

San Diego Housing Commission Strategic Plan

FY22 – FY24

We're About People



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Planning for the years ahead while remaining mindful of past successes and challenges is important for any organization. It provides a guide for progress as an organization moves forward.

With this principle as a foundation, the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) engaged in a strategic planning process that produced a bold new vision for the agency: a future in which everyone in the City of San Diego has a home they can afford.

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolved and continued over the past year, it reinforced and elevated the importance of this vision. A stable, affordable place to call home is essential.

Achieving this vision will require collaboration, perseverance and commitment from multiple organizations working together. SDHC cannot do this alone. We value the many elected officials, civic leaders, developers, service providers and community organizations that have worked with SDHC in the past, and we look forward to continuing these relationships and developing new ones in the years to come.

Many of these individuals and organizations, as well as our customers—individuals and families with low income or experiencing homelessness—and staff provided valuable insight as we worked on the elements of SDHC's Strategic Plan in consultation with Nuffer, Smith Tucker.

To define SDHC's role in working toward the vision, we also developed a new mission for the agency: SDHC fosters social and economic stability for vulnerable populations in the City of San Diego through quality, affordable housing; opportunities for financial self-reliance; and homelessness solutions.

The Strategic Plan detailed on the following pages will serve as a roadmap for SDHC, guiding our decisions, initiatives and day-to-day efforts for the next three years. At the same time, we have the flexibility to adapt this Strategic Plan as needed to address changing circumstances around us.

I thank SDHC's Board of Commissioners for their ongoing leadership, and direction. The input and support from our Board members has helped craft the direction and creation of this plan.

SDHC looks forward to continuing to collaborate with Mayor Todd Gloria, the San Diego City Council and organizations throughout the City of San Diego to identify and implement additional innovative solutions consistent with SDHC's vision and mission to help the San Diego community thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard C. Gentry".

Richard C. Gentry
President and CEO
San Diego Housing Commission



SAN DIEGO
HOUSING
COMMISSION

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS:

The strategic planning process was designed to obtain input from a variety of stakeholders. The process included:



STEP 1:

Telephone interviews with City Councilmembers, SDHC Commissioners, a representative sample of SDHC staff and community partners



STEP 2:

Electronic surveys of the full SDHC staff, SDHC tenants and individuals SDHC programs serve



STEP 3:

Strategic planning meeting with SDHC Board of Commissioners' Ad Hoc Committee on Planning Priorities to review themes and draft elements



STEP 4:

Staff planning meeting to elaborate on strategic priorities and action items



STEP 5:

Finalize plan, SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) objectives and methods for ongoing evaluation



STEP 6:

Align the organization behind the plan



STEP 7:

SDHC Board of Commissioners approval of the plan

THE LANGUAGE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING:

The most effective, forward-thinking strategic planning today focuses on “why” an organization exists in addition to the historic elements of “what” the organization does and “how” it works. Answering “why” involves defining purpose—articulating the benefit of an organization’s work to people or society at large. This resonates across stakeholders, particularly among younger demographics in search of meaning. Thus, the San Diego Housing Commission’s (SDHC) Strategic Plan now includes a purpose statement to help motivate and align internal and external stakeholders. Consider the following definitions when reviewing this plan:

Purpose: The end benefit of an organization’s work to people or society at large.

Vision: The destination the organization is working toward – the centerpiece of a strategic plan.

Core Values: Principles that drive decision making.

Mission: An organization’s core business.

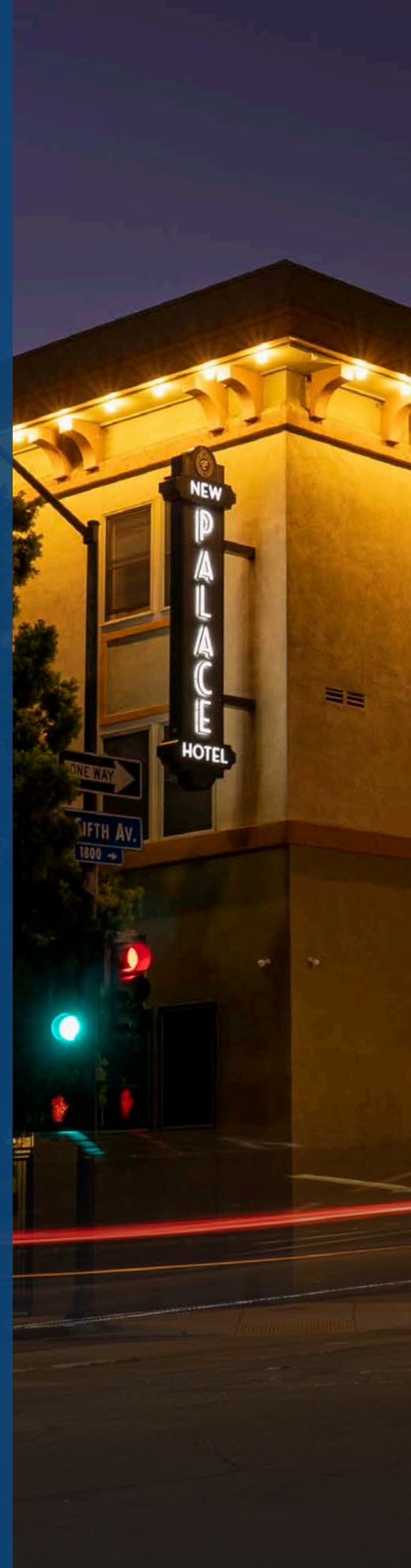
Strategic Priorities: Areas of focus to achieve the vision.

Action Items: Annual activities designed to support the priority.

SMART Objectives: Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound measures of success.

Aligning the Organization Behind the Plan:

To ensure SDHC is well-equipped to execute the Strategic Plan, careful consideration will be taken to ensure SDHC’s staff have the budget, people and other resources needed to implement the plan. In addition, values will be a focus in all decision making.



SAN DIEGO HOUSING COMMISSION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2024

Vision: The destination we are working toward.

Everyone in the City of San Diego has a home they can afford.

Mission: The organization's core business.

San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) fosters social and economic stability for vulnerable populations in the City of San Diego through:

- Quality, affordable housing.
- Opportunities for financial self-reliance.
- Homelessness solutions.

Purpose: The end benefit to people or society.

Help individuals, families and the San Diego community thrive.

Core Values: Principles to drive decision making.

At SDHC, we:

- Serve our clients with equity, dignity and respect.
- Are committed to excellence and innovation in all we do.
- Believe in transparency and being good financial stewards.

Strategic Priority Areas: Areas of focus to achieve the vision.

1. Increasing and Preserving Housing Solutions.
2. Helping Families Increase Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency and Quality of Life.
3. Investing in Our Team.
4. Advancing Homelessness Solutions – Supporting the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness.
5. Advocacy, Communication, Public Engagement.

Equity and Inclusivity.

At SDHC, we are about people. SDHC embraces diverse approaches and points of view to improve our programs, projects and policies.

- We believe in delivering programs and services in innovative and inclusive ways.
- We are committed to advancing equity and inclusion both internally and externally.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: INCREASING AND PRESERVING HOUSING SOLUTIONS

First-Year Actions:

1. Production: Identify opportunities to produce and retain affordable and middle-income housing, and permanent supportive housing solutions (note: ensure production goals are in alignment with Strategic Priority 4).
2. Preservation: Preserve existing deed-restricted affordable housing or naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) by furthering recommendations of SDHC's report "Preserving Affordable Housing in the City of San Diego," released May 28, 2020.
 - A. Identify components of the report on which action or progress can occur annually and present recommendations to the SDHC Board of Commissioners and Housing Authority of the City of San Diego/City Council.
3. Funding: Identify and pursue additional funding mechanisms dedicated to increasing housing solutions (note: ensure funding and advocacy needed to support priorities are reflected in Strategic Priority 5). Seek opportunities to diversify funding sources, including:
 - A. Public-private partnerships.
 - B. Local, county, state and federal collaborations, and Notices of Funding Availability (NOFA).
 - C. Tax-exempt bonds and tax credit financing.
4. Advocacy: In alignment with Strategic Priority 5, conduct advocacy with policy makers at local, state and federal levels in consideration of:
 - A. Favorable ordinances for affordable housing preservation (i.e., incentives for maintaining affordability).
 - B. Tax credit application processes and priorities.
 - C. Housing and community development priorities.
 - D. Increased allocations for federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance, Continuum of Care, HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and Community Development Block Grant funding formulas and priorities.
 - E. Middle-income housing financing and legislation for broader applicability.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

INCREASING AND PRESERVING HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Indicators of Success

The level of progress in this Strategic Priority is contingent on the amount of and diversity of funding opportunities available and a variety of policy and economic factors. SDHC will track the following metrics citywide annually, from which results can be measured. Metrics will be comprehensive and include SDHC-led efforts as well as other public and private projects.

- The number of affordable housing units created (acquisitions and new construction).
- The number of affordable housing units preserved.
- The number of middle-income housing units built and financed.
- The number of permanent supportive housing units created for individuals experiencing homelessness (acquisitions and new construction).

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

HELPING FAMILIES INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

First-Year Actions:

1. Conduct a needs assessment of existing SDHC program participants and residents to determine opportunities for quality-of-life enhancements in SDHC- or affiliate-owned housing communities.
 - A. Determine which existing SDHC support programs meet the greatest needs and identify potential unmet needs in current programming. Consider evaluating current SDHC Achievement Academy programming and gauging needs for medical and mental health services, career training, education, child care, digital access, financial coaching, loan programs and more.
 - i. Based on assessment, determine the opportunity to enhance, scale or remove current programs.
 - ii. Consider new services, including an audit of programs provided by existing third-party organizations that may be able to serve as potential partners. Potential programs should be evaluated based on need and financial, operational and other implications to SDHC and its customers.
 - iii. Explore adding priority services (e.g., broadband internet access) as a requirement for NOFA applications or other opportunities.
2. Explore an online tenant portal to streamline application process (e.g., a document portal that allows for an online application and submission of required documentation in a more secure environment). Consideration should be given to ways to best ensure equitable access to the diverse populations SDHC's programs serve.
3. Increase awareness of existing and/or new SDHC resources.
 - A. Develop a communications plan and tools to increase awareness among current SDHC residents, program participants and potential customers.
 - B. Develop and deploy internal training and a collaboration program to increase awareness of SDHC Achievement Academy, San Diego EnVision Center and third-party programs to encourage customer referrals across the agency's housing communities, rental assistance programs and homelessness services programs.
4. Explore new funding structures to support priority programming and identified quality-of-life opportunities, including joint funding opportunities with partners.
 - A. Streamline the grant application process internally to fast-track approvals to support the timely pursuit of new funding opportunities.
 - B. Identify philanthropic programs and opportunities that align with priority needs/programming.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: HELPING FAMILIES INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

SMART Objectives:

- By the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, increase awareness among customers of the availability and quality of SDHC Achievement Academy programming based on a to-be-conducted 2021 benchmark survey (upon survey completion, a specific metric for improvement will be set).
- By the end of FY 2024, increase the number of individuals who participate in or benefit from the SDHC Achievement Academy by 15 percent from the baseline established at the close of FY 2021.
- By the end of FY 2024, implement three new financial resource initiatives or products.
- By the end of FY 2024, establish partnerships with five new entities to supplement SDHC Achievement Academy programming and resident resources in SDHC- or affiliate-owned housing communities.
- By the end of FY 2024, implement five new quality-of-life initiatives in SDHC- or affiliate-owned housing communities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

First-Year Actions:

1. Enhance communication/engagement through the development and implementation of a year-round internal engagement plan. Consider opportunities to enhance the current Rewards and Recognition program, along with efforts aimed at cross-divisional learning and engagement in support of SDHC's mission, vision and core values.
2. Audit employee benefits and explore additional workplace programs – including those that support mental and physical health and allow for alternative and flexible scheduling – that position SDHC as an employer of choice.
3. Conduct a classification and compensation study to ensure employment opportunities remain competitive.
4. Ensure team members have the training and resources needed to support SDHC's vision and grow individually.
 - A. Audit staff to determine specific areas in which training and resources may be necessary, including any additional needs that may have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; implement a plan to ensure SDHC's team is equipped for success.
 - i. A training and development program may include a mix of tactics for individuals and groups or company-wide training efforts.
 - ii. Training would focus on all levels of the organization – from leadership to frontline staff, including potential programs for mentorship.
5. Ensure SDHC has the people it needs today and tomorrow to achieve success as outlined in the Strategic Plan. As part of this effort, examine if needs for additional talent exist and, if so, recruit the needed team members to achieve success as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
 - A. Establish and share a business continuity and succession plan for key positions, including knowledge transfer and the creation of a repository of information and resources to retain historical knowledge or expertise and prevent knowledge loss.
6. Ensure team members have the necessary technologies to support SDHC's vision.
 - A. Evaluate current information technology support tools/software applications to determine if they will continue to meet SDHC's needs or if additional tools, training or deployment efforts are needed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

SMART Objectives:

- By the end of FY 2024, increase employees' job satisfaction, and availability and quality of training among employees based on 2021 benchmark survey (upon survey completion, a specific metric for improvement will be set).
- By the end of FY 2024, maintain an employee retention rate that exceeds the current regional benchmark of 84 percent.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:

ADVANCING HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS – SUPPORTING THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN ON HOMELESSNESS

Note: The City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness (Action Plan) is the guiding document for annual activity related to homelessness programs and services. In its role as the project management administrator for the Action Plan, SDHC works, with the Implementation Team and Leadership Council to determine areas of focus for SDHC. This work will continue and be the basis from which SDHC will implement this Strategic Priority.

First Year Actions:

1. Continue to support the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness (Action Plan) by:
 - A. Providing day-to-day project management of the Action Plan's implementation and oversight of publicly accessible reporting dashboards for the Action Plan.
 - B. Coordinating and facilitating Implementation Team and Leadership Council meetings to further the Action Plan's objectives on a weekly, monthly and annual basis.
 - C. Working with City policy makers and community stakeholders to support the Action Plan. Areas of focus may include:
 - i. Identify funding and/or partnership opportunities to increase housing and supportive service resources for transition-age youth.
 - ii. Identify funding and/or partnership opportunities to increase housing and supportive service resources for veterans.
 - iii. Identify funding and/or partnership opportunities to increase shelter, long-term housing, permanent housing and supportive service resources for persons experiencing chronic homelessness and unsheltered homelessness.
2. Establish an internal working group to evaluate all SDHC divisions to look for opportunities to support the Action Plan. Ensure the areas of support align with Housing First principles and SDHC's role in the implementation of the Action Plan.
 - A. Adopt division-specific action items in support of the Action Plan.
 - i. Establish areas of prioritization/action and timeliness that align with the Action Plan's three-year "Goals Within Reach" and annually establish areas of focus toward achieving the long-term objectives, in order to promote informed and aligned decision making at divisional levels and for recommendations to the SDHC Board of Commissioners and Housing Authority of the City of San Diego.
3. Evaluate funding, infrastructure and capacity – staffing, technology, training, communications, etc.
 - A. Explore opportunities and collaborations for capacity building both internally and within the broader homelessness response system.
 - B. Proactively identify funding sources to support SDHC's role. Explore new funding mechanisms and external partners with funding capabilities (i.e., County of San Diego, philanthropy and public-private partnership opportunities).

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:

ADVANCING HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS - SUPPORTING THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN ON HOMELESSNESS

SMART Objectives:

- The Action Plan includes three-year and 10-year goals and objectives. SDHC will work annually with the Action Plan Leadership Council and Implementation Team to determine objectives to measure impact related to the portion of the Action Plan that SDHC implements. Measures may include at the following areas:
 - Transition-age youth homelessness and transition-age youth unsheltered homelessness within the City of San Diego.
 - Veteran homelessness and veteran unsheltered homelessness within the City of San Diego.
 - Unsheltered homelessness within the City of San Diego.
- Once division-specific action items are adopted, SDHC divisions will also establish SMART objectives to measure progress specific to the division, but in alignment with the Action Plan's three-year goals within reach and broader 10-year goals.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5:

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

First Year Actions:

1. Advocacy: Establish priority policy areas and a policy engagement guide to foster progress toward SDHC's vision and secure additional public funding.
 - A. The guide would establish roles for internal support, recommendations for potential partnership-building opportunities, recommendations for assuring that equity and inclusion issues are evaluated and addressed, and direction on how and when SDHC will engage on key issues. It will also outline systems for proactive engagement with City Council/Housing Authority of the City of San Diego with the goal of developing solutions and policies collaboratively.
 - i. Consider policy areas such as land use, naturally occurring affordable housing, social equity issues (e.g., poverty deconcentration), single-room occupancy ordinance, Housing Impact Fees (also known as linkage fees), tenant protection, Area Median Income levels, etc.
 - ii. Pursue public funding, specifically addressing needs outlined in:
 - a. Strategic Priority 1 – Increasing Housing and Preservation Solutions
 - b. Strategic Priority 2 – Helping Families Increase Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency and Quality of Life
 - c. Strategic Priority 4 – Advancing Homelessness Solutions
2. Stakeholder Communication: Develop a communications strategy for SDHC and key housing/homelessness issues that builds support and awareness for SDHC and its multifaceted responsibilities. The communications strategy would incorporate customized approaches to address the unique perspectives of various stakeholders (City Council/Housing Authority of the City of San Diego, Regional Task Force on the Homeless, developers, partners and those with a vested interest in housing and homelessness) and the public. Messaging should also address common misconceptions about programs, practices or outcomes.
 - A. Establish a stakeholder communications working group to foster information sharing, messaging, discussion around key issues, and alignment on approach and roles.
 - B. Develop and implement an ongoing stakeholder engagement plan designed to build support for SDHC's efforts and foster housing and homelessness solutions.
3. Public Engagement: Develop and implement an ongoing public engagement plan designed to build support for housing and homelessness solutions and SDHC among the broader public, including neighborhood planning associations, community leaders and the public at large.
 - A. Develop a media response guide that outlines internal roles, and how and on what subjects SDHC will respond to media requests.
 - B. Establish tenant-focused engagement strategies, such as "Know Your Rights" trainings and expository communication materials about SDHC programs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5:

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

SMART Objectives:

Advocacy:

- By the end of FY 2024, influenced or achieved the intended objective on 20 percent of the bills or policies SDHC engages in that support SDHC's mission.
- By the end of FY 2024, identify a minimum of three funding opportunities per year for which SDHC either directly or in collaboration with partners (e.g., City, public-private partnerships) can apply and/or advocate to support housing and homelessness programs and equity and inclusion initiatives.

Stakeholder Communication:

- By the end of FY 2024, 25 percent of stakeholder external communications, such as news releases, social media posts and e-newsletters, will contain one or more of SDHC's key message concepts.

Public Engagement:

- By the end of FY 2024, conduct at least 15 briefings with reporters or newsrooms to inform and educate them about SDHC's programs and activities, and to increase public awareness and understanding of SDHC's mission, vision and programs.