions Department. The request has been elevated to the highest possible level. Storage Connect Center I addressed the issue as timely as possible, and the San Diego Housing Commission has been following up weekly with the department to get the graffiti addressed.

Community Member asked if the same homeless services provided at Storage Connect Center I are being offered at the library downtown. Community member stated due to the number of services being offered there should be twice as many problems resolved.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) responded there are several homeless service providers downtown providing a variety of services to clients and coordination of efforts for these services. Family Health Centers has health clinics, homeless outreach, and mobile clinics.

San Diego Police Department (SDPD) clarified graffiti is handled differently by building owners. Graffiti on private property is handled differently than graffiti on commercial or city property. For private property, the owner of the property is responsible for getting the graffiti removed but if it is city property, then the city is responsible for handling the graffiti.

Council Representative, D8, shared that on Get It Done, viewers can see how long graffiti will get addressed according to code enforcements.

Community Member asked how many clients Storage Connect Center I serves and how many bins are on site.

MHS dba TURN Mental Health Services responded Storage Connect Center I has 500 bins total on site and 478 bins are in use as of July 13.

Community Member asked if all 478 individuals come daily and where they come from.

MHS dba TURN Mental Health Services responded if an individual is experiencing homelessness and are 18 years old or older, they can enroll into the program. Individuals self-report their living conditions and current living situations.

Community Member shared concern that individuals from outside the Chollas Creek area enroll for services.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) stated there was a survey completed a couple years ago in which participants reported they live near the vicinity of Storage Connect Center I. Some clients visit their storage bins multiple times a day. For example, many clients reported retrieving their sleeping items from their storage bins toward the end of the day, then drop those items back off early in the morning the following day.

MHS dba TURN Mental Health Services responded Storage Connect Center I receives many intake referrals from other local service providers, such as Alpha Project and Father Joe's Villages.

Community Member shared concerns there is less than half a dozen porta potties and hand-washing stations east of the 5 freeway although there are not fewer unsheltered individuals there. Community member asked why there is a porta potty and hand-washing station shortage east of the 5 freeway and if this can be elevated to the mayor's office. Community member stated council district 8 is aware of this issue, but shared concern that the mayor's office is unaware the community is requesting more porta potties and hand-washing stations.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) responded this concern will appear in the meeting's summary that is distributed to members of the community group, the city's Homelessness Strategies and Solutions Department, and city council representatives. The main concerns highlighted during this

meeting are a lack of portable restrooms and hand-washing stations and the graffiti on the building of Storage Connect Center I. The San Diego Housing Commission reminded the community group that the community representatives for council district 8 and 9 are present at the meeting and bring these issues to their council representative.

Community Member asked if it is feasible to move the bins from Storage Connect Center II to Storage Connect Center I and provide services to the homeless community there rather than in the Lea Street neighborhood. Community member asked if Storage Connect Center I has the capacity to take another 250 bins for their site.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) responded during last summer's listening session on the city of San Diego's Transitional Storage Centers, one of the recommendations brought to the city was to move Storage Connect Center II's bins to Storage Connect Center I. This idea was shared during the listening session from summer 2021, although currently, there is no plan to move bins from Storage Connect Center II to Storage Connect Center I.

Community Member stated the bins should be moved and placed where they are most needed for unsheltered individuals.

San Diego Police Department (SDPD) stated individuals currently utilizing bins at Storage Connect Center II would not go downtown if the bins were relocated there. Storage Connect Center II's location works where it is at and does not negatively affect the communities nearby. There will be a park on Lea Street one day.

Community Member stated Storage Connect Center II has invited community members to come visit and tour the facility in the past and encourages other community members to take advantage of the invitation.

MHS dba TURN Mental Health Services invited community members or individuals attending the meeting to visit Storage Connect Center II for a program tour.

Community Member requested utilization data of Storage Connect Center II and asked where Storage Connect Center II's clients live.

MHS dba TURN Mental Health Services responded there are 257 storage bins at Storage Connect Center II and 178 bins are utilized by clients as of July 13. Similar to Storage Connect Center I, Storage Connect Center II does not ask individuals for an address but rather where they slept the night before, per the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data requirements. Most of Storage Connect Center II's clients report they stay in the area near the facility. The Storage Centers do not collect data from clients regarding which locations they specifically live in, but rather types of categories for their living situations such as sleeping on the streets, in vehicles, or in emergency shelters.

Community Member shared there should be a transitional storage facility in every district of the city, not only in District 8 and District 9.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) responded there is a third transitional storage facility operated by Think Dignity located in District 3. There are three distinct storage center facilities in three different districts.

*Please note Mental Health Systems (MHS) is transitioning from Mental Health Systems to TURN Behavioral Health Services in 2022. Updated staff emails are listed below.

Storage Connect Center I

Program Manager: Veronica Aguilar

Email: vaguilar@turnbhs.org

Storage Connect Center II

Program Manager: Jennica Valdez

Email: jennica.valdez@turnbhs.org

Site Supervisor: Talia Vukovich

Email: talia.vukovich@turnbhs.org