County of San Diego Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan

County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency

Department of Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities

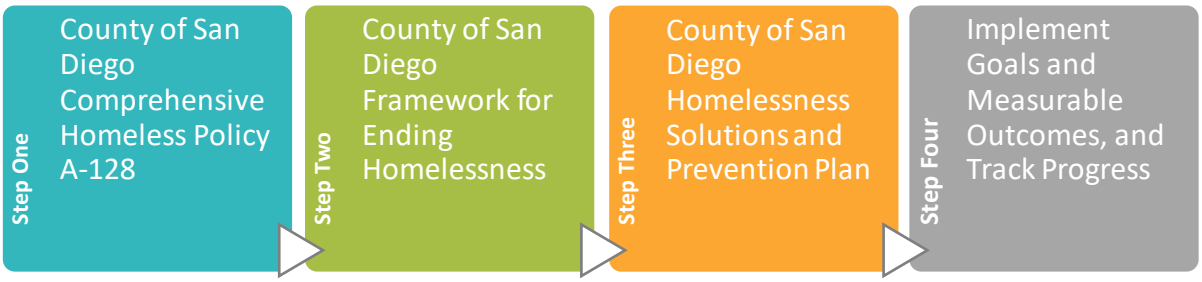
February 2024

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO | LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO

Executive Summary

County governments have complicated and interconnected roles in preventing and ending homelessness. This is due to multiple jurisdictional responsibilities driven by legislation and funding sources. The County of San Diego (County) complements the roles of the 18 incorporated cities located in San Diego County by serving as the health and human services arm for the entire region. The County oversees and administers all State and federal funding for behavioral health, substance abuse, public health, and public benefit programs, as well as being the local government for all unincorporated areas of the county. These services impact residents and all jurisdictions within the region. The County is strategically positioned to align and coordinate with the cities and other stakeholders to prevent and end homelessness, move away from managing crises, and shift toward the upstream prevention of homelessness.

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) has led significant actions in recent years to prevent and end homelessness. On April 6, 2021 (6), the Board established the County Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) as the centralized point of collaborative efforts to end homelessness. Subsequently, HSEC has taken several actions that can be summarized in four steps to ensure the County's approach to ending homelessness is coordinated and aligned with Board policy and the needs of the region.



Step one included revising the **County of San Diego Comprehensive Homeless Policy** (A-128) to lay the foundation for the County's comprehensive response to homelessness. Board Policy A-128 identifies 29 key initiatives. It recognizes that poverty, inequitable economic opportunity, and trauma are among the most significant causes of homelessness, and that a comprehensive approach must embrace the economic, physical, and mental well-being of all San Diego County residents.

Step two included developing the **County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness** (Framework) to operationalize the Board Policy. The Framework is anchored in five strategic domains: 1) Root Cause and Upstream Prevention; 2) Diversion and Mitigation; 3) Services, Treatment, and Outreach; 4) Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources; and 5) Permanent Housing and Support. Each strategic domain is driven by five key commitments that guide the County's approach: 1) Person-Centered; 2) Data; 3) Collaboration; 4) Sustainability; and 5) Equity. The Framework encompasses the County's ongoing work and provides a vision to support forward, collaborative, and impactful progress.

Step three included developing the **County of San Diego Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan** (Action Plan). The Action Plan, described in detail in this document, advances the Framework's

strategic vision into measurable priorities and outcomes. The Action Plan is designed to outline the County's strategies to impact homelessness regionally in alignment with existing efforts, the County's resources and authority, and the objectives of federal, State, regional, and local strategic plans.

Homebase, a national non-profit organization dedicated to building community capacity to end homelessness and reduce poverty, and to foster thriving, inclusive communities, was contracted to lead the initial development of the Action Plan. Homebase engaged with nearly 500 people with lived experience, 19 County departments, Board of Supervisors' offices, multiple city jurisdictions, San Diego County Office of Education, RTFH, East County Task Force, Alliance for Regional Solutions (North), and San Diego Workforce Partnership. They also reviewed more than 30 homelessness and housing plans within the region and the County's foundational frameworks and concepts. Homebase developed the initial Action Plan through a two-year, phased process that included significant stakeholder and public engagement.

Phase One was completed in May 2022 and focused on current needs, near-term actions, and a landscape analysis of people served and State, federal, and local funding for current programs. It set forth an initial set of outcomes and serves as a foundation for the current Action Plan. Phase One was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on May 24, 2022 (7) as part of Assembly Bill 140 requirements tied to the State's Housing and Homeless Assistance Program funding.

Phase Two was a Comprehensive Needs Analysis completed in the fall of 2022 through mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative data analysis, and comprehensive feedback from key stakeholders across the County enterprise, community stakeholders, and people with lived experience of homelessness. The purpose of this assessment was to help identify gaps and needs across the Framework for Ending Homelessness in San Diego County, recommend changes, and further cross-system and cross-sector efforts to develop the most impactful homelessness solutions.

Phase Three was the completion of the draft and current version of the Action Plan which sets measurable action steps and milestones. The Action Plan is focused on the interconnected nature of the County, including various departments and their work with the local Continuum of Care, cities, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness. Informed by the research and engagement process in Phases One and Two, Homebase helped develop key short- and long-term action steps and milestones that align with the Framework's five strategic domains and key drivers. Examples of the short-term and long-term action steps are listed on the following page, with the full descriptions beginning on page 39 of this report.

Examples of Action Steps by Strategic Domain

Root Cause and Upstream Prevention	• Implement shared data policies and systems to identify households at risk of homelessness. • Pursue funding opportunities in order to establish homelessness prevention program.
Diversion and Mitigation	• Support the expansion of a regional diversion model with regional partners. • Support efforts to reduce evictions regionwide by 20% each fiscal year.
Services, Treatment and Outreach	• Increase coordination of outreach to cover the county and streamline connections to services and treatment. • Increase the percentage of people going to safe temporary or permanent housing from County street outreach programs by 10% each fiscal year.
Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources	• Continue to assess County land and potentially available sites to implement compassionate emergency housing solutions. • Close the gap between emergency/interim housing need and supply by 90% by 2026 in the unincorporated areas of the county.
Permanent Housing and Support	• Increase the number of Permanent Supportive Housing units funded by the County by 20% before 2028. • Support the implementation of a countywide shared housing matching system for people experiencing homelessness.

Examples of Action Steps by Key Driver

Person-Centered	Data	Collaboration	Sustainability	Equity
• Increase County department coordination to better serve people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. • Develop training curriculum for County staff to increase knowledge of resources and risks of homelessness. • Measure client satisfaction quarterly.	• Publish key Action Plan metrics publicly. • Operationalize standard definitions of "homelessness" and "housing need" across County departments. • Identify funding for and implement a new County data system to improve data sharing and improve client outcomes.	• Conduct resource mapping with regional partners to further identify collaborative opportunities. • Advance impact through County interdepartmental working group on homelessness. • Establish agreements with additional jurisdictions to further service collaboration.	• Support policy changes to address root causes of homelessness. • Continue identifying available funding and partner with local entities to apply for those opportunities. • Continue participation in regional funding and policy strategy discussions.	• Add an equity analysis to the annual review of Framework programs and outcomes. • Assess performance measures related to equity in current County homeless contracts. • Leverage feedback from people with lived experience.

With the conclusion of this version of the County Action Plan, HSEC is currently entering step four, which will implement goals and measurable outcomes, and track progress to include developing public-facing dashboards to track the milestones laid out in the Action Plan. Although this version of the Action Plan is finalized, it is a living document and will be reviewed and updated regularly. HSEC will continue to define objectives and opportunities to further the Action Plan.

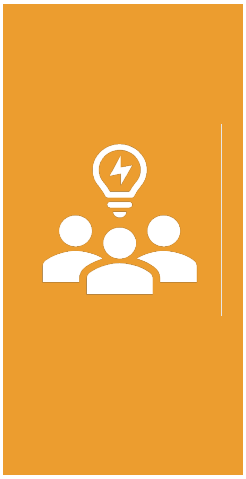
PHASE ONE: Foundational Concepts and Frameworks

Phase One of the Action Plan development was completed in 2022 to fulfill requirements of State funding applications. It focused on a high-level analysis of the County's role and current activities, as well as a landscape analysis of foundational concepts and frameworks, people served, current needs, near-term actions, and State, federal, and local funding for current programs. The full landscape analysis can be viewed on the County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors website as part of the May 24, 2022 (7) report to the Board. This section summarizes the Phase One findings that Homebase subsequently used as a foundation to create the Phase Three Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SOLUTIONS AND EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

A significant milestone that defines the County's role in addressing homelessness was the establishment of Department of Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities (HSEC). HSEC launched on July 1, 2021, and consists of the Office of Equitable Communities, the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, and the Office of Homeless Solutions.

HSEC is dedicated to centralizing critical expertise and resources and providing a platform to engage in partnerships with cities and other regional partners for preventing and addressing homelessness in the San Diego County region. HSEC also serves as a catalyst to better coordinate services and interventions across the County enterprise, including a focus on strategically leveraging existing resources and pursuing new resources to meet local and regional housing, shelter, and service needs. HSEC focuses on programs and services by leveraging existing regional partnerships and working with cross-sector community stakeholders to prevent, reduce, and eliminate homelessness.



Key tasks, objectives, and functions of HSEC include:

- Serve as the County lead for developing and coordinating policy and ensuring County efforts prevent and address homelessness.
- Assess the current function of County services related to people experiencing homelessness and design new programs or recommend system improvements.
- Utilize evidence-based and data-driven practices.
- Align with the County Comprehensive Homelessness Policy initiatives and the Framework as approved by the Board.
- Provide direct services in the field to people experiencing homelessness to help them obtain needed social services and housing supports.

Key HSEC accomplishments include:

Program Development

- Established Compassionate Emergency Housing Solutions, including the County's first Safe Parking program, located in unincorporated East County.
- Established the Housing Disability Advocacy Program for people who are disabled and at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- Provided shelter for people experiencing homelessness in unincorporated areas of the county through the Regional Homeless Assistance Program.
- Provided specialized assistance to youth up to age 24, throughout San Diego County, who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness through the Housing Our Youth Program.
- Funded countywide domestic violence shelter programs for survivors of domestic violence and their families.
- Offered comprehensive care coordination, service navigation and housing assistance through the Community Care Coordination for Veterans, Community Care Coordination Straight to Home, and Community Care Coordination Re-Entry Support Programs.

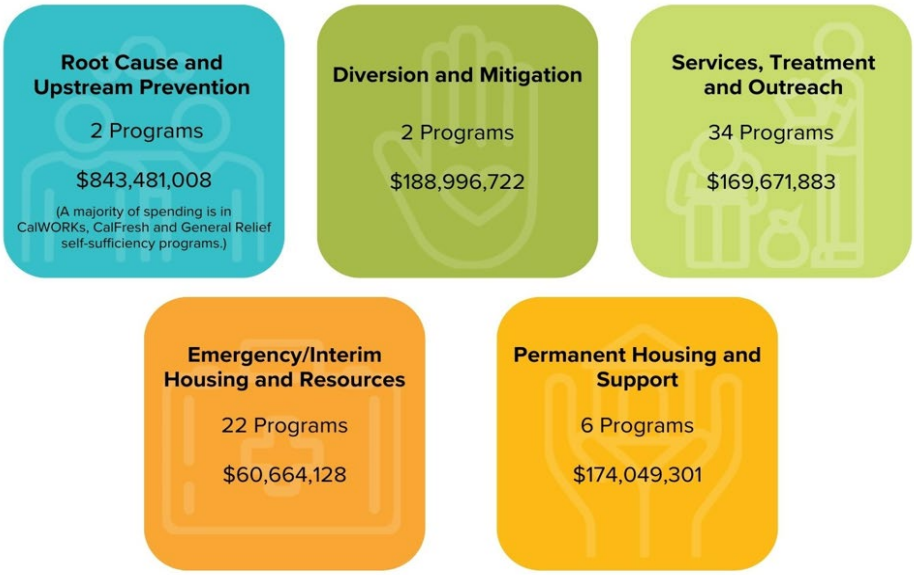
Direct Services

- Hired over 30 new staff to expand direct outreach and case management services countywide.
- Introduced the use of a software application that enable non-homeless focused County staff to refer people experiencing homelessness and encampments for outreach assistance.
- Executed a Memorandum of Agreement with cities in East County to increase access to low-barrier emergency and permanent housing to build a network of shared housing solutions.
- Since its inception, completed 60,000 engagements with people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, processed 9,000 self-sufficiency applications on streets and in encampments, and connected 3,500 people to shelter and housing.

Resources and Coordination

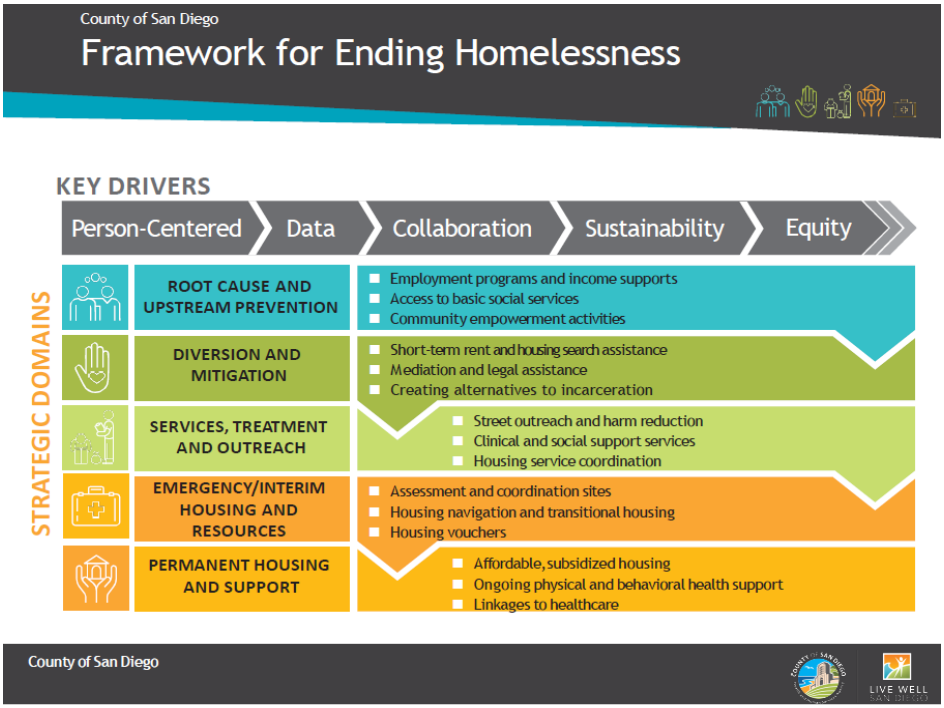
- Through various collaborative efforts with County departments, RTFH and city jurisdictions, secured over $80 million in new State Block Grant funding to prevent and end homelessness.
- Established a system to consistently collect data on funding and people served for over 80 County programs that serve people experiencing homelessness.

In addition to the role HSEC plays in the County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness, the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Framework Annual Index of Programs includes 17 other County departments that administer programs within the County of San Diego that directly contribute to at least one of the five strategic domains. The images below show the number of Fiscal Year 2021-2022 programs and expenditures by the Framework's strategic domains.



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO FRAMEWORK FOR ENDING HOMELESSNESS

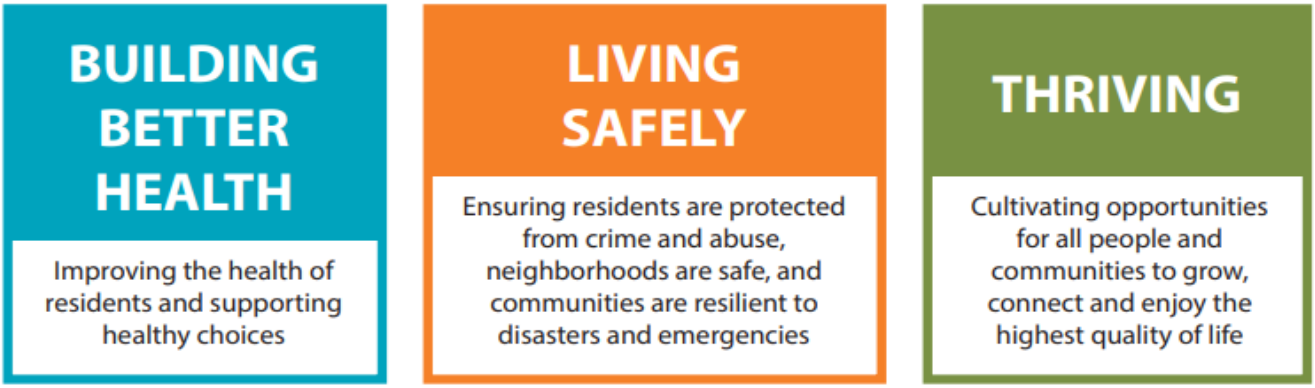
On November 2, 2021 (4), the Board adopted the County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness (Framework). The Framework operationalizes the County's initiatives on homelessness that align the existing work throughout the region to assist people at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, with the goal of ending homelessness. The Framework is anchored in five strategic domains that represent the continuum of opportunities to end homelessness by preventing it when possible, by reducing the length of time people experience homelessness, and by strengthening ways to remain housed. Additionally, the Framework is driven by five key drivers that guide the County's approach:



The establishment of HSEC and adoption of County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness were key events that drive the County's efforts in addressing homelessness. Homebase also reviewed other relevant frameworks and concepts that were incorporated in the Action Plan and are described below.

LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO

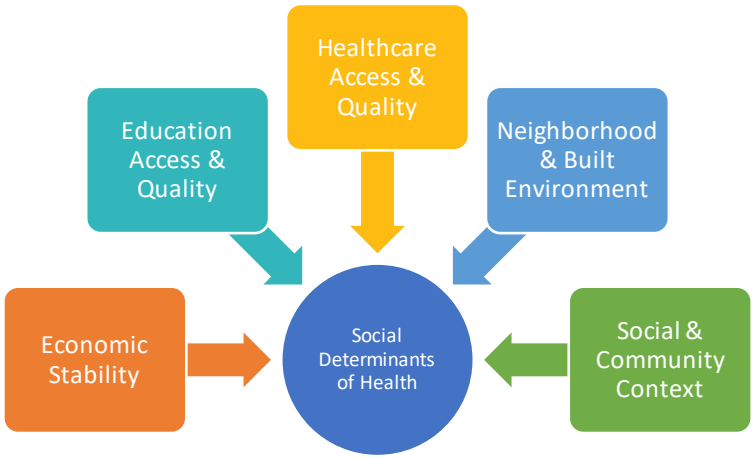
HHSA supports the *Live Well San Diego* vision of building better health, living safely, and thriving. *Live Well San Diego* is a regional vision that combines the efforts of partners inside and outside the County to help all residents be healthy, safe, and thriving.



The Action Plan aligns with and supports the *Live Well San Diego* vision by advancing strategic efforts to improve the lives of people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness through enhanced funding, innovative new programming, as well as creating measurable outcomes to guide existing and future regional efforts.

POPULATION HEALTH AND THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Adequate cross-sector planning to address homelessness necessitates a deeper focus on social determinants of health. The nature of addressing complex housing needs for those with physical or behavioral health needs, for example, requires detailed information sharing and early, consistent integration. While these factors affect an individual's vulnerability, health and social services help to address them.



It is important to note that homelessness is primarily a systemic issue and is driven by root causes, including lack of affordable housing. Transforming how the community thinks about population health will improve the ability to end the dual housing and health crisis of homelessness and help people experiencing homelessness thrive. These lessons influence the Action Plan.

MEDI-CAL TRANSFORMATION

Medi-Cal Transformation, previously referred to as California Advancing and Innovating in Medi-Cal (CalAIM), is a long-term commitment from the State of California Department of Health Care Services to transform and strengthen healthcare and community supports for individuals receiving Medi-Cal, offering Californians a more equitable, coordinated, and person-centered approach to maximizing their health and life trajectory. San Diego Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (SDAIM), is dedicated to supporting Medi-Cal Transformation implementation locally by serving as a liaison and partner to these efforts.

Medi-Cal Transformation represents an important system transformation around reaching and supporting people who are Medi-Cal eligible and is fundamental to the County's homelessness efforts. Health and social care providers are critical strategic partners in reaching and providing people with needed supports and treatment where possible to prevent homelessness and ensure any episodes of homelessness are rare, brief, and one-time. Properly resourced and aligned, Medi-Cal Transformation becomes the connection point not just for physical and behavioral health care, but also for access to stable housing and a building block for community transformation. Medi-Cal Transformation presents new services, such as Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports, as well as funding opportunities to support capacity building and infrastructure that can get and keep people, with significant health-related needs, in a home. By leveraging these new services offered through Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans, there is an opportunity to break down silos between the health, homelessness response, and housing sectors, so that use of existing funds can be reimagined with a focus on upstream prevention.

DECLARATION OF HOMELESSNESS AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

On September 27, 2022 (21), the Board declared homelessness a public health crisis in recognition of the intersection of housing stability and health. This declaration provides greater opportunities to bring together County departments, local jurisdictions, community stakeholders, and resources toward the shared goal of preventing and ending homelessness as a cross-system local priority involving the expertise of those in homelessness services, housing, public health, and behavioral health. This commitment to addressing homelessness as a public health crisis includes developing a comprehensive, innovative regionwide approach, including cross-system solutions, clear lines of responsibility and partnership, and continually updating progress on the County Framework.

The foundational concepts, frameworks, and other information identified in Phase One served as a foundation for the subsequent phases of Homebase's work.

PHASE TWO: Comprehensive Needs Assessment

In December 2021, Homebase began an assessment of homelessness and housing needs in San Diego County. The primary purpose of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment is to identify gaps and needs in the County response to homelessness to advance the Framework. It includes an analysis of existing resources versus unmet needs and a qualitative needs assessment based on feedback from the public and key County and regional stakeholders. Homebase also reviewed jurisdictional strategic plans related to addressing homelessness to inform this needs assessment. While some of the gaps identified lend themselves to strategies and action steps for making progress towards ending homelessness, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment is not intended to lay out a prioritized list of strategies. Specific goals and strategies are the primary focus of Phase Three starting on page 38 of this report.

There are various strategic plans that identify needs related to homelessness in jurisdictions across the county, such as the plan developed by the RTFH, the federally designated regional planning body that coordinates housing services funding for homeless families and individuals through the Continuum of Care (CoC). In 2022, RTFH in partnership with the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), conducted a gaps analysis as part of the Regional Community Plan to determine the projected number of resources in the region for people who are already experiencing homelessness:

Resource	Projected Need
Diversion	4,470
Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter	850-1,290
Low-Income and Rapid Re-Housing Need	16,280
Permanent Supportive Housing	4,347

Source: Regional Taskforce on Homelessness 2022 Regional Community Plan

The priorities, goals, and best practices identified in reports such as RTFH's are critical to inform County efforts. It is important to note however, that many existing reports assess efforts across the region or for specific cities and are not focused on the role the County plays. For example, although the County is a critical partner across the region, to meet the projected need described above will take significant action by many cities and jurisdictions and not the County alone.

Acknowledging the value and existence of these existing regional and jurisdictional plans, this assessment sets out to identify opportunities where the County could make the most impact given its unique position.

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment was informed by:

- A review of over 30 homelessness and housing plans within the region (refer to page 37).
- Regular meetings with a steering committee comprised of cross-departmental County leaders, known as the Homeless Action Plan Workgroup.
- Over 25 focus groups and interviews with leadership and staff across the County enterprise, cities in the region, RTFH and sub-regional alliances, San Diego County Office of Education and San Diego Workforce Partnership.
- Survey of 500 people with lived experience.

- An analysis of quantitative data from eight existing County data systems, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Stakeholder Engagement

Homebase worked in close collaboration with the County teams and other key stakeholders to conduct an analysis of homelessness and housing needs that encompassed:

- Monthly meetings with a Homelessness Workgroup comprised of key staff within relevant County departments.
- Twenty-five focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, including:
  - Alliance for Regional Solutions (Bridge to Housing Committee)
  - County of San Diego, Chief Administrative Office
  - County of San Diego, Finance & General Government Group
    - Office of Equity and Racial Justice
    - Department of General Services
  - County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency
    - Aging and Independence Services
    - Behavioral Health Services
    - Child and Family Well-Being Department
    - Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities
    - Housing and Community Development Services
    - Medical Care Services Department
    - Office of Strategy and Innovation
    - Public Health Services
    - Self-Sufficiency Services
  - County of San Diego, Land Use & Environment Group
    - Department of Public Works
  - County of San Diego, Public Safety Group
    - Child Support Services
    - District Attorney's Office
    - Probation Department
    - Public Defender
    - San Diego County Sheriff's Department, Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART)
  - East County Homeless Task Force
  - Homelessness Points of Contact for local jurisdictions, including the cities of San Diego, Chula Vista, Carlsbad, Escondido, Del Mar, El Cajon, Poway, Solana Beach, and Oceanside
  - People with lived experience and expertise on homelessness
  - Regional Task Force on Homelessness
  - San Diego County Office of Education
  - San Diego Workforce Partnership
  - South Region Homelessness Alliance
- A review of over 30 relevant community plans and guidance documents on preventing and ending homelessness in the region.

Quantitative Data Analysis

As part of the comprehensive needs assessment process, information was collected from cross-system partners to assess overarching needs and resource gaps. From the County, Homebase collected data from:

- Health and Human Services Agency
  - Behavioral Health Services
  - Child and Family Well-Being Department
  - Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities
  - Office of Strategy and Innovation
  - Public Health Services
- Public Safety Group
  - Child Support Services
  - District Attorney's Office
  - Probation Department
- Housing Authority of the County of San Diego

Homebase requested and received data from the HMIS provided by RTFH as well as data from the San Diego County Office of Education. They also leveraged the recent Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) regional needs projection modeling report and accessed additional sources, including but not limited to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and HUD Consolidated Community Planning data.

Recognizing the difficulty in quantifying a precise or finite number of households who would benefit from programs to prevent and end homelessness, one of the first steps Homebase took was to collect data on the potential need for homelessness prevention and response services across various systems.

It is important to note that one of the most significant limitations in quantifying the number of people needing services is the absence of data matching across system partners. For example, while there are many children experiencing homelessness throughout the school year it is difficult to be sure who receives services that are part of the homeless response system or behavioral health system without matching with HMIS data.

The highest estimate of people who could benefit from the homelessness response system, at arguably the ultimate intervention point to prevent homelessness, are people living in severely rent-burdened housing situations. Since not having enough income to pay rent is a significant driver of homelessness, ensuring that there is enough affordable rental housing (via development, rental subsidies, income guarantees, living-wage employment opportunities, etc.) for the **almost 400,000 people in San Diego County who are severely rent-burdened** would lead to a meaningful reduction in the number of people becoming homeless each day. (Data source: National Low Income Housing Coalition 2021)

A more targeted way to identify the scale of need is to start with numbers from a particular system, such as the school system, where **approximately 34,000 students and their families are currently counted as "homeless"** according to San Diego Department of Education CALPADS report. While those households are mostly not "literally homeless", by the HUD definition (living in unsheltered locations or

emergency shelter), they are often living in informal shared housing arrangements with extremely or very low incomes, which can increase their risk of becoming unsheltered or having to enter emergency shelter. Additionally, existing data from an analysis by CSH indicates that homeless response system-specific resources (those targeted primarily to people experiencing literal homelessness) should be scaled to add around 27,000 short-term and long-term resources.

Additional data collected through the analysis was matched with the appropriate strategic domain or key driver and incorporated throughout the needs assessment.

In conducting the quantitative data analysis, Homebase confirmed the assessments in other regional plans that in order to determine more exact quantitative needs, more accurate and consistent data is required from various County and regional sources. For example, within the County enterprise, challenges exist with collecting the data from programs in all Framework domains that span across the entire enterprise. These challenges include the fact that homelessness definitions are not consistent, contractual data collection requirements are not uniform, programs often rely on self-report of homelessness, and not all programs are solely focused on serving the homeless population and do not collect data specific to housing. The County is currently working on addressing these challenges.

Existing data from the various County agencies and systems will need to play a larger role in preventing homelessness. Such data can be collected and analyzed as part of a collective data warehouse and can provide a starting point to begin to understand how the resources and practices of those agencies and systems can be more effectively targeted. However, to truly understand the precise levels to which those resources should be scaled, the County must increase data sharing across agencies and systems to de-duplicate the data and understand which households (of either the higher-end severely rent-burdened, lower-end informally sharing housing, or literally homelessness groups) are being counted in multiple data systems.

While there are limits to the available quantitative data, an analysis of existing sources combined with qualitative feedback and information from other homelessness plans allowed Homebase to produce the following needs assessment for each Framework strategic domain and key driver.

By looking at the overall estimates of need versus existing resources, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment identified ten overarching needs for San Diego County, which are listed on the following page.

Overarching Needs for San Diego County

1. Additional **permanent, affordable housing options** to respond to housing instability and homelessness as a form of addressing the root causes, prevention, diversion, and as a permanent solution for those exiting homelessness.

2. Increased role and focus among County departments to identify and respond to the **upstream factors** and social determinants of health that can lead to and exacerbate homelessness.

3. **Increased coordination** across County departments and between the County, CoC, local jurisdictions, and the public; as well as **increased education** on issues related to homelessness including prevention, diversion, treatment, behavioral health continuum of care services, and emergency and permanent housing options.

4. Expansion of **homeless outreach, emergency shelter options, housing, and services** to all areas of San Diego County, including rural and unincorporated areas.

5. Development of a coordinated, comprehensive outreach network and model that focuses on **successful exits from homelessness into housing**.

6. **Low-barrier emergency housing and shelter resources** in all regions that are accessible to people experiencing homelessness in their own communities and neighborhoods, including emergency shelter, emergency stay hotel vouchers, sleeping cabins, and safe parking options.

7. Commitment to **Housing First, person-centered, and trauma-informed approaches** in housing, shelter, and services across the homelessness prevention and response system.

8. **Improved data-sharing processes** within the County and across jurisdictions to increase data accuracy, quality, and timeliness for people at-risk of or experiencing homelessness countywide.

9. Intentional and consistent incorporation of socio-economic, racial, and ethnic **equity** considerations and outcomes into programs, policies, processes, and contracts.

10. **Coordinated funding strategies** to establish, sustain, and scale up successful homelessness prevention and response interventions.

IDENTIFIED HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING NEEDS BY STRATEGIC DOMAIN

Root Cause and Upstream Prevention

Preventing homelessness by focusing on the root causes of homelessness and upstream prevention strategies.

In Fiscal Year 2021-22, the County of San Diego led two Root Cause and Upstream Prevention Programs, investing $843,481,008 in this strategic domain. A majority of the expenditures were in CalWORKs, CalFresh, and General Relief self-sufficiency programs.

Stakeholders across San Diego County spoke to the need for improved strategies to provide social, economic, and environmental interventions to support vulnerable households before reaching the point of housing instability. These interventions could reduce inflow into homelessness-dedicated programs and resources. According to HMIS-Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS), the annual number of people entering HMIS-tracked homeless services for the first time continues to increase. In 2018 there were 7,350 people accessing homeless services for the first time in San Diego County. That number rose to 9,612 in 2019 and to 12,153 in 2020.

An increased focus on preventing and reducing poverty is crucial for preventing homelessness upstream. Common challenges that contribute to or exacerbate the risk of homelessness for households across San Diego County include systemic and structural issues related to disability, unemployment, lack of income, access to affordable childcare, immigration status, and lack of health insurance.

A sentiment shared by stakeholders across interviews, focus groups, and local plans was clear: accessing and maintaining housing is the best way to prevent homelessness. There is an unmet need for enough affordable housing options that are accessible, especially to people who experience barriers to market-rate housing due to factors such as limited income, credit history, limited rental history, and eviction history.

Surging rental prices and a high cost of living have made it increasingly difficult for lower- and middle-income households in San Diego County to not only find, but also maintain safe, affordable housing. These households include older adults who are on limited incomes. The California Housing Partnership reports that in 2022, renters in San Diego County needed to earn 2.9 times the minimum wage to afford the average asking rent locally.

According to the federal HUD Consolidated Community Planning Data in the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), 26% of all renter households spend more than 50% of their income on housing and are considered rent burdened. For extremely low-income households, the cost burden is even greater: 70% spend more than half of their income on housing. Stakeholders identified a need for flat or shallow rental subsidies for households with limited income, such as those receiving Social Security benefits, to maintain their housing.

<u>Highlight of existing County resources:</u>

- *In 2023, HSEC launched a Pilot Shallow Rental Subsidy Program that provides a $500 monthly subsidy to 222 rent burdened seniors who are at risk of homelessness for 18 months.*

- *The County Housing and Community Development Services serves more than 11,000 households annually with rental subsidies such as Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and other programs.*
- *The County administers a Landlord Incentive Program that provide incentives to landlords that accept housing vouchers in efforts to expand the pool of affordable rental units.*

Strategies identified by stakeholders also included efforts to preserve existing and add new truly affordable housing stock. A distinct role was identified across the County enterprise to identify and inventory County land that could be utilized for a range of housing and shelter interventions, including affordable housing development. Affordable housing development is discussed further on page 26 in the context of the Framework's Permanent Housing and Support strategic domain.

Low-income households also need consistent access to economic resources to help maintain stable housing. Interviewed stakeholders noted that employment supports, child care, and self-sufficiency services such as CalWORKs, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal, need to be easier for low-income households to access and maintain through life disruptions, through improved outreach and education about resources and expansion of successful models such as supported employment.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *By providing eligibility determination and case management services for State, federal and local public assistance programs to over one million San Diego County residents, County Self-Sufficiency Services programs represent a major investment in upstream prevention. These programs help low- income families and their children meet basic needs. They include, but are not limited to, Medi-Cal free or low-cost health coverage, CalFresh food assistance, and CalWORKs cash assistance for eligible households.*

Feedback collected during the needs assessment process consistently pointed to the connections between homelessness and experiences of incarceration, foster care involvement, hospitalization, and inpatient mental health and substance use disorder treatment that reflect systemic challenges for upstream homelessness prevention. Stakeholders identified the need for alternatives to incarceration, greater investment in family reunification support, alternatives to the criminalization of homelessness, and more accessible substance use disorder treatment options as some of the ways that County departments can systemically address the root causes of homelessness.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *In 2023, the County launched the Child and Family Well-Being Department integrating multiple child and family serving systems, including First 5 San Diego and Child Welfare Services to strengthen families through the earliest intervention services to enhance child well-being, prevent child abuse and neglect, and ensure an equitable approach to reducing child maltreatment.*
- *In 2023, multiple departments within the County developed an Alternatives to Incarceration Work Plan that includes enhanced transitional services for justice populations.*

Stakeholders across sectors and at different levels within organizations recognized that the robust, interconnected nature of the County makes it uniquely positioned to identify and respond to the social determinants of health that can lead to and exacerbate – or prevent – homelessness. Stakeholders spoke

to the need for the County enterprise to increase focus on and connections to education, employment, healthcare access, transportation, child care, and community violence and crime prevention, as homelessness prevention measures that can offer pathways out of poverty and to greater housing stability. Upstream prevention requires a commitment to early identification and intervention in addressing housing-related issues across County departments and systems. This includes consistent and coordinated screening efforts for indicators that identify the risks of homelessness and housing instability among clients in non-homeless-specific programs.

Regional Prevention Programs Highlight: Of the 6,281 people who enrolled in homeless prevention programs between November 17, 2017, and February 16, 2022, 5,498 "exited" from the programs. Of those individuals whose exit destination was known, 92.72% went to permanent housing, including 85.09% leaving to rent or own housing units **without** ongoing subsidies. Homebase concluded that prevention projects in the region are having a consistent impact on the community with great rates of connections to permanent housing. Between 2019 and 2022, the average number of people who received these interventions per year was 1,756.

Finally, stakeholders identified the need for strong State and federal legislative action to change or implement new policies and legislation to address issues of inequity and poverty.

Equity Considerations in Upstream Homelessness Prevention Response

Stakeholders and community plans highlight specific equity considerations for upstream prevention. These equity considerations speak to the unique experiences of populations that are at higher risk of homelessness due to systemic risk factors, including youth, Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ+) people.	Lasting impacts of redlining and discriminatory lending and rental practices continue to shape the affordability and accessibility of certain neighborhoods for BIPOC households.
	Systemic racial disparities in income and poverty create the need for intentional outreach and engagement with low-income BIPOC households to help them access poverty reduction resources, such as financial assistance and mainstream benefits.
	Health equity zip codes used as a tool by County HHSA to help identify neighborhoods with the most vulnerable populations across the county. These people may be at risk of homelessness and benefit from focused prevention and poverty reduction efforts.
	San Diego County's BIPOC and Latino/a youth experience risk factors for homelessness – such as incarceration and engagement with foster care – at much higher rates than their peers in general.
	LGBTQ+ youth may face homelessness due to family rejection, indicating a need for greater family-based interventions and family strengthening to prevent homelessness upstream for youth.
	Many individuals who work in San Diego County and reside close to the U.S. – Mexico border make significantly low wages and are in need of affordable housing options for themselves and their families.

Diversion and Mitigation

Interventions that will prevent people who are on the brink of homelessness from becoming homeless.

The County of San Diego led two Diversion and Mitigation Programs in FY 2021-22 and invested $188,996,722 in this strategic domain.

When homelessness is not able to be prevented upstream, there is still an opportunity to intervene for those on the brink of homelessness. County staff interact with people facing housing instability and the risk of homelessness, although this may not be their primary reason for engagement in services. County departments need to work in coordination with the CoC, 2-1-1, community providers, and within and across their own programs to identify such people in urgent need of housing assistance and intervene with diversion and mitigation resources. This coordination should include more robust training opportunities.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *The County has contributed funding to RTFH's diversion program to help expand these interventions which are administered throughout the CoC.*
- *The County stood up an Outreach App to help staff from non-homeless related departments (Librarians, Park Rangers, etc.) make referrals to HSEC for assistance with encampments or people experiencing homelessness they are encountering through their work.*

Stakeholders identified a particular need for strategies and resources to work with private landlords to prevent evictions that could result in homelessness, including offering landlord incentives. Case management and housing navigation staff can also work with households to help resolve issues that may present barriers to housing, such as connecting them with legal services to help resolve unlawful detainer eviction cases. Preventing evictions can prevent episodes of homelessness and keep people in their homes with some added assistance. Pre-pandemic regionwide eviction data collected by San Diego Sheriff's Department shows an average of 3,500 evictions per year. This decreased significantly during the pandemic (2020 and 2021) when additional protections and rental assistance were put in place to prevent evictions. The average number of evictions during those two years was 890 per year. In 2022, after the protections related to the public health emergency ended, evictions increased to 1,300 per year.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *The County contracts with a local non-profit organization to provide Tenant Legal Services. This includes legal representation, legal clinics, education, outreach, and case management for households at risk of being evicted.*
- *The County administers a Coordinated Eviction Prevention program to help prevent evictions before an official eviction notice is given. This program provides outreach, flexible funding, mediation, and case management to help avoid the evictions and stabilize people in their homes.*

Outside of direct housing interventions, there is a need across the county for homelessness and mental health diversion to be more effectively integrated and woven into different crisis response strategies.

Police and firefighters are often the first responders to physical, mental, and behavioral health crisis among people experiencing homelessness. Local law enforcement utilizes thousands of police officer hours per year to respond to calls related to individuals experiencing homelessness.

This underscores a two-pronged need: 1) expanded crisis de-escalation and mental health screening trainings for first responders and 911 dispatchers countywide, and 2) non-law-enforcement crisis intervention models and community-based responders to help address emergency and non-emergency situations among people experiencing homelessness.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *Prosecution and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Services (PLEADS) provides non-medical sobering services to adults who are intoxicated or inebriated and who are brought to the program via health, safety, and/or law enforcement.*
- *County contracted Mobile Crisis Response Teams provide non-law enforcement 911 emergency response to those who are experiencing mental health issues but are not a threat to self or others.*

Stakeholders and community members also spoke to the importance of establishing more robust and efficient discharge planning efforts for people exiting behavioral health, foster care, and correctional settings. There is support for additional programming and/or staff that can coordinate institutional exits and provide warm handoffs, as opposed to simply providing referrals, to appropriate resources in the community to prevent homelessness, including shelter, housing, employment supports, mental health resources, and other wraparound services. These coordinated supports are particularly important for people who may be exiting institutions with higher barriers to market rate housing, including people with felonies or sex offenses, as well as to help prevent recidivism for people with histories of justice system involvement.

In the four years of data reviewed by Homebase, 4% of all enrollments in HMIS-tracked services - approximately 2,020 people per year - were initiated by people coming directly (spent the previous night) in hospitals, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, jails, prisons, foster care, psychiatric facilities, or substance use disorder facilities. According to a SANDAG report, 23% of people booked and released expect to exit to homelessness. Additionally, 31-46% of youth aging out of foster care will experience homelessness (broadly defined) by the time they are 26 (Data source: UC Berkley Child Welfare Dashboard 2021).

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *The County, through partnerships between HHSA and the Public Safety Group, operates Community Care Coordination (C3) programs to provide service navigation and housing assistance to at-risk populations being released from local jails.*

Stakeholders noted that people exiting institutions after stays of more than 90 days may not meet the eligibility requirements for some programs and have more limited access to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funded homeless-specific housing and services. There is a need for homelessness prevention and diversion resources that can serve as a safety net for these individuals who are ineligible for many federal homelessness response programs but are still at significant risk of homelessness.

Services, Treatment, and Outreach

Interventions that include street outreach, harm reduction, clinical, social, and housing support services.

In FY21-22, the County of San Diego led 34 Services, Treatment, and Outreach Programs. Total investment in this domain was $169,671,883.

The County plays a crucial role in ensuring that services, treatment, and outreach for people experiencing homelessness reach across the entire county, including rural and unincorporated areas. This includes services provided by County's comprehensive **behavioral health continuum of care**. The ability to provide these interventions in a comprehensive, coordinated, and timely manner can make the difference in ensuring that experiences of homelessness are rare, brief, and one-time.

Services

Stakeholders, community plans, and feedback from forums with people with lived experience consistently identified the same needs regarding homeless services – a greater diversity of services in more accessible locations provided by a greater number of staff. This includes greater access to specialized resources and interventions for special populations of focus, such as youth, individuals experiencing serious mental illness, and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.

Feedback from people with lived experience forums particularly highlighted the need for more effective services everywhere, in every region and area of the County, including meals, laundry, phone and internet access, restroom and shower facilities, transportation, vaccinations, assistance with obtaining documents, employment supports, mail services, and behavioral health services.

People experiencing homelessness across the county currently experience difficulties accessing services for a variety of reasons, including lack of transportation, "resource deserts," outdated service information, and fragmented services across multiple locations and programs.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *HSEC outreach teams leverage mobile devices to connect individuals experiencing homelessness to public benefits in the field (streets and encampments) during coordinated outreach.*
- *HSEC also leverages the County Live Well Mobile Office during outreach events which facilitates clients receiving Electronic Benefit Cards on the spot, printing important documents such as birth certificates and copies of IDs, and completing housing applications.*

The need for more "one-stop shops" and resource hubs to provide a variety of services in the same location for people with multiple needs was identified during lived experience forums. Many stakeholders interviewed also endorsed the need for easily accessible "one-stop shops" for people to connect with and apply for the myriad of County resources they need to access to achieve stability. Finally, but of significant importance, is the need to increase care coordination throughout the county.

Treatment

In addition to the need for more general wraparound supportive services, stakeholders identified the need for more robust and accessible medical, dental, mental health, and substance use disorder treatment interventions to better serve people experiencing homelessness.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) provides comprehensive care through their countywide network of providers. People experiencing homelessness can be linked to this existing continuum of care through BHS contracted outreach teams who join coordinated outreach events countywide to link people to existing services.*
- *In FY20-21, more than 68,000 people were admitted to mental health and substance use services contracted by the County. Of those individuals, 11,488 reported experiencing homelessness.*

Stakeholders and community plans have identified several specific treatment intervention types that need to be expanded, including regional or inter-city mental and physical health services, residential and non-residential behavioral health options, drop-in facilities, emergency response beds, medical respite, step-down care, and mobile health resources such as street medicine and pop-up clinics that are accessible to people experiencing homelessness.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *County Public Health Nurses join homeless outreach countywide and provide mobile vaccination, communicable disease screening, education, and prevention.*

In addition to increasing the scope of treatment interventions available across communities, there is also a need to address timely access to behavioral health services and offer expanded hours of availability. When considering the expansion and improvement of treatment options, several communities looked to the role of the County in addressing community health and allocating resources to mental health and substance use disorder treatment.

Outreach

The 2021 data from the local HMIS shows that one of the most common pathways for people experiencing homelessness to housing, shelter, and services across San Diego County is through street outreach.

The County is the leading entity when it comes to outreach in the unincorporated areas of the county. Local city jurisdictions lead outreach in their jurisdictions, and many have very robust coordinated outreach teams and activities. When HSEC was established in 2021, the County greatly expanded the capacity for countywide outreach supports to city jurisdictions by adding 30 new outreach staff positions to provide coverage in areas where outreach did not previously exist including the vast unincorporated areas of the county. HSEC partners with 18 city jurisdictions in outreach and joins their multi-disciplinary teams.

Some jurisdictions expressed a need for ongoing support in adequately locating and providing non-emergency services to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness or residing in encampments in harder-to-reach areas like canyons or riverbeds. Some stakeholders believe that homelessness in rural

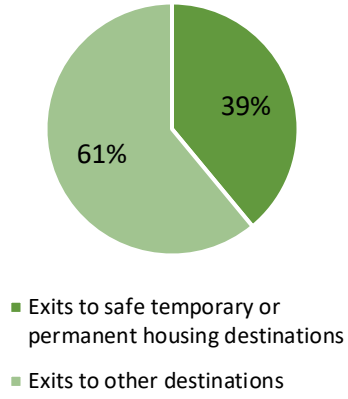
and unincorporated areas of the county has historically been significantly undercounted and under addressed. HSEC has expanded services to the unincorporated areas in partnership with the Sheriff's Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART) for full coverage of North, South, and East unincorporated communities.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *In 2022, in partnership with multiple County department and non-profit organizations, HSEC led efforts to resolve a large encampment of over 100 individuals in the unincorporated El Cajon. This encampment was resolved without enforcement and individuals were provided emergency housing options. This site was subsequently turned into a Safe Parking site that continues to serve people experiencing homelessness.*
- *In partnership with multiple city jurisdictions and Caltrans, HSEC led two separate applications for State of California Encampment Resolution Grant funding in 2023. Both applications were awarded for a total of $22 million which will help resolve longstanding encampments that cross multiple jurisdictions.*
- *HSEC is working on two additional applications in 2024 with multiple city partners and Caltrans to help resolve additional encampments.*

Overall, feedback from across sources spoke to the need to continue ongoing efforts to build out a comprehensive, coordinated outreach network that operates countywide. There are multiple outreach providers operating in San Diego County at the local and regional levels, but these efforts are not always coordinated across County and municipal boundaries. Additionally, there is a need for these outreach efforts to deepen their focus on helping increase placements into housing for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

Recent reports from RTFH public dashboards indicate that street outreach has a low housing placement success rate. In 2020, only 39% of people successfully "exited" street outreach programs to enter safe temporary or permanent housing destinations. Only one-third of those *successful* exits were to permanent housing destinations.



Furthermore, 20% of people housed from street outreach returned to homelessness within six months and 46% of street outreach clients experienced homelessness again within two years.

Stakeholders identified a need for more flexible funding that can be utilized by outreach teams to provide housing support, such as emergency hotel stays and storage for people who are ready to exit homelessness into shelter or housing. Improved coordination that ensures consistency in outreach and opportunities to build rapport can also strengthen outreach outcomes across San Diego County.

Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources

Interventions for emergency and interim housing needs with assessment, supportive services coordination, and housing navigation.

In FY 2021-22 the County of San Diego led 22 Emergency/Interim Housing & Resources Programs and invested $60,664,128 in this strategic domain.

Although Housing First has been identified as a best practice by regional plans and many stakeholders, addressing homelessness often requires emergency or interim housing and resources before a person can access safe, stable, and permanent housing. This can be due to a variety of factors such as lack of income, lack of available housing that is affordable or meets accessibility needs, or lack of proper documentation required to obtain housing. Feedback from forums with people with lived experience, stakeholders, and community plans overwhelmingly point to the need for more low-barrier emergency shelter in all regions of the county as well as specific and dedicated resources that can serve single adults, couples, families, people with histories of involvement with the justice system, the aging population, and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. In addition, stakeholders identified a need for youth-specific shelters, LGBTQ+ affirming shelters, and acceptance of pets.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *Eight County departments support some type of Emergency or Interim Housing resource for populations with special needs, such as: transitional Sober and Friendly Environment (SAFE) Housing, Domestic Violence shelters, interim housing for people supervised by the County Probation Department, and emergency housing for people accessing HIV case management.*
- *Although the County's primary responsibility related to Emergency and Interim Housing is to operate such facilities in the unincorporated area of the county, in 2022 the County made $10M available for cities to apply for one-time capital funding to support shelter resources in their respective cities. This will result in nearly 500 emergency housing resources such as shelters, sleeping cabins, and safe parking to serve people experiencing homelessness countywide.*

An additional significant concern for people with lived experience was safety in emergency shelters. Multiple stakeholders also expressed the need for on-site access to comprehensive wraparound supportive services, temporary storage options for personal belongings, and flexible funding to help respond to urgent needs.

Stakeholders also expressed concern regarding a lack of housing for people who are exiting shelters. Persons with histories of justice system involvement and reentry populations were identified as populations of focus with a particular need for greater support in transitioning from interim to longer-term housing options.

Beyond shelter beds, stakeholders across jurisdictions spoke to the need for more diverse crisis response and short-term housing options that are accessible to people in their own neighborhoods. Innovative community-based crisis response options include emergency stay hotel vouchers, master-leased and factory-built housing units for emergency and temporary housing, expanded capacity for day centers and drop-in centers, safe parking and sleeping spaces for individuals and families while they wait to get

into permanent housing, and treatment beds for detox and recovery, mental health crisis, and recuperative care.

Spotlight on Emergency Housing and Resources in Unincorporated Areas

According to the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, there are 200 people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County. Based on feedback from stakeholders, access to emergency housing or shelter and related crisis response resources is a primary concern for unincorporated areas.

HSEC currently administers the Regional Homeless Assistance Program (RHAP) for the unincorporated areas of the county which leverages hotels as scattered site emergency housing options. RHAP's current capacity is for 250 households on any given night and the contractor leverages over 30 hotels countywide as emergency housing options. Case management, housing navigation, and links to resources are part of the program to exit individuals into more permanent housing options. RHAP is exiting approximately 38% of participants into permanent housing.

There is a gap between the identified shelter need in the unincorporated areas that the County is focused on closing through Compassionate Emergency Housing Solutions and Pathways to Housing efforts. These efforts will create emergency housing options such as safe parking, RV parking, and sleeping cabin shelters that will help close the gap between the need and resources. However, long-term funding is needed to support these efforts.

In 2022, as part of Compassionate Emergency Housing Solutions and Pathways to Housing efforts, HSEC launched Magnolia Safe Parking in the unincorporated area of the county. This program serves people experiencing homelessness in their vehicles with safe place to sleep, flexible funding to remove barriers to housing, access to hygiene facilities, case management, and housing navigation to connect them to more permanent housing options. This program exits approximately 48% into more permanent housing options.

The photos below show the transformation of the space below the State Route 67 overpass on North Magnolia Ave from being the site of a large encampment in March 2022 to a Safe Parking site in August 2022. HSEC coordinated efforts with many partners to shelter or house over 100 people from this encampment in the process of transforming the lot into the County's first Safe Parking site.

Permanent Housing and Support

Providing permanent solutions to affordable housing and the support services individuals may need to maintain permanency.

The County of San Diego led six Permanent Housing and Support Programs in FY 2021-22, investing $174,049,301 in this domain.

Permanent housing and supports help prevent and end experiences of homelessness. There is a need across San Diego County to ensure that permanent housing is not only affordable and accessible to households experiencing homelessness, but that it also includes long-term support to help households maintain and sustain income and housing.

Highlight of County permanent housing resources:

- *From 2017-2023, the County supported the development of 1,660 new affordable housing units. As of late 2023, there were more than 2,900 additional units in the pipeline.*

A goal consistently identified across regional homelessness plans, including the County's Phase One Homelessness Action Plan described earlier, is to reduce the length of time persons remain homeless. In 2021, when the Phase One Action Plan was drafted, the average length of time (in number of days) persons were enrolled in street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, safe haven projects, and time prior to move-in for persons enrolled in rapid rehousing and permanent housing programs was 118 days.

Data from RTFH 2020 System Performance Measures indicate that 39% of people in street outreach programs and 32% of people in emergency shelter, safe-haven, transitional housing, and rapid rehousing programs exit to permanent housing destinations. Stakeholders and the County aim to increase those percentages to house more people. Some reasons for the current rate include high cost of housing and low vacancy rates as well as lack of supportive housing and long-term boarding care facilities to meet the needs of individuals with complex needs. Not exiting to a permanent housing destination means that individuals and households spend longer periods of time homeless and have less positive housing outcomes when time-limited/temporary assistance ends.

Lack of affordable housing inventory is one of the greatest barriers to help people experiencing homelessness exit to safe permanent housing destinations. There was universal feedback from stakeholders, community plans, and lived experience forums that the greatest need for addressing homelessness across San Diego County is to increase permanent supportive housing and permanent affordable housing units. Shared housing, master leasing, and tiny homes were identified as specific options to be explored to help increase the permanent affordable housing inventory, with a particular role for the County to identify available and appropriate land for development.

What does housing inaccessibility and unaffordability look like in San Diego County?

Low vacancy rates. This has been a challenge in San Diego County for years, including a plunge from a 2.91% vacancy rate across the county in Spring 2021 to 1.25% during Summer 2022 according to the University of Southern California Lusk Center for Real Estate. Low vacancy rates can lead people experiencing homelessness or on the brink of homelessness to unstable or unsafe situations, such as

doubling-up, couch surfing, sleeping unsheltered, or trading sex for shelter. Low vacancy rates also make it difficult for people with housing vouchers or tenant-based rental assistance to find affordable rental units that will accept their form of assistance. This is because many vouchers are designed to be used for units in the private market, putting voucher-holders in competition with other people looking for housing.

Rising rent prices. A 2022 annual study conducted by University of Southern California Lusk Center for Real Estate found that the average rent for a studio apartment in San Diego County is $2,417, up 23% from 2021; the rent for a one-bedroom apartment is up by 21% to an average of $2,775. Participants in County-funded lived experience forums, led by San Diego Housing Federation, spoke about how the rising cost of rent are pushing people out of their communities without any more affordable places to go in the region. Additionally, housing vouchers and rental assistance amounts are not adequate to match the rising cost of rent.

Lack of affordable unit production. San Diego County's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (2021) found that more than 171,000 housing units are needed in the San Diego County region by 2029, of which over 23,000 units need to be affordable to extremely low-income households. Of that number, the County is responsible for 6,700 units in the unincorporated areas. Currently, there is an approximate 10-year waitlist to access limited Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), which is a lengthy wait for people in urgent need of housing. The housing crisis is exacerbated by insufficient production of moderate-income housing, creating competition for low-income units because current housing options are unaffordable for many households.

Insufficient Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units. PSH is significantly lacking in San Diego County compared to other similarly sized regions. According to RTFH's 2022 Regional Community Plan, there were 6,449 PSH units in the region in 2022, a 54% increase from 2019, but more is needed. There is no reasonable access to PSH units in some areas of the county, including much of the unincorporated areas and smaller municipalities.

Inadequate range of specialized housing options. These include board and care, medical respite, crisis stabilization, independent living, group homes, and other short-term housing for people with specific health needs. There is also a need for more permanent housing options that suit the needs of different populations, including people who have experienced chronic homelessness, youth, families with children, people with histories of justice system involvement, older adults, and those with disabilities.

Numerous stakeholders identified the need to create new permanent affordable housing opportunities by any means necessary, including new construction, hotel or motel conversion, utilization of County-owned properties, and new innovative types of housing. The County was specifically identified, by other local jurisdictions as a key partner in identifying and converting properties that could be used for permanent housing and providing wraparound supportive services once people are housed.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *The County has been creative in identifying funding for the development of affordable housing, establishing and investing in an Innovative Housing Trust Fund, dedicating American Rescue Plan Act funding for extremely low-income units, and partnering with local city jurisdictions on successful applications for the State's Homekey program.*

- *Between 2017-2023, the Board of Supervisors identified 11 County-owned properties to be transformed into affordable housing.*

Despite the urgent need for additional permanent housing opportunities, stakeholders noted that complicated requirements, and regulations for combining and managing affordable housing funding from different sources can create an undue burden on affordable housing developers, disincentivizing the creation of new affordable housing units. Additionally, permitting, zoning, and environmental restrictions have been identified as significant barriers in using available land and facilities to expand the regional affordable housing inventory.

Highlight of County permanent housing resources:

- *There has been recent significant progress in overcoming these barriers through the direction of the Board and work by the County Planning and Development Services to amend the County's Zoning Ordinance. The amendment exempts County-owned, operated, and leased emergency shelters, as well as transitional and supportive housing, from Zoning Ordinance provisions related to basic provisions, definitions, and general regulations.*

Beyond availability of units, stakeholders emphasized the importance of units being low-barrier and accessible in all regions, including mixed-income neighborhoods - located in all area types (urban, suburban, and rural areas) - and situated near public transit, commerce, and other community services to equitably address homelessness. Efforts to provide low-barrier access to permanent housing need additional support through increased housing navigation services across the county.

Once connected to permanent housing, there is a need for robust aftercare and sufficient funds for contractors to be able to provide supportive services to ensure the success of Housing First, financial counseling, and connections to employment supports to help households sustain housing and avoid preventable reentries into homelessness. Only 7% of people served through homelessness-dedicated resources in the RTFH in 2021 saw an increase in income, which is often crucial for helping households maintain and sustain permanent housing placements.

Finally, it is critical that San Diego County maintain any new and existing affordable housing stock. There is a need to identify and secure long-term funding and supports to help keep affordable housing truly affordable for people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness and to maintain available housing options with quality standards.

IDENTIFIED HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING NEEDS BY KEY DRIVERS

Person-Centered Approach

A person-centered approach emphasizes the unique needs of each person to guide supports and services. This approach ensures that services and programs are created in culturally sensitive ways to address the unique needs of various vulnerable populations including, but not limited to LGBTQ+, older adults, veterans, foster youth, and justice-involved individuals.

The expansion of a person-centered approach throughout San Diego County, first and foremost, requires elevating more people with lived experience to the forefront of local planning and project implementation efforts. According to some stakeholders and regional plans, this should include increased employment and training of peer supports and utilization of peer navigation resources to ensure that people experiencing homelessness have someone they can trust to help them advocate for housing, shelter, and services along their journey out of homelessness.

Highlight of existing person-centered County resources:

- *County programs such as Community Harm Reduction outreach and the County's Tenant Peer Support Services (TPSS) leverage peer supports and lived expertise for deeper engagement with clients.*
- *HSEC outreach staff and case managers practice person-centered and trauma-informed approach to their engagement with clients.*

In addition to peer support positions, there is a need for more person-centered, trauma-informed staffing and training across systems and programs that serve people experiencing homelessness. Stakeholders spoke to the need to humanize people experiencing homelessness. They indicated the need for trained case management and navigation staff to provide coordinated housing and connections, work with landlords, and work towards a client's housing goals. Staff should include people with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and identities, including those with lived experiences of homelessness and fluent in more than one language. County departments work closely with human resources staff to ensure robust diversity in hiring processes. Additionally, community engagement is at the center of the County's General Management System and HSEC engages with people with lived experience to incorporate their voice in design, development, and implementation of various new programs.

Person-centered housing and services should reach people where they are and offer accommodations for their specific needs. Local jurisdictions and other stakeholders spoke to the importance of a regional approach that allows for variation in how services are delivered, giving people experiencing

homelessness the ability to decide where and how to access supports based on personal choice and not location or transportation barriers.

Highlight of existing person-centered County resources:

- *HSEC has launched several specialized programs that serve youth, people with disabilities, veterans, LGBTQ+ and justice-involved individuals with services crafted for their special needs.*

Additionally, participants in lived experience forums pointed to a lack of accommodations for people with disabilities and differing needs in current housing, shelter, and service options. There is a need for more ADA-accessible structures across homeless and housing resources and more compassionate staff who are trained to accommodate a range of physical, mental, and emotional health needs.

Finally, commitment to Housing First is key for expanding and implementing a person-centered approach throughout San Diego County. This includes providing a range of housing, shelter, and service options that are low-barrier and accessible to people with real or perceived barriers to housing, including couples, people with pets, those with credit and rental history concerns, and individuals with histories of justice system involvement. In alignment with the principles of Housing First, the impacted person should drive development of their own housing, service, and treatment plan every step of the way along their housing journey.

It was widely recognized that the County is a large organization that delivers wide range of services. One of the opportunities for impact and prevention that stakeholders identified could be accomplished through improved knowledge, training, and coordination of County staff. People seeking any County services should be able to access needed housing and resources to address their whole person needs in a coordinated way across County programs. Equipping County staff with knowledge and training of where to direct people who are at risk or experiencing homelessness could yield a more streamlined, person-centered, and whole person wellness approach and improved service delivery.

Data

A data-driven approach is one that uses evidence-based policy making to create more effective, equitable, and focused outcomes.

The lack of accurate and timely cross-sector data regarding housing stability and homelessness presents one of the greatest barriers to understanding and addressing housing needs across the county. Homebase identified, as have many regional plans and stakeholders, the overwhelming need for greater capacity to share and match data across systems to sustain an effective homeless response system.

Currently, countywide data on homelessness and system performance is not comprehensively tracked or maintained. The local HMIS is used by the local CoC in compliance with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards and is an important tool in the community that stakeholders must commit to using. Data available through HMIS provides only limited insight into the housing needs, characteristics, and outcomes (short-and-long-term) of people experiencing homelessness and housing instability across the county.

Numerous stakeholders and community plans identified the urgent need for improved data sharing and coordination efforts. For the County, this means greater collaboration between departments to identify people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness, to match client data and coordinate care, and to track housing outcomes across interventions representing the public housing, public health, mental and behavioral health, child welfare, human services, education, and justice systems through resources such as data dashboards. Periodic or continuous sharing of data may require the County to invest in building a data warehouse to combine cross-system administrative data with data from programs dedicated to responding to homelessness and leveraging HMIS. The County may also consider studying housing stability for people paying more than 30% - 50% of their income on housing, people accessing human service benefits, and those involved with the justice system.

Highlight of existing County data resources:

- *In 2022, the Board directed HSEC to work with the County's Office of Evaluation, Performance and Analytics (OEPA) to develop a County Homelessness Prevention Program. This is a multi-pronged approach to analyzing data related to homelessness which involves multiple County departments that participated in planning and are contributing to development of this program. OEPA is currently developing a cloud-based data collection system which will improve data sharing practices for the purposes or research and evaluation by OEPA.*
- *OEPA will be able to add an algorithm into the system to calculate risk of homelessness based on number of identified risk factors. This will allow HSEC to contact those identified at risk of homelessness and if those households are in need of services, HSEC can make those connections with goal of preventing an episode of homelessness.*

Data strategies for the County enterprise that can be employed through collaboration should include:

1. Aligned data collection across all sectors, including homelessness, housing, medical/hospitals, behavioral health, education, justice system, human services, and child welfare.
2. Periodic or continuous data sharing on clients served and client outcomes, especially housing stability; and
3. Regular, systematic studies of resource needs and gaps.

Aligned data collection strategies should include developing and implementing standardized definitions and methods for determining "homelessness," "risk of homelessness," and "housing instability" and for evaluating the need for "housing stabilization resources" that meet the reporting needs of each sector. Work is underway at the County to evaluate how these different terms are used across programs. Each agency will need a standard way of asking these questions to allow for systematic analysis.

Collaboration

Collaborating across the geographic boundaries through partnerships with jurisdictions, services providers, community partners, stakeholders, and others is crucial to aligning efforts to end homelessness.

San Diego County spans over 4,200 square miles, comprised of urban, suburban, rural, tribal, and expansive unincorporated areas. To effectively prevent and end homelessness regionally, the County needs to continue to develop and leverage structures that support a coordinated approach across jurisdictions.

Highlight of existing County regional collaboration:

- *HSEC led two successful collaborative State encampment grant applications which included local city jurisdictions and Caltrans to bring $22 million to the region to address long standing encampments. HSEC also collaborates with City of San Diego and RTFH on a joint Housing and Homeless Prevention Assistance application which in each round brings over $50 million locally from State funding.*

Stakeholders identified regional coordination with local hospitals and emergency departments as a high need to prevent discharges of vulnerable people into homelessness. Similarly, coordination between law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions is a priority to ensure that there is a consistent law enforcement response to homelessness countywide, with a focus on diversion from the justice system and connections to resources whenever possible.

Local jurisdictions and other stakeholders have spoken to the need for improved collaboration with the County to align resources, funding, ordinances, and other regional efforts to address homelessness, with a particular focus on addressing the primary and behavioral health needs of people experiencing homelessness. A Memorandum of Agreement signed in 2022 between the County and the Cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, and Santee demonstrates the importance of regional agreement across jurisdictions on shared and individual roles and responsibilities, goals, and desired outcomes for preventing and addressing homelessness and provides the opportunity for establishing measurable goals.

However, within regional collaboration efforts including existing subregional alliances, local jurisdictions noted that there is also a need for continued recognition of and responsiveness to the different characteristics and needs of different localities. This may include considerations such as different resource gaps between regions (i.e., emergency shelter beds or permanent supportive housing units and funding), as well as different challenges to accessibility of existing resources based on geography and access to transportation.

Highlight of existing County regional collaboration:

- *HSEC has partnered with local jurisdictions to enhance and strengthen outreach regionwide for coverage across the entire county. HSEC explored the needs of each jurisdiction as some had robust services and others had none and has filled outreach gaps without duplication. HSEC is focused on providing services that are crafted based on identified jurisdiction needs.*

Within the County enterprise, HSEC is taking a lead role in overcoming silos and providing coordinated resources to meet the needs of people across systems of care. Additional messaging and efforts to increase awareness of the County's leadership on the issue of homelessness regionwide, including resources, focus and impact, are needed to help define a more unified approach and the County's role in addressing homelessness.

Representatives of County departments considered what is needed to move from an individual impact framework to a collective impact model for homelessness prevention and response. The collective impact model is one way of aligning work across different partners and sectors using a structured form of collaboration. Key components of the collective impact model include a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and leadership support.

Needs identified by County department stakeholders include:

Common Agenda: Need to identify common language, definitions, and understanding of homelessness services/processes across areas of focus and expertise (i.e., housing and the justice system), different expectations, statutory and regulatory requirements, and fiscal timelines.

Shared Measurement: Need to understand outcome goals for different departments and to improve data sharing and HMIS utilization to collect, track, and report data on homelessness and housing instability.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Need to provide staff training on topics related to homelessness, collaboratively design crisis, and permanent housing programs, and incorporate homelessness into the day-to-day thinking of staff in different departments.

Continuous Communication: Need to strategize communication across departments and the community regarding homelessness and continue and expand cross-system collaboration on efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

Leadership Organization: Need to recognize HSEC as the organization to coordinate across all County departments on the issue of homelessness.

Stakeholders further identified specific roles and responsibilities desired of HSEC as a leadership organization, such as understanding and sharing knowledge of different County departments and their approaches to addressing homelessness, acting as a central hub for the coordination of County homelessness efforts, and developing consistent internal and external communications on the issue of homelessness for the county.

Sustainability

A sustainable approach is one that promotes and maintains solutions to ensure housing stability through a variety of financial investments.

As the County deepens its financial commitments to addressing homelessness, it is crucial that funding strategies are in place to help establish, sustain, and scale up those interventions that are most successful in preventing and ending homelessness. The County's declaration of homelessness as a public health crisis represents one important sustainability enhancement in terms of health/well-being, equity, economy, and environment for people experiencing homelessness in the region.

Highlight of existing County sustainability efforts:

- *Since its inception, HSEC has been able to secure funding outside of the standard local budgeting process, securing over $80 million in State grant funding through proactive and collaborative robust efforts. This funding is used for programming of key regional efforts in addressing homelessness.*

Stakeholders expressed a need to streamline current processes and reduce bureaucracy as much as possible to allow for quicker and more sustainable access to funding for programs, so they can in turn more quickly and effectively meet local homelessness and housing needs. At the program and funder level, there is a need to reduce requirements to only what is essential based on the funding source and administrative requirements. One recommendation was to assess the County's work across the enterprise for improved efficiency and sustainability for programs dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness. To enhance efficiencies and achieve better outcomes in supporting the unsheltered population and further preventing homeless, on November 7, 2023 (27), the Board approved the procurement for consulting services to conduct an enterprise-wide assessment of homeless services and programs in San Diego County to include County contracts relating to homelessness and current collaborations with homeless providers and city jurisdictions. This effort will build upon work done during the Action Plan development and further explores ways to streamline County services, ensure effective and adequate resources, and strengthen homelessness collaborations.

In addition, stakeholders expressed a need for greater coordination between the County, CoC, and local city jurisdictions to align funding priorities and avoid duplication of efforts among funded programs and activities. This coordination is needed to identify successful interventions to expand or scale up and to sustain programs and services that are tied to temporary funding and need a longer-term funding commitment. A more regionalized funding strategy is also necessary to help reduce competition, streamline processes, and to focus instead on filling gaps in regions and jurisdictions that have insufficient funding and capacity to respond to local need.

Highlight of existing County resources:

- *HSEC led two State Encampment Grant Funding applications with Caltrans and the Cities of Santee, San Diego, National City, and Chula Vista to help resolve homelessness in San Diego Riverbed and the Sweetwater Riverbed area (Plaza Bonita).*

- *The County issued $10 million in grants for local city jurisdictions to help stimulate expansion of emergency housing options. This will result in an estimated 500 new emergency housing resources countywide.*
- *HSEC issued grants for local private entities to purchase sleeping cabins from County approved vendor and use those to establish emergency shelters on their private property.*

Finally, a sustainable approach to homelessness prevention and response requires community support. There is a need for alignment and frequent communication to community members across San Diego County to help break down stereotypes around homelessness, communicate consistent information and resources, and build support for homelessness prevention and response interventions in their neighborhoods. While this messaging should be coordinated, it is also a matter of equity that information is shared by trusted messengers in the community and tailored to the specific characteristics, needs, and concerns of subregions.

Equity

Equity is a priority of the County, and therefore all aspects of homeless prevention and response should ensure socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic equity.

Ensuring socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic equity in all aspects of homelessness prevention and response is a priority for the County. Regional statistics from RTFH annual 2023 Point-In-Time Count indicate that BIPOC communities are disproportionately impacted by homelessness when compared to the larger residential demographic:

- 27.2% of people experiencing homelessness identify as Black or African American, roughly five times the proportion of people who are Black or African American in the region.
- 3.4% identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, which is nearly three times the proportion of the general population in the region.
- 28% of people experiencing homelessness in San Diego County are Latino/a or Hispanic.
- Prevalence of homelessness is not known for people who are undocumented and members of Native American tribes, although these are significant populations of focus in San Diego County. Greater intentionality and leadership to engage these populations is needed, including cultural sensitivity to nuances around defining homelessness.

Moreover, 58% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in 2022, reported having a disability, which includes 37% of the population who reported having a mental health condition. The 2022 youth-specific Point-in-Time Count, identified 659 youth experiencing homelessness, with recent estimates that one-fourth of youth experiencing homelessness in San Diego County are LGBTQ+. The needs of populations of focus such as individuals with disabilities, youth, and people who identify as LGBTQ+ are crucial for ensuring social equity in homelessness prevention and response efforts across the county.

Various stakeholders identified that the County's commitment to equity needs to be better institutionalized in processes and procedures across County departments, agencies, and services. There is a need for greater consistency in County contracts across departments and agencies that include specific stipulations and outcomes that promote equity.

Highlight of existing County equity resources:

- *In partnership with the County's Department of Purchasing and Contracting, the Office of Equity and Racial Justice has begun to communicate equity in contracting considerations and is working to implement a checklist that staff may use within each of the steps of the procurement process – from development of the Statement of Work to issuing a Notice of Intent to Award to ensure inclusive and equitable contracting.*

Finally, housing and healthcare outcomes are deeply interconnected. Therefore, it is crucial that homelessness and housing interventions promote and advance health equity alongside racial and social equity. Health equity requires policies at all levels to be harmonized around the social determinants of health and the factors that contribute to homelessness, such as rent control, limited housing stock, and short-term vacation rentals. Ongoing work by the County enterprise to advance health equity in homelessness prevention and response should build upon the current health equity resources and tools.

Phase Two Conclusion and Next Steps

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment provides an analysis of unmet needs across the strategic domains and key drivers of the County Framework for Ending Homelessness. This is a time of urgency and opportunity, with numerous efforts already underway to enhance collaboration across departments that aim to make a significant impact on addressing and preventing homelessness. The needs identified naturally point to several action steps and solutions, but with constraints on funding and capacity, it is important to develop a clear priority of goals and specific action steps, which are the aim of Phase Three.

Phase Three is outlined in the next section and focuses on opportunities for impact the County can take collectively as an enterprise to address and end homelessness. This is the first edition of the Action Plan, and it is meant to be assessed and updated in regular intervals to ensure it is aligned to the County's efforts and resources.

[Photo of house shapes]. (n.d.). Microsoft Word Stock Image

Phase Three: Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan Opportunities for Impact

The County is well-positioned to impact regional homelessness. The Action Plan described in this section was developed as a follow up to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment. It outlines opportunities for positive impact and measurable progress milestones that will guide the County's enterprise-wide response and activities to collectively end homelessness in San Diego County. To address the needs identified in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, HSEC has identified priorities under the Framework that will have the greatest impact across the network of services. Short-term and long-term action steps have been identified according to the five key drivers and five strategic domains within the Framework. This Action Plan also sets measurable outcomes for each identified priority. Public facing dashboards with outcomes and the County's progress toward ending homelessness through the Action Plan's measurable goals and outcomes are currently in development.

ALIGNMENT WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS PLANS

The recommendations in this Action Plan are aligned with the objectives of federal, State, regional, and local strategic plans. On February 28, 2023 (5), the Board directed staff to incorporate *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. HSEC completed a crosswalk of the federal plan to ensure full alignment with the Action Plan. Many of the short- and long-term action steps and the desired outcomes reflect shared goals, collective regional goals, and alignment with other plans. The following additional plans were considered in development of priorities:

- Ad Hoc Committee Addressing Homelessness Among Black San Diegans
- Behavioral Health Services Five Year Strategic Housing Plan
- Cal-ICH Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness
- California Association of Counties AT HOME Plan
- California's Roadmap Home 2030
- District Attorney's Blueprint for Mental Health Reform
- East County Steering Committee and Task Force Priorities for 2021
- Local city jurisdiction homelessness plans
- Regional Task Force on Homelessness, San Diego Community Plan to End Homelessness
- San Diego Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness
- San Diego County Consolidated Plan 2020-2024 and Annual Plan 2020-2021
- San Diego County's Regional Housing Need Assessment 2021

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION

Since adopting the County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness in November 2021, including throughout the course of the development of this Action Plan, the Board has taken significant actions to support the work of ending homelessness. The County webpage for the Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities – Office of Homeless Solutions (www.sandiegocounty.gov/hsec) hosts a regularly updated list of Board actions taken to address homelessness.

Strategic Domain: Root Cause and Upstream Prevention

Recommendation: Prevent homelessness by addressing the root causes, leveraging County data, and promoting affordable housing access in San Diego County.

The Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) is leading conversations among County departments on identifying and responding to root cause factors that if addressed help prevent homelessness and slow the inflow of households to crisis programs. A significant mechanism for change is upstream, early identification of households at-risk of homelessness. Today, a household in significant need may be accessing multiple County services independently. High utilizers of County assistance are likely to be at higher risk of homelessness; however, coordinating such cases is not formalized. Certain populations are poised to benefit significantly from coordination, such as those exiting from foster care or institutional settings. County service engagement data from both housing and non-housing departments can be leveraged to identify households at-risk of homelessness before they reach a crisis, quickly provide comprehensive support, and give departments information on how to strengthen safety net services.

Lead Department(s)	All County Departments that provide housing; HSEC; Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics (OEPA)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	All County departments; Regional Task Force on Homelessness; and city jurisdictions in San Diego County.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☐ Diversion and Mitigation ☐ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☐ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☒ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. HSEC will pursue funding opportunities and if funding is identified, establish a homelessness prevention program to address upstream risk of homelessness and help prevent it. 2. Encourage the preservation of current affordable housing units and expansion of affordable housing stock through innovative options such as Accessory Dwelling Unit development and shared housing.	1. Support implementation of the County's housing strategy to build more affordable housing. 2. Implement shared data system, policies, and procedures among County departments to identify at-risk households for connection to prevention assistance.

Desired Progress Milestones

- In partnership with OEPA, implement new shared data policies and procedures for purposes of preventing homelessness.
- In partnership with OEPA develop future goals to track homelessness prevention outcomes once the data system and homelessness prevention programs are both implemented.
- Support the goals of the County's future housing strategy to meet the housing goals for the unincorporated areas.

Strategic Domain: Diversion and Mitigation

Recommendation: Expand availability and access to homelessness diversion programs.

When homelessness cannot be prevented, robust diversion practices can still help many households achieve stability by keeping them from entering the homelessness system altogether. This can be done at many points along the path from housing instability to homelessness, and County departments have the opportunity to be better coordinated internally and with external partners (including the CoC, municipal agencies, community providers, and the 2-1-1 system) to ensure that all "touchpoints" where people with housing crises go are able to connect them with resources that can divert them from homelessness. Additionally, the County can support increased training for enhanced diversion efforts across departments and ramp up diversion resources to reduce inflow into the homelessness system. Enhanced diversion interventions should also be targeted towards eviction prevention efforts, both through legal services and eviction courts and through dedicated landlord engagement efforts, especially in neighborhoods of color to ensure equity.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions (HSEC)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH); County Health and Human Services Agency; Office of Education; County Public Safety Group; local Housing Authorities; and 2-1-1 San Diego.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☐ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☒ Diversion and Mitigation ☐ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☐ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☐ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☐ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Implement prevention and diversion training across the region in partnership with RTFH. 2. Review regional eviction prevention efforts and outcomes and develop plan for making the most effective and equitable practices permanent.	1. Increase dedicated diversion and mitigation resources to be implemented at the "front door" of the homelessness response system. 2. Increase resources for and coordination of eviction prevention system for long-term sustainability.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Contribute funding and support the expansion of the RTFH regional diversion model by June 2024 in partnership with jurisdictions, private funding entities, and RTFH.
- Reduce evictions by 20% each fiscal year by utilizing practices from Eviction Prevention System.

Strategic Domain: Services, Treatment, and Outreach

Recommendation: Maximize service capacity, quality, and utilization by expanding access and coordination of services.

Maximizing services, treatment, and outreach will involve expanding access and staff, improving ongoing training and staff retention, and establishing care coordination across County services, including street outreach. Stakeholders, community plans, and people with lived experience consistently identified the need for a greater diversity of services in more accessible locations provided by a greater number of staff. This includes greater access to specialized resources and interventions for special populations of focus, such as youth, individuals experiencing serious mental illness, substance use conditions, and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. This also includes expanding support to unincorporated and hard to reach places and racially and ethnically diverse communities.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions (HSEC)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness; County Health and Human Services Agency; San Diego County Office of Education; County Public Safety Group; and Department of Public Works.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☐ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☐ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☐ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☐ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☒ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Increase coordination of outreach and supportive services to ensure coverage of all areas of the county. 2. Streamline referral processes from non-outreach County staff, using HSEC outreach application. 3. Provide interdisciplinary training for supportive services staff to ensure warm handoffs and streamlined connections to needed services and treatment.	1. Increase the number of coordinated outreach events providing homelessness response services, mainstream resources, and connections to housing. 2. Increase the efficiency and flexibility of service, treatment, and outreach staff hiring and retention by improving staff incentives (i.e., raising pay and continuous training and upskilling). 3. Expand clinical and social support services to meet current and increasing need and to expand the diversity of services to subpopulations.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Increase the percentage of people who successfully exit from the County's street outreach programs into safe temporary or permanent housing destinations by 10% of the previous year's total each fiscal year.

Strategic Domain: Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources

Recommendation: Increase investment in emergency and interim housing in alignment with low-barrier principles, ensuring sufficient capacity in both rural and unincorporated areas.

More year-round emergency and interim housing resources were consistently identified as a need in all regions across San Diego County during the Needs Assessment process, with specific concerns raised regarding a lack of options in rural and unincorporated areas. Emergency and interim housing and resources provide a crucial intervention point for people experiencing homelessness to help them exit unsafe living situations, including unsheltered environments and encampments, and move further on their journey to housing stability. Without these resources, local jurisdictions cannot make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. As new emergency housing and resources come online, they must align with Housing First and operate with low barriers to entry to ensure fair and equitable access. Additionally, all emergency and interim housing should provide housing-focused supports with the goal of exiting people quickly but safely to stable permanent housing options.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness; County Health and Human Services Agency; County Public Safety Group; and city jurisdictions in San Diego County.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☐ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☐ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☒ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☐ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☐ Data ☐ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Continue implementation of compassionate emergency housing solutions and pathways to housing with specific subpopulations and accessibility needs in mind to serve people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county. 2. Continue to assess County land and other potentially available sites and analyze successful local and national models for emergency/interim housing and resources, including creative solutions to crisis housing.	1. In partnership with local agencies and jurisdictions identify funding opportunities and scale emergency/interim housing and resources in each region of San Diego County, including rural and unincorporated areas. 2. Explore incentives for city jurisdictions to stimulate development of emergency housing that results in increased emergency housing beds.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Close the gap between emergency/interim housing need and supply by 90% by December 2025 for the unincorporated areas of the county.
- All emergency/interim housing options developed in partnership with the County operate with low barriers to entry and in alignment with the principles of Housing First, as reflected in contracts and policies and procedures.

Strategic Domain: Permanent Housing and Support

Recommendation: Collaborate with partners to strategically increase funding for and support the development of the County's housing strategy for the expansion of Permanent Supportive Housing and affordable housing options across San Diego County.

Homelessness is fundamentally the result of the disparity between income and housing costs. It is a function of poverty and the affordable housing crisis. Impactful homelessness prevention and response ensures that there are enough accessible, affordable housing options available in San Diego County for people at all income levels. During the Needs Assessment, stakeholders identified an array of barriers to affordable housing development and access that the County can address, including conducting an inventory and making available County-owned land and buildings; assessing regulatory and zoning barriers that can be eliminated; and creating or increasing County subsidies to make rent affordable. Particularly for highly vulnerable people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, the County must increase its supply of Permanent Supportive Housing that meets a wide range of household needs, combined with adequate stabilization supports to ensure they can remain housed. The development of the County's housing strategy is an important step in establishing a countywide strategic response to regional permanent housing needs.

Lead Department(s)	Planning and Development Services; Housing and Community Development Services	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☐ Diversion and Mitigation ☐ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☐ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☐ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☐ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Participate in the development of the County's Housing Blueprint which will create a roadmap to help guide response to the housing affordability crisis. 2. Analyze best practices for ramping up Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), including development, motel conversion, shared housing, master leasing, tiny home construction, and tenant-based rental assistance.	1. Address barriers to implementing ambitious affordable housing development goals outlined in the County's Housing Blueprint. 2. Support the development and implementation of the countywide shared housing matching system for people experiencing homelessness. 3. Increase housing opportunities for specialized populations including veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, and youth.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Increase number of units available to extremely low-income households funded by the County by 20% by 2028.
- Increase number of PSH units funded by the County by 20% by 2028.

Key Driver: Person-Centered

Opportunity for Impact: Clients can access needed housing and resources to address their whole person needs in a coordinated way across County programs.

Recommendation: Focus on creating a smooth and coordinated experience for each household experiencing homelessness in need of services, treatment, outreach, and/or emergency or permanent housing options.

Every person who is at-risk of or experiencing homelessness has a different experience and unique needs, which may include housing, healthcare, income, employment, education, social supports, and other factors related to overall well-being. The Needs Assessment highlighted the need for a smooth and coordinated experience across County systems and programs that support households experiencing homelessness in navigating the care they need. Direct service workers are integral to these efforts to support systems-level coordination of care. It is important that the County continue to implement a person-centered model for care coordination across departments that incorporates a focus on equity and representation of people with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and identities among support staff. A robust and consistent training curriculum for direct service staff on practices central to a person-centered approach, including Housing First, Trauma-Informed Care, Harm Reduction, and Motivational Interviewing, will be crucial for success.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions (HSEC)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	County Health and Human Services Agency; San Diego County Office of Education and local school districts; County Public Safety Group; County Land Use and Environment Group; local Housing Authorities; North, South, and East County regional alliances; city jurisdictions in San Diego County.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☒ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☒ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☐ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☐ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Increase coordination across County departments that provide services to people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. 2. Develop a Housing First person-centered training curriculum for non-HSEC staff to help identify homelessness risks. 3. Make training available to frontline staff to help shape roles, responsibilities, and workflow within the person-centered approach.	1. Refine engagement approaches with a focus on client satisfaction utilizing numerous County programs and services. 2. Develop quantitative and qualitative evaluation measures to be completed at regular intervals (i.e., every six months) to assess outcomes of person-centered model.

Desired Progress Milestones

- To increase knowledge of homelessness risks and improve County customer experience, establish training curriculum in the Learning Management System (LMS) for non-HSEC staff by December 2024.
- Implement training January to March 2025 and ensure 95% of identified staff complete the training in LMS.
- Measure client satisfaction quarterly starting in April 2025 to determine impact of training.

Key Driver: Data

Opportunity for Impact: All County departments and programs have a shared understanding and capacity to define, collect, combine, and share data on housing and homelessness.

Recommendation: Develop and maintain a shared database in partnership with the Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics and the Office of Business Intelligence and implement standardized data elements regarding housing status and homelessness for intake and exit across County programs.

Clear and accurate data is a crucial need for understanding and effectively responding to homelessness. The Needs Assessment found that current data limitations constrain the County's ability to predict, measure, and design data-informed responses to housing resource needs. The lack of standardized data elements and collection processes across County programs to track experiences of homelessness, risk of homelessness, and housing needs limits understanding of the nature and severity of homelessness regionally. Additionally, current limitations on combining data across County programs impact the ability to conduct care coordination; define pathways to homelessness; identify possible leverage points to prevent homelessness; and better understand the experiences and outcomes for people at-risk of or experiencing homelessness who are accessing multiple sectors concurrently or consecutively. These changes to how data are defined, collected, combined, and shared will improve the County's ability to respond comprehensively and effectively to homelessness using a data-driven approach.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions; Office of Evaluation and Performance Analytics (OEPA); and Office of Business Intelligence (OBI)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness; County Health and Human Services Agency; Office of Education; County Public Safety Group; County Land Use and Environment Group; and local Housing Authorities.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☒ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☒ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☒ Data ☐ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. As part of the Framework, clarify and operationalize definitions of "homelessness," "risk of homelessness," and "housing need" used by each County department. 2. In partnership with OEPA, convene County department representatives to establish homelessness prevention goals and outcomes once system is established.	1. Design and build shared County data system including data from Homeless Management Information System, in partnership with OEPA. 2. Utilize a predictive analytics model that utilizes real-time data from the shared system in partnership with OEPA. 3. Conduct evaluations of cross-system homelessness and housing data access/use to improve collaborative planning efforts.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Design and identify funding for a new cross-sector data system by the end of 2024, with implementation of the system by 2025.
- Collaborate with OBI and OEPA on identifying metrics which will include logic model and results chain to monitor outcomes of the Action Plan priorities by creating public dashboards.

Key Driver: Collaboration

Opportunity for Impact: Leveraging the unique jurisdictional and funding roles of the County to improve the regional response to homelessness.

Recommendation: Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions should continue as the lead entity in the County of San Diego to coordinate across all County departments and with diverse external stakeholders on the issue of homelessness.

In a county as geographically broad and with such a large and diverse homeless population as San Diego, regional collaboration is essential to creating meaningful reductions of homelessness and housing instability. Within the County enterprise and with the establishment of the Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities, inter-department collaboration and coordination has begun. However, there is much more progress to be made. Greater coordination is also required across municipalities to ensure a consistent (but flexible), housing-focused, and equitable response among many systems, including healthcare, housing, and law enforcement.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions (HSEC)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH); County Health and Human Services Agency; San Diego County Office of Education and local school districts; County Public Safety Group; County Land Use and Environment Group; local Housing Authorities; North, South, and East County regional alliances; city jurisdictions in San Diego County.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☒ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☒ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☒ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Leverage interdepartmental working group on homelessness, with HSEC as the lead entity, to address issues identified in the collective impact model section of the Needs Assessment. 2. Establish a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with jurisdictions to further collaborate on homelessness programming.	1. In partnership with RTFH and other jurisdictions, conduct countywide resource mapping to determine localized need and departmental capacity, where funding can be braided, MOAs implemented, and projects consolidated, and where ordinances and contracts can be aligned to reduce bureaucratic barriers. 2. Develop collaborative, cross-jurisdictional priorities for housing-focused, equitable funding for all programs serving people experiencing homelessness.

Desired Progress Milestones

- In ongoing efforts to address and end homelessness, the County and other willing stakeholders will initiate MOAs that can be publicly shared and that establish the best collaborative practices on an ongoing basis.
- Through the MOAs, the County and other relevant stakeholders will establish joint priorities for housing-focused efforts and equitable homelessness funding priorities by December 2025.

Key Driver: Sustainability

Opportunity for Impact: Maximize the use of new and existing funding for homeless and housing resources regionwide.

Recommendation: Develop a regional funding strategy in partnership with Regional Task Force on Homelessness that aligns the goals of different funders across San Diego County and reduces duplication of efforts.

Preventing and ending homelessness across San Diego County requires a sustained and intentional funding approach. San Diego County is a large and geographically diverse county with different housing and service needs reflected within each region, among urban and rural locales, and between incorporated and unincorporated areas. The Needs Assessment found that while there are several funding streams that are used to both directly and indirectly respond to homelessness in San Diego County, a lack of coordination among funders has resulted in these resources not being used to their greatest potential and even some duplication of efforts. A regional funding and policy strategy will not take away any decision-making powers from any funders or funding agencies. Rather, a regional funding and policy strategy will provide a framework for discussion and collaboration around new and existing funding opportunities to ensure that service gaps are being identified and met, that successful strategies and interventions are being supported and brought to scale, and that every funder is supported in utilizing their funds to have the greatest impact in alignment with their priorities and mission.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions (HSEC)	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH); County Health and Human Services Agency; Office of Education and local school districts; County Public Safety Group; County Land Use and Environment Group; local Housing Authorities; North, South, and East County regional alliances; city jurisdictions in San Diego County.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☒ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☒ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☐ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☐ Data ☒ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. In partnership with RTFH and city jurisdictions, continue to explore opportunities to discuss regional housing resources to participate in regional funding and policy strategy discussions. 2. Identify any available funding opportunities and partner with local entities in joint applications whenever possible.	1. Regularly analyze homelessness and housing resource investments to identify and agree upon ways to increase, decrease, or redirect funding to meet regional needs and priorities. 2. In partnership with RTFH and city jurisdictions, align efforts for new State and federal funding and policy opportunities. 3. Use data and the voice of lived experience for policy change to address root causes of homelessness.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Improve coordination with local jurisdictions and entities in the application for new State and federal homelessness and housing funding opportunities.
- Support policy changes that will address root causes of homelessness.

Key Driver: Equity

Opportunity for Impact: A County commitment to equitable solutions to homelessness is institutionalized in tools, policies, and practices and is witnessed in outcomes.

Recommendation: Establish or adapt tools, policies, and practices to support equity countywide in collaboration with other County departments.

The County of San Diego seeks to balance flexibility and intentionality in homelessness response and prevention through an ongoing process of data informed decision-making with regards to advancing socio-economic, racial, and ethnic equity. Qualitative and quantitative feedback mechanisms will enable all County departments involved in the response to homelessness to better institutionalize and standardize equitable processes and procedures and to update these policies and procedures as needed. Meeting this recommendation will require the use of data to understand equity considerations and needs for different populations experiencing homelessness in San Diego County, as well as integrating the experiences, perspectives, and preferences of people using the system to properly design, implement, and monitor equitable solutions.

Lead Department(s)	Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities-Office of Homeless Solutions	
Collaborating Departments/Agencies	Regional Task Force on Homelessness; County Health and Human Services Agency; Office of Education; County Public Safety Group; Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ); and local Housing Authorities.	
County of San Diego Framework for Ending Homelessness This recommendation also impacts the following strategic domains and key drivers from the Framework.	☒ Root Cause and Upstream Prevention ☒ Diversion and Mitigation ☒ Services, Treatment and Outreach ☒ Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources ☒ Permanent Housing and Support	☒ Person-Centered ☒ Collaboration ☒ Equity ☒ Data ☐ Sustainability

Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
1. Inventory County departments to identify equity measures related to homelessness in contracts that are being collected. 2. Collect and analyze cross-sector data on homelessness, risk of homelessness, and service access and outcomes by subpopulation, demographics, and geographic location. 3. Leverage feedback from people with lived experience and Needs Assessment equity considerations, including underserved populations, locations, and needs for County resource development discussions.	1. Work with OERJ to develop feedback loops to continually identify and monitor equity concerns in County homelessness programs. 2. Collaborate with other County departments to strategize ways to improve health outcomes for mutual clients/patients and include social determinants of health metrics in the evaluation of the homelessness system and the equity of that system.

Desired Progress Milestones

- Complete annual equity analysis as part of the Framework beginning in Fiscal Year 2023-24, and in partnership with OERJ set ambitious, but practical, schedule for recuring equity analysis.
- Establish mutual agreement on framework, department responsibilities, and method of analysis.

Summary of Action Steps

Strategic Domain	Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
Root Cause and Upstream Prevention 	1. HSEC will pursue funding opportunities and if funding is identified, establish a homelessness prevention program to address upstream risk of homelessness and help prevent it. 2. Encourage the preservation of current affordable housing units and expansion of affordable housing stock through innovative options such as Accessory Dwelling Unit development and shared housing.	1. Support implementation of the County's housing strategy to build more affordable housing. 2. Implement shared data system, policies, and procedures among County departments to identify at-risk households for connection to prevention assistance.
Diversion and Mitigation 	1. Implement prevention and diversion training across the region in partnership with RTFH. 2. Review regional eviction prevention efforts and outcomes and develop plan for making the most effective and equitable practices permanent.	1. Increase dedicated diversion and mitigation resources to be implemented at the "front door" of the homelessness response system. 2. Increase resources for and coordination of eviction prevention system for long-term sustainability.
Services, Treatment, and Outreach 	1. Increase coordination of outreach and supportive services to ensure coverage of all areas of the county. 2. Streamline referral processes from non-outreach County staff, using HSEC outreach application. 3. Provide interdisciplinary training for supportive services staff to ensure warm handoffs and streamlined connections to needed services and treatment.	1. Increase the number of coordinated outreach events providing homelessness response services, mainstream resources, and connections to housing. 2. Increase the efficiency and flexibility of service, treatment, and outreach staff hiring and retention by improving staff incentives (i.e., raising pay and continuous training and upskilling). 3. Expand clinical and social support services to meet current and increasing need and to expand the diversity of services to subpopulations.
Emergency / Interim Housing and Resources 	1. Continue implementation of compassionate emergency housing solutions and pathways to housing with specific subpopulations and accessibility needs in mind to serve people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county. 2. Continue to assess County land and other potentially available sites and analyze successful local and national models for emergency/interim housing and resources, including creative solutions to crisis housing.	1. In partnership with local agencies and jurisdictions identify funding opportunities and scale emergency/interim housing and resources in each region of San Diego County, including rural and unincorporated areas. 2. Explore incentives for city jurisdictions to stimulate development of emergency housing that results in increased emergency housing beds.
Permanent Housing and Support 	1. Participate in the development of the County's Housing Blueprint which will create a roadmap to help guide response to the housing affordability crisis. 2. Analyze best practices for ramping up Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), including development, motel conversion, shared housing, master leasing, tiny home construction, and tenant-based rental assistance.	1. Address barriers to implementing ambitious affordable housing development goals outlined in the County's Housing Blueprint. 2. Support the development and implementation of the countywide shared housing matching system for people experiencing homelessness. 3. Increase housing opportunities for specialized populations including veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, and youth.

Key Driver	Short-Term Action Steps	Long-Term Action Steps
Person-Centered 	1. Increase coordination across County departments that provide services to people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. 2. Develop a Housing First person-centered training curriculum for non-HSEC staff to help identify homelessness risks. 3. Make training available to frontline staff to help shape roles, responsibilities, and workflow within the person-centered approach.	1. Refine engagement approaches with a focus on client satisfaction utilizing numerous County programs and services. 2. Develop quantitative and qualitative evaluation measures to be completed at regular intervals (i.e., every six months) to assess outcomes of person-centered model.
Data 	1. As part of the Framework, clarify and operationalize definitions of "homelessness," "risk of homelessness," and "housing need" used by each County department. 2. In partnership with OEPA, convene County department representatives to establish homelessness prevention goals and outcomes once system is established.	1. Design and build shared County data system including data from Homeless Management Information System, in partnership with OEPA. 2. Utilize a predictive analytics model that utilizes real-time data from the shared system in partnership with OEPA. 3. Conduct evaluations of cross-system homelessness and housing data access/use to improve collaborative planning efforts.
Collaboration 	1. Leverage interdepartmental working group on homelessness, with HSEC as the lead entity, to address issues identified in the collective impact model section of the Needs Assessment. 2. Establish a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with jurisdictions to further collaborate on homelessness programming.	1. In partnership with RTFH and other jurisdictions, conduct countywide resource mapping to determine localized need and departmental capacity, where funding can be braided, MOAs implemented, and projects consolidated, and where ordinances and contracts can be aligned to reduce bureaucratic barriers. 2. Develop collaborative, cross-jurisdictional priorities for housing-focused, equitable funding for all programs serving people experiencing homelessness.
Sustainability 	1. In partnership with RTFH and city jurisdictions, continue to explore opportunities to discuss regional housing resources to participate in regional funding and policy strategy discussions. 3. Identify any available funding opportunities and partner with local entities in joint applications whenever possible.	1. Regularly analyze homelessness and housing resource investments to identify and agree upon ways to increase, decrease, or redirect funding to meet regional needs and priorities. 2. In partnership with RTFH and city jurisdictions, align efforts for new State and federal funding and policy opportunities. 3. Use data and the voice of lived experience for policy change to address root causes of homelessness.
Equity 	1. Inventory County departments to identify equity measures related to homelessness in contracts that are being collected. 2. Collect and analyze cross-sector data on homelessness, risk of homelessness, and service access and outcomes by subpopulation, demographics, and geographic location. 3. Leverage feedback from people with lived experience and Needs Assessment equity considerations, including underserved populations, locations, and needs for County resource development discussions.	1. Work with OERJ to develop feedback loops to continually identify and monitor equity concerns in County homelessness programs. 2. Collaborate with other County departments to strategize ways to improve health outcomes for mutual clients/patients and include social determinants of health metrics in the evaluation of the homelessness system and the equity of that system.