



Office of the City Manager

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INFORMATION CALENDAR
September 24, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Kelly Wallace, Interim Director, Health, Housing and Community Services Department

Subject: Pathways STAIR Center: First Year Data Evaluation and Results-Based Accountability Dashboard

SUMMARY

On June 27, 2018, the City of Berkeley, in partnership with Bay Area Community Services (BACS), welcomed the first guests into the STAIR Center, the first Navigation Center for people experiencing homelessness in the East Bay. June 30, 2019 marked the end of the first full fiscal year of the program.

This report is part of our effort in the Health, Housing and Community Services Department to increase transparency and accountability about agency performance. Included as an attachment is an initial dashboard for STAIR using a Results-Based Accountability (RBA) framework, which distills program performance down to three categories: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

During the program's first year, 170 individuals accessed a STAIR Center bed, with 128 having exited the shelter and 95 of those receiving flexible funding/rapid rehousing assistance. Nearly 4 in 5 of those individuals slept in an encampment the night before entering the STAIR Center. 101 clients exited to permanent housing by June 30, 2019; this includes 82 clients housed from the STAIR Center shelter (64% of all exits) and 19 clients housed directly from the streets via outreach. On average, clients exiting a STAIR Center bed to housing took just under 3 months (88 days) to do so.

Thirty clients (23% of all exits) left the STAIR Center back to homelessness. Among those who exited to permanent housing, 22% eventually returned back to homelessness. This percentage includes 3 individuals who were unable to graduate the STAIR Rapid rehousing program and returned back to homelessness before the end of case management and partial rent subsidy. Too little time has passed to draw conclusions about the long-term success of the rapid rehousing component of the program.

Moving forward, HHCS intends to provide such performance dashboards on the STAIR Center on a quarterly basis and extend the dashboard to other homeless programs.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Pathways STAIR Center: An Overview

On any given night in Berkeley in 2019, 1,108 people experience homelessness, with nearly three quarters of them (813) living without shelter, in places not meant for human habitation. The City has experienced an increase in the number of people living in encampments, most of whom are unable to access traditional homeless services such as emergency shelters. To address this problem, the City opened the STAIR Center in June, 2018. The STAIR Center is a comprehensive Housing First program with three components:

- A *street outreach* component, with two full-time outreach workers, maintains a consistent presence in Berkeley's encampments, builds relationships with their residents, and offers vacant STAIR Center beds to individuals with the highest-needs.
- A *shelter* component offers 45 beds in a low-barrier, service-rich environment. At the STAIR Center, located on a block of 2nd Street between Cedar and Virginia in West Berkeley, program guests receive intensive housing search and application assistance and live in a shelter environment with no curfews, one meal a day, laundry, showers, and accommodations for pets and possessions.
- A *rapid rehousing* component provides access to flexible funding to help overcome housing barriers. The amount and duration of the funding is tailored to the specific needs of each recipient; while some may need only security deposit assistance to regain housing, for example, others may need several months of partial or full rent subsidy. Rapid rehousing recipients also receive ongoing case management services to ensure their tenancy and transition to housing self-sufficiency is successful. While not everyone will succeed in rapid rehousing, no one is placed into a housing situation that they have no hope of maintaining on their own within one year.¹

Measuring Program Performance with Results-Based Accountability

The Health, Housing and Community Services Department is working closely with staff and community based partners to deepen our positive impact on the community, especially for those most vulnerable. Central to this effort is using a highly regarded framework called Results Based Accountability (RBA). RBA has a proven track record in improving the quality of life for people and communities. The STAIR Center is the City's first homeless program to be included in this effort. This report and the attached dashboard summarize data using this organizational framework.

¹ For more information on rapid rehousing in Berkeley, please see City staff's 2018 Information Report on Rapid Rehousing (https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2018/04_Apr/Documents/2018-04-24_Item_39_Rapid_Rehousing_What_it_Can.aspx) and the 1000 Person Plan to Address Homelessness in Berkeley (https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2019/02_Feb/Documents/2019-02-26_Item_20_Referral_Response_1000_Person_Plan.aspx).

Within the RBA framework, we first define the outcome or results we hope to achieve to have the greatest positive impact in the community. Next we decide how we can measure progress on that result. Data are collected and reported on an ongoing basis to guide our understanding and inform efforts to enhance progress towards those results. Performance measures answer three key questions:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off?

RBA is a new way of accounting for our work. Moving forward, HHCS intends to provide quarterly RBA Performance dashboards on the STAIR Center, and eventually extend this to other homeless agencies and programs. Through these reports, we hope to increase transparency and accountability on how public dollars are being spent to serve the City's mission to end homelessness. The ultimate goal is to improve the impact we are having and the quality of our work.

STAIR Center: Summary of Year One (June 27, 2018 – June 30, 2019) Performance

How much did we do?

Since the program's opening, 170 individuals have spent at least one night in a STAIR Center shelter bed, with 128 having exited the shelter. A total of 95 people have received rapid rehousing (RRH) or flex fund assistance to date. Among those, and as of June 30, 2019, 54 were still being supported with a RRH subsidy.

Demographics and characteristics among STAIR bed users are as follows:

- The average client age is 48.
- 64% of clients identify as male, 35% as female, and 1% as transgender.
- 58% of clients identify as Black or African-American; 28% as White; 3% as American Indian or Alaska Native; and 1% as Asian. 9% identified with more than one race, and 1% refused to state their racial identity. 12% of all clients identify as Latinx.
- 77% of all clients at STAIR report receiving a source of income, for an average monthly income of \$898. This includes 11% of clients who report earned income, at an average of \$1,458 per month. 44% of clients at STAIR receive disability income (SSI or SSDI), receiving \$896 per month on average. An additional 21% were receiving County General Assistance (\$337/month on average).

How well did we do?

The STAIR Center is targeted to Berkeleyans living in encampments. Among those who ever used the STAIR Center shelter during the first year (170 individuals total), 79% (135 individuals total) had spent their prior night sleeping in an encampment. An additional 13% (22 individuals) spent their prior night in another shelter or transitional

housing bed, and 8% (13 individuals) spent their prior night in a temporary or institutional setting (such as a hospital or detox center).

On average, all clients who have exited the STAIR Center took 84 days to do so. Those who exited to permanent housing took 88 days to do so on average. Clients who are currently active in the program have been in their beds for an average of 82 days.

The STAIR Center has maintained an average nightly occupancy rate of 89% since opening, but as of this writing it is 96% full. Large vacancy rates have coincided with a large number of residents exiting the shelter to permanent housing destinations, creating bed turnover that sometimes takes a few days to fill.

Is anyone better off?

Of those who exited the STAIR Center shelter during the first year (128 total):

- 30 have exited back to homelessness (23%);
- 101 clients have exited to permanent housing. This includes 82 clients housed from the STAIR Center shelter (64% of all STAIR Center shelter exits) and 19 clients housed directly from the streets via outreach. 15 clients exited to permanent supportive housing, 63 exited to rapid rehousing programs with an ongoing partial subsidy, 7 reunited with family or friends, 8 moved into a rental with another form of subsidy (i.e., a Section 8 voucher or equivalent), and 8 moved into housing units with no ongoing financial assistance.
- 13 clients exited to institutional or temporary settings, including other homeless programs, jail, or hospitals (10%)
- 1 client was deceased, and 2 exited to unknown destinations.

Of the 95 people who have received RRH or flex fund assistance,

- Five clients graduated from RRH, taking on the cost of the rental themselves, while an additional 33 transitioned to some other subsidy not funded through the STAIR's budget.
- Three exited to homelessness before case management had ended, and three more eventually returned to homelessness after graduating the program into permanent housing. We will continue to assess how this return rate compares to that of other rapid rehousing programs.

Among everyone who has accessed one or more component of the STAIR Center's programming (outreach, shelter, and/or rapid rehousing) and exited to a permanent housing destination, 22% have returned back to homelessness. Among those who received rapid rehousing assistance and exited to a permanent housing destination, only 3 (8%) returned back to homelessness. Again, we will continue to monitor this count to determine an accurate reflection of the program's true recidivism rate.

BACKGROUND

On April 4, 2017, Council voted unanimously to refer the creation of the STAIR Center, as part of the Pathways Project to Address Homelessness in Berkeley, to the City Manager. Council allocated the funding for the capital creation of the program on June 27, 2017, and the allocated program funds on December 5, 2017. Roughly 7 months later, the City and BACS opened the STAIR Center, on June 27, 2018, and the program's first full fiscal year of operations concluded on June 30, 2019.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Some individuals who had been living in encampment areas with considerable environmental impacts have moved into the STAIR Center, but the overall environmental impact of the program overall cannot be quantified with the data available.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

HHCS staff will continue to provide quarterly dashboard updates on the STAIR program, and intends to expand this framework to other homeless programs as well.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Staff time.

CONTACT PERSON

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Laura Schroeder, Community Services Specialist III, HHCS, (510) 981-5411.

Attachments:

- 1: Pathways STAIR Center Program: Results-Based Accountability Year One Performance Dashboard.

PATHWAYS STAIR CENTER PROGRAM

June 2018-June 2019



The City of Berkeley has experienced an increase in the number of people living in encampments, most of whom are unable to access traditional homeless services such as emergency shelters. To address this problem, the City opened the STAIR Center in June of 2018. The STAIR Center has three components: (1) street outreach, (2) a 45-bed, low-barrier, service-rich shelter, and (3) rapid rehousing, which includes time-limited financial assistance (including rent subsidies) to help overcome housing barriers. At the STAIR Center shelter, located on a block of 2nd Street between Cedar and Virginia in West Berkeley, program guests receive intensive housing search and application assistance and enjoy no curfews, one meal a day, laundry, showers, and accommodations for pets and possessions.

How Much Did We Do?

45

NUMBER OF BEDS AT STAIR SHELTER

170

NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED AT THE STAIR SHELTER

95

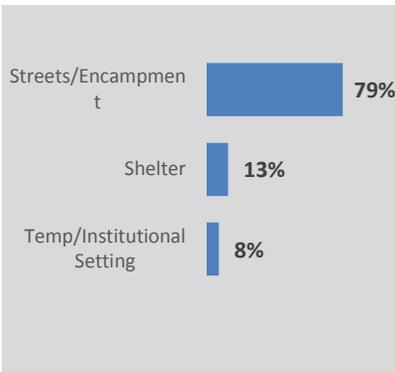
INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING RAPID REHOUSING ASSISTANCE

How Well Did We Do It?

% of STAIR Shelter clients from the Streets/Encampments

79%

Where Clients Resided Prior to the STAIR Shelter



Average Occupancy Rate of STAIR Shelter

89%

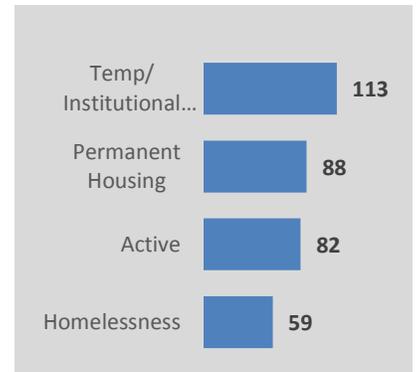
Occupancy Rate of STAIR Shelter by Month



Average Length of Stay at STAIR Shelter To Date in Days

84 days

Average Length of Stay at STAIR Shelter by Selected Exit Destinations



Is Anyone Better Off?

64%

EXIT TO PERMANENT HOUSING FROM STAIR SHELTER

23%

EXIT TO HOMELESSNESS FROM STAIR SHELTER

22%

RETURN TO HOMELESSNESS FROM PERMANENT HOUSING

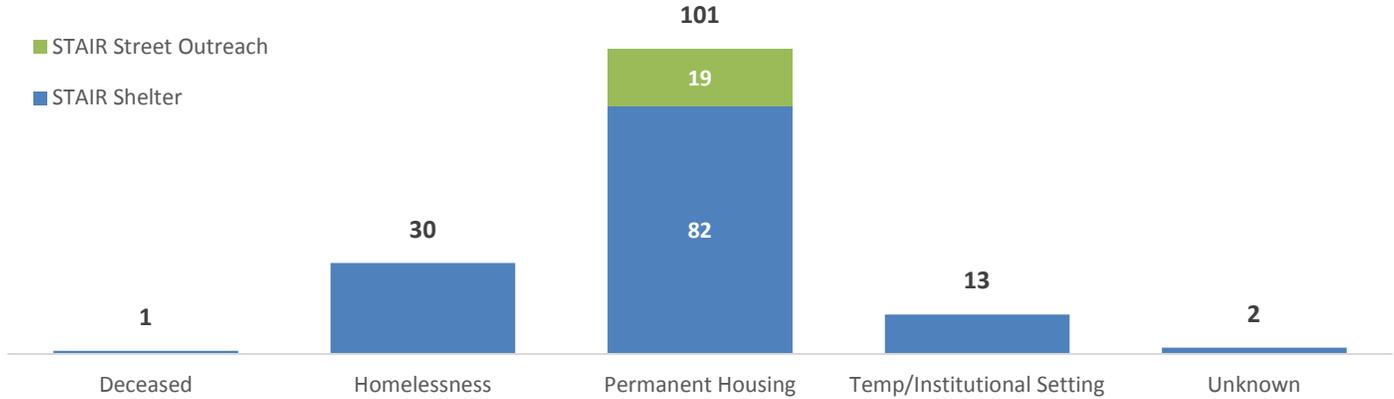
PATHWAYS STAIR CENTER PROGRAM

June 2018-June 2019



Number of Exits by Destination from STAIR Center Program
(Includes those that obtained permanent housing from street outreach)

N:147

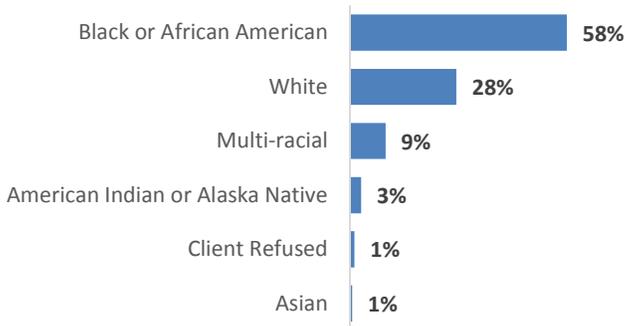


STAIR SHELTER DEMOGRAPHICS

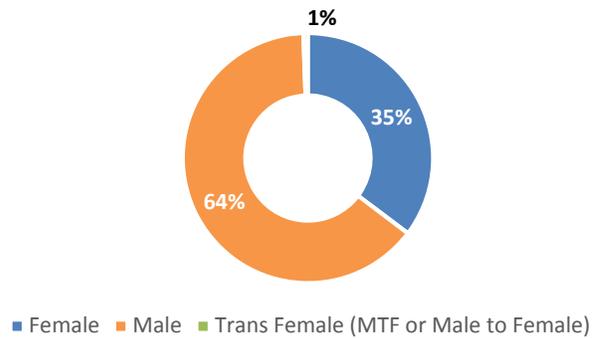
All Clients to Date

N:170

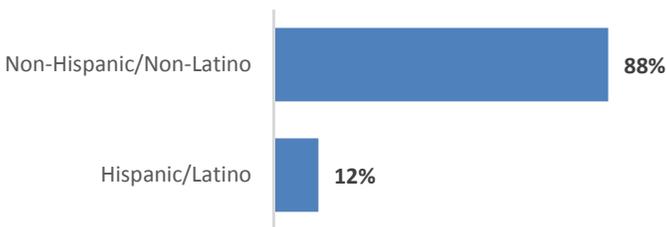
Race



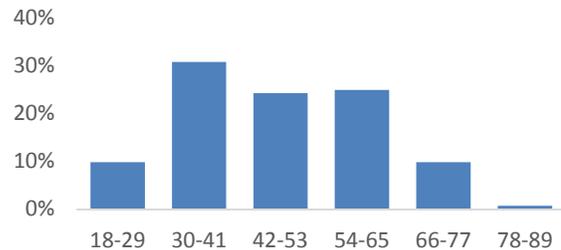
Gender



Ethnicity



Age



Notes

¹ Permanent Housing includes clients that receive rapid rehousing assistance. Rapid rehousing connects individuals to affordable rental units with time limited financial assistance. A full description of our rapid rehousing program can be found at www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2018/04_Apr/Documents/2018-04-24_Item_39_Rapid_Rehousing_What_it_Can.aspx

⁴ Return to Homelessness from Permanent Housing is the % of those that obtained permanent housing but were unable to maintain housing during the time period and returned to homelessness, as indicated by a re-enrollment in another homeless program.

