

North County Homeless Action Plan

Elected Leaders from Escondido, San Marcos, Vista, Oceanside, Carlsbad, and Encinitas adopted the following goals in December 2019:

1) Reduce Unsheltered Street Homelessness 50% by January 2022

2019 Point-In-Time-Count: 964 unsheltered persons in North County

Goal: Reduce to 482 by January 2022 Point-In-Time-Count

2) Increase Short-Term Housing Options for People Experiencing Homelessness Today

Currently only 144 year-round shelter beds in North County, coordinated by the Alliance for Regional Solutions and funded collectively by all North County cities

3) Increase Long-Term Housing Options to End Homelessness for People Experiencing Homelessness or Who Are in Shelter Today

Individual cities to support creation of entry-level and affordable housing

January 2020 Point-In-Time-Count Reveals 18% Decrease in Unsheltered Homelessness, along with Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Beds in Each City (Distribution to Shelter Network Also Noted):

	Homeless: Unsheltered	Homeless: Emergency Shelter	Homeless: Transitional Housing	FY20 Funding to Alliance for Regional Solutions Shelter Network
Poway	15	0	0	\$20,835
Escondido	264	102	52	\$85,821
San Marcos	8	0	0	\$125,000
Vista	51	49	0	\$26,000
Oceanside	242	35	131	\$56,000
Carlsbad	94	53	0	\$47,000
Encinitas	47	25	8	\$20,054
County (Unincorporated)	71	0	0	\$173,612
Totals:	792	264	191	\$554,322

Supporting Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, and Working Hard to Access Very Limited Affordable Permanent Housing, Is a Diverse and Growing Network of Supportive Services:

	City-based, Person-Centered Homeless Outreach Teams Combining Law Enforcement & Social Workers	County-Funded Drug Medi-Cal Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs	County-Funded Mental Health Services and Permanent Supportive Housing for Severe Mental Illness	Federally Qualified Health Centers Providing Medical Care and Behavioral Health Services for Mild-Moderate Mental Illness
Poway				Yes
Escondido	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
San Marcos			Yes	Yes
Vista		Yes	Yes	Yes
Oceanside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carlsbad	Yes			Yes
Encinitas	Yes			Yes
County (Unincorporated)	Yes			Yes

So What’s Missing? Three Critically Needed Resources:

- 1) Additional short-term housing for adults and youth/young adults (YYA), (Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing);
- 2) Entry-level and affordable permanent housing;
- 3) Accessible resources and more effective interventions for chronically homeless, including youth and young adults (YYA), individuals with Severe Mental Illness, including Day Center Services, Case Management and Supportive Services, and expanded Conservatorship program through the office of County Counsel for those who are gravely ill.

Three-Point Plan to Reduce Unsheltered Homelessness in North County

- 1) **Create Additional Short-Term Housing**
 - a. Increase City & County funding for existing shelter network
 - i. Vista City Council approved an additional \$200,000 funding
 - ii. Carlsbad Council recently approved additional \$54,848 for shelter via funds available in response to COVID-19

- iii. Even with those additions, FY21 Shelter Network projected expenses of ~\$2,000,000 are only off-set by ~\$750,000 in local government support, most of which is pass-through federal funding.
 - iv. If we want to help people turn their lives around through proven-effective North County shelters, we must invest in the operations of those shelters. We must also invest in early intervention services and housing for YYA.
- b. Create new shelter and short-term accommodations / transitional housing through blighted motel conversions
- i. Cities / County could purchase and own, or work with non-profit community partners to secure State, Federal, and Philanthropic funds to purchase distressed properties.
 - ii. Advocate for county approved Housing Our Youth (HOY) Pilot to be regionally distributed.

2) Increase Entry-Level and Affordable Housing

- a. Purchase and convert blighted motels
 - i. Work with non-profit community providers to secure and operate high-quality, entry-level housing with case management and supportive services for all adult, youth, and young-adult residents.
- b. Identify additional opportunities to expedite and develop affordable housing amidst COVID-19 recovery
 - i. Additional properties will be available, one-time and special COVID recovery funds have been received (with more coming), and there may be loosening of certain regulatory barriers.

3) Accessible resources and more effective interventions for chronically homeless with Severe Mental Illness, including Day Center Services, Case Management and Supportive Services, and Conservatorship for those who are gravely ill

- a. Fund more social workers to address case management needs for persons experiencing homelessness and struggling to access housing and programs.
- b. Identify multiple North County Day Center locations where people can safely access and be connected with resources. Build capacity at existing youth drop-in centers in Oceanside, Vista and Escondido.
 - i. Identify if any existing shelters or service locations can provide Day Center services, through space repurposing and additional staff support.
 - ii. Identify new sites.
 - iii. Oceanside, Escondido, and Vista all identified plans to pursue additional Day Center services in their city-specific submissions.
- c. Work with County of San Diego, Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers (Neighborhood Healthcare, Vista Community Clinic, North County Health

Services), Medi-Cal Reform (CalAIM), and Homeless Service Providers to increase the number of person-centered case managers and social workers who can help people in need to access and benefit from resources that will end their homelessness and support long-term success.

- d. Select examples are already in-place, but an additional 10-20 person-centered social workers (not working just for one program or agency) will make a dramatic impact housing very hard-to-serve individuals.
- e. Increase proven-effective SOAR program, which secures Federal disability benefits (SSI, SSDI) for homeless individuals who are unable to work.
 - i. North County pilot program currently funded by State CA and Regional Taskforce on the Homeless is working, but at capacity
- f. Strengthen opportunities for conservatorship for individuals with multiple disabling conditions who are unable to end their own homelessness, manage their own health, and are a great risk to themselves or others.

Conclusion & Next Steps

Each of the six North County cities comprising the North County Homeless Action Committee is committed to reducing homelessness. In February 2020 (pre-COVID-19) each city identified detailed steps they are taking to meet each of the three adopted goals of this working group. See: "City-Specific Action Items for North County Homeless Action Committee". This updated Action Plan for all of North County has been created and approved by elected leaders from each North County city.

The Cities of Escondido, San Marcos, Vista, Oceanside, Carlsbad, and Encinitas request the County support this plan by completing the following in Fiscal Year 2021:

1. **Increase County funding for existing North County shelter network by at least \$500,000 FY21**, which combined with other city additions still will cover just 50% of the shelter operating costs, but will help ensure critically important and currently sited shelter beds continue to operate in North County, with set asides of 8 -10% for youth and young adults.
2. Create new shelter and short-term accommodations / transitional housing through blighted motel conversions for adults, youth, and young adults.
 - a. **Master-lease at least three hotels in North County to provide at least 150 rooms for short-term housing**, acknowledging the need for non-congregate shelter amidst COVID-19 and using funding specifically available for COVID response.
3. **Purchase and convert blighted motels to provide needed long-term housing.**
 - a. Either purchase additional motels outright or support lease-to-own deals on motels currently being used for homeless shelters and set aside 8 - 10% for youth and young-adults.

4. Identify additional opportunities to expedite and develop affordable housing amidst COVID-19 recovery.
 - a. **Implement specific plan to utilize County-owned properties** which can overcome land use challenges at the individual city level.
5. Fund more social workers to address case management needs.
 - a. **Contract with North County community-based providers to provide at least 10 Full Time Equivalent mental health social workers** to work with individuals who are homeless with Severe Mental Illness, including an 8-10% set aside for youth and young-adults.
6. **Expand conservatorship program through Office of County Counsel** can help individuals who are unable to help themselves.
7. Work with North County City leaders to **identify and fund Day Center Services** and build capacity of existing youth drop-in centers in Oceanside, Vista, and Escondido.