San Mateo County Continuum of Care

2017 CoC Competition
PROJECT REVIEW AND RANKING PROCESS

Approved August 7, 2017

I. Background on 2017 NOFA and Ranking Requirements

On July 14, 2017 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the *Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program*.

- This year, funding is available for eligible renewal projects. San Mateo County is eligible to request up to $572,571 for bonus permanent housing projects, which may include: (1) permanent supportive housing (PSH) serving chronically homeless households with the greatest severity of need and longest histories of homelessness; (2) rapid re-housing (RRH) projects serving homeless single adults or families with children and (3) a new joint transitional-housing/rapid re-housing (TH/RRH) project type.

- San Mateo County may also create new projects through the re-allocation of funds from lower performing existing grants. The amount of available re-allocation funds is expected to be in the range of $100,000 to $200,000 (though the actual amount may vary) and may be used for the same project types as described above). These funds may also be used by the CoC Lead Agency (San Mateo County Human Services Agency) for dedicated HMIS projects or Coordinated Entry projects.

The NOFA requires that each CoC conduct a transparent and objective process to review and rank all applications for renewal of existing projects and creation of new projects. Ranking of renewal projects must demonstrate the use of established objective criteria used to review project applications. Additionally, the CoC must place projects into Tier 1 and Tier 2, with projects in Tier 2 having to compete nationally for funding.

This document describes the San Mateo County CoC policies and process governing the review and ranking of projects in the 2017 competition, as well as the adopted policy for determining which projects are placed into Tier 2.

II. Rating and Ranking Process and Criteria

a. Adoption of Performance Standards

On July 12, 2013, the CoC Steering Committee adopted objective Project Performance Standards for all program types within the continuum (emergency shelter, short and long term

transitional housing, permanent housing, rapid re-housing, services only with housing focus, and services only with employment focus). In June 2016 these standards were updated to align with HUD's System Performance Measures (published in 2014). They also reflect the most recent available data on current performance of San Mateo County programs and performance targets recommended by Focus Strategies as part of their technical assistance work on H.S.A.'s new Strategic Plan to End Homelessness 2016-2020.

The Performance Standards are attached as **Attachment A**.

b.   Solicitation of CoC Applications

On July 27, 2017, the CoC Lead Agency (H.S.A.) released an announcement of available funding for both new and renewal CoC projects. These were distributed broadly via email to the provider community and were also posted to the H.S.A website. The announcements explain the process for submitting application, as well as the review criteria and process.

c.   Application Process

- On or about August 9, 2017, renewal applicants will receive a Project Performance Report from H.S.A. summarizing their progress in meeting the established performance standards using data from the Clarity HMIS system. This report provides each renewal project applicant the opportunity to provide any narrative explanation or clarification regarding why they did not did not meet any of the standards. This document also includes supplemental narrative questions.

- On August 23, 2017 all applicants (new and renewal) must complete their Project Application(s) (Exhibit 2) in e-snaps. Renewal applicants must also submit their completed Project Performance Reports including any clarifications and responses to the supplemental narrative, as well as supporting documentation. New applicants must also submit their completed supplemental narrative.

d.   Review, Ranking and Tiering Process

- H.S.A. will convene an unbiased and non-conflicted Review Panel composed of representatives from neutral (non-applicant) organizations. The Panel may include staff from the County of San Mateo, cities and towns within the County, funders and non-profit housing and social services organizations.

- The Review Panel will meet on or about August 30, 2017 to determine final ranking of the projects.

- Prior to the meeting, the H.S.A. staff will calculate the preliminary score for all renewal applicants using the objective Scoring Factors in **Attachment B**.   The preliminary scores will be distributed to the Review Panel prior to the meeting.

- Prior to the meeting, the Panel will receive copies of all <u>new</u> project applications for review and scoring. New project applications will be scored using the scoring factors in **Attachment C.**

- At the meeting, the Review Panel will determine the final order of ranking of projects in accordance with the Ranking and Tiering Policy in **Attachment D**.

- The rankings will be brought to the Continuum of Care Steering Committee for approval on or about September 12, 2017.

- All applicants will be notified on or about September 8, 2017 whether their project is being included in the application as well as their rank on the Project Priority listing.

- Applicants may appeal any of the following decisions of the CoC Steering Committee:

  ➢ Placement of project into Tier 2

  ➢ Reduction of renewal grant amount (i.e. renewal grant partially re-allocated to a new project)

  ➢ Elimination of renewal grant (i.e. entire grant re-allocated to a new project)

Appeals must be submitted in writing to H.S.A. no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 13, 2017. Appeals will be heard by a panel of three non-conflicted members of the CoC Steering Committee who did not serve on the review panel. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

ATTACHMENT A
Performance Standards Revised June 2016

	Measures	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Rapid Re-Housing
1	a) **Exit to Permanent Housing** Percent of all leavers who exited to a permanent destination	30% (S)/ 50% (F)	85%	NA	85%
	b) **Exit to Permanent Housing or Retained Permanent Housing** Percent of participants who retained housing and all leavers who exited to a permanent destination	NA	NA	85%	NA
2	**Length of Stay** Average length of stay for program participants	30 days	120 days	NA	NA
3	**Returns to Homelessness** Percent of all participants who return to homelessness within one year after exiting to permanent housing	Less than: 20% (S)/ 2% (F)	Less than: 11% (S)/ 1% (F)	NA	Less than 15%
4	**Increased Employment Income** Percent of adult leavers who exited and stayers (who stayed for 12 months or more) with increased employment income	10%	15%	NA	15%
5	**Increased Non-Employment Income** Percent of adult leavers who exited and stayers (who stayed for 12 months or more) with increased non-employment income	10%	15%	10%	15%
6	**Utilization Rate** Average daily bed/unit/ or program slot utilization	95%	90%	90%	NA

7	**CoC Grant Spending** Percentage of CoC award spent in most recently completed yr	95%	95%	90%	90%
8	**HMIS Data Quality** Percentage of null/missing and don't know/refused values	Less than 10%	Less than 10%	Less than 10%	Less than 10%

Legend: (S) = singles, (F) = families

ATTACHMENT B
SCORING FACTORS FOR RENEWAL PROJECTS

The scoring system for renewal projects is based on objective criteria, including a consideration of past performance as demonstrated by the project APR, HMIS data, performance data compiled by Focus Strategies using HMIS and budget data, CoC Project Applications and supplemental project narratives. The scoring system also takes into consideration the severity of needs and vulnerabilities experienced by program participants, and the extent to which projects are aligned with Housing First principals (low barriers to participation, no service participation requirements or preconditions).

Scoring Factor		Maximum and Minimum Scores		
		TH	RRH	PSH
1	1a. Exits to Permanent Housing (up to 12 pts)	Exceeds standard by more than 10% = 12 points Meets standard or exceeds by 10% = 6 points Within 10% of standard = 3 points Below 10% of standard = 0 points		Not Applicable
	1b. Exits to Permanent Housing/Retain Housing (up to 14 pts)	Not Applicable		Exceeds standard by more than 10% = 14 points Meets standard or exceeds by 10% = 9 points Within 10% of standard = 5 points Below 10% of standard = 0 points
2	Length of Stay (up to 6 pts)	Exceeds standard by more than 10% = 6 points Meets standard or exceeds by 10% = 4 points Within 10% of standard = 2 points	Not Applicable	
3	Returns to Homelessness (up to 4 pts)	Achieves standard = 4 points		Not Applicable
4	Increased Employment Income (up to 5 pts)	Exceeds standard by more than 5% = 5 points Meets standard or exceeds by 5% = 4 points Within 5% of standard = 2 points Below 5% of standard = 0 points		Not Applicable
5	Increased Non-Employment Income (up to 7 pts)	Exceeds standard by more than 5% = 7 points Meets standard or exceeds by 5% = 4 points Within 5% of standard = 2 points Below 5% of standard = 0 points		

Scoring Factor		Maximum and Minimum Scores		
		TH	RRH	PSH
6	Utilization Rate (up to 6 pts)	Meets standard or exceeds = 6 points Within 5% of standard = 2 points Below 5% of standard = 0 points	Not Applicable	Meets standard or exceeds = 6 points Within 5% of standard = 2 points Below 5% of standard = 0 points
7	CoC Grant Spending (up to 6 pts)	Meets standard or exceeds = 6 points Within 5% of standard = 3 points Below 5% of standard = 0 points		
8	HMIS Data Quality (up to 11 pts)	All Data Elements Less Than 10% Missing/Don't Know = 11 points 1-2 Data Elements More Than 10% Missing/Don't Know = 6 points More Than 2 Data Elements More Than 10% Missing/Don't Know = 0 points		
9	Housing First (up to 16 points)	Does the project ensure participants are not screened out based on the following criteria? A) Having too little or no income B) Active or history of substance abuse C) Having a criminal record with exceptions for state-mandated restrictions D) History of domestic violence If yes, then 0.5 points for each (possible total of 2 points). Does the project ensure that participants are not terminated from the program for the following reasons? A) Failure to participate in supportive services B) Failure to make progress on a service plan C) Loss of income or failure to improve income D) Being a victim of domestic violence If yes, then 0.5 points for each (possible total of 2 points). Does the program have these Housing First approaches documented in Program Manual or other program documentation? If yes, then 1.5 points for each approach documented in submitted documents (up to 12 points).		

Scoring Factor		Maximum and Minimum Scores		
		TH	RRH	PSH
10	Accessibility for Highest Need Households (up to 8 pts)	Is the project accessible for households with the highest needs and housing barriers? Are participants entering from literally homeless situations; with zero income; or with disabling conditions? Does the project take affirmative steps to make housing and services accessible to people with significant vulnerabilities, including: having experienced abuse or victimization (including domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse), criminal histories, chronic homelessness, low or no income, current or past substance abuse? Project is highly accessible for highest need households = 8 points Project is accessible for highest need households = 3 points Project is not accessible for highest need households = 0 points		
11	Grants Monitoring/ Compliance (up to 6 pts)	a) Project submitted APR on time= 1.5 points If not = 0 points b) Project had sufficient LOCCS drawdown frequency for executed contracts (at least quarterly)= 1.5 points If not = 0 points c) Project did not return funds to HUD = 1.5 points If returned funds = 0 points d) Project serves CoC-eligible participants (as demonstrated in written policies/procedures on eligibility, screening and admission) = 1.5 points If not = 0 points e) Serious unresolved compliance finding from HUD would result in up to 8 points subtracted from project's score		
12	Cost Effectiveness for PH exits or PSH units (up to 7 points)	Cost per exit to permanent housing is reasonable for project type = 7 points Cost per exit to permanent housing is not reasonable for project type = 3 points		Cost per unit served is reasonable for project type = 7 points Cost per unit served is not reasonable for project type = 3points
13	Policy Priorities (up to 19 points)	Not Applicable	Rapid Re-Housing = 12 points	Permanent Supportive Housing = 13 points
		Prioritizes a priority population or population needing more support: chronically homeless individuals, veterans, families, youth, DV survivors = 6 points		
Maximum Score		100	100	100

Methodology for Renewal Scoring Factors:

Factor 1 through 8 (Project Performance Standards): Data will be extracted from
APR/Clarity/Looker/HUD Applications for each project for the period March 1, 2016 to
February 28, 2017 to calculate these performance measures.

Factor 9: (Housing First): This will be based on how the applicant responds to the Questions on
Section 3B of the Project Application relating to Housing First, entry barriers, and service
participation requirements. In addition, these items will be scored based on the project's
documented program manual. The projects with written policies that clearly document
low barriers and no service participation requirements will receive higher scores.

Factor 10: (Accessibility for Highest Need Households): This factor considers whether the
project is serving a high need population and is based on the following considerations:
extent to which the project serves individuals entering from literal homelessness (streets or
shelters), have zero income at entry, or have a disability. This information will be drawn
from the APR and other Clarity/Looker reports. In addition, applicants will be asked to
provide a brief narrative describing how they target and prioritize high need households
and if/how the project takes affirmative steps to make housing and services accessible to
people with significant vulnerabilities.

Factor 11: (Grants Monitoring/Compliance): Applicants will be scored based on their responses
to the questions in Section 2B of the Project Application, to include: whether they
submitted APR reports on time, have made sufficient LOCCS drawdowns, or have had any
unspent grant funds returned to HUD. Applicants will be asked to submit their eligibility
and screening policy/procedures to assess whether projects serve CoC-eligible populations.
In addition, projects will lose points for having serious unresolved compliance findings from
HUD.

Factor 12: (Cost Effectiveness): For TH and RRH projects, the measure will be calculated by
dividing the total program budget by the number of households who exited to permanent
housing. For PSH projects, the measure will be calculated by dividing total budget (as
submitted by program) by the number of units/households in the project to arrive at an
average cost per unit.

Factor 13: (Policy Priorities): This factor provides additional points for permanent housing
projects (PSH and RRH) as well as projects prioritizing chronically homeless people,
homeless veterans, youth, families or DV survivors, as documented by program documents.
DedicatedPLUS projects will not receive points for serving chronically homeless individuals
because they do not only serve chronically homeless individuals.

ATTACHMENT C
SCORING FACTORS FOR NEW PROJECTS

Rating Factor	Score Range
1. HEARTH and Opening Doors Objectives. The project articulates how it will advance the goals set forth in HEARTH and Opening Doors (the federal strategic plan to end homelessness): • Reduce new entries into homelessness • Reduce the length of time people are homeless • Reduce returns to homelessness • Increase participant income	0-5
2. Targeting and Outreach • Project targets an eligible population • Project targets participants who are coming from the street or other locations not meant for human habitation, emergency shelters, safe havens, or fleeing domestic violence • There is a strong outreach plan specifically designed to identify and engage people in the target population and ensure they are able to access the program	0-10
3. Appropriateness of Housing • Type, scale, and location of the housing fit the needs of the program participants • Participants are assisted to secure housing as quickly as possible • Programs and activities are offered in a setting that enables homeless people with disabilities to interact with others without disabilities to the fullest extent possible	0-5
4. Housing First Model • Project will have low barriers to entry and does not screen out applicants based on having no or low income, active or history of substance use, criminal record (except for State mandated requirements), history of domestic violence) or lack of willingness to participate in services • Project services are client-centered • Project will not terminate participation for: failure to participate in services, failure to make progress on service plan, loss of income or failure to improve income; being a victim of domestic violence, or other activities not covered in the lease agreement	0-20
5. Service Plan • For RRH projects, project meets National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) RRH standards • Type, scale, location of the supportive services fit the needs of the program participants and are readily accessible. This includes services funded by the CoC grant and other project funding sources • There is a specific plan to ensure participants are individually assisted to obtain the benefits of the mainstream health, social, and employment programs for which they are eligible • There is a specific plan to ensure participants are assisted to obtain and	0-20

Rating Factor	Score Range
remain in permanent housing in a manner that fits their needs • There is a specific plan to ensure participants are assisted to increase their incomes and live independently	
6. Timing • Applicant has a clear plan to begin operations when the contract is executed. Within six months of contract execution may be awarded up to 10 points and within one year of contract execution may be awarded up to 5 points	0-10
7. Applicant Capacity • Recent relevant experience in providing housing to homeless people • Recent data submitted demonstrates strong performance for relevant services and/or housing provided • Relevant experience in operation of housing projects or programs, administering leasing or rental assistance funds, delivering services and entering data and ensuring high-quality data in a system (HMIS or a similar data system) • Organizational and finance capacity to track funds and meet all HUD reporting and fiscal requirements • If application has sub recipients, applicant organizations have experience working together • Any outstanding monitoring or audit issues or issues are explained	0-10
8. Financial Feasibility and Effectiveness • Costs appear reasonable and adequate to support proposed program • Match requirement is met • Additional resources leveraged	0-10
9. Project Type Prioritization • TH/RRH - 0 points • PSH/DedicatedPLUS - 3 points • RRH – 5 points • PSH Dedicated to Chronically Homeless People – 10 points	0-10
TOTAL	**100**

ATTACHMENT D
RANKING AND TIERING POLICIES

1. Ranking Policy

In determining the rank order of projects, the Review Panel will adhere to the following policies:

a. Projects will be ordered in accordance with their scores as set forth in Attachment B (for renewal projects) and Attachment C (for new projects).

b. Projects falling into Tier 1 will be submitted on the Project Priority list in the order in which they are ranked

c. Projects falling into Tier 2 will be ranked according to the policies set forth in below in Section 3 and 4.

d. The following project types will not receive scores:
   • Renewal projects that do not have any performance data (because they were only recently awarded) will be placed at the bottom of Tier 1 or into Tier 2, at the discretion of the Review Panel.
   • Any dedicated HMIS or Coordinated Entry projects will not receive scores. As critical infrastructure for the CoC, dedicated HMIS and/or Coordinated Entry projects will be placed at the bottom of Tier 1.

2. Tier Two Project Scoring as Established in the HUD NOFA

In this year's NOFA, HUD has set forth a scoring system for Tier 2 Projects:
   a. CoC Score – up to 50 points
   b. CoC Project Ranking – Up to 40 points based on how each project is ranked within Tier 2, with those closer to the top of the list receiving more points
   c. Housing First – projects that demonstrate low barriers to entry, prioritize rapid placement into housing, and that do not have service participation requirements receive up to 10 points.

All projects in Tier 2 will compete nationally for funding based on this scoring system. Projects lower on the list are less likely to be funded, as are transitional housing and services only projects, which are eligible for fewer points under item c.

3. San Mateo County Tier 2 Policy
Once the rank order of projects has been determined (see Section 1), any projects falling into Tier 2 will be candidates for re-allocation to create new permanent housing, rapid-re-housing,

dedicated HMIS or Coordinated Entry projects. The Review Panel will make a recommendation as to whether to re-allocate Tier 2 projects or leave them in their rank order.

4.   Re-Allocation Policy

In addition to the above, the Review Panel will examine the spending history of ALL renewal projects to determine if any grants should be reduced. Any grants that have significant under spending will be candidates to have their grant amount reduced. Funds captured from grants that are reduced will be used to fund new permanent housing or rapid-re-housing project(s), which can be placed either in Tier 1 or Tier 2, or HMIS or Coordinated Entry projects, which are placed at the bottom of Tier 1.

Renewal applicants may request to voluntarily re-allocate one or more of their grants, either in whole or in part. If re-allocating in part, the applicant's grant will be reduced by the amount requested and re-allocated to a new project. If an applicant wishes to voluntarily re-allocate in whole, with the purpose of replacing their existing project with a new PH or RRH project, the new project will be ranked and scored according to the policies outlined in this document. There is no guarantee that voluntarily re-allocated projects will be placed in Tier 1.

5.   Final Project Priority List

After following the process described above, the Review Panel may elect to make adjustments to the order of projects if doing so will advance the goals of ensuring a more competitive overall funding application and maximizing our CoC's ability to fund eligible renewals and new projects. These adjustments are limited to the following:
- Adjustments to address any issues that arise from projects straddling the Tier 1 and Tier 2 line, in accordance with the policy outlined in the HUD NOFA.
- Ranking of bonus project(s).
- Ranking of renewal projects that do not yet have any performance data.

Adjustments to rank order will **not** be made to protect low-performing projects from re-allocation or placement in Tier 2.