

ITEM 8i

Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Executive Committee
February 28, 2022



STAFF REPORT

Subject: CV Housing First: 2021 Year in Review

Contact: Tom Kirk, Executive Director (tkirk@cvag.org) and
Anyse Smith, Management Analyst (asmith@cvag.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: After nearly two decades of providing regional homelessness services, 2021 marked the first year where CVAG directly operated a program using its own staff. Based on the direction and feedback from the CVAG Homelessness and Executive Committees, the CV Housing First program focused on the CV200, a by-name list of chronically homeless individuals residing in desert cities that have frequent contacts with law enforcement and who are likely to be shelter resistant or who have already fallen out of housing. The list was developed in partnership with CVAG's member jurisdictions and local law enforcement.

CVAG staff has committed to adjusting CV Housing First programming based on the data, and provides quarterly updates to its members about the program. The CV Housing First team uses two primary methods to get clients to housing solutions: rapid resolution and crisis stabilization units:

- Rapid resolution is an urgent, cost-saving solution that the Housing First staff use to help overcome the barriers that keep people from getting housing. This could include options such as helping them secure their identifying paperwork, which then can help them qualify for benefits. It also includes sorting out the process for housing, medical, mental health, substance abuse, employment, and mainstream benefits.
- The crisis stabilization units allow CVAG to connect CV200 individuals to housing. These are apartments and hotel rooms where clients stay, generally up to 90 days, that keep them off the streets. Through case management and frequent interactions with the team, CVAG is helping them achieve the goal of permanent housing, programs, and family reunifications

On a weekly basis, staff also conducts valley-wide coordinated outreach, and participates in regular planning meetings with law enforcement, healthcare providers, county behavioral health teams, and other service providers. By working collaboratively, staff can respond directly when unsheltered CV 200 individuals are located in the field and desiring services. Some of this work will be done by the mobile access center, which launched in 2021 to bring services to the unsheltered service-resistant homeless population where they are located and progressively provide the necessary assessments, interventions, and services. By bringing the access center into the field, the project has expanded services to individuals residing in places not meant for habitation and those who are unsheltered that may not be in the Coordinated Entry System or Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). CVAG staff is collaborating with partners including healthcare providers, county agencies, and legal service providers to offer medical services, referrals and assessments for housing, and assistance with vital documents and public benefits.

CVAG staff set a lofty internal goal of getting 90 individuals into permanent housing solutions in its first year. By the end of the year, 75 CV200 clients were in permanent housing solutions and another 32 non-CV200 clients were housed.

CV Housing First Clients – By the Numbers through December 31, 2021

CV200 as of 12/31/2021	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Clients housed in Crisis Stabilization Units (CSH)	50	22	35	32	139
Clients being helped through Rapid Resolution (RR)	--	3	2	0	5

Clients returned to the street (failures)	6	11	5	10	32
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Clients moved into permanent housing from CSH (successes)	20	21	12	12	65
Clients moved into permanent housing from RR (successes)	5	3	2	0	10
TOTAL HOUSED FROM LIST OF 200	25	24	14	12	75

NON CV200 as of 12/31/2021	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Households Housed in CSH Units	5	3	0	3	11
Households being helped through RR	--	0	0	3	3

Households returned to the street (failures)	0	1	0	3	4
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Households moved into permanent housing from CSH (successes)	3	2	0	0	5
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Households moved into permanent housing from RR (successes)	2	0	0	2	4
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS HOUSED	5	2	0	2	9
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS HOUSED	19	11	0	2	32

CVAG staff continues to track program metrics, such as the length of stay in the units. For the fourth quarter, the CV200 clients who successfully exited the program into permanent housing stayed in a crisis stabilization unit for 104 days. Those CV200 clients who exited the program unsuccessfully stayed 78 days. Since the end of the third quarter the length of stay for permanent resolutions has increased (up from 82 days), and the length of stay for returns to the street has also increased slightly (up from 71 days). Part of the reason for the extended length of stay has been due to the availability of permanent bed space, as well as challenges in securing necessary behavioral health services.

Throughout the year, CVAG staff also added additional program metrics to track the permanent housing resolutions. Knowing the type of housing where clients resolve will help with identifying future opportunities and options for housing, while also highlighting where we face challenges in finding placement for clients. Of the 12 permanent housing resolutions in the fourth quarter, the breakdown of clients' Exit Destination is as follows:

- Family/Friends – 1
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – 1
- Rental With Ongoing Subsidy (Low Income Senior Housing) – 3
- Rental With Ongoing Subsidy (VASH Voucher) – 1
- Rental With Ongoing Subsidy (Housing Choice Voucher) – 5
- Shared Housing - 1

The Housing First team has, over the past year, worked diligently to connect individuals experiencing homelessness to services and permanent housing. Case managers focused on each individual or household to determine their unique needs, and provided linkages to services as part of a collaborative effort. CVAG also established new partnerships with organizations – such as Inland County Legal Services – to assist with acquiring clients' vital documents, mainstream benefits, Social Security, SSI, and SSDI. Staff worked diligently to be responsive to landlords and to maintain the needed units valleywide. The efforts to house individuals on the CV200 is a unique challenge, as these clients are often the toughest of the tough cases.

CVAG staff will also be tracking the housing status of permanently resolved clients at the six- and 12-month period after they were initially housed to determine which clients still remain in housing and which have returned to homelessness. As of December 31, 2021, three people have reported having returned to homelessness and CVAG staff is working closely with these clients to determine additional housing opportunities. For the clients who are still in housing, CVHF staff remains ready and available to assist our clients with transitioning into independent living and to help prevent a return to homelessness.

Looking forward to 2022, and as detailed to the Homelessness Committee in November, CVAG staff is working with partners in law enforcement and the county to review the CV200 list for names that should be removed and update with new clients who are chronically homeless and high utilizers of public services. Those clients on the CV 200 who have not yet been housed and who have been contacted within the last 90 days will remain part of the list and staff will continue to engage these individuals through

street outreach. CVAG staff is still awaiting some feedback from local law enforcement, but anticipates the list will be finalized this month. Additionally, CVAG staff this month met with Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco and the department's leadership in the Coachella Valley to provide a detailed update on CVAG's efforts to address homelessness. CVAG staff will continue to follow up with the Sheriff and department staff as the department is working on programs – such as the recently announced homeless court – that may provide additional opportunities for collaboration with the CV Housing First team.

CVAG staff continues to identify areas of need and gaps. In 2022, staff anticipates exploring partnerships that improve outreach efforts. CVAG staff also is exploring ways to bolster the available behavioral health services, which can ultimately help get clients into permanent housing solutions. The availability of beds – whether it is retaining crisis stabilization units or having permanent supportive housing and affordable housing units – will also be critical to the program's long-term success.

Fiscal Analysis: The CV Housing First program, including the staffing and CV200 program, is incorporated into the CV Housing First budget, which has been funded by contributions from cities, Riverside County, the Desert Healthcare District/Foundation, and grants.

ITEM 8j

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Executive Committee
February 28, 2022**



STAFF REPORT

Subject: Update on Ad Hoc Efforts to Explore Additional Homelessness Resources and Policies

Contact: Erica Felci, Assistant Executive Director (efelci@cvag.org) and Greg Rodriguez, CVAG contract staff, (GRodrigu@rivco.org)

Recommendation: Information

Background: At the September 2021 meeting, the Homelessness Committee received an update on the ongoing Performance Assessment and Gaps Analysis of Riverside County's homeless services, which is being led by the County's Continuum of Care. This led to a conversation among the Homelessness Committee members about an idea brought forward by Palm Desert Mayor Pro Tem Sabby Jonathan, who had suggested creating an ad hoc committee to explore the additional services being used in other communities. The goal of the ad hoc, as outlined by Councilmember Jonathan, was to explore models that cities such as Los Angeles and Seattle have used to address homeless individuals who have refused services or who are not being helped by existing services. The ad hoc would evaluate optional programs that would be in addition to CV Housing First, then return to the full Homelessness Committee with a report and recommendations in 2022.

Members of the Homelessness Committee supported the approach. The ad hoc was created with the following members: Mayor Pro Tem Jonathan, Cathedral City Councilmember Mark Carnevale, Desert Healthcare District/ Foundation Director Carole Rogers, Indio Mayor Waymond Fermon and Palm Springs Councilmember Christy Holstege, who is chair of the Homelessness Committee.

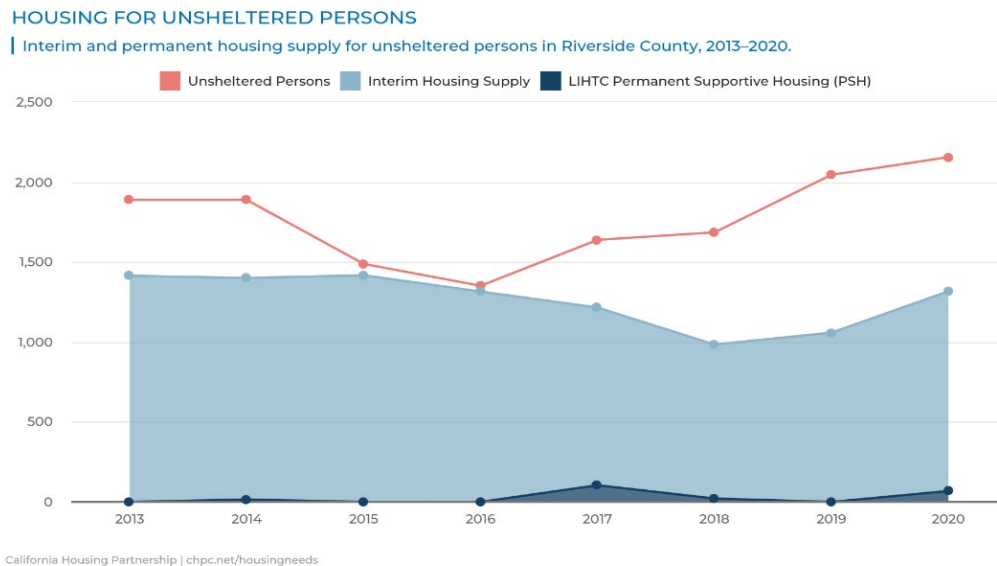
The ad hoc met again in January and February 2022 to discuss a policy proposal in the City of Sacramento that's garnering widespread attention. The proposal, which was introduced by Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg, would have the City adopt a first-in-the-nation right to housing, which includes an obligation of homeless individuals to accept housing if offered. The proposal, as introduced, would have taken effect in January 2023 and would have applied to every unsheltered resident who was previously housed for at least one year in the city limits. According to the City, "each person offered at least two forms of shelter or housing would have an obligation to accept one, or they could be moved from their camping site." A full copy of the proposal is here: https://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=21&event_id=4175&meta_id=65348
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At its January meeting, the ad hoc members heard from retired Superior Court Judge Lloyd Connelly, who is leading the effort for Mayor Steinberg's proposal. The mayor's Director of Communications, Mary Lynne Vellinga was also present. The proposal is in initial stages and it

was explained that many legal issues and implementation methods need to be addressed. Much of the Judge’s presentation focused on best practices that are being implemented in Sacramento, which CVAG staff would note are also being implemented in the Coachella Valley. These include:

- Housing First approaches like the CV200 program;
- Crisis Stabilization Units (CSU) or transitional housing such as CVAG’s units, Jewish Family Services and the proposed interim housing units at the planned Palm Springs Navigation Campus;
- Coordination of Respite Care services such as those at Martha’s Village and those being developed with CVAG’s program;
- Imbedding Behavioral Health Staff with police, which is a model used by the cities of Palm Desert and Palm Springs as well as Riverside County; and
- Navigation Centers such as the one being pursued in the City of Palm Springs, providing shelter beds, interim housing and full wrap-around services including behavioral health, medical and dental clinic, workforce development and access to other services

It should be noted that in order to fully comply with an obligatory requirement, the Coachella Valley needs more shelter capacity in the west, but more importantly transitional and permanent supportive housing units throughout the Coachella Valley. This is especially true due to the *Martin v. Boise* 9th Circuit Court decision preventing enforcement of anti-camping ordinances if jurisdictions do not have adequate shelter and housing supply. The following graphic illustrates the deficiencies in transitional and PSH units compared to the level of unsheltered persons countywide. While desert-specific information was not available for this staff report, CVAG staff will be following up with the County to see specific data for the region.



In addition, and based on the feedback from the ad hoc committee discussions to date, CVAG staff has incorporated the following position into its draft legislative platform, which is up for consideration by the Executive Committee at its February 2022 meeting: *“Support legislative efforts that would allow local jurisdictions to implement, if they choose, programs and ordinances*

that increase the available housing units and/or require unsheltered individuals to accept housing solutions and treatment solutions so long as there are adequate housing units available.”

Staff has also proposed the following approaches, which were supported by the ad hoc:

- Work with the County after the 2022 Point in Time Count is released to quantify housing needs specifically for the Coachella Valley;
- Monitor Sacramento’s policy adoption, implementation and any resource and/or legal challenges;
- Monitor potential housing and homeless legislation through organizations such as The Steinberg Institute and Housing California that would address rights to housing and funding of housing infrastructure. This would include Permanent Supportive Housing units (PSH), which are defined as community-based housing without a designated length of stay in which formerly homeless individuals and families live as independently as possible;
- Analyze 2022 legislation after the state Legislature’s February deadline to see if any bills address rights to housing and homeless infrastructure;
- Work with CVAG and County lobbyists on legislative platforms to address resource needs and reduced bureaucracy for increased development of PSH, CSU, transitional and affordable housing; and
- Support current activities around the Palm Springs Navigation Campus and any expansions to other valley cities.

At the February Homelessness Committee meeting, ad hoc members were provided an update on the work so far and some initial thoughts on the opportunities and challenges of doing a similar program in the Coachella Valley. Members of the Homelessness Committee expressed support for continuing to explore additional approaches to addressing homelessness, particularly for those who are refusing current services.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no cost to CVAG for this update. However, depending on the extent of the ad hoc’s scope and analysis in the future, CVAG staff may ask the Homelessness and Executive Committee to consider allocating additional resources beyond staff time.