



TO: Family and Human Services Committee, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Lavonna Martin, MPH, MPA, Health, Housing, and Homeless Services (H3) Director  
RE: Annual Report on the Homelessness Continuum of Care  
DATE: November 13, 2019

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Accept this report from the Health Services Department; and
2. Forward this report to the Board of Supervisors for acceptance; and,
3. Direct Staff to continue to report on an annual basis to the FHS Committee regarding progress of the effort to end homelessness and the activities of Contra Costa Council on Homelessness.

### BACKGROUND

Health, Housing and Homeless Services (H3) Division, in collaboration with the Council on Homelessness determines the most effective strategies for the Contra Costa Continuum of Care to ensure that homelessness is a uncommon, short lived and non-recurring experience for people in Contra Costa.

#### Overview of Data

Annual Service data shows that in 2018, 1,091 people accessed prevention services, 6,924 people accessed crisis response services and 899 people utilized supportive housing programs. Trends between 2014 and 2018 show increases in adults with disabling conditions, single adults and adults age 62 and older utilizing homeless services and a decrease in transition aged youth (18-24), families and veterans utilizing homeless services. Of those surveyed in the 2019 Point in Time Count, the majority of people experiencing homelessness reported losing their housing in East County and, on the night of the count, the majority of people reported they slept in Central County.

#### Outcomes and Accomplishments

- Our Continuum of Care has seen a 32% increase in funding from the department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) over last three years.
- In 2018, 1,450 households exited to permanent housing and 97% of households in permanent supportive housing maintained their housing.
- In addition, our community's crisis response system added 60 additional beds/cots in FY 18/19 and added more than 40 mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers.
- Based on 2018 average monthly in-flow and out-flow, the system of care only gained an additional 36 individuals per year overall. H3's Coordinated Outreach Referral and Engagement (CORE) outreach program won the 2019 Challenge Award from the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) for diverting 53 tons of trash from Contra Costa waterways by working with encampments in those areas.

#### Right-sizing the System of Care

In the last year, the CoC has also been focused on assessing the entire homeless system of care to identify the system's strengths and opportunities to better meet the growing and changing needs of persons experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa. First, Contra Costa's Continuum of Care (CoC) expanded a number of services available to people experiencing homelessness. Second, the CoC identified and implemented the most effective and efficient uses of new resources coming from the state. Third, utilizing state sponsored technical assistance,



our CoC has developed a System Map that provides data-based guidance and strategies for understanding our system resources and methods for right sizing it to suit the community's needs.

The system mapping process resulted in a number of key findings, which include:

- Contra Costa has approximately 50% of the permanent housing resources needed to meet the average need per year. To fill that gap, about 2,900 more permanent housing interventions per year are needed.
- The average length of time from first accessing homeless services until being housed has increased from 15 months to 17 months in one year and 28% of persons experiencing increased lengths of time homeless are chronically homeless.
- 5,800 households experience literal homelessness in Contra Costa annually and 58% of those households are living unsheltered.
- 17% of households who exit permanent housing return to the system within two years.

Additionally, the system map provided multiple strategies to support building and maintaining resources for the system. Per the System Map, the CoC should:

- add temporary shelter beds;
- continue scaling Rapid Resolution services to route persons in need to alternate safe housing destinations;
- increase the amount of Permanent Supportive Housing;
- reduce inflow by redirecting individuals to stable resources outside of the homeless system of care;
- reduce length of time homeless by increasing temporary bed turnover rates at shelters and reducing wait times for other resources available through the community queue; and
- maximize use of resources based on an enhanced prioritization method that targets those with the highest vulnerability and length of time homeless.

### New and Pending Opportunities

#### *Funding*

There are a number of state funding opportunities for homelessness related services and projects on the horizon including:

- California's Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding competition (to be announced Fall 2019)
- California's Housing for a Healthy California (HFCA) funding (awards pending)
- California's No Place Like Home (NPLH) Round 2 funding competition (to be announced)
- California's California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH) (Rounds 1 and 2 awarded) local project selection process
- California's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) annual funding competition
- Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) annual CoC funding competition ("CoC NOFA")

As the CoC's lead agency, Administrative Entity, and Collaborative Applicant, H3 will facilitate the application and disbursement process for these funds based on identified system and program needs, recommendations and direction from the Council on Homelessness, and with input from community partners and stakeholders.

#### *Capacity & System Building*

H3 has been building capacity in the CoC by taking full advantage of state sponsored one-time technical assistance offered in 2019 and opportunities for technical assistance provided by the Kaiser Community Foundation. H3 used technical assistance to support the growth of the system, implement best practices, launch an equity initiative, improve the system's ability to measure and monitor program and system performance and regulatory compliance, and to support H3 and Council on Homelessness data-based decision making.



Specifically, that technical assistance was used to:

- Integrate Rapid Rehousing into the Coordinated Entry System, per phase III of the coordinated entry system rollout and the CoC's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness
- Develop a dynamic prioritization process to maximize system resources
- Implement Housing First principles, including monitoring for compliance to ensure barrier free access to housing for consumers
- Launch of an Equity Initiative led by expert consultants to provide the CoC with an extensive assessment and system-wide education and implementation of equitable practices and values (across multiple intersections, such as race/ethnicity, health, ability, and other characteristics)
- Enhancement and development of System and Project Performance Metrics
- HMIS system buildout to accommodate new and expanded projects, new providers, and enhanced performance metrics and monitoring capability

H3 is also increasing staffing to keep pace with the demands of the growing system and support planning for the future of the system. The new staffing includes a Research, Data and Evaluation Manager, a Systems, Strategy and Planning Administrator and a Coordinated Entry Specialist.

#### *Program Development*

Upcoming Program and Service improvements include:

- expanding diversion/rapid resolution services;
- Central County CARE Center capital improvement and expansion;
- added \$650,000 to the Housing Security Fund;
- new CORE teams for youth;
- new Rapid Rehousing program for TAY;
- new site for Trinity CARE Center; and
- a Safe Park program in Walnut Creek

#### Attachments

1. Contra Costa County Homelessness Continuum of Care 2018 Annual Report
2. Contra Costa Homeless Service System Map
3. System Map Summary
4. Race & Ethnicity Equity Assessment

