

AB 2176: Emergency Bridge Housing Communities
Annual Report



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Annual Report to the State Legislature

January 1, 2021



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PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the State Legislature with an update on the progress of the City of San José's Bridge Housing Communities (BHC) authorized under Assembly Bill 2176 and subsequent extension under Assembly Bill 1745. In accordance with the provisions of the bills the City must provide an annual report to the State Legislature to include:

1. The number of residents housed in every BHC;
2. The number of residents who have moved from a BHC into permanent affordable housing;
3. The average time required for a resident to receive a permanent affordable housing unit and;
4. The actual and projected number of permanent affordable housing units available through January 1, 2022.

Additionally, this report will provide some key data on San José's homeless population and the housing interventions and solutions underway, including the implementation of the City's Bridge Housing Communities and Emergency Interim Housing.

STATUS

Since the last report, the City of San José has completed development of the two Bridge Housing Communities (BHC), two leased sites to the City from Caltrans and the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). The first BHC site has been operating for almost a year and has provided a bridge to permanent housing for unhoused program participants. The second BHC, a Caltrans owned site, completed construction mid-December 2020.

Additionally, since the beginning of the pandemic the City has expeditiously developed three new Emergency Interim Housing (EIH) sites to provide a safe and secure environment for the City's homeless residents to shelter in place. The new EIH developments will provide 209 temporary housing units to protect up to 317 unhoused, high-risk individuals and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Once the pandemic recedes, the three EIH's will transition from interim shelter to the BHC programs.

Key timelines and benchmarks in the City's progress in maximizing San José's Bridge Housing Communities is detailed later in this report. The table below provides the most recent data required under AB2176 and AB1745. BHC and housing data through December 31, 2020:

BHC Residency		
	Actual	
	Current Year	Total
Number of residents Housed	191	192
BHC residents exited to permanent housing	55	55
Average time from BHC to permanent housing	49 days	

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Development				
	Actual		Projected	
	Current Year	Total	Available by End of 2021	Available by End of 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Supportive Housing • Transition in Place Units • Rapid Rehousing Subsidies/Coupons 	103	257	308	453
	26	147*	172	225
	600	1513	1000	2513

*adjusted to account for loss of 4 units

HOMELESSNESS IN SAN JOSÉ BACKGROUND

Every two years, communities across the country conduct a comprehensive Point-in-Time (PIT) count of the local homeless populations to measure the prevalence of homelessness in their communities. The last PIT count conducted in Santa Clara County was the 2019 Homeless Census and Survey, which identified a total of 6,097 homeless individuals on any given night. This PIT figure represents a 40% increase from the 2017 census when 4,350 individuals were identified. Out of the total 6,097 people, 84% were unsheltered (living on the street, encampments, in vehicles, or other areas not meant for human habitation). On any given night, there are 849 shelter beds available Citywide, however, approximately 5,117 homeless people are unsheltered.

SAN JOSÉ'S RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS PRE-COVID

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San José was on track in accomplishing prioritized approaches included in the Community Plan to End Homelessness. The 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County was collaboratively developed by representatives of community-based service organizations, local government, philanthropy, business, healthcare, and people with lived experience. The Plan is organized around three core strategies:

- *Strategy 1: Address the root causes of homelessness through system and policy change;*
- *Strategy 2: Expand homelessness prevention and housing programs; and*
- *Strategy 3: Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all.*

In the beginning months of 2020, the Housing Department completed the Community Plan to End Homelessness while simultaneously elevating its Emergency Operations Center, activating a Pandemic Management Plan. Accordingly, the City has since transitioned to exclusively working on the City's COVID-19 response and new priorities to protect unhoused high-risk individuals and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

SAN JOSÉ'S RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS DURING COVID

Guidance released from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on March 9, 2020 stated that housing instability and frequent mobility increase the risk of exposure to infectious disease. Limited access to health care services and poor living conditions further compound this risk. As a

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result, the experience of homelessness may place these individuals at greater risk of exposure to a variety of infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

On March 10, 2020 the San José City Council ratified the Director of Emergency Services Proclamation of a Local Emergency due to COVID-19. The Council has since extended the Proclamation every 60 days, with the last extension approved by Council on September 22, 2020.

On April 7, 2020, the City Council ratified the Office of Emergency Services Declaration of Shelter Crisis and adopted a Shelter Crisis Declaration and an Emergency Order pursuant to Government Code Section 8634 which applies to emergency shelters developed during the COVID-19 emergency.

The Shelter Crisis declaration found that the current health crisis presents an urgent necessity to take urgent actions for the preservation of life, health and property through the most rapid procurement, construction and development of emergency shelters, emergency bridge housing or emergency interim housing to increase the City's shelter capacity and allow the City's unsheltered residents an opportunity to shelter in place, protecting both those residents and the larger community.

With assistance from the State of California, the County of Santa Clara and many other partners, the City of San José has implemented the following efforts to help our unhoused population during the Pandemic:

- **Homelessness Prevention** – From funding provided by the City, community partners have increased direct support to households through homeless prevention assistance program, providing rental assistance, financial support and services. In a span of 2-3 months this focused approach resulted in supporting approximately 4,500 extremely low-income and very low-income households.
- **Meeting Basic Needs** – By funding community partners, homeless individuals were provided with case management, transportation vouchers, and mobile hygiene services.
- **Rental subsidies and Rapid Rehousing** – In response to the pandemic, the City has increased funding to support homeless veterans and rapid rehousing clients through rental subsidies, rapid rehousing rental assistance and supportive services.
- **Supporting Encampment Residents** – While shelter and housing remain the priority to address homelessness, The City and County of Santa Clara have suspended encampment abatement during the pandemic in accordance with County Health recommendations. City staff has worked to provide increased hygiene supportive resources to improve sanitary conditions for those living in areas not meant for human habitation. Additional efforts include providing resources, adding hand-washing stations and restrooms at large encampment locations across the city; providing trash pickup at different locations to improve sanitation, deploying shower + laundry trucks to improve hygiene; sending comprehensive street outreach teams staffed by mental health clinicians and drug and alcohol counselors; distribution of hand sanitizer and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at encampments; and providing portable technological supplies and additional storage to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

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- **Increasing Emergency Beds** – The City, in partnership with the County, has created over 1,000 new emergency beds through a combination of hotel/motel leasing and new congregate temporary shelter sites to meet COVID-19 social distancing space requirements, to provide shelter in separate rooms or units for the protection of unhoused high risk individuals, for isolation of COVID-19 positive individuals, for quarantine of people who have been exposed, and to expand shelter beds for the unhoused population in San José to allow them to comply with the County shelter-in-place order. All new emergency housing opportunities provide for shower and laundry facilities, bed-bug treatment, custodial services for sanitization, meal services, case management, smoking areas, and security.
- **Hotel Acquisition** – The City of San José with funding from the State of California Project Homekey Initiative acquired a 76-unit hotel to expand housing opportunities for individuals or families experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness for those impacted by COVID 19.
- **COVID-19 Testing** – In partnership with the Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing and Valley Homeless Health Care Program, regular COVID-19 testing is provided to all congregate shelter and encampments of 10 people or more. Testing is also made available for interim housing programs when requested.
- **New Emergency Interim Housing Development** – The City of San José has suspended zoning codes and other regulations combined with a declaration of shelter crisis necessary for the City to expeditiously construction and open three emergency interim housing (EIH) communities to protect unhoused individuals and families from the spread of COVID-19, and expand the City's interim housing capacity after the emergency recedes.

PROGRESS ON EMERGENCY BRIDGE HOUSING COMMUNITIES

BHC EXPANSION

The first two BHC sites, which provide 80 individual sleeping cabins and communal facilities have been completed. The VTA site has been in operation for one year. Due delays negotiating the lease agreement with Caltrans as well as construction delays, the Felipe site was completed at the end of December. In addition to the original two sites, the City expeditiously constructed three emergency interim housing communities (EIH).

Using prefabricated modular construction under the City's BHC Ordinance, the City is benefiting from the temporary relief under the Governor's Executive Order (N-32-20) and the flexibility authorized under Assembly Bill 2176 (Shelter Crisis Emergency Bridge Housing Communities); ensuring speedy project delivery as well as the ability to successfully operate beyond the current COVID-19 crisis. The emergency Interim Housing sites have been developed to flexibly serve the dual purpose of addressing two intersecting crises – the public health crisis posed by COVID-19 and the shelter crisis posed by the homelessness crisis. As such, the EIH sites will be implemented in three phases:

1) **Emergency Interim Housing** – Phase one of the EIH operations has prioritized homeless adults and families that are at a higher risk of serious illness or death if they were to contract COVID-19. Working in

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conjunction with the County’s Office of Supportive Housing, The City will work with the site operator to assess perspective residents and refer individuals to the EIH’s based on a combination of health risk factors and VI-SPDAT scores. This may include individuals already enrolled in programs such as Rapid Rehousing or those just entering the County’s system of care. Through a combination of onsite supportive services and program Case Management, resident will work on developing a Housing Plan with the goal of exiting to permanent housing.

2) Transitional period from COVID-19 – Once the Pandemic subsides, the EIH site operators will begin transitioning to the established BHC program model. The site operators will continue to work with the existing EIH residents to locate suitable housing and begin shifting their intake focus to individuals and families already enrolled in programs within the County’s coordinated system of care.

3) Bridge Housing Communities (BHC) – Phase three will focus on individuals and families referred through the County’s coordinates system of care. The BHC’s operators will work with the City and County to maintain a referral list of homeless individuals and families who are enrolled in a housing program such as Rapid Rehousing or other permanent supportive housing programs.

BHC/EIH Inventory

Development	# of Sleeping Units	Occupancy (up-to)	Project Status (12/30/20)
Mabury BHC	40	40	Complete - occupied
Felipe BHC	40	40	Near completion – target mid-January 2021
Monterey/Bernal EIH	78	78	Complete - occupied
Rue Ferrari EIH	82	118	Near Completion – Partially occupied full completion mid-January 2021
Evans Lane EIH	49	121	Near Completion – mid January
Total	289	397	

SITE DEVELOPMENT

Staff assessed multiple temporary housing types including a variety of individual sleeping cabin – the first BHC model, workforce housing, and a variety of prefabricated modular units. Ultimately City staff determined the most expedient option was to expand the City’s Bridge Housing Communities (BHC) inventory by using prefabricated modular units.

The City of San José has developed three emergency interim housing communities which will add 209 new temporary housing units to the overall system with a capacity to assist up to 317 people. Combined with the two BHC’s the City has added 289 temporary housing units capable of serving up to 397 people.

Monterey/Bernal - With a capacity to serve 78 individual residents, Monterey/Bernal provides individual with a shower and restroom facilities within each participant room, shared facilities for living needs, office space for staff to provide services, a perimeter fence and onsite security, pet accommodations, onsite

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parking, full ADA accommodations, and improved traffic safety adjacent to the site. This site is City owned.

Rue Ferrari - a Caltrans-owned site, leased by the City, is an 82-unit EIH site designed to single adults as well as couples. The Rue Ferrari EIH will accommodate up to 118 people. Like Monterey/Bernal, the site includes modular sleeping units with individual shower and restroom facilities within each participant room. As the largest of the five BHC/EIH development, Rue Ferrari offers two administrative buildings with shared kitchens, lounge and office space as well as two full laundry and office facilities. As with Monterey/Bernal, the site also offers perimeter fence, onsite security, pet accommodations, onsite parking and full ADA accommodations.

Evans Lane –unlike Monterey/Bernal and Rue Ferrari, the Evans Lane EIH is designed to house homeless families as they transition to permanent housing. Like the other two EIH developments, Evans lane utilizes modular construction. Each unit includes individual showers and restroom facilities, shared facilities for basic living needs, including communal kitchens, office space to manage the site and provide services. In addition to the site amenities offered at the other two sites, Evans Lane also provides a small basketball court and play area for children.

OPERATIONS

All BHC and EIH sites are managed by agencies who will provide property management and maintain a client-focused integrated care that combines housing, supportive services, and healthcare linkages. Services are culturally appropriate and recovery-oriented designed to reduce barriers to housing. Staff will provide on-site services and coordinate resident access to offsite, community-based specialty health or social services needed to assist with housing navigation and stabilization, medical and mental healthcare, substance use treatment, childcare services and education, employment assistance, life skills workshops, support groups and more.

In addition to supportive services, all sites feature community building opportunities, including:

- Participation from people with lived experience on a BHC oversight and support committee which discusses program operations.
- Client-focused Workshops – For the Mabury site, the program operator has worked diligently to continue to host workshops program participants have expressed interest in. All workshops are offered multiple times to accommodate varying schedules, while ensuring proper socially distancing protocols are in place. At the Mabury site alone, in the first year of operation, 61 workshops were hosted. Workshop topics include yoga, budgeting, anger management, gardening, game days, and coping skills facilitated by a clinician to support mental health.
- Virtual Community Events – The BHC Operators focus on community building by connecting the program participants with the surrounding community in order to maintain positive relationships. This past August the Mabury BHC hosted a virtual National Night Out event in which staff, program participants and neighbors won Citywide-photo contest for their participation.

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KEEPING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS SAFE DURING COVID

BHC operators have adjusted program operations to follow CDC and Santa Clara County recommendations for COVID-19 procedures. BHC staff disinfects surfaces every day, checking temperatures at the beginning of every shift, wearing a face mask while onsite, posting signs with recommendations, and are tested for COVID-19 regularly. A cleaning crew also disinfects surfaces two times a day.

Program participants are provided with masks, hand sanitizer, and are asked to follow social distance protocols. Participants who express a need to refrain from wearing a mask due to medical conditions will be exempt from this requirement. There are signs in every common area to promote social distancing and masking. If a participant is exhibiting COVID-19 related symptoms, staff will take their temperature and connect them to the appropriate healthcare services. Whenever COVID 19 Testing is requested, the Valley Homeless Healthcare Program tests participants for COVID. Great efforts are made to ensure program participant healthy and safety.

BHC/EIH SUCCESS

DONATIONS & DONATED MATERIALS

The City of San Jose has established several partnerships through the development of its Emergency interim Housing (EIH). While procured through a competitive process, the City's non-profit Contractor, Habitat for Humanity Silicon Valley East Bay, has established a strong partnership with the City. In addition to the significant direct construction cost savings Habitat created through it volunteers, they have established strong partnerships with private philanthropic donors on these EIH developments. Most notably, the 36 modular sleeping units at Evans Lane are being donated by Sand Hill Property Foundation. The value of the Sandhill units has a value of approx. \$1.2 Million.

As much as COVID-19 has disrupted day-to-day of daily program operations, it has not deterred our partners in supporting program success. By adapting to ensure program support is done in a safe manner, several organizations, companies, and individuals continue to express support for the BHC/ EIH concept and efforts to combat homelessness. Support has come through public endorsements, volunteers in various capacities, as well as donations.

Donations have come in the form of hygiene welcome kits, pet supplies, and so much more. Companies such as Comcast have donated approximately \$150,000 toward equipment and services to our BHCs/ EIHs to directly assist the participants in their housing and self-sufficiency goals. Various community stakeholders (e.g., community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and private companies) have proven to be irreplaceable through their contributions at such a critical moment. Below are a few of many partnerships:

- Food Pantry Services – Cathedral of Faith, Loaves and Fishes, and Second Harvest Food Bank
- COVID Testing – Valley Homeless Healthcare Program
- Veterinarian Services – Our Pack, Parktown Vet Clinic, and Humane Society of Silicon Valley

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- Hygiene Items and Welcome Kits – San José Rotary
- Workshop Volunteers
 - Gardening – UC Masters Gardeners
 - Employment Readiness – Work2Future and ConXion
 - Housing Rights – Project Sentinel
- Community Events Donations – Peter's Bakery, Cinnaholic, Mod Pizza, & Nothing Bundt Cakes

The City's partnership with Habitat for Humanity has successfully leveraged a significant amount of volunteer labor over the past year to complete construction of the second BHC site and the three new EIH sites. Thus far, Habitat has organized over 1,645 individual volunteers, resulting in more than 21,540 volunteer hours contributing to different components of our BHC/EIHs. Volunteer support has been provided by a minimum of 70 different groups, including Google, CISCO Systems, McAfee, Microsoft, Chabot College Interior Design, Dykes with Drills, Northrop Grumman, SAP, Wells Fargo, Sereno Group, the San José Sharks foundation, San José Rotary, Stryker, and many more.

TESTIMONIALS

We have learned it takes a village to make our programs, our participants, and our communities successful, and it's taking place every day our programs are operating. We end this report by sharing the collective impact of our efforts by sharing how our program participants feel about our programs:

"The staff educated me on topics I had little understanding of. I love how every Resident Advocate always shows enthusiasm. I know it's hard to trust people you just met but the staff have your best interest in mind."

"I encourage others to try to get into the BHC and leverage the resources here. You will be amazed at what happens. The staff and workshops were helpful, and I gained knowledge I initially didn't have. Keep up the good work."

"I use all of the services on-site. The kitchen is my favorite because I like to cook. I enjoy everything and am thankful for everything. I feel comfortable with the rules and do not find them hard to follow. I would recommend this program to others. I feel like this is a family. I get along with other participants. I'm very quiet and reserved but I am learning to consider others."

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