



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

News Release

February 27, 2014

**Media Contact: Maria Velasquez, Vice President
Community Relations & Communications
619-578-7560 mariav@sdhc.org**

SAN DIEGO HOUSING COMMISSION PROPERTY TO SERVE AS NEW HOME FOR STORAGE CENTER THAT HELPS KEEP HOMELESS SAN DIEGANS' BELONGINGS OFF THE STREETS

Homeless Transitional Storage Center serves up to 350 homeless individuals

SAN DIEGO, CA—At a [joint news conference](#) today, Interim Mayor Todd Gloria and San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) President & CEO Richard C. Gentry announced that an SDHC-owned paved lot in downtown San Diego will become the new home for the storage center that helps keep homeless San Diegans' belongings off of downtown streets, sidewalks and storefronts.

“The storage center is a key element of ending the cycle of homelessness and moving people off of the streets and onto more productive and self-sufficient paths, and I’m ecstatic its future is secure,” said Interim Mayor Gloria.

The Homeless Transitional Storage Center provides a safe place for homeless individuals to keep their belongings in large, clean bins as they look for work, attend classes or meet with a service provider or doctor.

“We are pleased to provide a stable home for this storage center,” said SDHC President & CEO Richard C. Gentry. “The storage center is just one solution to help homeless San Diegans stabilize their lives.”

SDHC administers funding from the City of San Diego to maintain the storage center, which provides space for 350 homeless people to temporarily store their belongings. Since May 1, 2012, SDHC has contracted with the Girls Think Tank, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting basic human dignity for homeless individuals, to operate the shelter on a day-to-day basis.

On June 25, 2013, the San Diego City Council allocated up to \$50,000 in City of San Diego General Funds to support the storage center during fiscal year 2014 (July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014). The Girls Think Tank raises additional funds to keep the storage center open, which costs about \$100,000 a year. Private donors have included Harbor Presbyterian Church, Ace Parking, Jerome’s Furniture and the Downtown Fellowship of Churches and Ministries.

In his closing remarks at the news conference, Gentry recognized Interim Mayor Gloria and Mayor-Elect Kevin Faulconer, who in 2012 took the leadership role in finding funding for the storage center.

They each contributed \$10,000 from their City Council districts to keep the storage center open and approached SDHC to administer the funds.

SDHC will seek final approval from the SDHC Board of Commissioners to lease the paved lot at 252 16th Street in downtown San Diego to Girls Think Tank for the storage center, beginning on May 1, 2014, with a monthly rent of \$1,500 for the first year. Monthly rent would increase 4.5 percent in the second year. The lease would include three one-year options to renew the lease, with additional 4.5 percent rent increases each year.

SDHC has already provided the required 60-days' notice to terminate the current lease on the property with an apartment complex that uses the lot for parking.

The Homeless Transitional Storage Center is currently located at a vacant parking lot owned by St. Vincent de Paul Village at 1610 Commercial Street.

Interim Mayor Gloria and Gentry also thanked the Girls Think Tank, St. Vincent de Paul Village, Downtown San Diego Partnership, the Port Commission, the San Diego Police Department, David Ross and the team at SDHC for coming together to make the new location and funding for the Homeless Transitional Storage Center possible.

Background:

- The storage facility was created as a result of a 2011 legal settlement that required the City of San Diego (City) to provide a check-in center for downtown homeless San Diegans to safely store their belongings.
- The settlement resolved a federal class action lawsuit against the City that alleged that the City's Environmental Services Department and the San Diego Police Department were violating the constitutional rights of homeless individuals by destroying their personal property found on public streets.
- The initial operation of the check-in center was funded by \$100,000 from the settlement.
- The original center opened its doors in February 2011 and was located at 917 9th Avenue in a vacant building owned by Centre City Development Corporation. It was operated by the Isaiah Project, founded by David Ross, which offered 360 bins for storage.
- In May 2012 the Girls Think Tank became the operator of the storage center and the center was renamed the "Homeless Transitional Storage Center."
- The storage center relocated in 2013 to 1610 Commercial Street, a 4,500-square-foot property owned by St. Vincent de Paul Village.

For more information about SDHC, please visit www.sdhc.org.

###