

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Homeless Services Task Force (Zoom Meeting)

Wednesday, January 4, 2023, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

MEETING VIDEO LINK: [Meeting Video](#)

Meeting Notes *(submitted by Laurie Jacobs)*

These meeting notes are an overview of the meeting content. We suggest watching the meeting video and/or opening the supporting document links for more comprehensive information.

Welcome and Introductions

Elected officials/representatives in attendance:

Councilmember Tanaka (Gardena); Mayor Pro Tem Uphoff (Lomita); Councilmember Sheikh (Torrance); Chair (SBCCOG) Mayor Pro Tem Cruikshank; Councilmember Seo (Rancho Palos Verdes) Councilmember McOsker (CD15); Jeanette Christian (Representative for US Senator Feinstein); Jocelyn Dominguez (Representative for LA Mayor Bass); Janet Turner (Representative for Congressman Lieu); Vanessa Cruz (Representatives for Congressman Barragan); Ivan Sulic, Jennifer LaMarque (Representatives for Supervisor Hahn)

Others in attendance:

Elana Eden (Housing Rights Center); Erik Vargas (LAHSA SPA8); Onnie Williams (LA County Homeless Initiative); Amanda Valorosi, Cac Le, Debra Scott, Fariba Moghadam, Keith Bennett, Raeann Munoz (Carson); Jaclyn Arco, Officer Chad Amerine (Gardena); Angela Crespi (Hermosa Beach); Kimberly Mack (Hawthorne); Cinder Eller Kimball, Roberto Chavez (Inglewood); George Gabriel, Rita Crabtree-Kampe (Manhattan Beach); Jay Hart, John LaRock, Zulma Gent (Torrance); Lila Omura, Wayne Windham (Redondo Beach); McKenzie Bright (Rancho Palos Verdes); Jeannie Naughton (Rolling Hills Estates); Kimberly Damico, Haley Fuselier, Ana Abril-Urias, Courtney Reed (PATH); Shari Weaver, Max Estrada, Matt Morash, Cathy Hetzer, Ramon Rendon (Harbor Interfaith Services); Laurie Ramey (MHALA); Paul Stansbury (NAMI); Mary Agnes Erlandson, Jonathan Siad (St. Margaret's Center); Robert Chavez (SBWIB); Garrett Dunbar; (Sheikh Impact); D. Bowie Russ (Venice Family Clinic) Craig Townsend (Harbor City Estates); John Chou (Gardena Lawyer); Lee Phillips (MB Safe); Jackie Bacharach, Ronson Chu, Laurie Jacobs (SBCCOG)

November 2, 2022, meeting notes – Received and filed.

WINTER SHELTER: Ronson Chu announced the urgent need for Winter Shelter locations due to the heavy rainstorms and asked for everyone to reach out to source possible church and motel locations. While the Augmented Winter Shelter program offers motel vouchers through the 211 app for areas without shelter locations, currently there are little to no motel rooms available through this app.

NOTE: The meeting video started recording after those announcements.

Service Provider Updates

PATH Services

Ana Abril-Urias, Program Manager SPA8 Outreach, and Courtney Reed, Associate Director SPA 8, PATH
Also in attendance: Haley Fuselier, Regional Director
PRESENTATION LINK: [PATH Presentation](#)

Ana Bril-Urias presented information on the current PATH outreach teams, their schedules of outreach in the south bay along with updates on Intensive Street Case Management, Screening and CES, Housing Location Services, Ongoing Supportive Services, Interim Housing Referrals, and Housing Voucher Assistance. Currently they are short handed with only 2 outreach workers so the schedule is based on

case management appointments and can be adjusted to best serve participants. Click on the presentation for details.

Their challenges include:

- Shelters at their max capacity and/or covid lock-down/quarantine
- Lack of interim housing availability
- Low affordable housing availability, especially for seniors
- Street 2 Subsidy has no more availability
- Emergency Housing Vouchers have been paused indefinitely

Harbor Interfaith CES Update

Shari Weaver, SPA8 Director Coordinated Entry System (Families, Adults & Youth) Harbor Interfaith
PRESENTATION LINK: [Harbor Interfaith Report](#)

Shari shared the status of vacancies and housing placements which are listed in the linked report. There are 15 vacancies at the San Pedro interim shelter site so Shari will work offline with Ivan Sulic and DHS to do direct referrals that should not be held up by the referral process. Success stories included 2 people who were placed at the new West Haven Supportive Housing site after living temporarily at the new 3290 Temporary Village in Torrance.

Presentation Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority 2023 Homeless Count

Erik Vargas, Community Relations Coordinator, SPA 8 LAHSA

Presentation Link: [Homeless Count Announcements Report](#)

Link to Register as a Volunteer: [Volunteer Link](#)

Erik announced the 2023 Homeless Count for SPA 8 will be on Wednesday, January 25th at 8pm and shared the training dates for volunteers and deployment site leads. He shared that more volunteers are still needed. Currently SPA 8 has 146 signed up and the goal is 200-250. There is a new app for volunteers to use which makes the process easier.

Presentation on Evictions and Tenant Rights

Elana Eden, Director of Media, Outreach & Education, Housing Rights Center

Presentation Link: [Tenant Protections Updates](#)

Website: www.housingrightscenter.org, Phone: 800.477.5977

Elana's email: eeden@housingrightscenter.org

Email: info@housingrightscenter.org to schedule appointments. They have a walk-in clinic in Carson.

Founded in 1968, the Housing Rights Center (HRC) is a non-profit civil rights organization dedicated to fair housing offering free services in many languages. Their core services include housing counseling free to tenants and landlords. HRC assists with discrimination and eviction prevention through Stay Housed LA.

COVID related eviction protections end on January 31, 2023, so it is very important for our cities to do community outreach to ensure stakeholders are aware of their rights.

Eviction Resources:

- **Stay Housed LA**, www.StayHousedLA.org, 1-888-694-0040
Free or low-cost legal aid & community support
- **Tenant Power Toolkit**, www.TenantPowerToolkit.org,
Online guide to complete an Answer to respond to an eviction
- **LA County Self-Help Centers**, <https://SelfHelp.lacourt.org>,
Virtual appointments to complete an Answer and other forms

There also is assistance for mortgage holders at <https://camortgagerelief.org/>

The presentation slides provide details on programs and protections, so it is suggested you listen to the meeting video.

Q&A

Debra Scott asked what tenants can do if they do not have the funds to pay the back rent, and how will landlords enforce this.

Elana advised that if the tenant turned in their hardship form and got the protection, then the landlord must go to small claims court. As to how the tenant will pay, the protection ended, and it is not likely the state will open another program to assist with back rent owed. Some cities are trying to allocate their American Rescue Funds or are considering short term or long-term rental assistance programs.

Ronson Chu asked if there was any data that can identify how much back rents are owed so cities can evaluate what rent relief programs may be needed. He also reminded us that the California Policy Lab says that two thirds of all homelessness begins with evictions.

Elana is unaware if this data is available. She highly encourages tenants to reach out for the free legal assistance through Stay Housed LA the Tenant Power Toolkit.

Councilmember Sheikh asked what the State of Emergency issued by cities exactly means.

Elana was not familiar with how this could address homelessness.

Jocelyn Dominguez shared about how the City of Los Angeles State of Emergency activated the Emergency Response site which helps obtain resources to address emergency situations quicker by removing standard barriers to address encampments and homelessness. This state of emergency does not guarantee access to state funding but does allow streamlining of funding and procurement to address housing and homelessness. Onnie Williams added that the State of Emergency allowed the City to restructure their processes to cut down unnecessary levels of approvals that normally happen during government business. Also, this allows housing to come online much quicker, however keep in mind that the City of LA has a lot more resources than the South Bay cities.

Debra Scott inquired about what is being done to prepare for additional people becoming homeless due to the end of the eviction moratorium.

Ronson indicated the only action he is aware of is funneling more resources to legal assistance. He is not aware of any other additional safety nets.

Ronson added that many people affected by the potential evictions are seniors on fixed incomes as well as other people on fixed incomes. The SBCCOG is looking into creating a shallow subsidy program or a street to subsidy program that could bridge the gap along with reaching out to CES prevention strategy to better tap into those resources.

Legislative Updates

Janet Turner, Representative Congressman Lieu

The Congressman asked for an increase in the homeless prevention grant program for the fiscal 2023 Omnibus bill. Janet reported this went from 30.7 million to 36.4 million and he will work on more homelessness programs this year.

The Congressman secured \$1 million toward a mobile health crisis response team for Hermosa Beach and \$1 million for Torrance temporary housing programs received funding.

Vanessa Cruz, Representative Congressman Barragan

Her internet microphone was not working so this report was emailed by Ms. Cruz:

Barriers to Housing for the Justice Impacted: Rep. Barragán successfully included language in the House Budget Report directing the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to consider reforms aimed at improving housing for those impacted by the justice system and assess for opportunities in reducing barriers for these individuals. Rep. Barragán led a letter with more than 20 other Members of Congress requesting this assessment.

Documentation barriers related to housing: The final deal maintains report language encouraging the U.S. Office of Government and Accountability to study the documentation barriers people experiencing homelessness face in obtaining housing and provide recommendations the federal government can take to

reduce these obstacles. Rep. Barragán led a letter requesting a multi-agency assessment on the documentation barriers to housing assistance programs people experiencing homelessness face.

Barriers to Federal benefits and services: The final budget agreement maintains language to aid with homeless service providers through capacity-building grants to help our most vulnerable navigate the federal benefits system. Rep. Barragán led a letter requesting \$20 million for a pilot program to expand service providers' capacity to assist our unhoused neighbors navigate and receive federal benefits.

Secured funding for Harbor Interfaith Services to modernize the Family Shelter in San Pedro
This facility provides transitional housing to about 20 families – mostly single mothers with children. The funding will enable Harbor Interfaith to modernize the shelter with new exterior windows, refrigerators, and paint for the exterior of the shelter, and also assist with the temporary relocation of the families during capital improvements.

And here are topline numbers on funding for housing programs included in the omnibus \$30 billion for Housing Choice Vouchers, including an extra \$50 million to expand rental assistance vouchers to an additional 11,700 households, including individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness; survivors of domestic violence; and veterans.
\$3.6 billion for Homeless Assistance Grants, including \$290 million for Emergency Solutions Grants and \$107 million to prevent youth homelessness.
\$1.5 billion for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments Updates - Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG

The SBCCOG just received a grant right before Thanksgiving from the California Public Utilities Commission to look at needs and market assessment for our fiber network. We will be doing some design in regard to some disadvantaged communities.

We are also working on our Local Travel Network (LTN). Signage has been approved and we spend time in 2023 working on implementation.

We are still working with SCAG on projects having to do with regional REAP projects to promote housing. We have a project on ADUs to look and see how ADUs are working in the South Bay as well as a project on areas that might be capable of being redeveloped from commercial to housing.

Starting on January 12th, we have a virtual workshop for cities on housing issues. It is not open to the general public so let Jacki know if you are interested. The first session will be on Housing Markets.

This year an EIR will be coming out for the Green Line, or the C Line extension which should come out at the end of January. There will be public input but the COG will not take a position at this time. We are planning a bus tour open to election officials on March 2nd. If there is room for more and you are interested, notify Jacki.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: Our big event of the year is the General Assembly on March 23rd from 9 – 3 at the Carson Community Center. We are taking sponsorships now so please let Jacki know of any potential sponsors. Sponsors over \$2500 will be given a table to display their information. We also have an exhibit room.

The event is free to attend. This year's title is The South Bay: Leading the Way on Resilience and Adaptability. The conference will feature panel discussions and interactive exhibits. This year's program will explore how the South Bay is adapting to the growing impacts of climate crisis and working to create a more resilient future. The community, as well as county, state, and federal legislators representing the South Bay, are invited to hear an array of speakers.

LINK: [General Assembly Registration](#)

Announcements

We welcome two newly elected Councilmembers to our meeting; LA CD15 Councilmember Tim McOsker and Councilmmber Paul Seo from Rancho Palos Verdes.

The January 26th SBCCOG Board meeting will include a welcome to all newly elected Councilmembers and an overview for existing Councilmembers about the programs of the COG.

Councilmember John Cruikshank and SBCCOG Chair shared this meeting was very impressive with over 50 people in attendance addressing the homelessness crisis and understanding our place in helping.

Councilmember Tanaka added that he used to work the skid row area and knows that weather like this is horrendous. He mentioned each city should work on getting assistance for people on the streets during this winter storm weather.

Mark your calendars: 2023 meetings: Jan 4, Mar 1, May 3, Jul 5, Sep 6, Nov 1

Adjournment – next meeting is scheduled for March 1, 2023