



Five Year (2022-2027) Strategic Housing Plan

2022 is a year of opportunity following a seismic shift in how we all think about the importance of home and what it means to be healthy. Now, more than ever, there is a shared understanding of the critical importance of housing and agreement that housing is fundamentally important to being healthy and having a strong platform to achieve goals.

This Five-Year Plan envisions **Creating Homes With Intention, Purpose, and Collaboration** and outlines guiding principles and targeted responses that will maximize a range of housing

options for people with behavioral health issues (people with serious mental illness/serious emotional disorders and/or substance use disorder) and limited resources through policy decisions, funding commitments, and programmatic initiatives. The Plan's approach is rooted in principles of equity and inclusion and the goals are driven by the voices of people with lived expertise. The Plan aims to maximize opportunities for community integration as well as choice in housing and services options that best meet individual needs and recovery goals.

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SUMMARIZING THE FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN

Three key goals have been identified with ten focus areas that call for purposeful action in the first two years in order to recognize the urgent need for housing and maximize the impact of significant new resources.



GOAL #1
Opening
More Doors

Focus Area #1 Diversity of Housing Options

Focus Area #2 Housing Equity and Supporting Community Integration

Focus Area #3 Priority Populations

Focus Area #4 Geographic Diversity and Regional Distribution of Housing

GOAL #2
Driving
Collaboration
Through
Active
Connectivity

Focus Area #5 Effective Collaboration and Integrating Systems

Focus Area #6 Ongoing Pandemic Response

GOAL #3
Expanding
Services
Approaches

Focus Area #7 Recovery and Retention Supports

Focus Area #8 Flexibility in Service and Housing Models

Focus Area #9 Bring Moving On Opportunities to Scale

Focus Area #10 Increase Wraparound Service Supports



USE THIS QR CODE TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT OR LEARN MORE, OR VISIT:

https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/mental_health_services_act/mhsa_housing.html

UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES

Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and San Diego National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) designed an input process in partnership with people with lived expertise as well as the Behavioral Health Housing Council and County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services. Throughout the input process, they identified key stakeholders in order to develop and refine the questions and key areas of discussion. An extensive variety of opportunities for participation in the development of the Plan were offered throughout the first half of 2021 in order to engage with a broad range of stakeholders, including:

- 14 Focus Groups with people with lived expertise,
- 2 focus groups with service and housing providers
- Client Surveys (online in English and Spanish; paper copy for in-reach)
- 13 input/listening Sessions
- Online Input Form

Guided by the BHS multi-sector system of care transformational goals of continuous care and prevention, and providing coordinated resources to keep people connected, stable and healthy, the Housing Council members used all of the valuable feedback to identify the following top three priority goals and corresponding actionable strategies.

GOAL #1 Opening More Doors

The County of San Diego has prioritized the creation of new housing for over two decades, and the inventory of dedicated supportive housing for people with serious mental illness with limited resources has successfully increased from 241 units to 584 units. The need remains high, however, and focused effort needs to continue, especially for very low and extremely low income households; there is a shortfall of 68,959 homes in these income categories. The Housing Council is particularly focused on increasing a diversity of housing options and geographical locations by:

- Maximizing and accelerating unit creation by fully committing the first 3 years of No Place Like Home Funding by February, 2023.
- Maximizing ongoing rent subsidies by aligning with support services, such as Emergency Housing Vouchers.
- Identify opportunities to create "tiny home" villages with wrap-around supports that are not time limited and which have an emphasis on community building, particularly on parcels of land that can't support larger multifamily housing projects.
- Establish a dedicated flexible housing subsidy pool for people with behavioral health issues.
- Increase inventory of shared housing by exploring feasibility of developed shared housing opportunities, converting more single family homes into co-living or communal living situations, and expanding independent living and recovery residence association member homes by 25%.
- Explore other housing production alternatives and innovative housing types in addition to tiny homes to include, but not limited to 3D printed homes, new prefabricated housing types that meet state and local building code standards, conversion of vacant commercial or industrial buildings to affordable housing. This includes deepening collaboration with Department of Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities to address system, service & housing needs for people experiencing homelessness who have identified behavioral health needs.

- Expand understanding and implementation of quality in housing and services, including Housing First and Supportive Housing fidelity models which emphasize community integration principles.
- Address systemic disparities by reviewing and incorporating recommendations from the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Equity Index, the San Diego Cultural Competency Plan, and the Ad Hoc Committee Addressing Homelessness among Black San Diegans.

GOAL #2 Driving Collaboration Through Active Connectivity

Stakeholder feedback indicated that purposeful collaboration is needed and also desired among the various industries – health care, mental health care, law enforcement, public defender's office, district attorney, service providers and more that work every day to assist BHS clients experiencing homelessness to ultimately access housing and keep it. More effective, collaborative working relationships would result in more housing opportunities, and more successful outcomes once people are housed. The Housing Council is focused on supporting:

- Payment reform efforts, including Medi-Cal CalAIM planning, which prioritizes care and provides incentives for collaboration and continuous system improvement instead of cost-based reimbursement which includes burdensome documentation requirements.
- Engage in collaborative data-sharing efforts by seeking out opportunities to align systems and databases with BHS housing planning efforts, building on cross-sectoral referral capacities with housing & service partners.
- Address the digital divide by expanding access to computers and internet access.
- Further develop and promote quality telehealth, phone app based, and 24/7 phone based behavioral health options as well as connections to public health supports (including access to vaccines/boosters).
- Continue to develop services in housing which accommodate for social distancing while maintaining community connection.
- Focus on increasing income and basic supports.

GOAL #3 Expanding Service Approaches

Homeless individuals struggle with a wide range of housing needs, including understanding how to apply for a variety of affordable housing and how to navigate the system once they are able to access affordable housing. Many stakeholders also shared that it is often traumatic to move from homelessness to a new home and BHS clients struggle in making that adjustment. Priorities for Housing Council include:

- Further develop peer based programs to support tenants who are connected to BHS services as they make a transition into housing.
- Identify opportunities to expand services and housing eligibility criteria to more broadly serve people with behavioral health issues through intentional partnerships.
- Expand Moving On opportunities through training and additional housing subsidies.
- Increase BHS client access to Social Security work incentives, Housing Authority "Family Self Sufficiency" programs, and other partner program opportunities that offer financial literacy programs as well as financial incentives to increase earnings and savings.
- Expand employment supports for people accessing housing opportunities.
- Increase the evidence-based and best practice service supports that assist in enhanced access to housing and housing retention, including income and benefit supports, harm reduction strategies, mental health support and linkage to physical health care and housing retention supports.