



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: January 9, 2024

04

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

APPROVE A PILOT SHARED HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Of the nearly 3.4 million people currently living in San Diego County, approximately 908,000 are over the age of 55. According to the California Department of Finance demographic projections, that number is expected to grow to more than 1 million by 2030. With a longstanding commitment to ensuring that all communities within San Diego County have the capacity to support the unique needs of the aging population, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board), took action on August 29, 2023 (22) to address growing the homelessness among older adults. As part of this action, the Board directed staff to return with a program design, implementation plan, and evaluation framework for an older adult shared housing program. The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Housing and Community Development Services conducted a comprehensive review of 16 different shared housing models as well as the December 2020 *Shared Housing in San Diego Report* by the Regional Task Force on Homelessness and collaborated with County departments of Aging & Independence Services, Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities, and the Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics to develop a pilot program called the Shared Housing for Older Adults Program (SHOAP).

SHOAP aims to prevent homelessness, reduce the burden of housing costs, support aging in place, and offer a means of companionship for the region's older adults by creating shared living arrangements. This will be achieved through recruiting, assessing, and matching low- to moderate-income older adults, aged 55 years and older, who may be struggling to find affordable housing with appropriate homeowners or renters with an extra bedroom. The program will aim to create and support approximately 25 housing matches a year over the two-year pilot.

Today's action requests the Board to approve the pilot SHOAP and to authorize the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to pursue future funding opportunities related to addressing the housing needs of older adults. This item supports the County's vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, as well as the ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities by creating new housing opportunities for older adults. Additionally, this item aligns with the County Framework for Ending Homelessness by creating homeless prevention measures for individuals with a high risk of housing instability.

SUBJECT: APPROVE A PILOT SHARED HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Finally, the proposed SHOAP also supports the County's Aging Roadmap priority area of Housing by increasing the supply of housing options for older adults.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Approve the pilot Shared Housing for Older Adults Program.
2. Authorize the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to pursue future funding opportunities related to addressing the housing needs of older adults.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

According to the 2022 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, nearly 73% of San Diego County's householders over the age of 55 own their homes. However, in 2015 the San Diego Seniors Community Foundation reported that within the renter population, 55.8% of single older adults who live alone reported they struggle to make ends meet. The 2023 Point-in-Time Count found that 2,670 San Diegans aged 55 years and older are experiencing homelessness, representing more than a quarter of the homeless population. Additionally, a 2021 survey conducted by Serving Seniors found that among unsheltered older adults, 88% became homeless in San Diego County and 45% are experiencing homelessness for the first time in their lives. Furthermore, community feedback provided from listening sessions and focus groups for the development of the Aging Roadmap concluded that older adult renters in San Diego County reported affordability as a pervasive problem, especially for those living on a fixed income. Other concerns included the challenges in finding affordable housing options and a growing concern for environmental factors that impact their safety.

The highlighted data underscore the exponentially growing need for affordable housing options for older adults, but also present opportunities within the older adult population rate of homeownership. The Shared Housing for Older Adults Program aims to link older adults aged 55 years and older who are looking for housing with appropriate homeowners or renters with an extra bedroom. The program also provides ongoing support for a sustainable living arrangement.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today's actions support the County of San Diego Sustainability Goal #2 to provide just and equitable access, and Sustainability Goal #4 to protect health and well-being of San Diegans. Sustainability Goal #2 will be accomplished through the creation of a program that prioritizes older adults as an underserved population for affordable housing opportunities. Additionally, utilizing the shared housing model optimizes the efficiency of the current housing supply. Sustainability Goal #4 will be accomplished through providing older adult participants the ability to age in place, avoid homelessness, and foster new social relationships.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-25 Operational Plan in Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) and the Office of Evaluation Performance and Analytics (OEPA).

SUBJECT: APPROVE A PILOT SHARED HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

If approved, this request will result in estimated costs of \$161,000 in FY 2023-24 and \$135,000 in FY 2024-25 in HHSa and an estimated cost of \$15,000 in FY 2024-25 in OEPA, for a total estimated cost of \$311,000.

These costs include one-time costs of up to \$200,000 in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25, and \$96,000 in staffing costs to implement the Request for Proposal and administration of the two-year contract. Of these, up to \$200,000 will be used to implement the two-year pilot Shared Housing for Older Adults Program. These costs will provide outreach, matching and other services for approximately 50 housing matches over two years administered through a contracted provider. The remaining \$15,000, needed only in FY 2024-25, will be required for program evaluation. These funds will cover data collection and related costs.

These costs will use existing appropriations and funds for subsequent years and will be incorporated into future Operational Plans. The funding source is existing one-time General Purpose Revenue. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

Of the nearly 3.4 million people currently living in San Diego County, approximately 908,000 are over the age of 55. According to the California Department of Finance demographic projections, that number is expected to grow to more than 1 million by 2030. Older adult homelessness has been identified as a critical issue impacting San Diego County. The University of California Los Angeles Center for Health Policy Research 2022 Elder Index found that 51.3% of California's single older adults struggle to afford necessities such as housing, goods, healthcare, and transportation. Currently, more than 2,000 older adults live unsheltered within the region. Older adults, particularly those relying on Social Security payments or other fixed income sources, experience substantial housing insecurity.

To address the growing homelessness among older adults, on August 29, 2023 (22), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) directed staff to return within 120 days with an implementation plan for a shared housing program for adults aged 55 and older, including recommendations on program scale, funding, staffing, and an evaluation framework. The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS) conducted a comprehensive review of 16 different shared housing models within and outside California as well as the December 2020 Shared Housing in San Diego Report by the Regional Task Force on Homelessness. Additionally, HCDS collaborated with the County departments of Aging & Independence Services, Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities, and the County Office of Evaluation, Performance, and Analytics (OEPA) to develop the Shared Housing for Older Adults Program (SHOAP). SHOAP is a pilot program that aims to prevent homelessness, reduce the burden of housing costs, support aging in place and offer

SUBJECT: APPROVE A PILOT SHARED HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

a means of companionship for the region's older adults by connecting them with compatible housemates so that they can reduce their housing costs. If approved, this program would recruit, assess, and match low- to moderate-income older adults, aged 55 years and older, who may be struggling to find affordable housing with appropriate homeowners or renters with an extra bedroom. Key components of the program design include:

- Assessing needs and goals of home-seekers and home-providers to coordinate appropriate matches;
- Ensuring affordability of rent; and
- Creating long-term housing solutions with supports including tailored housemate agreements, mediation services, and regular check-ins with housemates.

If approved, SHOAP would be administered by a contracted provider as a two-year pilot program with the goal of creating and supporting a total of 50 housing matches or approximately 25 housing matches per year. This provider would be responsible for recruiting participants and determining eligibility. Eligibility for home-seekers requires the participant to be 55 years of age and older and able to care for oneself mentally and physically. Additionally, home-seekers shall earn no more than 120% of Area Median Income. There are no income or age restrictions for home-providers, as this would limit the housing supply available for the program. All program participants must be located within San Diego County. Eligible participants would take a comprehensive assessment designed by the program administrator to assess personal goals, interests and values, housemate criteria and preferences, finances, health, and other factors to appropriately match compatible participants. Once matched, support would be provided to determine an appropriate cost of rent with the goal of keeping the cost at or below 30% of the home-seeker's monthly income on rent. Participants would enter into a customized housemate agreement and would receive an annual check-in by the program administrator to ensure continued compatibility and provide any additional referrals to services as appropriate. To support the sustainability of the housemate matches, mediation services would be provided as needed. Further details on the implementation plan can be found in Attachment A.

An evaluation framework was developed by OEPA to evaluate the effectiveness of SHOAP (Attachment B). The evaluation framework specifically includes a logic model, anticipated short-term and medium-term results, programmatic output and outcome metrics, and plans for evaluating program effectiveness, based on a mixed-methods pretest-posttest design. In alignment with the County's commitment to data-informed policy solutions, program design elements may change over time given the results of the program evaluation.

Today's actions support the County's Aging Roadmap Housing priority area by increasing the supply of housing options for older adults, as well as the Framework for Ending Homelessness through increased housing options for the region's older adults. Today's action requests the Board approve the Pilot Shared Housing for Older Adults Program and authorize the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to pursue future funding opportunities related to the long-term sustainability of the program.

SUBJECT: APPROVE A PILOT SHARED HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's actions support the County of San Diego's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan initiatives of Equity (Housing) and Community (Quality of Life) by providing housing opportunities that meet the needs of San Diego County's older adult community and advancing opportunities for economic growth and development for older adults experiencing housing insecurity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric C. McDonald". To the right of the signature, the word "FOR" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A – Pilot Shared Housing for Older Adults Program Implementation Plan

Attachment B – Performance Measurement and Evaluation Framework