



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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First District

JOEL ANDERSON  
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE  
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND  
Fifth District

**DATE:** December 10, 2024

**12**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### SUBJECT

**AUTHORIZE CONTRACT EXTENSIONS WITH ARBOR E&T DBA EQUUS WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR THE REGIONAL HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND MCALISTER INSTITUTE FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER PROGRAM (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

### OVERVIEW

On November 2, 2021 (4), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) implemented and approved the County of San Diego (County) Framework for Ending Homelessness (Framework), which created a unified strategic approach to support the coordination of homeless services in San Diego County.

On January 27, 2016 (HA01), the Board approved the Inclement Weather Program (IWP), which would temporarily house unsheltered homeless individuals and families in response to high-risk inclement weather events. Subsequently, on May 19, 2020 (17), the Board approved the Regional Homeless Assistance Program (RHAP), an emergency housing program that supports people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated communities by using local hotels and motels as emergency housing options coupled with case management, and housing navigation with the goal of connecting people to more permanent housing solutions. In addition, on February 8, 2022 (14), the Board approved the Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing, which includes leveraging RHAP as an emergency housing option. Both IWP and RHAP are the critical components within the Framework. On February 27, 2024 (11), the Board approved the ongoing operational costs of RHAP through Fiscal Year 2025-26. Most recently, on March 12, 2024 (19), the Board authorized a new competitive solicitation of RHAP, which also includes the IWP component.

Today's action requests the Board authorize an extension of the current RHAP contract and the IWP contract terms through June 30, 2025, to allow for the competitive solicitation process to be completed. This extension will ensure that American Rescue Plan Act funding is obligated timely and will sustain core services to RHAP's existing program participants. Additionally, this extension will ensure that people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated communities have emergency housing resources during inclement weather events. Today's action supports the

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County vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically for communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This item also advances the Framework by ensuring our most vulnerable community members have access to housing, care coordination, and connections to more stable housing opportunities.

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

### **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

In accordance with Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement, and Administrative Code Section 401, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to amend contract No. 560945 with Arbor E&T (dba Equus Workforce Solutions) and contract No. 561988 with McAlister Institute for Treatment and Education to extend the contract terms through June, 30, 2025, subject to the availability of funds; and to amend the contracts as required to reflect changes to services and funding allocations, subject to the approval of the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency.

### **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The County of San Diego (County) is dedicated to addressing the root causes of homelessness and providing equitable access to preventative and supportive services for vulnerable residents. The mission of the County Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) is to support under-resourced and vulnerable groups, immigrant and refugee communities, and those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. HSEC administers both the Regional Homeless Assistance Program (RHAP) and the Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing program, which serve people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated communities.

The 2024 Point-in-Time Count of people experiencing homelessness identified 10,605 individuals who were living on the streets or in shelters throughout San Diego County on one night. Of those, 201 were counted in the unincorporated areas of the county. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24, 526 households were served by RHAP, of which 44% were male, 56% were female, 29% were living with a disability, 8% were African American, 3% were American Indian, and 21% were Hispanic/Latino. Moreover, with respect to IWP, 3,714 duplicated households were served in FY 2023-24, of which 20% were Hispanic/Latino and 15% were African American.

The County engages people at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, impacted community members, community partners, and other key stakeholders in developing County plans to address homelessness. Their feedback is valued and incorporated into the development of programs. The County has conducted lived experience forums in the North, East, and South Regions to gain valuable information on shaping programs and has implemented regular lived experience feedback questionnaires. RHAP and IWP will provide needed emergency shelter and support to people across the unincorporated areas of San Diego County. This includes those who are disproportionately represented in the homeless system including, justice involved people, and

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people with a range of health and social needs, as well as Black, Indigenous and People of Color.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Today's actions support the County of San Diego Sustainability Goal #2 of providing just and equitable access to services and resources, and Sustainability Goal #4 to protect the health and well-being of everyone in the region. The Regional Homeless Assistance Program and the Inclement Weather Program support the most vulnerable community members in the unincorporated communities to have just and equitable access to housing, services, and resources including connections to healthcare and behavioral health support.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-26 Operational Plan for the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in one-time costs and revenue of \$7,500,000 for Regional Homeless Assistance Payment and one-time costs and revenue of \$250,000 for Inclement Weather Program in FY 2024-25 for a total cost and revenue of \$7,750,000. The funding sources are American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and existing General Purpose Revenue leveraged through ARPA under the Homeless Services component of the ARPA Framework. 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**

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) has demonstrated a strong commitment to housing and providing support to address the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. On November 2, 2021 (4) the Board adopted the County of San Diego (County) Framework for Ending Homelessness (Framework) to maximize existing and future regional work on addressing homelessness and to create a unified strategic approach to support the coordination of homeless services and funding. The Framework encompasses the County's ongoing work and provides a vision to support forward, collaborative, and impactful progress. The Regional Homeless Assistance Program (RHAP) falls under the Framework's Emergency/Interim Housing and Resources domain. These efforts are geared toward ensuring that people in the unincorporated areas of the county who are experiencing homelessness have access to emergency housing options.

On January 27, 2016 (HA01), the Board approved funding for a program to temporarily house people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county during high-risk inclement weather events. Inclement weather events are activated under specific circumstances at times of extreme heat, cold, and/or rain.

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The unincorporated San Diego County covers a large geographic area and a wide range of microclimates. An Inclement Weather Program (IWP) offers an efficient and flexible means of providing temporary shelter through hotel or motel vouchers on an as-needed basis during high-risk inclement weather events. Hotel or motel stays are generally up to three days in length. Similar to RHAP, the IWP is a scattered site model. Therefore, it meets the needs of individuals where they are located and impacted by adverse weather events.

The 2024 Point-in-Time Count identified 201 individuals experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county. Over the past years, IWP has served as a critical resource for many individuals. This program has been a crucial resource for people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated communities during recent weather events. By maintaining IWP, with the ability to shelter people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated communities during inclement weather events, the County will be better prepared during severe weather incidents to reduce further harm to people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated communities.

RHAP is an emergency housing program that supports people experiencing homelessness by sheltering them in local participating hotels or motels. It is the only emergency housing program that supports people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county, which spans from North to East and South regions of the county including rural areas where homelessness services are scarce. The RHAP scattered site design has proven effective in supporting program recipients, as the broad geographic coverage enables people to take shelter while remaining near to their existing natural supports. Since 2020, RHAP has served over 2,400 individuals, 39% of which have transitioned to permanent housing. In addition, the program supports people through credit reference and repair, needs assessment for services, employment and training, connections to income, food and medical benefits, rental and subsidy applications, as well as training on life skills. RHAP also works directly with landlords to provide incentives to housing participants. In its current capacity, RHAP serves 250 households on any given night.

While RHAP was formally developed in 2020, this program has early roots starting in 2017. On September 6, 2017 (1), the Board ratified a local health emergency due to the Hepatitis A outbreak. To support the response to the Hepatitis A outbreak, an existing contract was amended to include hotel or motel vouchers for people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County, which was later approved for an extension on May 15, 2018 (7). Subsequently, on September 11, 2018 (6), the Board declared a shelter crisis in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County. This action paved the way for the County's first emergency housing program, referred to as RHAP, which the Board approved on January 28, 2020 (6).

On February 8, 2022 (14), the Board approved the expansion of emergency housing options by implementing a plan for Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing for people experiencing homelessness. The plan included leveraging RHAP as an emergency housing option for the unincorporated areas of the county and developing additional emergency housing options such as safe parking, Recreational Vehicle (RV) parking, and sleeping cabin shelters. In August 2022, the County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Department of Homeless

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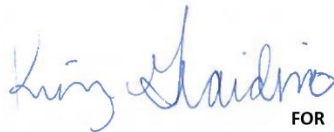
Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) launched the Magnolia Safe Parking in unincorporated El Cajon as part of this effort and in August 2024, HSEC launched the second safe parking location in Spring Valley. On February 27, 2024 (11), the Board approved American Rescue Plan Act funding for the operational costs of RHAP through Fiscal Year 2025-26. On March 12, 2024 (19), the Board approved the new competitive solicitation for RHAP which also includes Inclement Weather Program component.

Currently, RHAP and IWP are set up as two separate contracts. The RHAP contract is set to expire on December 31, 2024, and the IWP contract is set to expire on March 31, 2025. Since the Board approved the new competitive solicitation for RHAP in March 2024 that includes the IWP component, County staff have been working to establish a new contract. At this time, the Source Selection Committee is evaluating the proposals. Today's action asks the Board to extend the current RHAP contract and the IWP contract aligning both contract terms through June 30, 2025. This extension will ensure timely obligation of ARPA funds, sustain the core services to program participants, and ensure a smooth transition to the new contract.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's actions support the County of San Diego 2024-2029 Strategic Plan initiatives of Sustainability (Resiliency), Equity (Economic Opportunity), and Community (Quality of Life) by continuing to provide low barrier housing options and resources for anyone experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness, which also supports improved quality of life and economic opportunity within the community.

Respectfully submitted,



FOR

EBONY N. SHELTON  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A