

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness and Encampments

BACKGROUND ON EFFORTS TO DATE AND NEXT STEPS

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Framing Our Discussion: Council Policy

Related Overarching Policies

The Council understands that the most effective way to end an individual's homelessness is through the rapid provision of a permanent stable home with appropriate ongoing support.

The Council shall focus on creating pathways to permanent housing and developing permanent housing solutions, and that efforts to address homelessness use a person-centered and Housing First approach.

The Council recognizes that homelessness is not a crime, but responsible behavior is expected. Individuals and families experiencing homelessness possess rights and responsibilities and deserve respect and protection afforded to every member of the community.

Related Policy Details

Promote outreach that targets the most vulnerable unsheltered individuals with the highest service needs, moves individuals towards permanent housing, and builds relationships, trust, and rapport.

Provide that all City departments interacting with those experiencing unsheltered homelessness understand best practices and are knowledgeable on availability of homeless services in the community.

Strike a balance between respecting the rights of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness while responding to community needs for safe streets, healthy neighborhoods, and responsible behavior.

What do we know? – Unsheltered Numbers

2,630

Unsheltered Persons in
City of San Diego
(2018 PIT Count)

3,231 Unsheltered in 2017

Top 10 Census Tracts

2018 Point-in-Time Count

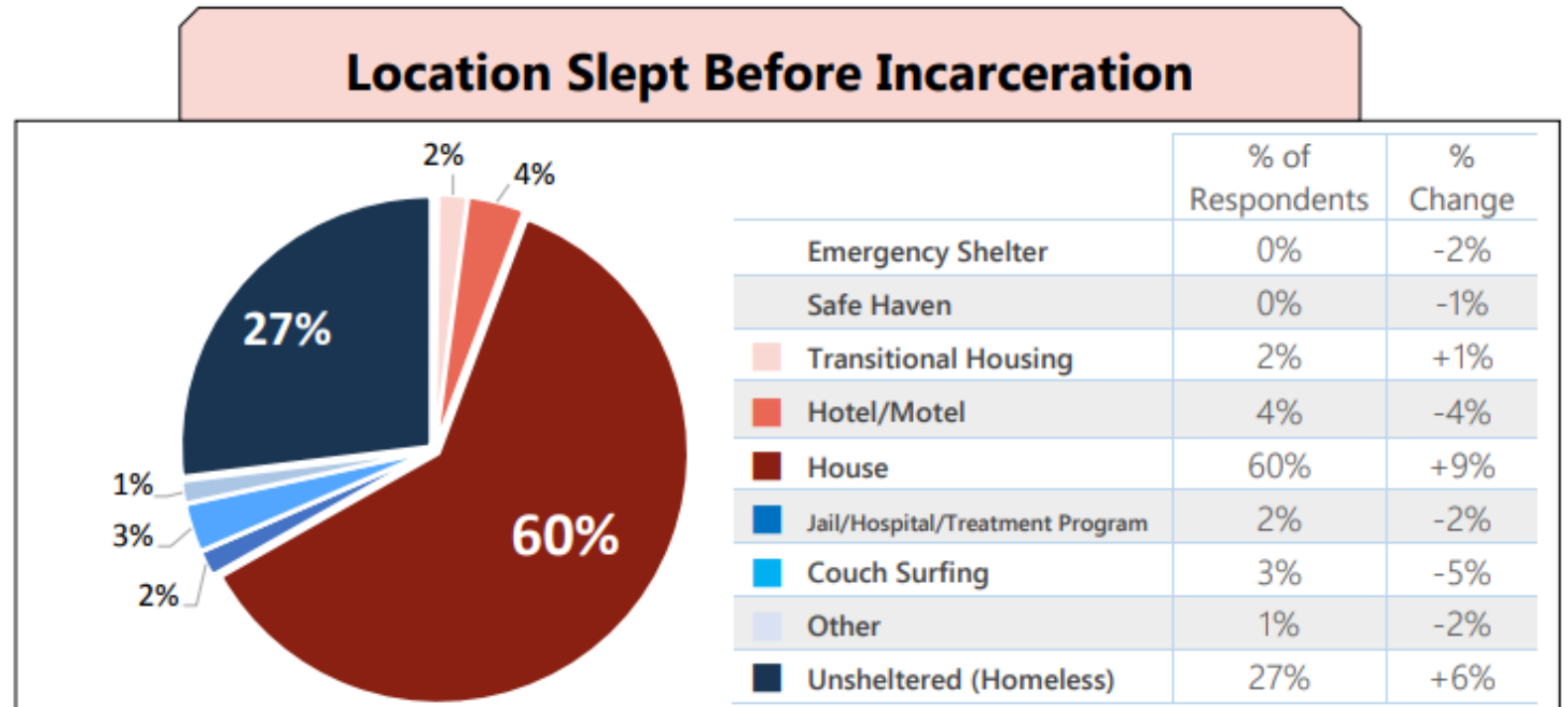
Census Tract	Location Description	Individuals	Vehicles*	Hand-built Structures**	TOTAL
51.00	SAN DIEGO – Area surrounding the 12 th & Imperial Transit Center southeast of Petco Park	253	10	172	435
53.00	SAN DIEGO – North end of the Gaslamp Quarter within the Westfield Horton Plaza shopping center and Civic Theatre	158	0	37	195
52.00	SAN DIEGO – Northern side of East Village with San Diego City College, west of the I-5 and north of Market St	96	8	54	158
54.00	San Diego – The downtown waterfront extending from Petco Park through the Gaslamp Quarter to Ash St	87	0	37	124
186.03	OCEANSIDE – Region along the 76 freeway east of the I-5 and north of	29	51	25	105

Unsheltered homelessness is concentrated in Downtown

What do we know? - Connection Between Unsheltered and Jail

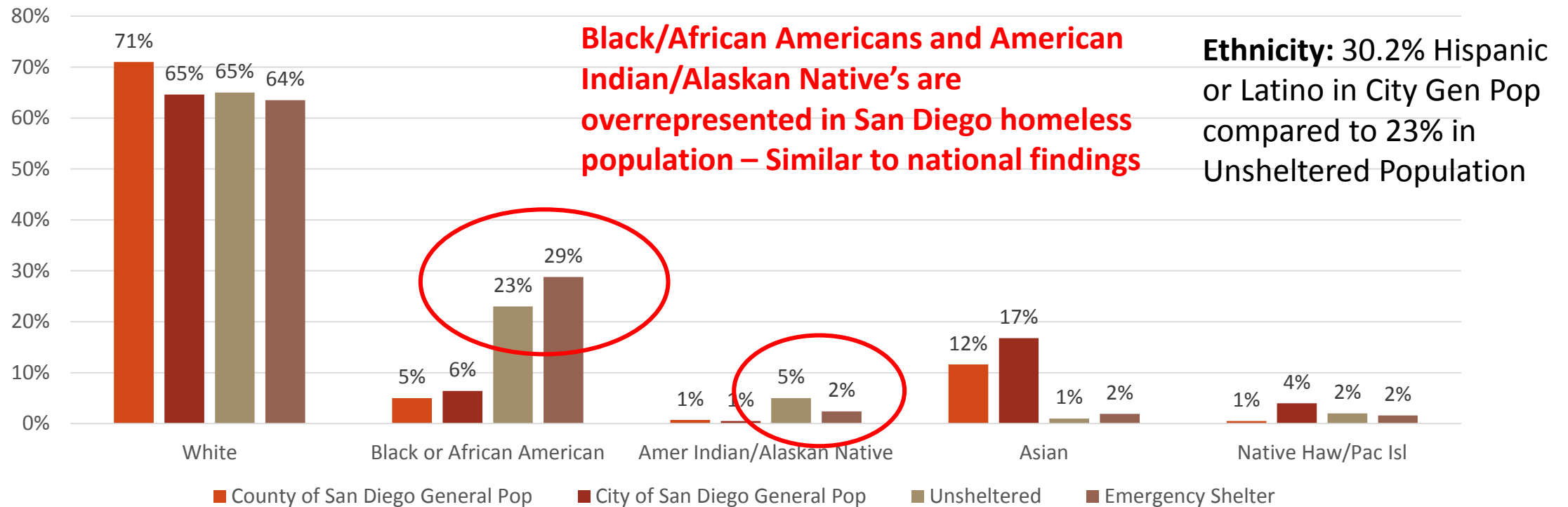
In 2018 PIT Count, individuals residing in County jails were surveyed and asked where they slept the night prior to being incarcerated.

27% of those in County jails were unsheltered prior to incarceration representing **1,507** individuals



What do we know? - Connection Between Unsheltered and Race

Race of General Population Compared to Homeless Population



Source: County and City General Pop data from 2016 US Census Bureau American Community Survey

Multiple Races and Two or More Races not presented since discrepancy in ACS vs RTFH data

Source: Unsheltered data from 2018 PITC – County wide

Source: Emergency Shelter data from RTFH Dashboards – Persons served in Emergency Shelter Jan-March 2018

What has the City been doing to address unsheltered homelessness?



Overview of Street Outreach Programs in City

City of San Diego/San Diego Housing Commission

Bridge Shelters

Alpha Project – 5 FTE
Father Joe's Village –
5 FTE
VVSD – 5 FTE

Single Adult Interim Housing

Father Joe's
Village – 2 FTE

SDPD Homeless Outreach Team

13 Officers
3 teams – 7 days a
week
50 interim beds at
FJV

Family Reunification Program

Downtown
Partnership -
2 FTE

Storage Connect Center

MHS – 3 FTE

RTFH Outreach Coordinator

Coordinate
outreach efforts
across County – 1
FTE

Neil Good Day Center

Engagement
site but no
dedicated
street outreach

Other Outreach in City – Not Exhaustive

County of San Diego:

- HHS staff with HOT Teams
- Whole Person Wellness – Enrollment into program
- PERT Clinicians – Psychiatric emergencies
- Behavioral Health Outreach – Friend to Friend, UPAC, Vista Hill
- Homefinder Program and TPSS – Alpha Project outreach at BH Clinics

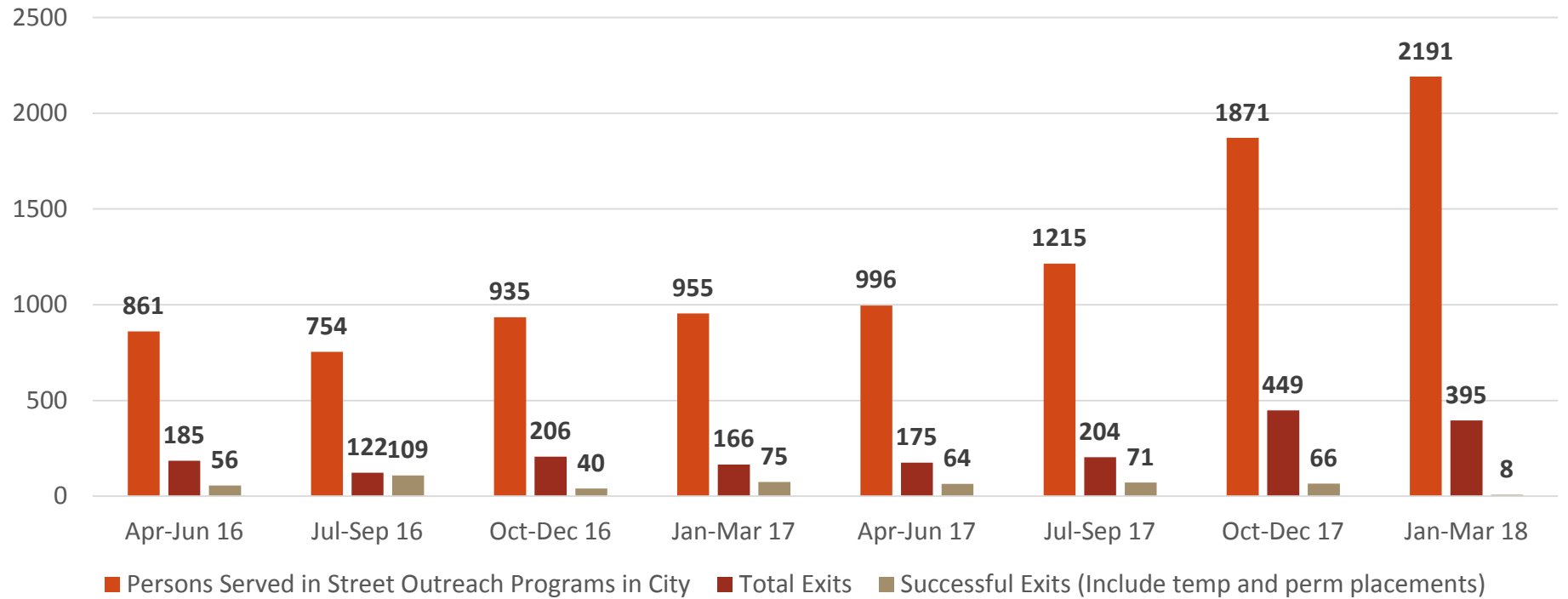
Downtown Partnership Clean and Safe
Salvation Army Homeless Outreach
VA Homeless Outreach
Family Health Centers of San Diego
Port of San Diego

Street Outreach Performance in City

Performance of Street Outreach Programs in City

Successful placement from Street Outreach is a HUD System Performance measure

CoC Performance 2017 = 30%
CoC Performance 2016 = 35%



Source: RTFH Systems Framework Dashboards: All Clients – Street Outreach Programs in City of San Diego

New Street Outreach Efforts with Bridge Shelters

April-August Performance

Outputs:

5,252 total encounters

4,093 total interviews

1,159 total visual observations

2,687 total referrals

2,555 basic needs provided

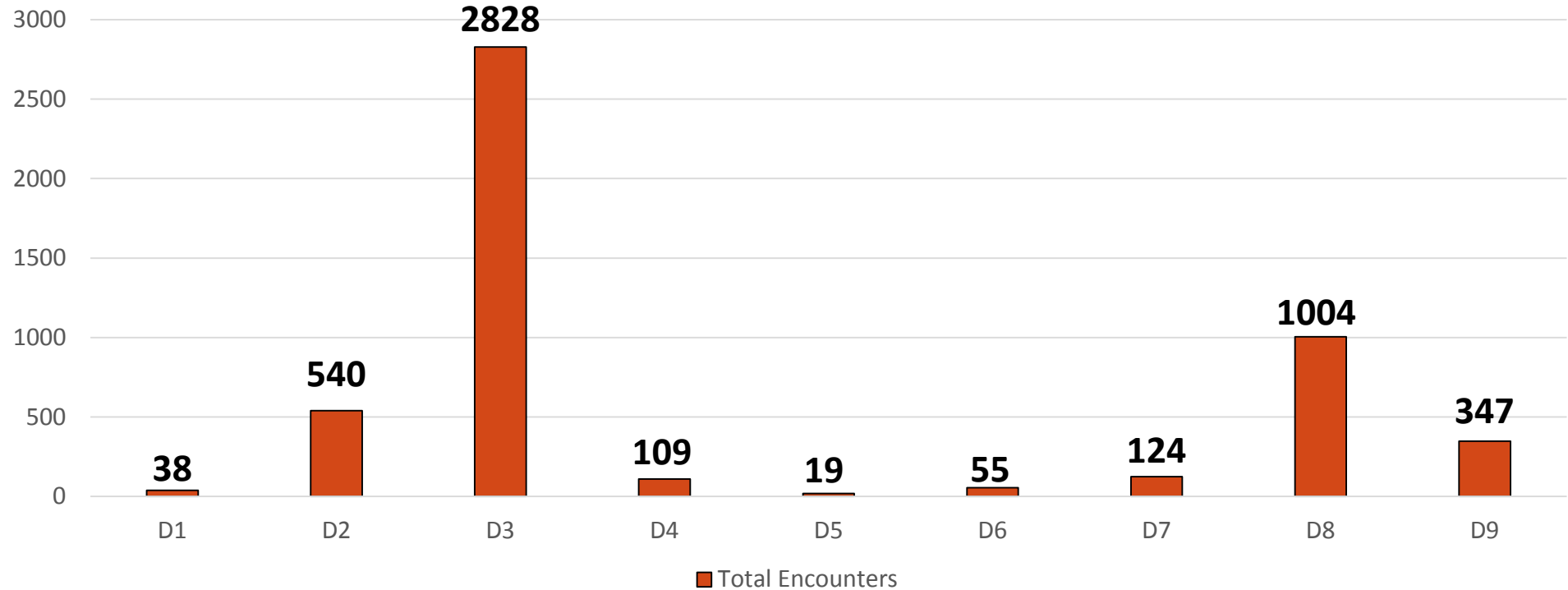
(Note: Figures may be duplicative)

Outcomes:

532 individuals placed into temp housing

13% placement rate into temp housing

Encounters per Council District – April through August 2018



City Enforcement and City Settlements

City Enforcement

When appropriate, the City has multiple enforcement tools to address encroachments in the right-of-way, unattended property, and illegal lodging. SDPD uses these tools progressively.

City Settlements

Spencer v. City of San Diego
(2007, modified in 2010)

The City will only enforce illegal lodging laws between the hours of 9:00PM and 5:30AM under certain circumstances.

The Isaiah Project v. City of San Diego
(2011, modified in 2018)

The City must post 3 hour notice before abating unattended property and established a process for sorting and retaining certain personal property.

Ultimate Solution: Permanent Housing

Many of the recommendations that we have brought forth to Committee already



1. Adopt proven best practices especially Housing First approach through Comprehensive Homeless Policy (Council adopted in April 2018)
2. Urge the creation of more Permanent Supportive Housing (July 2018 meeting)
3. Improve effectiveness of Rapid Re-Housing through employment (June 2018 meeting)
4. Promote innovative housing models to address rental market - Discussion of Flexible Housing Pool – Increased landlord engagement, increased holding fees, master leasing, shallow subsidies, shared housing, and rental assistance (February 2018 meeting)
5. Use local data to project the need for homeless resources especially Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-Housing (June 2018 meeting)
6. Work to increase effectiveness of Bridge Shelters with exiting people to permanent housing (June 2018 meeting – SDHC)

Solutions: Addressing Unsheltered and Encampments



United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

- 1. Preparation and Adequate Time for Planning and Implementation:** Action plans should ensure that there is adequate time for strategizing, collaboration, outreach, engagement, and the identification of meaningful housing options. Adequate time is essential to achieve the primary objective of meeting the needs of each person and assisting them to end their homelessness.
- 2. Collaboration across Sectors and Systems:** Action plans should include collaboration between a cross-section of public and private agencies, neighbors, business owners, and governmental entities, based upon on where the encampment is located. The action plan should feature strong communication among a broad range of community service providers and managers of the permanent housing resources that are being utilized in order to maximize efficiency, align resources, and address system gaps.
- 3. Performance of Intensive and Persistent Outreach and Engagement:** Action plans should involve agencies that have strong outreach experience and demonstrated skills in engaging vulnerable and unsheltered people. Effective outreach is essential for effectively connecting people with coordinated assessment systems, resources, and housing options.
- 4. Provision of Low-Barrier Pathways to Permanent Housing:** Action plans should focus on providing people with clear, low-barrier pathways for accessing and attaining permanent housing opportunities and should not focus on relocating people to other encampment settings.

Source: USICH *Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments* (2015)



United States Interagency Council on Homelessness



In Nov 2017 USICH and HUD provided San Diego with recommendations in regards to Hep A and steps to address unsheltered Homelessness

1. Strengthen Outreach and Engagement of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
2. Prioritize housing placement strategies and outcomes as an alternative for people who are unsheltered or who enter new shelter settings
3. Strengthen coordinated decision-making and collaborative implementation of activities

Community Example: Dallas, Texas

BEFORE

“Prior to 2015 outreach was non-existent... PD focus was on mental health warrants. Rate of refusal for shelter/housing was high... most just picked up their things and moved to another location.”

Source: USICH Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments: Lessons from Dallas, Texas – Interview with Cindy Crain (2017)

AFTER

CoC lead agency convened interagency team of outreach workers

Targeted outreach to highest needs. Once those individuals were housed the team moved on to the next 15-20 individuals

Coordinated shelter and housing resources

“Outreach team operates under the assumption that, given the choice, most people will not choose to remain unsheltered. If a client is initially hesitant to accept a housing offer, the team follows up and makes repeated offers until they are willing to come inside”

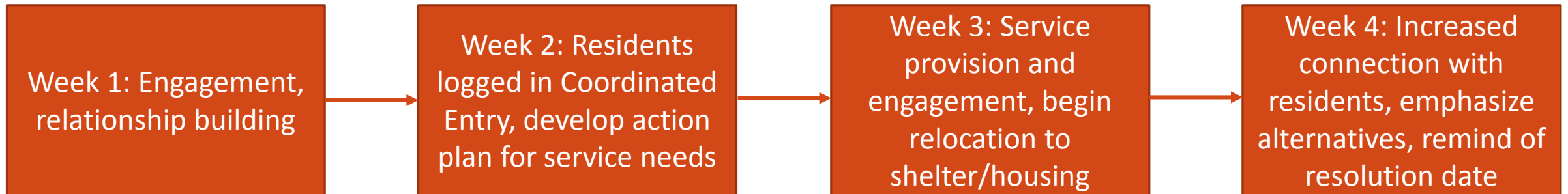
“The community has also moved away from the use of the term ‘cleanups.’ Outreach to individuals in encampments and other unsheltered locations is case management first and foremost. The primary goal is to connect people to appropriate housing and services, not to move them to another unsheltered location.”

Community Example: San Francisco, CA

Created an Encampment Resolution Team— Special team within Homeless Outreach Team –
Includes Licensed Clinical Social Worker and two outreach workers

Team focused on encampments with 6 or more tent/structures

Encampment Resolution Process



Services include basic healthcare, hygiene, case management, problem solving, Suboxone starts, and incentives

Resolution includes 72 hour notice, reservation of shelter beds, remaining individuals offered other options then asked to leave, mobilization of police/public works

RTFH Regional Outreach Strategy

Outreach Assessment and Framework

RTFH completed an assessment and framework for SDHC for a Coordinated Street-Based Outreach Plan in early 2018.

Purpose: Identify all outreach in region (County-wide) and provide coordination contact

Findings: Little coordination, practices are not consistent, and no clearly defined purpose or outcomes

RTFH Regional Outreach Coordinator (SDHC funds the position at RTFH)

Role/Tasks:

- Develop coordination of outreach efforts and approaches across regions
- Provide training opportunities
- Determine current resources available – Resource guides
- Model best practice in using of CES and Diversion
- Work within regions to create By-Name List to case conference most vulnerable
- Collect better data on unsheltered populations
- Prioritize referrals to housing and other shelter options

RTFH Regional Outreach System Strategy

RTFH Regional Outreach System Strategy

Infrastructure of Outreach

- Coordinated outreach meetings
- Geographic and encampment coverage
- Staffing and composition of outreach teams
- Coordination with other systems
- Consistent trainings for all outreach teams
- Resource guide for each region

Components of Outreach

- Outreach engagement
- Diversion
- Case conferencing and By-Name Lists
- Target and priority Populations
- Low-barrier shelter access
- Geographic coverage – Hotspots
- Data collection/entry

Policy Academy on Outreach and Engagement

HUD, USICH, NAEH, SAMHSA, VA

San Diego is 1 of 12 CoC's receiving unique level of hands on TA (18-24 months) focused on addressing outreach in communities with high unsheltered populations and challenging rental markets

TA Providers:

Patrick Wigmore: Deputy Managing Director – Homebase
Steven Sachs: Subject Matter Expert – The Cloudburst Group

Presentation Summary

Council Policy promotes permanent housing as the primary strategy for ending homelessness and notes several policies related to effective outreach

City has over 2,600 people living unsheltered on any given night

Over a quarter of inmates in County Jails were unsheltered prior to incarceration

Persons of color, especially African Americans, are overrepresented in the unsheltered population

The City has made recent steps to address unsheltered including addition of Temporary Bridge Shelters and outreach workers

Outreach in the City has increased and is more coordinated than before, however effectiveness is unknown.

The City has tools for enforcement of certain activities used progressively by SDPD. City also have two settlements for illegal lodging and property removal

Communities across the country have enacted policies and procedures that promote outreach and case management as the key strategy for addressing unsheltered coupled with low-barrier pathways out of homelessness

San Diego has received/currently receiving federal guidance on addressing unsheltered

RTFH is currently working on a regional coordinated outreach strategy and SDHC has funded a position at RTFH to oversee

Requested Actions

1. Formalize the creation of a City of San Diego coordinated proactive outreach and encampment team that is primarily focused on getting people on a pathway to permanent housing settings and is dedicated to resolving encampments.
2. Request Committee staff work with Mayor's Office, SDPD, SDHC, RTFH, County of San Diego and non-profit partners to draft a City-wide Proactive Outreach and Encampment Protocol to bring in front of the full council by the end of the year that does the following:
 - a. Provides clarity on role of outreach in City, how various outreach efforts are coordinated, and guides service protocols.
 - b. Identifies clear process from engagement to resolution – focused on housing, and incorporates current City temporary and permanent housing resources.
 - c. Ensures connection to the Coordinated Entry System and how By-Name Lists are used within the City and council districts.
 - d. Defines success, incorporates performance monitoring processes, and highlights technology tools to assist with implementation of protocol. Sets attainable goals to house 15-20 most vulnerable individuals at a time.
 - e. Clearly defines an encampment for the purposes of the protocol, a step-by-step process to address, and who is responsible/involved.
 - f. Follows guidance from USICH on encampments and USICH/HUD recommendations to San Diego, including new support from HUD TA on addressing unsheltered homelessness.
 - g. Aligns with RTFH efforts on regional outreach strategy and approved Community Standards for street outreach.
 - h. Defines role of SDPD and other City departments.
 - i. Uses a racial equity lens.
 - j. Engages justice partners to address impact of stay away orders to help them advocate for access to service providers when appropriate.

Requested Actions

3. Request Mayor's Office and SDPD follow Proactive Outreach and Encampment Protocol
4. Request that City Departments who interact with those living unsheltered receive training from the RTFH on homeless best practices as outlined in the Council Policy.