BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD (BHAB)
ACTION ITEM JULY 6, 2023

AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BRIDGE HOUSING GRANT FUNDS; AUTHORIZE NOTICES OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY; AND AUTHORIZE COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENTS FOR LICENSED ADULT AND SENIOR CARE FACILITY SLOTS

To support the well-being of those with behavioral health conditions, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) and the County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) remain committed to investing in services to meet the needs of this vulnerable population. In alignment with this commitment, HHSA's Behavioral Health Services (BHS) department continues to pursue new funding opportunities to enhance and expand access to critical mental health and substance use disorder prevention, engagement, and treatment services.

Through the Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) Program, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will provide a total of $1.5 billion in funding to county behavioral health agencies and Tribal entities to operate bridge housing settings to address the immediate and sustainable housing needs of people experiencing homelessness who have serious behavioral health conditions, including serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder, with a primary focus on serving historically underserved client populations that are most in need of care, including individuals with a Community Assistance, Recovery & Empowerment (CARE) plan.

BHBH funds will primarily provide operational and supportive services funding to expand bridge housing capacity within existing settings or new settings, and can be utilized across four domains, including:

- County program implementation,
- Bridge housing outreach and engagement,
- Bridge housing, including shelter/interim housing, rental assistance, enhanced rates (patches) for licensed residential adult and senior care facilities (board and cares), and housing navigation, and
- Bridge housing start-up infrastructure.

BHBH funds are being released through four distinct funding rounds, as follows:

- **February 2023:** $907 million non-competitive allocation to counties.
- **Spring 2023**: $50 million competitive allocation to Tribal entities.
- **Summer 2023:** $250 million competitive allocation to counties and Tribal entities.
- **Fiscal Year 2024-25**: $250 million competitive allocation to counties and Tribal entities.

On June 23, 2023, BHS was notified by DHCS that San Diego County was conditionally awarded $44,300,211 of non-competitive BHBH grant funding through the initial funding round to increase bridge housing capacity for individuals with serious behavioral health conditions who are

experiencing homelessness. The BHBH grant funds will be utilized to increase licensed residential adult and senior care facility (board and care) slots through rate enhancements (patches) that will be operational through June 30, 2027. A portion of the BHBH funds will also be utilized to support infrastructure start-up costs in the first year to expedite the ability for the new board and care slots to be operationalized and would shift to additional board and care patches, if unspent.

Approval of the recommended actions will authorize the acceptance of the one-time non-competitive BHBH Program funding allocation and authorize Notices of Funding Availability and competitive procurements for BHBH Program funding to increase the capacity of new licensed board and care slots with enhanced rates (patches) for people with behavioral health conditions. These items support the County's vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically those communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities by supporting housing stability for adults and seniors with behavioral health conditions, including those who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

It is, THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that BHAB supports the approvals and authorizations needed to implement the above recommendation.