



184 Days of Progress INTERIM MAYOR TODD GLORIA

City of San Diego

WEEKLY UPDATE: February 6, 2014

I want to provide some more details about a topic I touched on in the State of City address last month. And that's the way San Diego can better spend our limited resources on the challenge of homelessness.

Just over a year ago, I set the goal of ending homelessness in Downtown by the end of 2016. In addition to the direct benefit of helping individuals break the cycle of homelessness, investing in solutions has positive impacts for the City and saves taxpayer dollars. Without these critical homeless programs and services, we will continue to see an increase in the need for law enforcement, emergency services, and Neighborhood Code Compliance activities.

This year's City budget committed \$1.9 million from the General Fund to extend operations of both winter shelter programs. I know there's a better way of using that money that will result in greater progress ending homelessness.

I recommend allocating the same level of General Funds for homeless services in the fiscal year 15 budget, but directing these funds toward outcomes-focused services and critical program enhancements that result in the most effective use of our resources and a coordinated system that helps to end the cycle of homelessness.

That includes seven components:

1. Enhanced Single Adult Winter Shelter and Veterans Winter Shelter. An investment of \$800,000 would enable shelter operators to improve the assessment and case management services offered and partner closely with the existing integrated homeless outreach efforts, increasing opportunities for homeless San Diegans residing at the shelters to be placed in more stable and permanent housing so we can end the cycle of homelessness for many neighbors while the shelters are open.

This allocation would fully fund an enhanced Single Adult Winter Shelter, which does not have any funding currently identified, and augment CDBG funding for the Veterans Winter Shelter, from November through March 31st during the coldest and wettest months of the year.

Anticipated Outcome Resulting from Enhancement:

- 60% of shelter residents will elect to engage in case management
- 45% of shelter residents will exit to more permanent housing
- 20% of shelter residents will exit to permanent housing

2. Coordinated Assessment, Coordinated Entry, and Homeless Management Information System. A one-time investment of \$400,000 would provide funding to support the Regional Continuum of Care's creation of a coordinated intake and assessment system, applicable to all organizations throughout the City and region and addressing the needs of our critical homeless housing and services programs. This is currently an unfunded federal mandate, and is a critical step in delivering coordinated and efficient services to homeless individuals, and identifying what our needs are and where to spend our limited resources.

Furthermore, investing in this system is essential to bringing nearly \$16 million in federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to the City and County of San Diego **every year** for homeless programs and services. By expanding the system, agencies will be able to share data in real-time or near real-time, allowing services to be delivered in a more coordinated and efficient manner.

By the end of FY15, the technology and tools would be in place allowing for real-time or near real-time data enhancement.

3. Serial Inebriate Program (SIP) Expansion. Established in January 2000, SIP has positively impacted hundreds of chronic, homeless alcoholics who cycle in and out of detoxification centers, county jail, and local emergency rooms. By providing intensive case management and access to housing, clients are able to improve their well-being and achieve long-term recovery. Since 2007, SIP's budget has been cut 34 percent, inhibiting its ability to operate at full capacity. At the same time, the economic recovery in the housing market is causing rents to increase and shortened the lifespan of the housing subsidies provided to SIP clients. An allocation of \$120,000 would restore SIP to its pre-reduction funding levels and nearly triple the number of individuals capable of being served, making an additional 20 units or beds available for SIP participants, increasing the total SIP supported units and beds to 32.

4. Neil Good Day Center Service Enhancement. Currently, the Neil Good Day Center provides homeless individuals access to showers, mail services, computers, medical care and case management. In addition, the Neil Good Day Center serves as a point-of-entry to San Diego's full array of homeless services. An additional \$80,000 would enhance the services that the Neil Good Day Center offers. I anticipate this would result in:

- 60% of Day Center clients will elect to receive case management services
- 45% of those Day Center clients electing to receive case management services will be placed in more permanent housing

- 20% of those Day Center clients electing to receive case management services will be placed in permanent housing

5. Homeless Outreach Team Enhancement. An allocation of \$40,000 to link the San Diego Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team's (HOT) efforts with local housing and service providers would enhance the street outreach and engagement services currently provided to homeless individuals. With this additional funding, each HOT rotation would include alternating members of the provider community. Together, the combined knowledge of police officers assigned to HOT and service providers would be a great asset for engaging homeless individuals and linking them with appropriate resources. The San Diego Housing Commission would work with participating providers to set aside housing inventories for eligible homeless individuals encountered by HOT officers while they are on patrol.

Anticipated outcomes:

- Up to 50 interim beds will be made available with the existing shelter capacity to be used by HOT and the enhanced outreach team for direct interim housing placement.

6. Homeless Transitional Storage Facility. Currently operated by Girls Think Tank, this storage facility provides a place for 350 homeless families and individuals to safely store their personal belongings. For the previous two years, the facility has been sustained with private contributions and funds allocated by the City Council. Allocating \$150,000 per year would fully fund the facility's annual operating budget, including relocation funds to rent property if necessary.

Anticipated Outcome Resulting from Funding:

- Continuation of the availability of storage bins to homeless so belongings are not on the streets or in our canyons
- Revise program criteria to limit use of storage bins to currently homeless individuals
- Enhance data collection to further analyze program use and effectiveness

I shared with you in December that the storage facility was facing a challenge because the property it is on was going to be used in another way. I don't want to speak too soon, so I will only share I anticipate a long term solution to be announced soon.

7. Finally, Connections Housing Downtown Gap Funding. In its first year in operation, Connections Housing Downtown has become an essential component of the City of San Diego's homeless services. More than 500 homeless individuals have been positively impacted since the center's grand opening in March 2013. After recognizing the higher level of services the building's residents required, the intensive services budget was implemented immediately, resulting in a budget gap of \$400,000. A commitment of \$300,000 per year will help ensure PATH's continued success and

essential services, and development partners will continue to pursue private fundraising and public grants to fill the remaining gap in operating funds.

It is my intention to work with our next Mayor and my Council colleagues so that these allocations are included in the Fiscal Year 15 budget, which will be considered this Spring.

In addition to the \$1.9 million of General Fund money, funding for the Neil Good Day Center, the Veterans Shelter Program, Cortez Hill Family Center and the annual contribution to PATH Connections Housing should continue through the CDBG Program in an amount not to exceed \$1,318,078. Note that these discretionary monies no longer fund the Single Adult Emergency Shelter. This is consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission for the Provision of Homeless Services.

I also would like to ask my fellow San Diegans and our business community to contribute to these solutions. We've seen tremendous participation from local businesses in recent years as they've stepped in to work together with the City and service providers, and I will be reaching out to see if we can find other ways to collaborate to end homelessness.

Obviously, we want to know what programs are working. Developing measurement tools to assess their effectiveness will occur this year as well, with the goal of replicating successful programs elsewhere in the City, like near the San Diego River, in the Uptown and Mid-City communities, and near the beaches.

It's no secret that homelessness is a difficult challenge. But it's one I know we can address, and by more creatively using our limited resources, we can make a far greater difference in the lives of our neediest neighbors. And helping them toward self-sufficiency and ending the cycle of homelessness makes economic sense as well.

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