



SAN DIEGO  
Regional Task Force  
on Homelessness

**OUR MISSION**

REDUCE AND END  
HOMELESSNESS  
IN SAN DIEGO,  
ENSURING  
THAT IF THIS  
SITUATION DOES  
HAPPEN FOR ANYONE,  
IT REMAINS  
A RARE, BRIEF AND  
NON-RECURRING  
INSTANCE;

**NOT AN OUTCOME.**

**ANNUAL REPORT | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021**

# Regional Task Force on the ~~the~~ Homeless<sup>ness</sup>

THE HOMELESS SOUNDS LIKE AN IDENTITY.

HOMELESSNESS IS A CIRCUMSTANCE.

“ This small, almost unnoticeable change we made in our name is very deep, very powerful, particularly for the people we work to serve, those we work with and who’s dignity we hold dear. It is important for our name to truly reflect that homelessness is most often a brief situation in someone’s life, it’s not an identity it’s something people are experiencing. ”



*Tamera Kohler*

CEO of the RTFH



# WELCOME FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

**Dear Friends & Colleagues,**

Our 2021 Fiscal Year ended June 30th. It certainly has been a challenging and eventful year for the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) especially with the impact of Covid-19. I am very proud of the way our staff continued to step up during these unprecedented times, under the skillful leadership of our CEO, Tamera Kohler. In spite of the challenges, there have been significant changes to the RTFH that lay the foundation for the organization to continue to address homelessness in the San Diego region.

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Advisory Board voted to separate from the RTFH effective October 1, 2020. This was done after 18 months of careful evaluation, reviewing best practices, and gaining unanimous Board support. The new RTFH Board of Directors is comprised of 13 volunteers including several past CoC Advisory Board Members and a diverse group of other talented individuals working in partnership with Tamera Kohler and her gifted Executive Team. This important governance change allows the RTFH Board to focus on operational, financial, and strategic issues facing the non-profit organization.

Some keys areas of focus this last year have been:

- Ongoing and strategic outreach to all communities within San Diego County to be a resource and convener to address homelessness.
- Changing our name to reflect the fact that homelessness is an experience and not a label that defines someone.
- Developing a Regional Community Plan to end homelessness in San Diego County. The plan will most likely be adopted in the Fall and implementation in 2022.
- Creating user-friendly Dashboards using our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to measure outcomes and system performance.
- Establishing a robust Finance Committee to work with staff to strengthen our financial position.
- Building strong relationships with regional elected officials.
- Supporting the efforts of the CoC and providing important information, best practices, technical support, training, and funding to service providers.
- Bringing more attention to the housing crisis in our region. Housing is without a doubt the key to reducing and ending homelessness.

Obviously, there is tremendous work ahead, but I'm confident that with the progress we've made this year, we can build on this work and continue to improve. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,



*Ray Ellis*

**Ray Ellis, Board Chair**  
**Regional Task Force on Homelessness**

# WHO WE ARE



RTFH began its work nearly 40 years ago as a City of San Diego Mayor’s Task Force to examine emerging issues of homelessness, primarily in Downtown. The RTFH has since evolved into a robust nonprofit organization with a community of partners committed to preventing and ending homelessness across all of San Diego County.

RTFH leads, coordinates, promotes and advocates for solutions to prevent and end homelessness. One of our primary roles is to serve as the lead agency and backbone support for San Diego County’s United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homelessness Continuum of Care (CoC) program. In this role, RTFH administers federally required activities such as the HMIS, Coordinated Entry System (CES), Point-In-Time (PIT) Count, serves as the CoC Collaborative Applicant, creates and oversees standards for homelessness assistance, and staffs the CoC Advisory Board, committees, and membership. The CoC work accounts for roughly 80% of the RTFH’s staffing and time throughout the year, with the focus of moving the CoC towards becoming a HUD designated High Performing Community.

In addition to serving as the CoC lead agency, RTFH facilitates a community vision and goals for ending homelessness, coordinates with local jurisdictions, promotes and funds best practices and innovative strategies, supports and trains community agencies, plans for and monitors the area’s homeless response system, and advocates for effective policies at federal, state, and local levels.



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## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS



1

### **BUILD CAPACITY TO DRIVE PERFORMANCE**

Strengthen governance, staffing, program delivery, management practices, financial stability, IT Systems, and HR systems to support development of new capabilities and make RTFH a desired place to work.

2

### **BE THE TRUSTED SOURCE FOR DATA ON HOMELESSNESS IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION**

Continue to improve ability to gather complete and accurate data on the number of people experiencing homelessness in the San Diego region and to evaluate the performance of the system and programs against HUD metrics.

3

### **BUILD RTFH'S REPUTATION AS A LEADER IN ENDING HOMELESSNESS**

Increase awareness of homelessness reduction efforts, accelerate discussions of best practices, and strengthen its role as a convening body. Component activities will include initiating an annual Conference on Homelessness, publishing an annual State of Homelessness report with regional metrics, and improving our ability to publicize RTFH successes.

4

### **GROW REVENUES TO ACCOMPLISH RTFH STRATEGIC GOALS**

Establish revenue sources for operations independent from Federal and State program grants. Flexible funding will allow for expansion of current programs, hiring of experienced staff, and initiating new efforts.

5

### **ELEVATE ADVOCACY TO ACTION.**

Increase ability to develop evidence-based policy for reducing homelessness at the state, county, and city levels, and advocate for policy implementation and appropriate funding for programs in the region.

## A STRONG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In October 2020, RTFH established its own high impact Board of Directors. Prior to this change, the CoC Board fulfilled both the roles and requirements for the HUD CoC program and the RTFH nonprofit board. With the new structure, a CoC Advisory board fulfills the federal requirements of the CoC program. RTFH serves as the lead agency for the CoC, while a separate nonprofit board guides the impact and sustainability of RTFH.

RTFH also changed its name from “Regional Task Force on the Homeless” to “Regional Task Force on Homelessness” to emphasize that homelessness is the result of system barriers and should not define the people who experience it.

This new structure and name allows RTFH to provide greater regional leadership, to advocate, and to pursue new initiatives to achieve its mission, while ensuring the federal requirements of the CoC are met with excellence.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**RAY ELLIS**  
*Board Chair*  
Ellis and Associates, LLC

**RICK GENTRY**  
*CoC Board Chair*  
San Diego Housing  
Commission

**STEPHANIE KILKENNY**  
*Secretary*  
Lucky Duck Foundation

**KAREN BRAILEAN**  
*Treasurer*  
BFT Equity Partners

**NANCY SASAKI**  
United Way of  
San Diego County

**AMY DENHART**  
Funders Together to End  
Homelessness San Diego

**DAVID BAKER**  
YMCA of San Diego County

**JOEL JOHN ROBERTS**  
People Assisting  
the Homeless (PATH)

**LINDSEY WRIGHT**  
Kaiser Permanente

**KEN SAUDER**  
Wakeland Housing  
and Development  
Corporation

**JANET CARSON**  
Community Member

**VERONICA DELA ROSA**  
San Ysidro Health

**DAVID DENG**  
J.P. Morgan Private Bank



# SAN DIEGO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

## Regional Leadership in Ending Homelessness

Awarded more than  
**\$3.5M**  
in Homeless Housing,  
Assistance and Prevention  
(HHAP) funding to  
**19** organizations,  
including four organizations  
to  
focus on youth  
specific programs  
and services.



Worked with  
the City of  
San Diego and  
the County of  
San Diego to  
plan for and  
coordinate  
with new  
departments  
focused on  
homelessness  
solutions.



Successfully administered over  
**\$26M**  
in federal and state funding  
to local partners through the HUD Youth Homeless  
Demonstration Program (YHDP)  
and the State's Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP).

In the last year, **805** youth received  
assistance through YHDP and HEAP helped over  
**8,000** people.



**Convened the CoC  
Intergovernmental Council and  
Roundtable to gather local elected  
leaders to listen to regional  
challenges and align efforts.**

Met with over  
**60**  
federal, state, and local elected  
officials, as well as individuals  
who are a part of national  
associations and leading  
organizations.

Fully expended  
**\$18.8M**

in HEAP funding that ended June 30, 2021. RTFH was able to enhance service delivery and increase capacity throughout San Diego by funding outreach teams, safe parking programs, provide training and learning collaboratives for providers, and investing in capital projects. This also included purchasing five vans for outreach teams to deliver services more efficiently.



Supported sub-regional planning efforts including the East County Homeless Task Force, South Region Homeless Alliance, the North County Alliance for Regional Solutions, and the City of San Diego's homeless action plan leadership group.



Joined the Funders Together to End Homelessness San Diego funders collaborative.

Met with every city in the county to listen and understand their challenges, partnerships, and priorities with addressing homelessness in their respective cities.



# SAN DIEGO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

## Pandemic Response

Provided leadership and policy guidance on Operation Shelter to Home to transition people from shelters, specifically the Convention Center, to permanent housing.

Worked with the City of San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission, and the County of San Diego to transition over

# 400 people

into two new Project Homekey housing sites.



Partnered with street outreach teams to distribute more than

220,000  
masks

6,000  
hand sanitizer

donated and purchased by RTFH, the Muslim Coalition for America, Lucky Duck Foundation, Takeda California, Saint Helen Philoptochos Society of Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church Cardiff by the Sea.



**Lucky Duck  
Foundation**

In partnership with the Lucky Duck Foundation and outreach teams, distributed meals, supplies, and other necessary items to people living unsheltered.



**Helped the community secure various HUD waivers to increase flexibility in delivering services in response to COVID-19.**

Provided a forum at CoC membership and board meetings for the County of San Diego Public Health Department to educate homeless system partners on the pandemic, vaccine distribution, and protocols for housing and shelter programs.



Partnered with the San Diego Housing Commission in planning for the Homeless Response Center as the Convention Center was winding down.

**Worked with partners and supported housing exits for people sheltering at five hotels funded by the County of San Diego.**



**Supported 18 CoC grantees and eight subrecipients with 2020 CoC funding renewals, given there was not a competitive CoC application in 2020.**





SAN DIEGO  
Regional Task Force  
on Homelessness

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

Housing Focus



Connected  
**1,805**  
people to  
permanent  
housing  
programs  
through the  
Coordinated  
Entry System  
(CES).

**Built  
For  
Zero.**

With national partner Community Solutions and funding through Kaiser Permanente, launched the national Built for Zero initiative in San Diego to drive month over month reductions in Veteran and youth homelessness. RTFH was also awarded \$75,000 through the Conrad Prebys Foundation to support the Built for Zero youth initiative.

Partnered with four Public Housing Authorities – San Diego Housing Commission, County of San Diego, City of Oceanside, and the City of National City - to launch HUD’s Emergency Housing Voucher program that will provide a permanent rental voucher to over 800 households at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.



With Brilliant Corners, successfully launched the regional Flexible Housing Pool (FHP). In its first year, the FHP secured **219** private market rental units and housed **203** people across the region. This included leasing up **80** HUD Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers across the county. Partners include the County of San Diego, the VA San Diego Healthcare System, and other housing and services providers.





# SAN DIEGO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

## Convening and Training Homeless System Partners

**Staffed and supported the CoC Advisory Board and coordinated with chair Rick Gentry, CEO of the San Diego Housing Commission and co-chair, Nora Vargas, County of San Diego Board of Supervisor.**

Convened  
monthly CoC  
Membership  
meetings  
averaging

100

attendees per  
meeting.



Convened CES Work Group with community partners for continued improvement of CES. Created updated CES Policies and Procedures and trained the community on new CES processes including the updated CES assessment.

**Convened youth with lived experience to identify better strategies for centering youth voice in developing a youth service system.**



**Established and supported four new committees of the CoC focused on racial equity, the connection between healthcare and homelessness, Veterans, and older adults.**

Provided 10 trainings to CoC members on HUD programming, funding, and reporting requirements.



Brought in national experts to lead learning collaboratives and provide training on street outreach, rapid re-housing, and diversion.



Updated and enhanced the CoC Community Standards to promote best practices for street outreach, rapid re-housing, and the coordinated entry system; and updated the CoC's community standards with a focus on Housing First, person centered and trauma informed care, and reducing racial disparities.



## Shared Housing Institute

Engaged community partners to create a culture of shared housing. Hosted a shared housing forum, developed a shared housing white paper, and created two system tools for partners to use to message shared housing to clients and landlords. Funded 40 front line staff across 18 organizations to participate in eight weeks of shared housing training through the Shared Housing Institute.





SAN DIEGO  
**Regional Task Force  
on Homelessness**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

**Trusted Source of Data  
on Homelessness**

Supported over  
75 organizations,  
administering over  
600 unique  
programs,  
with over  
1,000 individual  
staff users.

In total the HMIS  
supported the records of over  
39,000 persons  
experiencing homelessness  
throughout the year.

**Successfully  
administered the  
HMIS in San Diego  
and Imperial  
Counties.**



Conducted the 2021 sheltered  
Point-In-Time (PIT) Count and worked  
with housing and shelter partners  
to aggregate the annual Housing  
Inventory Count (HIC).



**Released an  
in-depth data  
report on 2020  
key system  
performance  
metrics.**

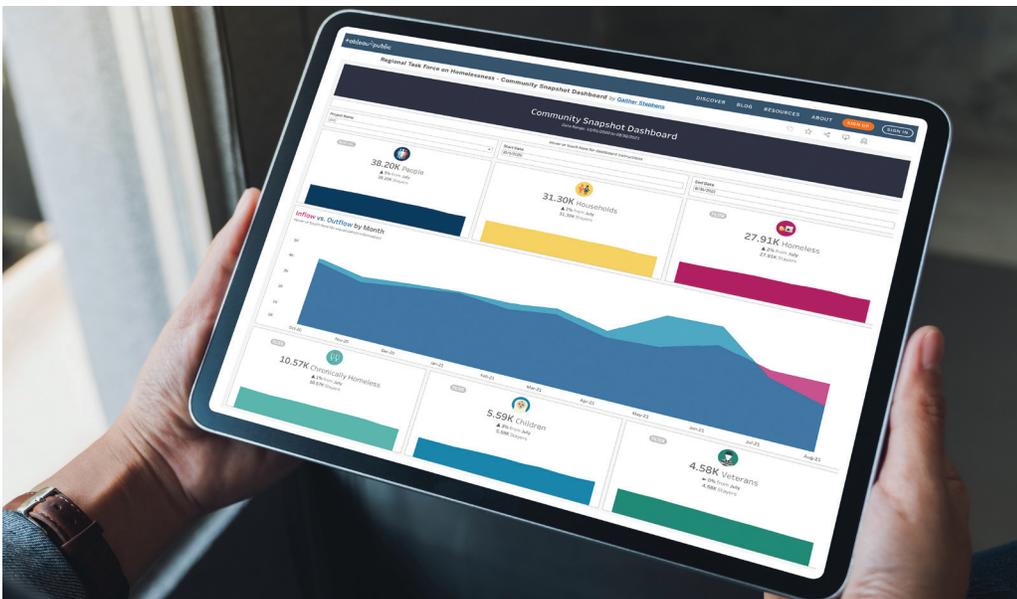


Partnered with 211 San Diego to integrate HMIS data into the Community Information Exchange (CIE) and provided regional data to the State for the Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS).



Met community demand to set up new programs and reporting mechanisms in HMIS as required by new pandemic funding resources.

Improved monitoring systems and increased the number of CoC programs monitored annually from 3 to 15.



Launched three new public dashboards for the community to access both system and program performance data.





SAN DIEGO  
**Regional Task Force  
on Homelessness**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

**Elevating Advocacy  
to Action**

**Developed official RTFH  
policy priorities and process  
for determining policy and  
advocacy actions.**

Published an op-ed in the *San Diego Union Tribune*, conducted interviews with various local media outlets, and enhanced the use of social media to convey key policy and advocacy efforts.



Signed on to and endorsed AB-71 focused on creating an ongoing state revenue source to address homelessness. While AB-71 fell short, advocated successfully with state and local partners for \$2 billion in new state funding to address homelessness.

Provided input to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness and to the State's Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council on the State's homeless action plan.





**Provided input to HUD on engagement best practices with the PIT Count**



Presented at the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference, the National Human Services Data Consortium conference, Housing California conference, Forensic Mental Health Association Words to Deeds Conference, and the San Diego Housing Federation conference.



**With Father Joe's Villages, participated in a statewide healthcare and homelessness learning collaborative funded by the California Health Care Foundation. Lessons from the learning collaborative were shared with San Diego stakeholders through the Health and Homelessness Committee.**



**Signed on to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition's HoUSed Campaign focused on achieving large-scale, sustained investments and reforms necessary to ensure that renters with the lowest incomes, especially those experiencing homelessness, have an affordable place to call home.**



# SAN DIEGO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS | JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

## Building Organizational Capacity



**Created new Senior Program Manager position focused on CES and Housing Strategies.**

Hired 360 Public Strategies to enhance public and government relations and increase social media presence.



**Seated an influential and diverse Board of Directors and created several board committees focused on finances, governance, and external relations.**



Created new leadership position to engage with local government partners.





Conducted diversity analysis of the RTFH staff.



Expanded HMIS team to meet the growing demand for high quality data, reporting, and analytics.



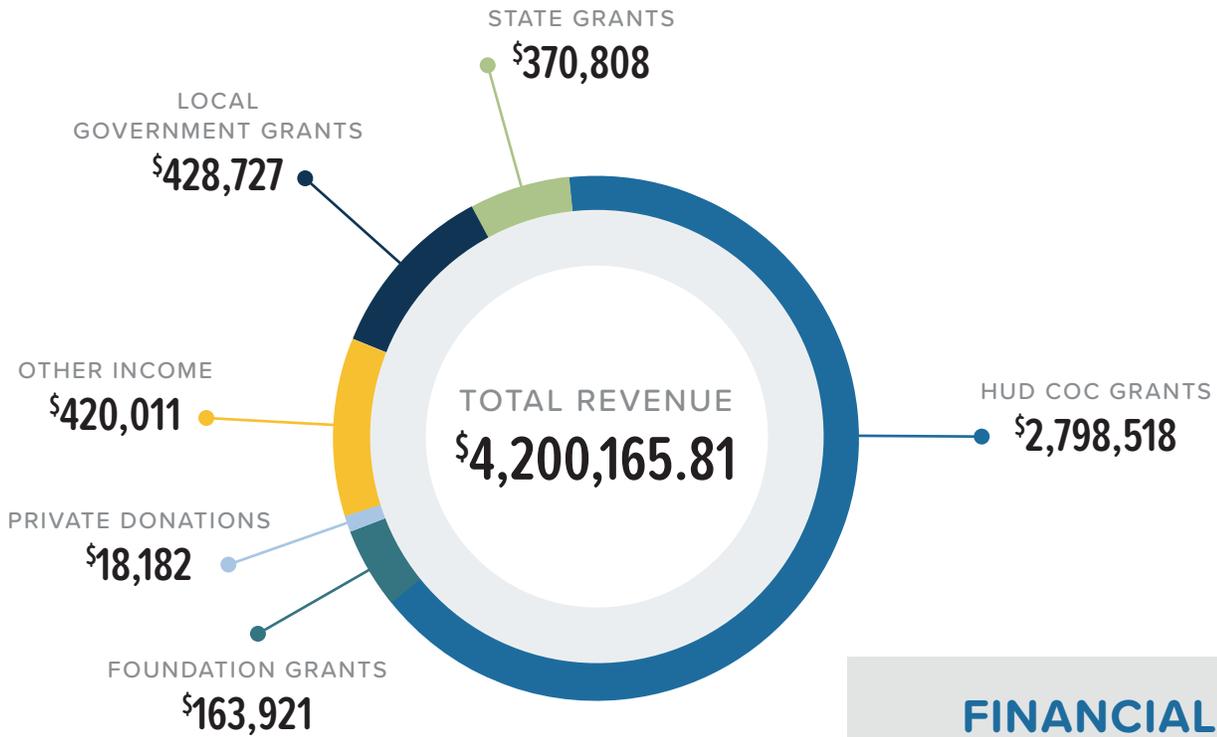
Received grant funding from three large private entities to expand the work of the RTFH beyond federal and state grants.

Continued to work with the Impact Center to strengthen organizational leadership and create strong culture of communication and planning.



Continued to support staff working remotely.

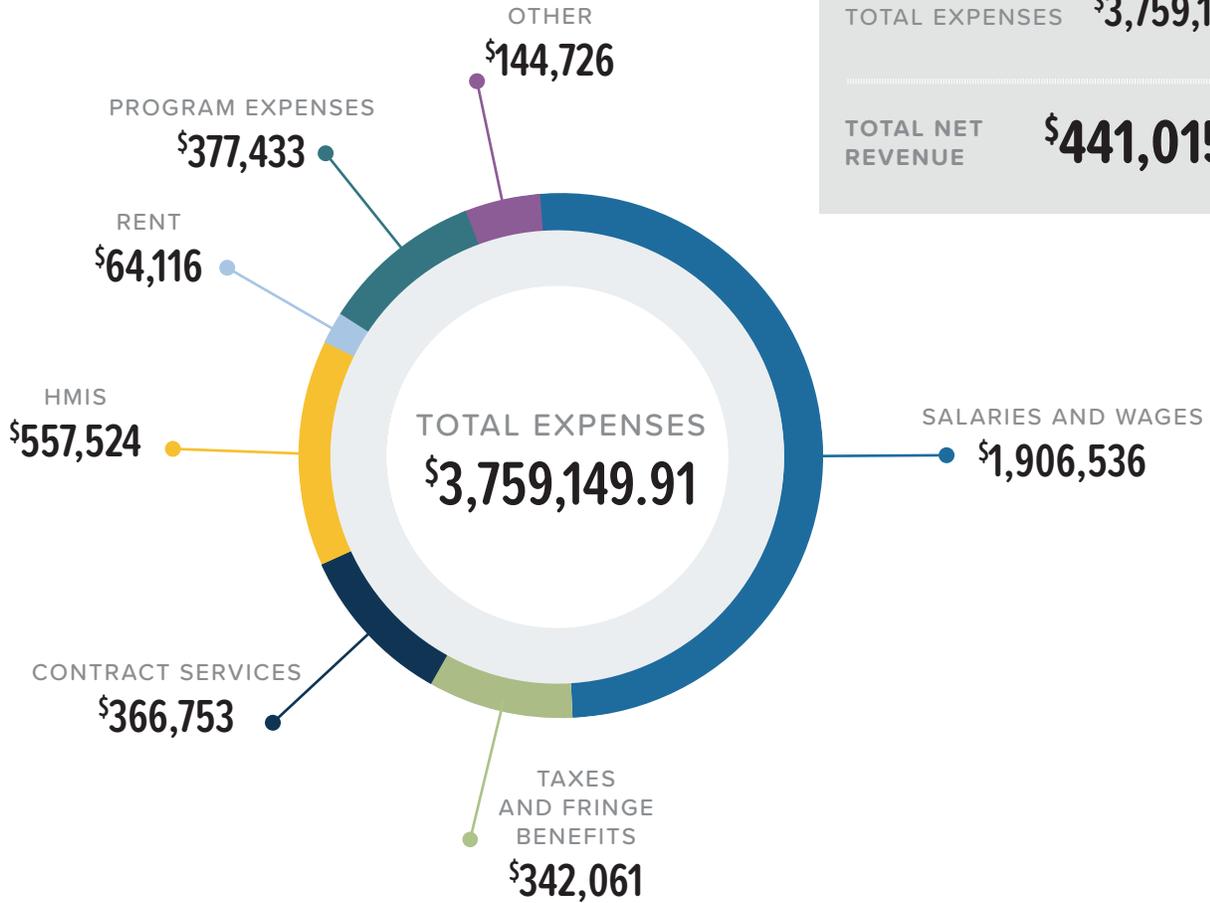




### FINANCIALS

JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021

TOTAL REVENUE	\$4,200,165.81
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,759,149.91
<b>TOTAL NET REVENUE</b>	<b>\$441,015.90</b>





# SAN DIEGO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

## OUR TEAM

### EXECUTIVE TEAM



**Tamera Kohler**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Lahela Mattox**  
Chief Operations Officer



**Aimee Cox**  
Chief Impact Officer



**Kris Kuntz**  
Chief Policy Officer



**Susan Bower**  
Local Government Liaison



**Kathryn Durant**  
Chief Program Officer



**Jegnow Zeggeye**  
Chief Data Officer

### ADMINISTRATION

**Heidi Kone**  
Grants & Contracts Manager

**Jessica Torres**  
Program Analyst

**Carrie Stemrich**  
Sr Administrative Assistant

**Sally Zamadics**  
Executive Assistant

**Myleya Griffin**  
Project Support Specialist

**Zoe Ridgeway**  
Office Technician

### CONTINUUM OF CARE

**Justin Creel**  
Senior Program Manager – CES & Housing Strategy

**JennaMarie Glenna**  
Community Outreach Coordinator

**Evan Hamner**  
Project Support Specialist, Coordinated Entry System

**Nina Lakhani**  
Regional Resource Coordinator

**Brenda Viveros**  
CES Systems Specialist

**Keisha Smith**  
CES Systems Specialist

**Phylcia Applewhite**  
CES Systems Specialist

**Nica Hermosillo-Vanella**  
CES Systems Specialist

### HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

**Alex Feyissa**  
Systems Improvement Manager

**Tyler Uhlig**  
HMIS Manager

**Alma Vasquez**  
HMIS Project Analyst

**Elizabeth LaBrake**  
HMIS Support Specialist

**Cristian DeLeon**  
Data Analyst 1

**Anna Strahl**  
Data Analyst 1

**Diane McKany**  
Data Analyst 1

**Emily LaBlond**  
Data Analyst 1

**Alex Gloudeman**  
Data Analyst 1



## SAN DIEGO Regional Task Force on Homelessness

### THANK YOU FROM OUR CEO

The last 12 months have been another challenging year with addressing homelessness given COVID-19. While we are working hard as a system to help individuals, families, and youth access stable affordable housing, we know that more and more people need help. The work remains difficult, however the RTFH staff are tirelessly committed and dedicated to reduce and end homelessness in the region and coordinate with our network of partners to do so.

I want to thank the RTFH team for their determination to continue to perform at a high level while the pandemic remains. We have continued to work remotely in our homes and balance work, family, and other responsibilities ongoing.

I am very grateful to the new board members who have joined the organization this past year. Some board members I have worked with closely for quite some time, while others I have only recently had the pleasure of getting to know. All are contributing to making the RTFH a trusted organization in the community and ensuring that we support the community on an issue that we care deeply about. I appreciate all of the elected officials across the county who have stepped up and made addressing homelessness a critical part of the day-to-day work in their communities. Your bold leadership is critical to future success.

We must also thank the region's homeless services providers. Ending homelessness will not happen without a committed network of organizations providing direct services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. As the pandemic persists, these partners continue to show up day in and day out to support the most vulnerable members of our community. Thank you.

Lastly, a special thank you and deepest gratitude to Greg Block of ThreeSixty Strategies, who recently passed away from an ongoing battle with cancer. Greg was a huge champion for our organization and this work, a thoughtful and constant influence in our direction, and importantly crafting our message over the last year. He had a gift to make introductions and connections in a powerful way that have benefited and accelerated our organization for the future. Finally, Greg's understanding of the challenging issues that are both public and political as well as deeply personal for San Diegans experiencing homelessness helped navigate, balance and elevate our voice at one of the most critical times in this work. We will continue to honor his wisdom and guidance.

With deepest appreciation,



*Tamera Kohler*

**Tamera Kohler, CEO**  
Regional Task Force on Homelessness

Our sincere gratitude and thanks to our partners who provided many of the inspiring images featured throughout this report.

