

## HOMELESSNESS IN RIVERSIDE WORKSHOP

OCTOBER 11, 2016

### *County of Riverside Programs and Services*

#### ***Executive Oversight Committee on Homelessness – Homeless Response Work Group***

The County of Riverside Executive Office created the Executive Oversight Committee on Homelessness – Homeless Response Work Group to develop interventions that are successful and sustainable in addressing the “visible, service resistant, homeless” population. The City of Riverside is an active participant in this Work Group.

The Group held several meetings and developed the following recommendations to address homelessness throughout the County. These recommendations will be presented to the Executive Oversight Committee on Homelessness in October 2016.

- a) Education and Awareness: Create an education and awareness campaign to engage city and county elected officials, faith based organizations, the nonprofit community, and the public about homelessness.
- b) Housing: Increase development of affordable housing, with permanent supportive housing as a top priority, and identify and leverage existing and new funding sources that serve the homeless population in Riverside County.
- c) Countywide Homeless Crisis Response: Provide low-barrier pathways to permanent housing for all individuals and families experiencing homelessness through a robust and effective countywide homeless crisis response to align with a housing first approach and increased coordination with cities. This team will be responding to homeless encampments in unincorporated areas.

#### ***Riverside County Continuum of Care***

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers federal Continuum of Care funds. Last year, the County of Riverside Continuum of Care received \$9,116,864 from HUD to support regional efforts that address homelessness through the provision of services and housing. The Riverside County Department of Public and Social Services was the lead applicant for these funds.

The Riverside County Continuum of Care, supported by the Board of Governance, develops annual goals and plans for regional efforts, provides direction to the general membership, regional work groups and standing committees of the Riverside County Continuum of Care, and develops guidelines and provides oversight to the annual HUD application process.

Councilmember Burnard fills one of the six public sector positions on the Continuum of Care Board of Governance. The City’s Housing Authority Manager, Michelle Davis, is the Membership Chair. Through these active rolls, the City of Riverside is working to guide the regional planning efforts and implement activities that address the barriers of those living in homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.

There is an insufficient supply of housing units in the Riverside region, especially units that are available to individuals and households with barriers. The Riverside County Continuum of Care's Housing Committee has been tasked with addressing this need. The Housing Committee is working to locate landlords willing to rent units to individuals and households considered to be "high risk tenants", those without a steady work or credit history, typical of households experiencing homelessness. The Continuum of Care has recently created a Funding Committee, tasked with finding non-federal funding resources to supplement the activities that the Continuum of Care and its member agencies are carrying out.

### ***Riverside County Department of Public Social Services***

The Department of Public Social Services administers the Emergency Food and Shelter Program that helps people with economic emergencies (not disaster-related). Funding is provided to organizations to supplement feeding, sheltering and rent, mortgage, and utility assistance efforts. The Department of Public Social Services also provides: temporary financial assistance; employment services; programs and services to protect children and adults from abuse or neglect; and access to health care coverage to low-income households. These resources are provided through the following Divisions: Adult Services, Children's Services, Self-Sufficiency, In-Home Supportive Services, Homeless Programs, Family Resource Centers, First 5 Riverside and Community Outreach Branch.

### ***Behavioral Health***

In 2015, Riverside County opened the Rustin Building in Riverside, a 166,000 square foot building to house eleven programs ranging from Riverside University Health System – Behavioral Health administrative offices, outpatient mental health services, substance use disorder treatment services, and a 24,000 square foot conference center.

The Riverside University Health System Emergency Treatment Services (ETS) located in Riverside provides evaluation, crisis intervention and referrals to patients experiencing psychiatric emergencies. Clients may be referred to Inpatient Treatment Facilities for ongoing services. Behavior Health also has a housing crisis response team that provides homeless street outreach and engagement. The Full Service Partnership program works with those who are living in the streets and seeking behavioral services. The program provides intensive case management in small caseloads to support services such as individual therapy, crisis interventions, and medication support through psychiatric medical services and appointments. For people discharged from ETS services, there is follow-up to ensure that they are linked to Behavioral Health services.

Behavioral Health received Continuum of Care funding from the Riverside County Department of Public Social Service to operate the Coordinated Entry System for Riverside County, which links and prioritizes those living on the streets with navigation linkage and housing referrals. Behavioral Health also provides leadership to community outreach teams addressing homelessness throughout the County.

Behavioral Health also provides housing for people experiencing a mental illness coupled with a drop in center at The Place, which has 25 units of supportive housing and peer run services on Hulen Place and two integrated affordable housing sites (15 units at each site) that provide onsite case management to those previously homeless or at risk. The County also has dedicated 40 units of affordable housing at Geel Place in Riverside along with a continuum of various

housing programs including short-term rental assistance to prevent or end homelessness for individuals open to services.