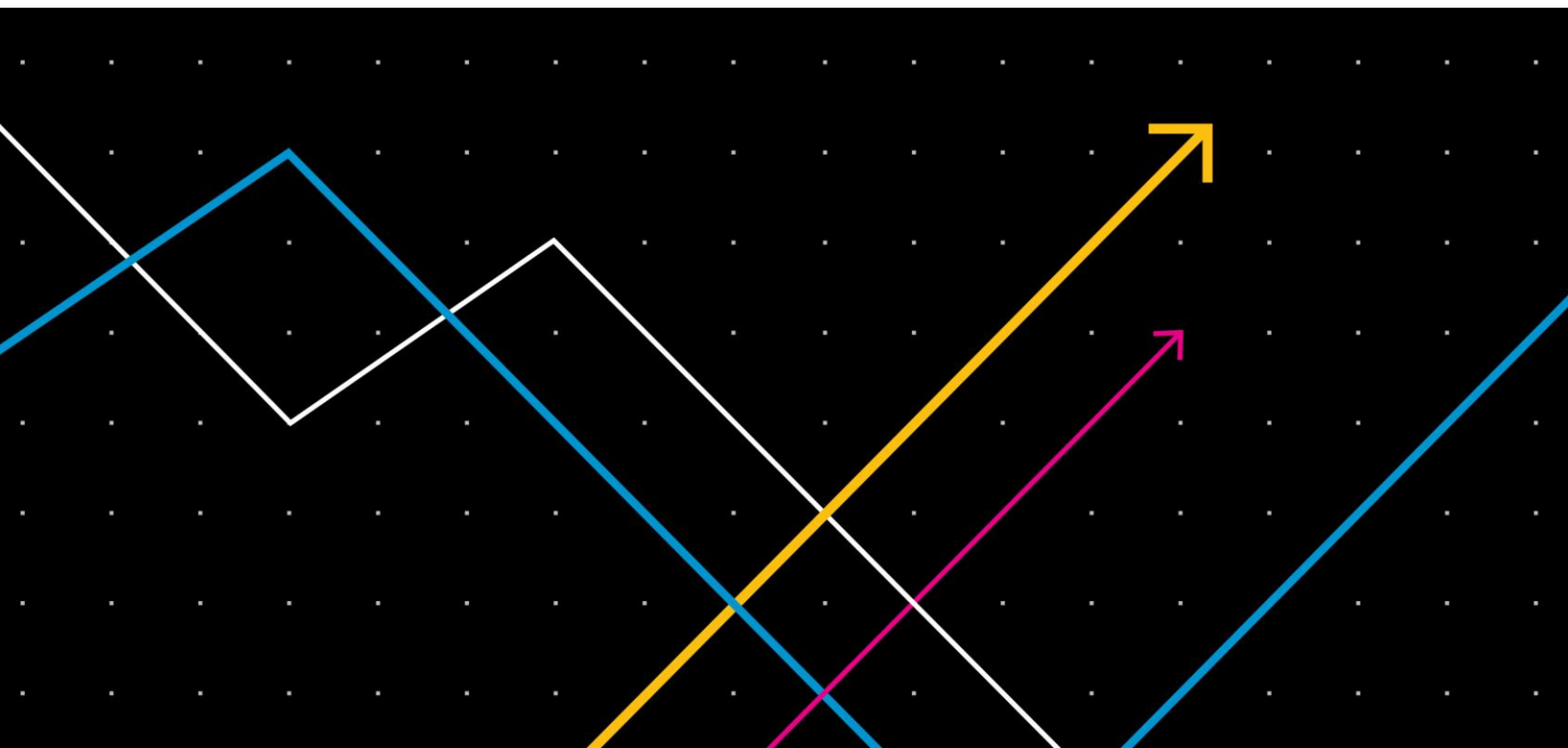




RESEARCH REPORT

Evaluation of Tipping Point Community's Chronic Homelessness Initiative

Final Report

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March 2024





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Acknowledgments

This report was funded by Tipping Point Community. We are grateful to them and to all our funders, who make it possible for Urban to advance its mission.

The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders. Funders do not determine research findings or the insights and recommendations of Urban experts. Further information on the Urban Institute's funding principles is available at urban.org/funding-principles.

We thank all Tipping Point staff, board members, grantees, and partners who spoke with us over the course of this project. We thank all of the staff at the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing and Brilliant Corners for their ongoing cooperation in sharing data and key insights throughout this evaluation. Without these conversations and this cooperation, this report and project would not have been possible. We thank Carol Wilkins; Dan Rinzler, Matt Alvarez-Nissen, Lindsay Rosenfeld, and Anthony Carroll at the California Housing Partnership; and Kenneth Perez, Pamela Olsen, and Margot Kushel at the University of California San Francisco, who served as partners of this project. We also thank Nina Catalano, Andrea Faiss, Andrea Evans, and other Tipping Point staff for their ongoing support of this evaluation, which included reviews of reports like this one and serving as thought partners and interview respondents. Finally, we thank Mary Cunningham at the Urban Institute for her guidance throughout the evaluation and particularly during the drafting of this report.

Executive Summary

In May 2017, Tipping Point Community (Tipping Point), a Bay Area nonprofit organization, announced the Chronic Homelessness Initiative (CHI)—a \$100 million investment to halve chronic homelessness in San Francisco in five years. Between 2017 and 2022, a period that included the COVID-19 pandemic, CHI funded more than 30 programs and activities and contributed to significant changes in the City’s response to homelessness. When CHI formally came to an end on June 30, 2022, the City and its nonprofit partners, including Tipping Point, had successfully housed 7,767 people experiencing chronic homelessness. In this final, cumulative report, we evaluate the overall implementation of CHI; describe successes, facilitators, and challenges; and identify lessons learned for communities working to end homelessness and for philanthropic entities tackling complex social challenges. This report also highlights the outcomes for specific strategies and programs implemented as part of CHI.

Background

In May 2017, Tipping Point announced CHI, the largest private investment to address homelessness in San Francisco’s history, in response to the growing number of people experiencing chronic homelessness¹ in the city. At the time of the announcement, the number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in San Francisco had increased from 1,735 to 2,112 (21.7 percent) between 2007 and 2017.

The goal of CHI was to halve chronic homelessness by the end of 2022, as measured by the difference between the 2017 and 2023 point-in-time (PIT) counts.² To achieve this goal, the CHI theory of change focused on three primary strategies:

1. create more housing, specifically permanent supportive housing (PSH) opportunities for people experiencing chronic homelessness;
2. prevent chronic homelessness by housing people before they become chronically homeless and improving the systems that serve people vulnerable to homelessness; and
3. change systems in ways that help achieve the above strategies, including by building capacity and optimizing the public sector.

City partners and Tipping Point originally estimated that they would need to house 5,500 people experiencing chronic homelessness to meet their goal. It was expected that most of those placements would be made through existing homeless assistance programs, but Tipping Point, through CHI funding, would need to help generate an additional 2,200 placements. In addition to these placements, the City, Tipping Point, and other partners would need to help prevent an unknown number of people from becoming newly chronically homeless.

Because the City did not conduct a full PIT count in 2023 due to the pandemic, we could not officially measure whether Tipping Point and partners met their goal by the end of 2022. However, based on our evaluation and analysis, it is unlikely that they met their goal. Even so, programs that have their foundation in CHI have continued in San Francisco, placed thousands of people in housing, and led to important systems-level change in the City's homelessness response.

BOX ES.1

Evaluation of Tipping Point Community's Chronic Homelessness Initiative

Tipping Point engaged Urban to evaluate the Chronic Homelessness Initiative's (CHI) implementation and outcomes. The Urban research team conducted a mixed-methods, systems-level evaluation to understand CHI's overall success in helping San Francisco halve chronic homelessness and make long-term, systemwide improvements in the systems intended to support the city's most vulnerable residents. The evaluation intended to answer the following primary research questions:

- How did Tipping Point and partners implement CHI's theory of change?
- Did San Francisco halve chronic homelessness by the end of 2022?
- What were the impacts of the specific strategies and activities Tipping Point developed through CHI to change the systems people experiencing chronic homelessness navigate, leverage other resources, elevate the voices and power of people with lived experiences of homelessness, and reduce racial inequity?

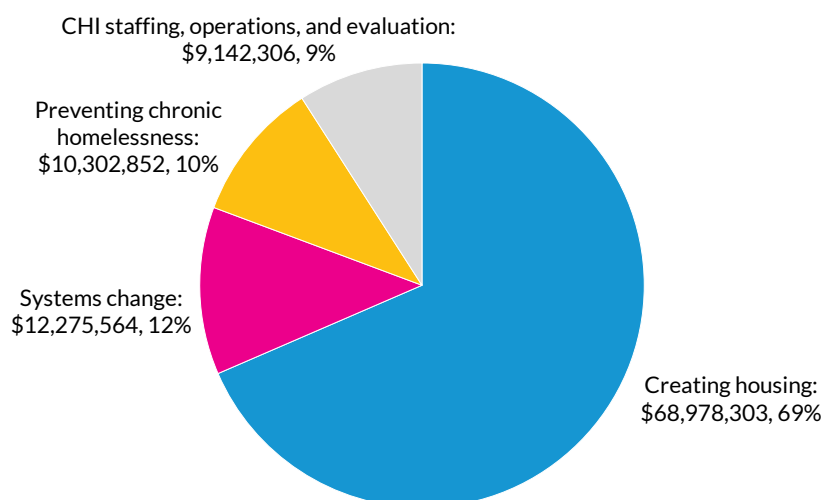
This overarching evaluation was complemented by several mixed-methods program evaluations seeking to understand the effectiveness of specific CHI investments and how they contributed to overall CHI goals. The evaluation of CHI made use of administrative and program data from the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Brilliant Corners, Episcopal Community Services, University of California San Francisco Citywide Case Management Division, and the Felton Institute, as well as drawing on more than 230 interviews with Tipping Point staff, donors, and board members; Community Advisory Board members; government and community partners; and grantees and program participants.

Implementation of the Chronic Homelessness Initiative

Between 2017 and 2022, Tipping Point successfully spent \$100 million implementing more than 30 distinct programs and activities as part of CHI. The greatest share of investments—\$69 million, or 69 percent—was spent on the first primary strategy of creating housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness (figure ES.1). The single largest investment made as part of CHI was slightly more than \$50 million dollars (50 percent of the total invested) toward the development of Tahanan, a PSH building developed through innovative construction and financing mechanisms (box ES.2).

FIGURE ES.1

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Investments, by Spending Type



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Source: CHI finance reports as of June 2023, provided by Tipping Point Community.

Notes: Six programs (Housing Platform, Rising Up, SSI Pilot, Breaking Barriers, Shared Housing, and Miracle Messages) are categorized in two spending types; the investment amounts for these programs are split evenly between their corresponding spending types.

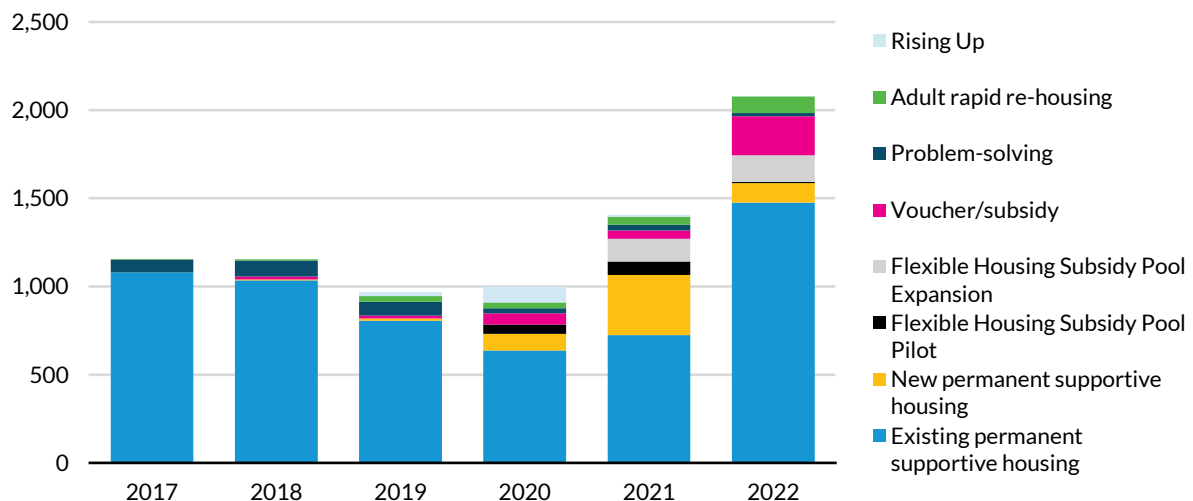
Tipping Point also invested \$10.3 million (10 percent) in its second primary strategy, programming focused on preventing chronic homelessness, and \$12.3 million (12 percent) in projects aimed at making lasting and systemic changes to the chronic homelessness response in San Francisco. About 9 percent of the \$100 million for CHI was spent on Tipping Point staffing and operations, including the evaluation. See box ES.2 for more information on CHI strategies and some of the notable programs funded under each strategy.

From 2017 to 2022, the City and nonprofit partners across San Francisco placed 7,767 people who were experiencing chronic homelessness into housing, far exceeding the projected 5,500 placements needed to halve chronic homelessness. Placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness increased annually from 2019 to 2022, from 970 to 2,078 (figure ES.2). Tipping Point’s CHI investments directly contributed to placements in the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (Flex Pool) pilot (184 placements); the Rising Up Campaign (128 placements); and new PSH, including Tahanan (145 placements) and the Granada and Diva hotel acquisitions (138 placements). Additionally, the Moving On Initiative resulted in 373 units of existing PSH turning over, as it helped move people with vouchers out of PSH and into community market-rate housing. For more information about these programs, see box ES.2.

FIGURE ES.2

Housing Placements for People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in San Francisco by Key Homelessness Programming Type

Number of housing placements among people experiencing chronic homelessness, 2017–2022



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Sources: Data from the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) and Tipping Point grantee monthly and quarterly reporting.

Notes: Existing and new permanent supportive housing (PSH) placements are all placements of adults (ages 18 and older) in PSH programs reported by HSH. PSH placements between 2017 and June 2018 are not broken out in the figure by existing or new programs, in part because of the rollout of the ONE System in mid-2017 and its full implementation in 2018. Voucher/subsidy placements are placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness through the Mainstream Voucher and Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) programs. CHI supported 50 Mainstream vouchers as part of the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (Flex Pool) pilot, and these are categorized as “voucher/subsidy” placements. Program data showed five Flex Pool pilot placements before the pilot began in 2020; we assume these are related to the Mainstream voucher placements for the pilot. Problem-solving placements were calculated as 15 percent of Homeward Bound program placements reported by HSH. Homeward Bound does not reflect broader problem-solving activities in the City, but this method of estimation is consistent with prior HSH estimates of the share of placements for people experiencing chronic homelessness. Adult rapid re-housing placements are placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness through rapid re-housing programs.

In addition to placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness, Tipping Point invested in programs intended to prevent chronic homelessness. While we cannot determine whether the placements prevented episodes of chronic homelessness, 288 people were placed into housing between 2020 and 2023 through CHI programs targeting people at risk of long-term homelessness, including young people experiencing homelessness, young people who have been involved with the child welfare system, and people who were reentering the community from incarceration and had a history of homelessness.

BOX ES.2

Notable Programs and Activities through the Chronic Homelessness Initiative

Tipping Point's Chronic Homelessness Initiative included various programs as part of the three primary strategies. Interview respondents most frequently identified the following programs as part of those strategies:

1. Create more housing

- **Tahanan** was a permanent supportive housing (PSH) development that provided housing to 145 people. The financing and development model had a faster development timeline and lower costs per unit compared with other PSH developments.
- The **Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (Flex Pool) pilot** was a scattered-site PSH pilot, a model new to San Francisco, which housed 184 people. The Flex Pool was sustained and expanded with public funds in 2021. The infrastructure built through CHI served as the foundation for the expansion of scattered-site housing programs in the city.
- The **Moving On Initiative** successfully transitioned 373 people from project-based PSH to tenant-based subsidized housing in the community, freeing up existing PSH units for people experiencing chronic homelessness to be re-housed.

2. Prevent chronic homelessness

- The **Rising Up Campaign**, a rapid re-housing and prevention program targeted to transition-age youth, provided housing to 369 young people experiencing or potentially at risk of chronic homelessness.

3. Change systems

- The **Community Advisory Board (CAB)** was an advisory body created for CHI comprising members with lived experiences of homelessness who provided input on strategies and activities. It served as an important model for continued engagement with directly affected groups in the city.

Note: Throughout this report, there are boxes expanding on these activities and others funded as part of CHI.

Successes

In 2017, the year Tipping Point announced CHI, San Francisco had already made significant investments in project-based PSH. While these investments showed early success in decreasing the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness between 2009 and 2015, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness rose from 2015 to 2017. Respondents described a homelessness response dominated by this type of programming with little investment in other strategies, such as scattered-site PSH or rapid re-housing. Additionally, the City had recently created the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) to consolidate the coordination and implementation of homelessness programs and was planning for the implementation of Coordinated Entry and a new Homeless Management Information System called the Online Navigation and Entry (ONE) System.

By 2022, the homelessness response in San Francisco looked radically different. The City had significantly expanded the number of tools it used to re-house people and help them remain housed, notably including scattered-site PSH, rapid re-housing, and problem-solving. As a result, the number of people being placed in housing was increasing each year. Additionally, HSH capacity had grown significantly, and coordination with other agencies, including those working on behavioral health and the criminal legal system, improved. Coordinated Entry and the ONE System were fully implemented and being refined. The city had also come through the COVID-19 pandemic without significant increases in chronic homelessness (see box ES.3 for details about the pandemic and its impacts on CHI).

Over the course of CHI, respondents identified the ways that Tipping Point staff and CHI investments contributed to important successes and changes to San Francisco's response to chronic homelessness:

- **Increased the number of housing placements for people experiencing chronic homelessness.** The number of housing placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness increased each year from 2019 to 2022, and interview respondents almost universally agreed that the greatest CHI successes were CHI investments focused on creating more PSH. CHI-funded programs, including the Flex Pool, Rising Up, and Tahanan, directly placed about 600 people experiencing chronic homelessness into housing. Additionally, many respondents shared the belief that CHI activities helped prevent increases in chronic homelessness during the pandemic.

I was homeless for seven years but seven months ago...they came and interviewed me. They came to me where I was sleeping and did the interview, I was skeptical about being scammed. They've been awesome with me, even though I'm still trying to transition from street life. I think I've got the hang of it now. [I] can go home and feel safe.

—Flex Pool program participant

- **Proof points for innovative approaches that became new tools to re-house people.** Several CHI investments served as “proof points” that made the case for expanded investment in or replication of CHI programs or activities that increased placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness. The most commonly cited proof point was the Flex Pool pilot, which served as the foundation for expanded scattered-site PSH and implementation of multiple rapid re-housing programs in San Francisco. Respondents also identified Tahanan and Moving On as successful proof points that ultimately increased housing options in the city.
- **Building capacity in government and nonprofit agencies.** Consistent with the objectives laid out in the CHI theory of change, respondents indicated that Tipping Point helped build the capacity of both government and community partners through investment in staff positions, consultants, and capacity-building grants. Respondents noted that Tipping Point expanded the organizational capacity of HSH and other government partners through the funding of staff positions and consultants in particular. Another capacity-building activity noted by multiple respondents was the support for Brilliant Corners, which was foundational to the implementation of the Flex Pool pilot and its later expansion.
- **Leveraging philanthropic resources for expanded capacity and sustainability.** A central component of the CHI theory of change was to invest in projects that would leverage state and federal resources and be sustained by public resources. Throughout Urban’s evaluation, interview respondents shared several examples where CHI investments were leveraged into sustainable public funding, including examples of philanthropic resources used to start a program, government resources used for sustainability, or CHI-funded consultants writing plans or reports that ultimately helped secure funding for programming.
- **Funding and publishing foundational reports.** Tipping Point funded several reports over the course of CHI, some of which played an important role in leveraging resources to address homelessness. Stakeholders cited a report on the behavioral health system, *The View from the*

Outside report, a report on a survey of San Francisco voters, and an internal HSH report on equity and inclusion as examples of foundational reports that helped advance CHI goals.

- **Elevating the voices of people with lived experiences of homelessness.** Throughout the initiative, interview respondents—including Community Advisory Board (CAB) members—described the CAB as an important aspect of ensuring that the voices of people with lived experiences of homelessness were centered in both CHI and the City’s efforts more broadly. The commitment of centering lived expertise is now integrated more thoroughly across City initiatives and programs.

[Tipping Point] always included me and spoke to me like an equal, which I should be, but it’s rare that you find that in this world these days in the way that people treat people, especially unhoused people. They look at you differently. Basically, I never felt anything different, and my experiences mattered, and that was the cool thing about that. They listened, and that was the most important thing.

—CHI Community Advisory Board member

- **Advancing equity.** Over the course of CHI, Tipping Point set explicit goals around reducing disparities in overrepresentation and designed programs to explicitly target people experiencing homelessness who were also part of historically marginalized groups. Respondents praised Tipping Point for convening grassroots organizations and government partners for conversations on cultural competency and for investing in organizations led by or primarily serving historically marginalized and underserved target populations, such as Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ+ people.
- **Convening partners.** While not an explicit goal of CHI, stakeholders almost universally commented on Tipping Point’s contributions to the City’s efforts to address homelessness through its unique position and capacity as a convener. Respondents often credited this to Tipping Point staff having the bandwidth for collaboration and convening activities when implementation partners are often fully immersed in daily operational activities.

- **Building accountability.** Respondents acknowledged Tipping Point’s success in encouraging and supporting capacity for accountability. Respondents reported increased data collection, tracking, and reporting that was helpful to City agencies and grantees.

BOX ES.3

COVID-19 Pandemic and the Chronic Homelessness Initiative

The story of CHI’s implementation cannot be told without discussing how the COVID-19 pandemic interacted with it. In many ways, the pandemic was a challenge for CHI, leading to projected increases in homelessness, attention diverted from key CHI activities, strained nonprofit capacity, and changes in the cadence of the point-in-time count. But in other ways, the pandemic was also a facilitator, bringing increased attention and urgency to homelessness and bringing unprecedented resources to San Francisco. Across all respondent types, stakeholders consistently described the positive impact of CHI and Tipping Point on the City during the pandemic, and respondents highlighted how Tipping Point was able to use flexible funds from CHI to fund urgent and time-sensitive strategies during a period of intense strain on the system.

Source: Urban interviews and review of secondary documents.

Challenges, Facilitators, and Adaptations

Throughout the implementation of CHI, Tipping Point and partners faced and adapted to challenges. In some instances, these challenges presented opportunities that facilitated momentous changes and key successes. Prior evaluation reports have documented the challenges facing implementation partners, some of which predated and continued during CHI, such as high rents and low vacancy rates in San Francisco’s private rental market. However, in this report, we focus on how Tipping Point staff, grantees, and partners adapted to challenges over time and how those adaptations facilitated change.

One area where respondents noted ongoing changes and associated challenges and adaptations was the turnover of the mayor, government agency staff, and Tipping Point internal leadership. These leadership changes sometimes presented challenges, such as decreased momentum for planned CHI strategies. But in other instances, leadership change served as a facilitator by injecting new ideas, priorities, and partners. Additionally, respondents felt that coordination between CHI leadership and government partner leadership in key agencies improved over the course of CHI implementation.

Respondents also consistently identified process- and structure-related challenges within the homelessness response system. The most frequently cited examples were inconsistent referral pace from Coordinated Entry, documentation barriers in PSH, and vacant units in PSH. Tipping Point, government agencies, and nonprofit community partners worked to find adaptations to a number of these challenges, piloting a “batch referral” process intended to increase housing placement speed and exploring options for streamlining documentation challenges. Respondents appreciated the active role Tipping Point took in helping convene partners and serving as a thought partner on solutions to these system challenges. Unfortunately, partners continue to struggle with many of these challenges.

I do think what happens though is that systems change is not linear, it's circular.
—Community stakeholder

Lessons Learned

Over the course of five years, CHI efforts resulted in several lessons for San Francisco and cities across the country regarding the role of philanthropy in addressing complex social challenges, as well as lessons for communities working to end homelessness.

Lessons for Philanthropic Groups

- **Balance ambitious goals with realistic timelines.** Early in CHI implementation, respondents described the goal as “inspirational.” But as CHI progressed, respondents reflected that Tipping Point may not have adequately considered how relationship- and rapport-building and securing buy-in would affect their ability to meet their initial goal. After CHI ended, interviewees agreed that systems change takes time, and the five-year time frame may have not been long enough to realize the changes needed.
- **Build foundational partnerships before announcing goals.** After CHI ended, respondents reflected that Tipping Point could have engaged in more partnership building within the sector before announcing CHI. They felt that this would have eased early tensions with government partners who had more experience working on the issue and would have enabled CHI to plan

out their strategies and programming more thoroughly prior to announcement and implement them earlier in the timeline.

- **Balance short-term investment and long-term change.** Respondents consistently identified a tension between short-term investments and programs that have immediate impacts on trends in chronic homelessness and long-term and systemic solutions to homelessness.
- **Take risks to build evidence for innovative strategies.** Respondents identified Tipping Point's "ability to take risks" as a leading strength that the organization brought to the community. They noted that Tipping Point invested in programs that had not been implemented previously in San Francisco or other places and successfully created proof points. However, respondents also noted that sometimes these investments in "risky" programs were too small to have impacts on homelessness or allow for evaluation of their effectiveness.
- **Maximize the impact of flexible resources.** Respondents described Tipping Point as "nimble" than the government, which is subject to more restrictions in procurement and compliance and more silos in resource allocation. Respondents described one of Tipping Point's significant value-adds as being able to pivot resources quickly to address immediate needs or fill gaps, particularly during the pandemic.
- **Convene partners for more strategic planning and include historically marginalized groups.** Respondents repeatedly raised Tipping Point's important role as a convener for City partners and a convener of people with lived experiences of homelessness for CHI. This direct engagement and collaboration with affected groups was also cited as a success of CHI. Philanthropy is uniquely positioned to serve as a third party or neutral convener, and respondents consistently identified Tipping Point's convening power as a contributor to sustainable systems change.
- **Build the capacity of community nonprofit service providers.** Respondents shared that, over the course of the initiative, CHI investments helped increase the capacity of nonprofit service providers. For example, respondents noted that these investments not only affected the scope and services grantees could provide but also were often in services, programs, or organizations that are not typically funded by the government.

Lessons for Communities Working to End Homelessness

- **Understanding and addressing inflow is essential to ending homelessness.** Although Tipping Point and partners across the City placed 7,767 people experiencing chronic homelessness into

housing over the course of the initiative, this did not sufficiently counterbalance the number of people who entered into homelessness during that period. While Tipping Point did implement numerous programs intended to prevent chronic homelessness, these programs were not close to the scale of housing programs dedicated to people experiencing chronic homelessness. Ending chronic homelessness will require communities to better understand the pathways into chronic homelessness and how many people are entering chronic homelessness, as well as what funding resources are needed to successfully intervene in those pathways.

- **Maximize placements in existing community resources.** Although placements into existing PSH units were the most common placement type for people experiencing chronic homelessness, respondents shared that there were several barriers to placing people in these units throughout CHI. For example, respondents cited offline units due to maintenance issues and paperwork-related challenges as obstacles to filling existing units. These barriers resulted in multiple vacancies throughout the initiative. For communities working to end chronic homelessness, prioritizing filling vacancies in PSH is critical.
- **Diversify PSH stock and development and acquisition strategies.** Before CHI, San Francisco relied heavily on project-based PSH units as its main strategy for supplying PSH. CHI investments, including Flex Pool and the Homes for the Homeless Fund (also referred to as Tahanan), demonstrated new ways to diversify PSH stock, such as incorporating scattered-site housing into the City's PSH strategy and implementing innovative development and financing strategies. Over the course of CHI, the City—with some financial support from Tipping Point—also invested in acquisition of new buildings to increase the number of new PSH units.

Sustainability and Looking Forward

In interviews throughout CHI and after its completion, respondents reflected on how components of CHI were being sustained and next steps for both governmental and philanthropic entities to continue to address chronic homelessness in San Francisco. At the end of CHI in June 2022, several Tipping Point investments had been sustained either fully or partially, and others were planned for future replication. Most respondents identified the Flex Pool as Tipping Point's most successfully sustained program, but other examples included work with the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the CAB. Although it had not been replicated as of the end of 2023, respondents felt that Tahanan still had significant potential for replication and sustainability.

Interview respondents shared that although they felt the impact of CHI ending in terms of funding and partnership, Tipping Point staff and staff from other government departments and community-based organizations saw Tipping Point as continuing to play an important role. Since the end of CHI, Tipping Point has continued to invest in strategies to address homelessness in San Francisco more broadly, including using data to track and monitor progress. And, in July 2023, San Francisco began a new five-year plan to reduce homelessness, which includes goals such as reducing unsheltered homelessness by 50 percent by 2028. Shortly after, Tipping Point launched a new San Francisco Homelessness Dashboard³ to increase transparency and track progress toward these goals. The dashboard examines homelessness in San Francisco across five key areas and metrics: prevention, shelter, permanent housing, affordable housing, and data specifically related to racial disparities within these systems. Respondents also shared that they valued Tipping Point as a “thought partner” and hoped that Tipping Point would continue to play this role in the future.

The biggest difference is that we have more systems and interventions in place. We have three times as many resources as we did six years ago...We also created scattered-site housing, thousands of scattered-site housing opportunities. We have really been able to lean into something that six years ago was kind of unimaginable because people didn't believe that people experiencing homelessness could go into market-rate housing.

—Community stakeholder

Conclusion

Between 2017 and 2022, the City and nonprofit partners placed 7,767 people experiencing chronic homelessness into housing. This included 2,011 people in 2022 alone, the culmination of multiple years in a row of increases in placements from 2019 to 2022. While there is no 2023 PIT count to show the final change in prevalence, HSH reported that chronic homelessness among individuals decreased by 7.5 percent from 2019 to 2022, a rate higher than the overall decrease observed among all people experiencing homelessness during the same period (3.5 percent) (HSH 2022). Despite this success, respondents believed—and the data suggest—that CHI and partners did not meet the goal of halving chronic homelessness in San Francisco by January 2023. Regardless, respondents felt certain that

Tipping Point investments had positively shaped San Francisco's responses to chronic homelessness, particularly through the Flex Pool, Tahanan, and the CAB.

Throughout our interviews, respondents identified several issues and ongoing challenges related to addressing homelessness in San Francisco, including public opinion; the overall economic outlook of the city, including challenges of affordable housing; and persistent challenges within the homelessness response system. Respondents also shared that San Francisco must focus on addressing the drivers of homelessness to ultimately end homelessness. This approach requires a larger focus and effort on broader development and preservation of affordable housing and homelessness prevention as well as continuing to examine and address systemic factors that can lead to homelessness, including racism. Overall, it was clear from respondents and the data that CHI achieved its goals of housing people experiencing chronic homelessness and improving the systems that respond to homelessness in San Francisco.

Evaluation of the Tipping Point Community Chronic Homelessness Initiative: Final Report

In May 2017, Tipping Point Community (Tipping Point), a Bay Area nonprofit organization, announced the Chronic Homelessness Initiative (CHI), a \$100 million investment to halve chronic homelessness in San Francisco in five years. As CHI formally ended on June 30, 2022,⁴ this final report documents the implementation of CHI and identifies key areas of successes and lessons learned based on evaluation activities conducted between fall 2018 and fall 2023.

Background

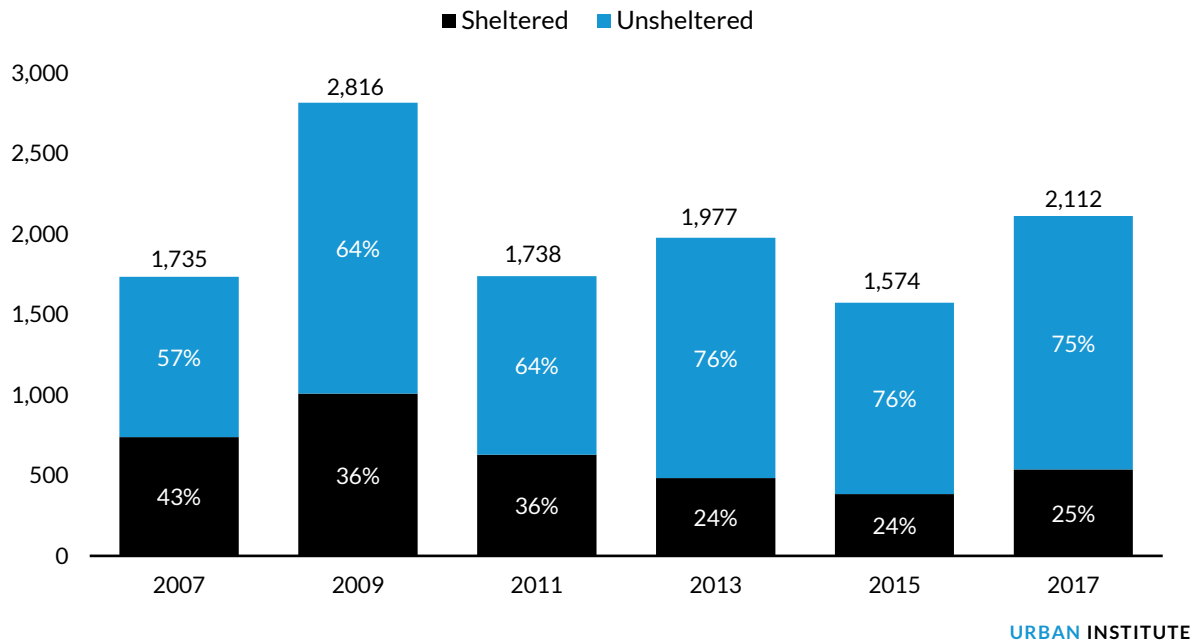
When CHI was announced in 2017, it was in response to growing chronic homelessness in San Francisco despite significant prior investment to address homelessness in the city. CHI was the largest private investment to address homelessness in San Francisco's history and was built on Tipping Point's work in the Bay Area to fund effective poverty-fighting organizations. Further, it was in response to San Francisco residents consistently citing homelessness as their top concern.⁵

Understanding Chronic Homelessness in San Francisco

In San Francisco, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness increased from 1,735 to 2,112 between 2007 and 2017 (ASR 2017). This increase was driven in large part by a growing number of individuals living in unsheltered locations, such as sidewalks, parks, cars, or other places not meant for human habitation. The number of people experiencing chronic homelessness in unsheltered situations increased from 997 in 2007 to 1,575 in 2017 (figure 1). As a result, homelessness, particularly chronic homelessness, was highly visible, with the 2017 point-in-time (PIT) count reporting that the majority of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness were in unsheltered situations (about 75 percent).

FIGURE 1

Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in San Francisco, 2007–2017



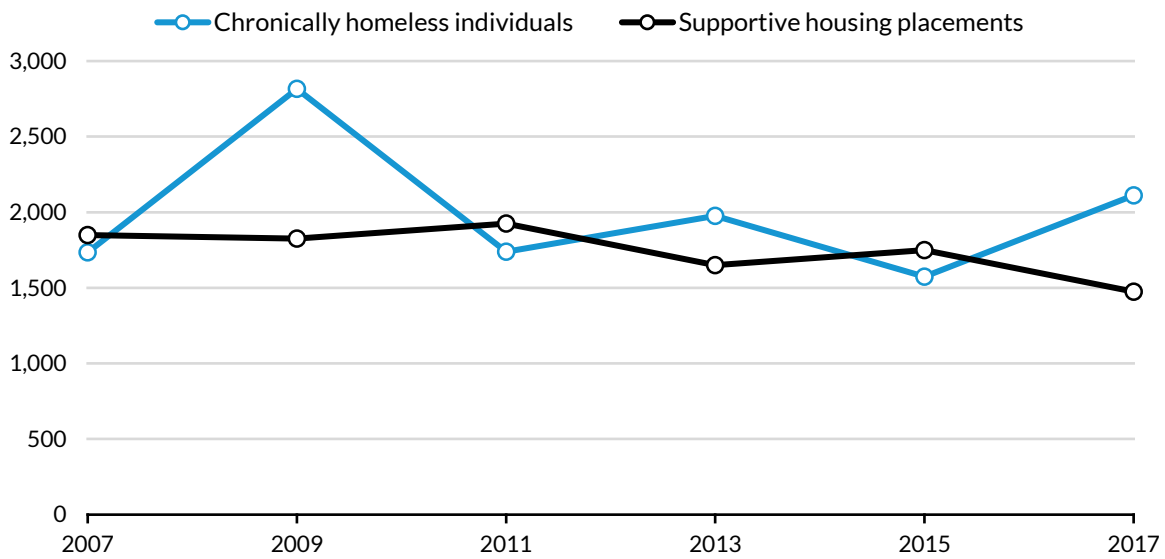
Source: Applied Survey Research, *San Francisco 2017 Homeless Count & Survey: Comprehensive Report* (San Jose, CA: Applied Survey Research, 2017).

In the lead-up to the 2017 announcement of CHI, San Francisco had long been regarded as a leader on homelessness response because of its early investment in and development of permanent supportive housing (PSH) to address chronic homelessness. Research has consistently shown that PSH is the most effective intervention for addressing chronic homelessness, helping keep people housed and reducing use of other systems (NASEM 2018). Research also shows that chronic homelessness decreases when communities invest in PSH (Byrne et al. 2014). San Francisco’s investment in PSH showed progress with an initial dip in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness from 2009 to 2015 (figure 2).⁶

In the 1980s and 1990s, the primary response to homelessness in San Francisco was providing emergency services to shelter people and connecting them to health services. Starting in 2004, San Francisco officially announced a 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness in the city, which included a pledge to create 3,000 PSH beds. By 2017, San Francisco had more than 5,600 beds of PSH dedicated to people experiencing homelessness (De Sousa et al. 2023). The development of these units was concentrated in project-based PSH in buildings with supportive services on site.

FIGURE 2

Relationship between Permanent Supportive Housing and Chronic Homelessness in San Francisco



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Sources: Annual PSH placements from the City and County of San Francisco Controller's Office, April 19, 2018. The number of chronically homeless individuals is from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's point-in-time count.

In 2016, in response to some of the same challenges that prompted the announcement of CHI, then-San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee established the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) with the goal of improving alignment across the City's homelessness programs.⁷ HSH was tasked with launching a new Coordinated Entry process⁸ and Homeless Management Information System called the Online Navigation and Entry (ONE) System. In October 2017, HSH released a strategic framework, with a goal aligned with Tipping Point's CHI goal of halving chronic homelessness by 2022 (HSH 2017).

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Overview

Tipping Point's goal for CHI was to halve chronic homelessness among individuals without children by the end of 2022, measured by the difference between the 2017 and 2023 PIT counts. In 2017, 2,112 individuals were experiencing chronic homelessness. To meet the initiative's goal, the 2023 PIT count would need to have shown 1,056 or fewer people experiencing chronic homelessness.

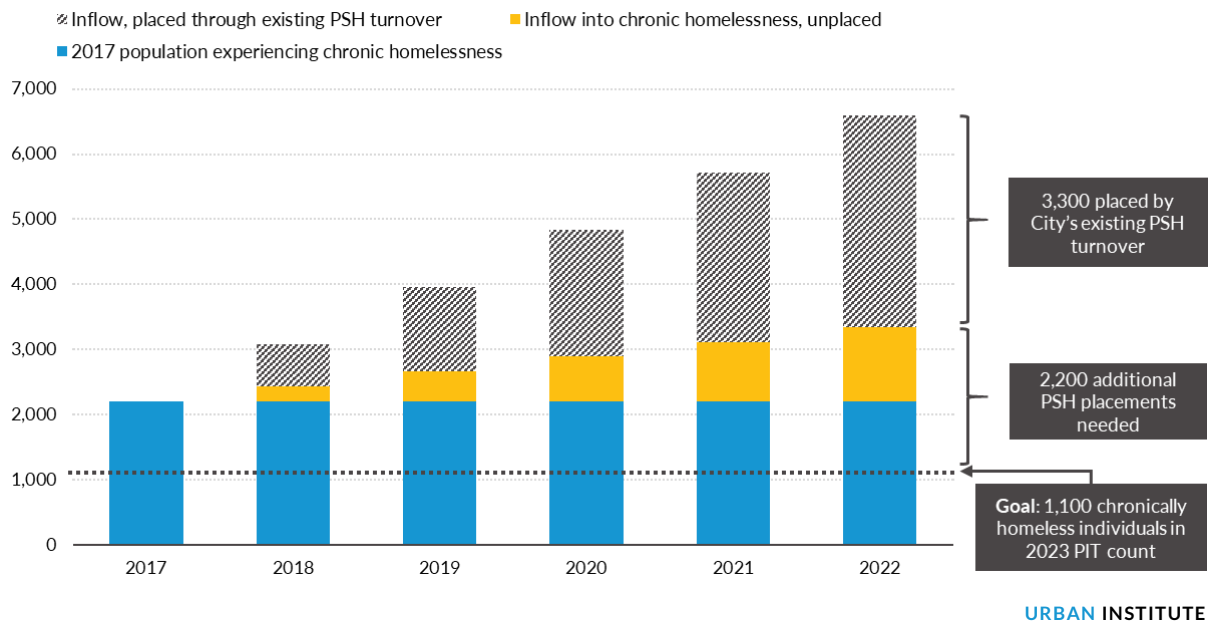
At the time CHI was announced, Tipping Point proposed a three-pronged strategy:

1. creating new housing units;
2. attacking the root causes of homelessness, including addressing how people flow into homelessness from the mental health, child welfare, and criminal justice systems; and
3. boosting the capacity of the public sector.⁹

In the first year of CHI, Tipping Point staff worked to concretize a theory of change around these three objectives. The cornerstone of this theory of change was that the City—the government and community partners, including Tipping Point—would need to place 5,500 people experiencing chronic homelessness in PSH to halve chronic homelessness. The assumption was that 3,300 placements would be placements made in existing PSH through turnover in those units. This left approximately 2,200 placements that needed to be created through CHI and partner efforts (figure 3). Tipping Point’s theory of change also focused on changing systems where people experiencing chronic homelessness or people who may be vulnerable to chronic homelessness have frequent interactions, including the behavioral health, criminal legal, and child welfare and foster care systems. Finally, CHI planned investments intended to change policy and practice and design for sustainability. Specifically, the CHI theory of change called for improving the use of data, increasing cross-sector accountability, and leveraging federal, state, and local resources.

FIGURE 3

Estimated Permanent Supportive Housing Placements Needed to Halve Chronic Homelessness by 2022



Sources: Urban Institute documentation of the Chronic Homelessness Initiative theory of change as of August 2018.

Notes: Based on data provided by the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing at the time (2017), we approximated inflow into chronic homelessness at approximately 880 people per year, about 650 of whom would be housed through the turnover of existing PSH units each year.

From 2018 onward, Tipping Point continuously refined CHI's theory of change through work with partners, feedback from the evaluation, and growing and expanded staff expertise. One period of intentional reflection on the theory of change resulted in clear shifts in urgency and priorities. Following the release of the PIT count in June 2019, as well as leadership changes at CHI later that fall, the CHI team conducted an internal analysis of CHI's impact and progress in early 2020. CHI staff identified two key elements of the theory of change to emphasize in the final years of the initiative: (1) system transparency and accountability and (2) innovative permanent housing solutions to ending homelessness. At the time of that analysis, Tipping Point relied on a CHI dashboard tracking tool, developed in partnership with Urban's evaluation. The tool modeled chronic homelessness inflow and housing placements in response to targeted efforts in the years leading up to the 2023 PIT count. Urban updated the model quarterly and incorporated actual housing placements and projected housing placement goals. Tipping Point used the dashboard to understand progress in key programs and areas for improvement in processes and systems. Additionally, at this time, Tipping Point reaffirmed its commitment to expanding permanent housing options for people experiencing chronic homelessness.

Regardless of shifts in specific strategies and approaches over time, a through line from start to finish was CHI's focus on collaboration between local government, the community, and philanthropy to maximize impact on the three central objectives. Over time, those objectives shifted in language to reflect updated priorities, but they remained essentially the same:

1. create more housing, specifically PSH opportunities for people experiencing chronic homelessness;
2. prevent chronic homelessness by housing people before they become chronically homeless and improving the systems that serve people vulnerable to homelessness; and
3. change systems in ways that help achieve the above strategies, including by building capacity and optimizing the public sector.

Evaluation Overview

Tipping Point engaged Urban to evaluate CHI's implementation and outcomes. In January 2018, Urban's evaluation began with a planning period focused on documenting CHI's theory of change and developing a research design and analysis plan. Urban completed this planning phase and began the full evaluation phase in fall 2018. Urban worked with Tipping Point staff over the course of CHI implementation to refine the research design, including adding evaluation components and refining research questions.

The foundation of Urban's work from the outset was a systems-level evaluation to understand CHI's overall success in helping San Francisco halve chronic homelessness and make long-term, systemwide improvements for supporting the city's most vulnerable residents. The evaluation intended to answer the following primary research questions:

- How did Tipping Point and partners implement CHI's theory of change? What strategies and activities did CHI support? How did CHI align and operate within the larger San Francisco strategic framework to halve chronic homelessness?
- Did San Francisco halve chronic homelessness by the end of 2022? What factors contributed to the success or failure to achieve this goal? Did Tipping Point and HSH meet their established targets for housing placements by quarter and by program type (e.g., rapid re-housing, PSH, etc.)?

- Were assumptions about inflow, turnover of existing PSH stock, units in the pipeline, and other factors accurate? If not, how could they be refined to be more accurate? Did meeting or exceeding assumptions correspond to projected decreases in chronic homelessness as measured in the PIT count?
- What were the impacts of the specific strategies and activities Tipping Point developed through CHI to change the systems people experiencing chronic homelessness navigate, leverage other resources, elevate the voices and power of people with lived experiences of homelessness, and reduce racial inequity?

The systems-level evaluation included quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component focused on quarterly updates to Tipping Point through the data dashboard, using data from HSH and Brilliant Corners to track placements and progress toward the CHI goal of halving chronic homelessness. Urban supplemented the dashboard with fast turnaround analyses of quarterly interviews with key partners to identify potential drivers of observable trends in housing placements or inflow into chronic homelessness. The evaluation also included annual interviews with 12 to 15 San Francisco stakeholders familiar with CHI activities, including Tipping Point staff, donors, and board members; CHI Community Advisory Board (CAB) members; government and community partners; and grantees and program participants. Data collected from interviews complemented a review of documents, which included Tipping Point reports from staff, donors, and grantees and media coverage. We published annual progress reports for CHI years 2020, 2021, and 2022 to document housing placements as well as successes and challenges facing CHI implementers (Batko et al. 2021; Batko et al. 2022; Batko et al. 2023a).

The systems-level evaluation was complemented by several mixed-methods program evaluations focused on understanding the effectiveness of specific CHI investments, including the Moving On Initiative (Moving On), Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (Flex Pool), Rising Up Campaign, Homes for the Homeless Fund (also referred to as Tahanan), Step Up to Freedom, CHI's CAB, and a small cash-transfer pilot. Each of these program evaluations had discrete research questions and reports (box 1). Urban analyzed information collected for these program evaluations as part of the systems-level evaluation, and we have incorporated those findings in this final report.

BOX 1

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Program Evaluation Reports

Urban conducted a series of mixed-methods program evaluations of key CHI strategies and activities. Prior publications from these program evaluations are listed below:

- **Moving On Initiative**
 - » ***Moving On Brief: Findings from Participant Interviews:*** summary of findings from interviews with Moving On participants and staff in the program's first year
 - » ***Moving On Initiative: Second Annual Report:*** preliminary assessment of the early implementation of the Moving On Initiative
- **Rising Up Campaign**
 - » ***Evaluation of Rising Up: Early Program Successes and Challenges during the First Year of Implementation:*** early successes and challenges observed during the first year of implementation of Rising Up
 - » ***Evaluation of Rising Up: Participant Voices during the Second Year of Implementation:*** youth experiences using interviews with 10 young people in Rising Up's rapid re-housing (RRH) program
 - » ***Evaluation of Rising Up: Participant Experiences and Outcomes from a Cross-Sector, Citywide Campaign to Rapidly Re-House 400 Young People in San Francisco:*** experiences and outcomes of a sample group of young people served through Rising Up's RRH services
- ***Tipping Point Community's Community Advisory Board: Contributions to and Lessons Learned from the Chronic Homelessness Initiative:*** evaluation of the CHI CAB, including an exploration of its role, influence, and contributions
- ***Evaluation of the Homes for the Homeless Fund: Analysis of Development Costs and Timeline for Tahanan (833 Bryant Street), a Permanent Supportive Housing Development in San Francisco:*** summary report of the financing and development model used for Tahanan and results of an analysis comparing its timeline and cost data with those of other PSH developments
- ***Evaluation of Step Up to Freedom: A Chronic Homelessness Initiative Rapid Rehousing Pilot in San Francisco for Individuals with Incarceration and Homelessness Histories:*** successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the Step Up to Freedom pilot
- ***Tipping Point Community's Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool: Evaluation of the Scattered-Site Supportive Housing Pilot:*** details of the Flex Pool program model, participants' characteristics and their experiences in the program, and successes and challenges implementing the pilot
- ***Formative Evaluation of a Cash Transfer Pilot:*** findings from an evaluation of the cash transfer pilot were delivered directly to Tipping Point; because of the small size of the pilot and scope of the evaluation, Urban did not publish the report publicly

Over the course of the comprehensive CHI evaluation, Urban conducted interviews with 232 respondents between 2018 and 2023 (this total does not include the quarterly interviews described above). In partnership with Tipping Point staff, Urban identified respondents to be recruited for interviews. We worked to ensure a diverse mix of respondents to include those donating funds to CHI; those receiving funds, ensuring a mix of grantees implementing CHI strategies; and other external partners who worked on chronic homelessness issues in San Francisco but were not direct recipients of Tipping Point CHI resources. Within program evaluations, Urban conducted interviews with implementing staff as well as participants. Urban selected participants among those who consented to have their contact information shared with the research team for an interview. See appendix A for a full documentation of interview numbers by respondent type and the year in which the interviews were conducted. Urban compensated all program participants and CHI CAB members for their time participating in an interview for the evaluation.

Implementation of the Chronic Homelessness Initiative

As previously noted, by 2017, San Francisco had made significant investment in project-based PSH and observed decreases in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness between 2009 and 2015, though the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness rose from 2015 to 2017. San Francisco's response to chronic homelessness was dominated by project-based PSH with little investment in other strategies, such as scattered-site PSH or rapid re-housing. Additionally, the City had recently created HSH to consolidate the coordination and implementation of homelessness programs and was planning for the implementation of Coordinated Entry and the ONE System.

By 2022, the homelessness response in San Francisco looked radically different. The City had significantly expanded the number of tools it used to re-house people and keep them housed, including scattered-site PSH, rapid re-housing, and "problem-solving."¹⁰ As a result, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness being placed in housing increased each year from 2019 to 2022. Additionally, HSH capacity had grown significantly, and coordination with other agencies, including those working on behavioral health and the criminal legal system, increased. Coordinated Entry and the ONE System were fully implemented and being refined.

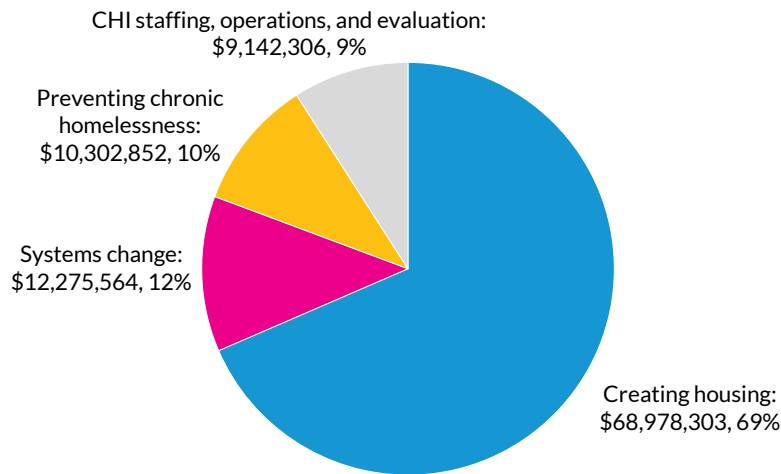
As part of CHI, Tipping Point implemented more than 30 distinct programs and activities. A primary goal of the evaluation was to document what strategies and activities CHI supported and how those strategies and activities were implemented. Many of these programs and activities contributed to the changes to the homelessness response noted above.

In this section, we provide information on Tipping Point investments through CHI, the timeline of investments and activities, and discussion of how those investments and activities contributed to the goal of placing people experiencing and at risk of chronic homelessness in housing.

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Investment Summary

Tipping Point successfully spent more than \$100 million dollars on CHI across 30 different programs and activities. The greatest share of investments (\$69 million; 69 percent) was targeted toward creating housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness (figure 4). Tipping Point invested \$12.3 million (12 percent) into projects that aimed to make lasting and systemic changes to chronic homelessness response and \$10.3 million (10 percent) into programming that focused on preventing chronic homelessness. About 9 percent of the \$100 million for CHI was spent on Tipping Point staffing and operations, including the evaluation. A full, detailed list of CHI-funded programs and activities can be found in appendix B, including funding amounts and brief program descriptions.

FIGURE 4
Chronic Homelessness Initiative Investments, by Spending Type



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Source: CHI finance reports as of June 2023, provided by Tipping Point Community.
Notes: Six programs (Housing Platform, Rising Up, SSI Pilot, Breaking Barriers, Shared Housing, and Miracle Messages) are categorized in two spending types; the investment amounts for these programs are split evenly between their corresponding spending types.

The largest investments under the first primary CHI strategy of creating more housing were Tahanan, Flex Pool, and Moving On (table 1). The single largest investment was Tahanan, accounting for

50 percent of all CHI funding, and was supported by a \$50 million donation from Charles and Helen Schwab. The second-largest investment was the Flex Pool at more than \$9 million (9 percent of all CHI funding). Other investments in creating more housing included the Rising Up Campaign, which was also considered an investment in preventing chronic homelessness, and the Housing Platform (also considered a systems-change investment), which was a capacity-building grant to Brilliant Corners intended to support the eventual development of the Flex Pool.

TABLE 1

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Top Investments, FY 2016–22

Investments totaling at least \$1.5 million

Program/project	Investment amount	Percentage of total spending	Spending type(s)
Homes for the Homeless Fund (Tahanan)	\$50,737,143	50%	Create housing
Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool	\$9,143,124	9%	Create housing
Moving On Initiative	\$3,675,000	4%	Create housing
Housing Platform	\$3,300,000	3%	Create housing; systems change
Rising Up Campaign	\$3,100,000	3%	Create housing; prevent chronic homelessness
Hummingbird Valencia Respite Center	\$3,025,725	3%	Prevent chronic homelessness
SSI Advocacy pilot	\$2,841,122	3%	Prevent chronic homelessness; systems change
All In campaign	\$2,198,730	2%	Systems change
Breaking Barriers	\$1,541,503	2%	Create housing; systems change
All Home	\$1,500,000	1%	Systems change

Source: CHI finance reports as of June 2023, provided by Tipping Point Community.

Notes: Tipping Point spent a total of \$100,699,025 on CHI during the evaluation period. Funding spent on CHI staffing and operations totaling \$8,256,056 are not shown in the table. SSI = Supplemental Security Income.

The Rising Up Campaign, in addition to contributing to the strategy to create more housing, was the largest investment made toward preventing chronic homelessness (\$3.1 million; 3 percent). Similar investments were also made in the Hummingbird Respite Center (\$3 million; 3 percent) and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Advocacy pilot (\$2.8 million; 3 percent). The SSI pilot was also considered part of CHI’s investments in systems change.

The largest investment in systems change, aside from the Housing Platform and SSI pilot, was the All In campaign at \$2.2 million (2 percent). The next-largest investments to create systems change were Breaking Barriers, a program to help nonprofit organizations quickly move people out of shelter-in-

place (SIP) hotels¹¹ and into permanent housing, and a contribution to All Home, a Bay Area group working to coordinate regional response to homelessness.

Milestones and Key Activities

Each year of CHI was marked by key milestones and activities associated with the described investments and development of new strategies. Below, we provide highlights from each year of CHI implementation. The purpose of this section is not to describe every program or activity associated with CHI but to identify milestones and activities of note. A full list of CHI-funded programs and activities can be found in appendix B, including funding amounts and brief program descriptions.

2017

May 8, 2017, marked the official launch of CHI, with Tipping Point announcing the goal to halve chronic homelessness in San Francisco by 2022.¹² As part of the announcement, Tipping Point indicated that \$60 million of the \$100 million total dedicated to CHI was already secured and that CHI would build on work already underway by a Tipping Point policy team. Formed in 2016, the policy team prioritized chronic homelessness and worked closely with HSH, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH), and the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA) on the development of key strategies. One example of such collaboration was Moving On, which Tipping Point and partners launched in December 2016 (box 2).

BOX 2

Moving On Initiative

San Francisco's Moving On Initiative (Moving On) launched in December 2016 as a collaboration between Brilliant Corners, the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, and the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA). Tipping Point's contribution to Moving On was providing funding to Brilliant Corners for housing placement and retention services. Tipping Point hoped this investment would support CHI's goal to create more housing by facilitating positive exits from permanent supportive housing (PSH) and making units available to people currently experiencing chronic homelessness.

Moving On offered long-term, stabilized tenants in project-based PSH in San Francisco the opportunity to move into independent housing through the use of a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV). In San Francisco, PSH units are often single-room occupancies with shared kitchens, bathrooms, and living spaces, and many PSH tenants preferred living situations that offer more independence, better amenities, or a more desirable neighborhood. With the support of the HCV, tenants who want to "move on" are able to, and their departure creates a vacancy in PSH for people still experiencing chronic homelessness.

The University of California San Francisco's Center for Vulnerable Populations evaluated Moving On as part of Urban's broader evaluation of CHI. The evaluation found the following:

- Moving On fulfilled a widespread desire among PSH tenants to move into independent housing while increasing the availability of PSH for people experiencing chronic homelessness.
- The program succeeded in identifying people who were ready to move out of PSH and into a more independent setting. However, the housing search process was stressful for most participants, particularly for those who entered in the early stages of the program.^a
- The keys to success for Moving On included having housing specialists who secured units for participants and housing coordinators who served as intermediaries between participants and property owners; choosing participants ready to handle the increased independence; communicating the limitations of Moving On; and creating trusting relationships between staff and participants.^b

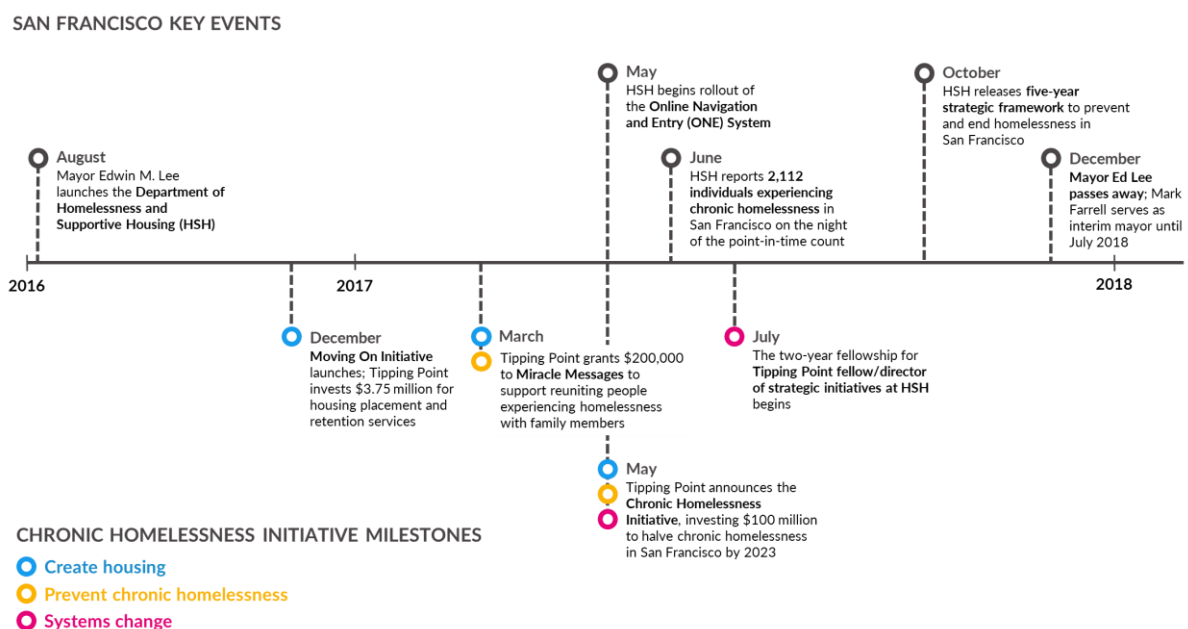
^a Anna Feiss, Josh Bamberger, and Josh Leopold, "[Moving On Brief: Findings from Participant Interviews](#)" (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2019).

^b Kenneth Perez, Pamela Olsen, Margot Kushel, and Josh Leopold, [Moving On Initiative: Second Annual Report](#) (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2019).

Immediately following the announcement of CHI, HSH released the results of the 2017 PIT count, reporting that there were 2,112 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness on any given night. In July 2017, Tipping Point made one of the first CHI investments aimed at increasing capacity of the

public sector by hiring the first of two Tipping Point fellows at HSH. In October 2017, HSH released a Strategic Framework for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in San Francisco that also had the goal of halving chronic homelessness in five years (HSH 2017). Mayor Lee welcomed Tipping Point as a partner, and interviews and Urban’s review of secondary materials and documents indicate that a number of strategies, including a funders collaborative, were under development in partnership with his administration before he unexpectedly passed away in December 2017.

FIGURE 5
Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Before CHI through Year 1, Ending December 2017



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Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

2018

In 2018, Tipping Point continued to make progress on key components of the strategy to create more housing. In January, Tipping Point and the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund announced the creation of the Homes for the Homeless Fund, which would ultimately serve as the development pipeline for the building that would become known as Tahanan (box 3). In October, implementers acquired the property where Tahanan would ultimately be sited.

BOX 3

Tahanan

As part of CHI's efforts to create more housing and optimize the process of doing so, Tipping Point partnered with the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund to create the Homes for the Homeless Fund (HHF). Tipping Point invested in HHF as part of CHI with the goal of piloting a new approach to developing permanent supportive housing (PSH) that would reduce the development time and cost per unit.

Tahanan (a Tagalog word meaning "home") was the largest single CHI investment and the first HHF investment. Tipping Point's goals for Tahanan were to use an innovative financing and development model to complete the project in less than three years and at a cost of less than \$400,000 per unit—substantially faster and less costly than other new-construction PSH developments in San Francisco. The model's success at reducing the time and cost of development could have important implications for the system of financing and developing PSH—and affordable housing more broadly—in San Francisco and potentially other parts of the region and state.

An evaluation by the California Housing Partnership and the Urban Institute found that when compared with similar developments, Tahanan's costs and timeline were substantially lower and shorter, respectively. Per unit costs for Tahanan were approximately \$377,000, which was \$265,000 or 41 percent less than the median per unit cost of \$642,000 for a comparison group consisting of 25 new-construction PSH developments in San Francisco. The evaluation also found that the timeline for Tahanan from the entitlement approval date to the placed-in-service date was 41 percent shorter than the typical timeline for comparison PSH developments.

Each component of Tahanan's unique finance and development model contributed to the following achievements:

- A commitment to the timeline and cost goals permeated the decisionmaking process at every phase of the project.
- Flexible up-front resources, streamlined entitlements, and local government commitments to long-term property lease payments enabled early decisionmaking and finalization of the project's efficient design.
- Modular, off-site construction contributed to reductions in the project's timeline.

Source: Dan Rinzler, Matt Alvarez-Nissen, Lindsay Rosenfeld, Anthony Carroll, Samantha Batko, and Pear Moraras, "[Evaluation of the Homes for the Homeless Fund: Analysis of Development Costs and Timeline for Tahanan \(833 Bryant Street\), a Permanent Supportive Housing Development in San Francisco](#)" (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2021).

By September, the Moving On Initiative had helped more than 150 people use vouchers to move from PSH into market-rate housing in the community, freeing up 150 units of existing PSH for people

experiencing chronic homelessness. But in November, the housing authority (SFHA) stopped issuing new vouchers for Moving On due to financial and management challenges at the agency.

The freedom to have a key to my own door from the street...it is independence. It is back to the life that I was used to before I became homeless.

—Moving On program participant

Tipping Point also launched its first prevention and systems change effort with the launch of the SSI pilot, in partnership with the San Francisco Human Services Agency, Positive Resource Center, and Bay Area Legal Aid, with the goal of connecting individuals with disabilities who were experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness with legal advocacy to help with the SSI benefit application and appeals process. The Rising Up Campaign, a rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention effort targeted to young people ages 18 to 24, was also announced in October, but Tipping Point's investment in the program was not finalized at this time.

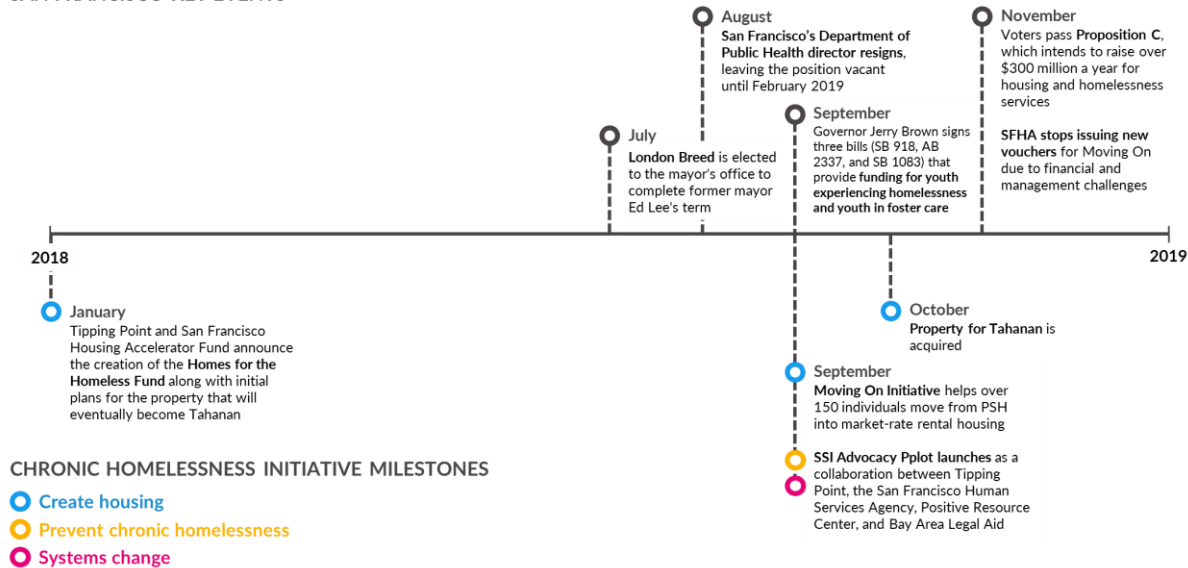
While Tipping Point and partners continued key elements of CHI, San Francisco experienced numerous political changes in the wake of Mayor Lee's unexpected passing. After the County Board of Supervisors President London Breed was named acting mayor following Mayor Lee's passing, the board replaced Breed with Mark Farrell, a fellow supervisor, in January 2018. Farrell would go on to serve as interim president until a special election was held in June.¹³ Breed won the special election to complete Mayor Lee's term and was officially sworn in on July 11. Additionally, an unexpected leadership departure at DPH in August left a gap in a key partnership role until it was filled in 2019.

Finally, in November, voters passed Proposition C (Prop C), a tax on gross profits for companies based in San Francisco grossing more than \$50 million in profits to fund housing and homelessness services. (The funds secured through the passing of this measure were ultimately held in escrow due to lawsuits and were not released until September 2020.) Tipping Point did not endorse or oppose Prop C at the time of the vote, and some interview respondents wondered if this would result in a loss of their standing as a partner. These fears did not materialize in future years of CHI, however.

FIGURE 6

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Year 2, January–December 2018

SAN FRANCISCO KEY EVENTS



URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

2019

The first half of 2019 was marked by continued progress on CHI strategies, particularly on efforts to create more housing. In January, Tipping Point announced another significant CHI investment: \$3 million in the Rising Up Campaign. This announcement was made in conjunction with other investments from public and private funders, including the City of San Francisco, Airbnb, and Twilio (see box 4 for additional information on Rising Up).

I can go home and feel safe.

—Rising Up program participant

Tipping Point also continued to make steady progress on the development of Tahanan, securing Episcopal Community Services as the eventual service provider for the future tenants of the building in May. In the same month, Tipping Point, in partnership with grantee Brilliant Corners, launched the Housing Platform, which would eventually serve as the foundation for the Flex Pool.¹⁴

BOX 4

Rising Up Campaign

In January 2019, the City of San Francisco and Tipping Point launched the Rising Up Campaign in support of the City’s goal to halve homelessness among young people ages 18 to 24 by 2023. Rising Up was a public-private, cross-sector collaboration with 14 partners across city agencies and nonprofit organizations. Tipping Point invested in Rising Up as part of CHI’s strategies to create housing and to prevent chronic homelessness. The program aimed to house 400 young people through rapid re-housing (RRH) services and to prevent homelessness through problem-solving strategies for an additional 450 by the end of June 2023. RRH participants were eligible for up to \$27,000 in rental assistance.

Between July 2019 and March 2023, 369 young people were rapidly re-housed through the program and 227 received a problem-solving resolution. While the program likely met its goal of re-housing 400 total young people by June 2023, its success in helping young people achieve housing stability is not definitive. Based on an evaluation sample of 187 participants, participants spent long periods of time between referral and housing; spent subsidy resources faster than expected, resulting in shorter durations of support than originally projected; and, among those who exited the program, about one-third moved out of their units at program exit. Additionally, participants’ experiences and outcomes varied depending on a number of factors, including a participant’s particular identity, background, or when they enrolled in the program.^a

When we spoke with young people housed through the Rising Up program, participants found safety and stability in their housing, saying that this was their primary goal for enrolling in the program. Young people also identified positive relationships with staff, opportunities for employment, and improvements in overall well-being as a result of participation in the program. Many young people were also concerned about the affordability of the units the program placed them in and whether they would be able to afford housing at the end of the program.^b

Despite this mixed picture of success for participants in the program, program data showed that Rising Up served young people who were experiencing chronic homelessness—approximately a third of the total served—in addition those who were potentially at risk of becoming chronically homeless. In this respect, Rising Up contributed to overall CHI efforts to re-house people experiencing or at risk of chronic homelessness. One Rising Up participant shared, “I think the biggest thing is that they offer a sense of security, which I don’t have in any other aspect of my life. Security with housing, which is a huge part of anyone’s life.”

^a Pear Moraras, Samantha Batko, and Brendan Chen, “[Evaluation of Rising Up: Participant Experiences and Outcomes from a Cross-Sector Citywide Campaign to Rapidly Re-house 400 Young People in San Francisco](#)” (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023).

^b Samantha Batko, Amanda Gold, and Abigail Williams, “[Evaluation of Rising Up: Participant Voices during the Second Year of Implementation](#)” (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2021).

Tipping Point also continued to move forward with prevention efforts. Tipping Point implemented a six-month jail transition pilot project from January to June 2019 in partnership with the sheriff's Discharge Planning Office. In April, Launchpads—a CHI program intended to be a web-based platform similar to Airbnb to help young people transitioning out of foster care connect with landlords and property managers—began to recruit potential hosts. In June, the SSI pilot programming, which had continued work in the prior year, served its 100th client. Finally, Tipping Point invested in the SPARK (Stable Pathways to Achievement, Resilience, and Knowledge) Initiative, a three-county partnership that began as a pilot program in October 2017, and offered peer-to-peer support to connect young people to housing and stabilization services (box 5).

BOX 5

SPARK Initiative

Stable Pathways to Achievement, Resilience, and Knowledge (SPARK) was a three-county initiative offering peer-to-peer support to engage young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and help connect them to housing and stabilizing services. Partnering with the organization On The Move, services were offered through collaborative services teams and included referrals to external services such as civil legal advocacy, education, and employment.

Beginning in October 2017, SPARK launched as a nine-month pilot project, during which the program recruited a cohort of seven peer advocates with lived experiences of homelessness and engaged more than 300 young people experiencing homelessness. Following the pilot phase, SPARK launched as a full three-year initiative in July 2018. Beginning in 2019, Tipping Point invested in the SPARK Initiative as part of CHI's goal to prevent chronic homelessness. Between 2020 and 2021, SPARK placed 18 young people from San Francisco in housing. The program ended in June 2021.

Source: Urban Institute review of secondary materials.

Another key CHI investment was also wrapping up: in June 2019, the private funding period for the Tipping Point fellow/director of strategic initiatives position within HSH ended. Beginning in July 2019, the City assumed funding for this position. Interview respondents felt that the continuation of the position and shift to government funding were signs of success for CHI.

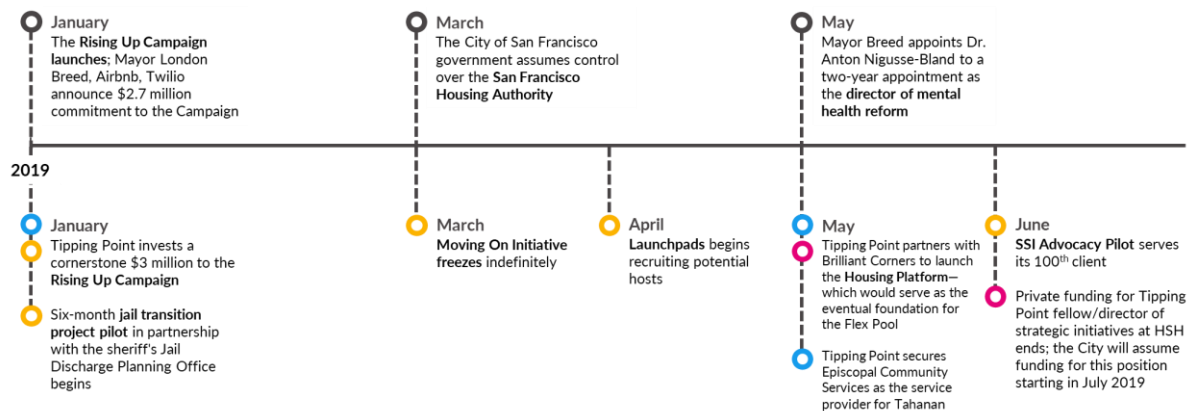
Meanwhile, changes at government partner agencies continued in the early half of 2019. In March, the City took control of SFHA as a result of financial mismanagement in the agency. This resulted in the indefinite freezing of the Moving On Initiative as well as other voucher types that people experiencing and at risk of homelessness need. In May, Mayor Breed appointed Dr. Anton Nigussie-Bland to a two-

year appointment as the director of mental health reform. Ultimately, he was the primary Tipping Point partner for numerous behavioral health–focused prevention and systems-change activities undertaken as part of CHI.

FIGURE 7

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Year 2, January–June 2019

SAN FRANCISCO KEY EVENTS



CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE MILESTONES

- Create housing
- Prevent chronic homelessness
- Systems change

URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

Prompted by the July release of the 2019 PIT report, which showed a significant increase in chronic homelessness, Tipping Point shifted into a period of updating plans and strategies to act with greater urgency in terms of its funding and programs. In September 2019, after a period of several leadership changes for CHI, Chris Block became its director. Block shifted CHI's focus to placement projections and modeling in an effort to meet the goal of halving chronic homelessness by the 2023 PIT count.

CHI activities already under development continued in the second half of 2019. In July 2019, Tipping Point held its first CHI CAB meeting. The CAB, a systems-change investment, comprised members with lived experiences of homelessness who were recruited to provide input on strategies undertaken as part of CHI.

They've [Tipping Point] taken the things I've said and incorporated it, as well as the other CAB members, into how important it is to get housing, why we need housing, and keep it at the forefront of the point of why they exist.

—CHI Community Advisory Board member

Another systems-change investment, the All In campaign, also officially launched in July (box 6). All In was designed as a public engagement campaign that sought to change the public narrative toward housing as the solution to long-term homelessness.

BOX 6

All In Campaign

In July 2019, Tipping Point launched the All In campaign with support from more than 90 organizations, including Airbnb, Google, and local sports teams such as the Giants and 49ers. All In was designed as a public engagement campaign that sought to change the public narrative toward housing as the solution to long-term homelessness. The campaign also included an initial objective to secure 1,100 permanent supportive housing units (PSH) throughout San Francisco within two years.

Through a combination of in-person convenings and digital media publications, All In was able to secure more than 9,000 pledges from individuals in support of the campaign's mission to increase access to stable homes and services for people experiencing homelessness across San Francisco. Beginning in May 2020, the campaign began to produce "monthly snapshots," which provided key data on the progress San Francisco was making toward CHI's overall goal of halving chronic homelessness.

The All In campaign also acted as an avenue to promote and champion other components of CHI. All In advocated heavily for the establishment of the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool, which has since become a key part of San Francisco's housing strategy and is currently aiming to house more than 1,400 people in rental units in San Francisco. The campaign also highlighted the work of CHI's Community Advisory Board through a series of blog posts focused on the lessons and challenges of people at the front lines of work in homelessness.

While All In officially ended along with the end of CHI in 2022, the campaign produced a final tool known as the "NeighborGood Guide." The guide highlights the lived experience of several people who have experienced homelessness as well as providing a toolkit on how to engage with people experiencing homelessness and connect them with the resources available throughout San Francisco.

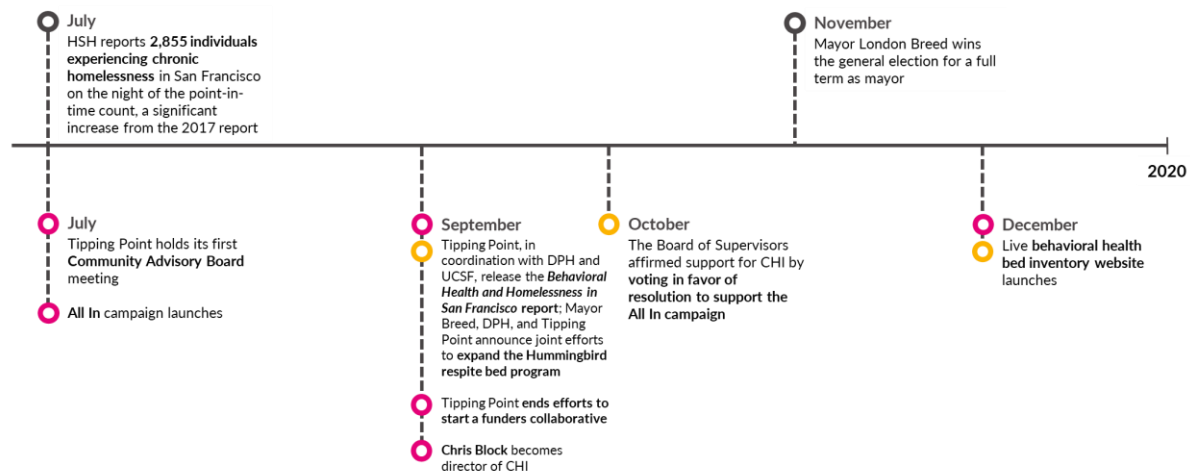
Source: Urban Institute review of secondary materials.

In September, Tipping Point, in coordination with DPH and the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), released the CHI-funded *Behavioral Health and Homelessness in San Francisco* report (Haller et al. 2019). In conjunction with the announcement of the report, Mayor Breed, DPH, and Tipping Point announced joint efforts to expand the Hummingbird respite bed program supported by CHI and public resources. As part of this effort, a live behavioral health bed inventory website launched in December. The development of the website was funded by CHI, with DPH taking over ongoing operating costs. Mayor Breed would eventually cite this website as a major contributor to increases in the use of substance use treatment beds. These activities were part of the CHI chronic homelessness prevention strategy.

While political support for the behavioral health programming funded by CHI was clear, other CHI programming faced mixed support from local elected officials. In September, Tipping Point ended efforts to start a funders collaborative, which had been a strategy under development with Mayor Lee. In October, the board of supervisors affirmed support for CHI by voting in favor of a resolution to support All In.

FIGURE 8
Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Year 2, July–December 2019

SAN FRANCISCO KEY EVENTS



CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE MILESTONES

- Create housing
- Prevent chronic homelessness
- Systems change

URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

2020

The largest event of note in 2020 was the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, which led to significant upheaval to the homelessness response system, CHI, and community partners for the remainder of the CHI timeline. The City quickly created the COVID command center, which pulled in HSH and other department staff to manage the crisis. In April, the City opened its first SIP hotel to provide noncongregate shelter options to vulnerable populations experiencing homelessness during the pandemic. Housing and service providers across the city were forced to make accommodations to keep people safe in project-based programming, transition services to remote delivery, and manage capacity challenges that arose as a result of pandemic effects on the workforce.

Despite the pandemic disruption, CHI efforts to create more housing continued. In March, construction began on Tahanan, and by November, installation of the housing modules was completed and work began on the interior. In June, the CHI-funded Flex Pool pilot launched with the goal of housing 250 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in scattered-site supportive housing, a new model for the City. Flex Pool service provider partners UCSF Citywide and the Felton Institute started taking referrals from HSH in November. With \$15 million in recycled funds¹⁵ from the development of Tahanan through the Homes for the Homeless Fund, CHI contributed to the acquisition of the Granada and Diva hotels in November and December, respectively, with plans to rehabilitate more than 300 units for permanent supportive housing.

CHI efforts to prevent chronic homelessness continued with new program launches. In May, the Step Up to Freedom program launched with plans to provide 40 people with incarceration history who were experiencing or at risk of homelessness with rapid re-housing assistance through Episcopal Community Services (box 7).

I've come across a lot of so-called housing programs that were a lot of lip service and filling out papers and this and that, but this program was different. It was hands on from the very start, pedal to the metal.

—Step Up to Freedom program participant

BOX 7

Step Up to Freedom

One of CHI's goals was to prevent people from experiencing chronic homelessness. To that end, Tipping Point, along with partners at Episcopal Community Services and the San Francisco Adult Probation Department, implemented the Step Up to Freedom (SUTF) pilot program. The SUTF pilot used a rapid re-housing (RRH) model to house 40 individuals with incarceration histories who were also experiencing housing instability or homelessness. The goal of the pilot was to serve as a proof of concept for intervening with RRH during reentry with people whose histories indicate that they might be at risk for long-term homelessness.

Overall, the SUTF program helped participants quickly move into housing and have “successful exits”—meaning they left the program either at the end of their subsidy or voluntarily and did not return to incarceration or homelessness. The average amount of time from enrollment to housing move-in date was 43 days, or about 1.5 months. Seventy percent of participants had successful exits, with only one participant exiting to reincarceration. Additionally, more than half of participants increased their incomes while in the program, with an average increase of 11 percent. Finally, participants felt the program helped them secure housing, pursue other goals, and reduce stress.

Despite the success of the pilot, it is unclear if the program is a “proof point” for the prevention of chronic homelessness. The primary reason for this uncertainty is that the eligibility criteria for the program—namely, the income criteria—likely screened out people with disabilities and other people facing more barriers to housing. As a result, it is possible that SUTF did not serve a population likely to experience chronic homelessness in the first place and therefore might not have contributed to CHI's goal of preventing chronic homelessness.

Regardless, SUTF did serve a population that has several risk factors for experiencing homelessness in general and some risk factors for chronic homelessness—specifically, a prior history of homelessness and incarceration. It also appeared successful in providing supports that show promise in helping people with incarceration and homelessness histories successfully lease up in the private market quickly and stabilize in housing without being rearrested and convicted. A Step Up to Freedom participant reflected, “The most important thing was giving me the security and reassurance, that feeling of support, that’s powerful for an individual, it raises someone’s self-esteem. That was very important for me, that we’re guaranteed that they’ll give us what they said. I don’t have to stress about the next rent.”

Source: Samantha Batko, Sophie McManus, Kaela Girod, Pear Moraras, Libby Doyle, and Mari McGilton, “[Evaluation of Step Up to Freedom: A Chronic Homelessness Initiative Rapid Rehousing Pilot in San Francisco for Individuals with Incarceration and Homelessness Histories](#)” (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023).

In September, the jail transition and housing project launched in partnership with the San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project. And in November, Tipping Point granted \$500,000 to the Transgender,

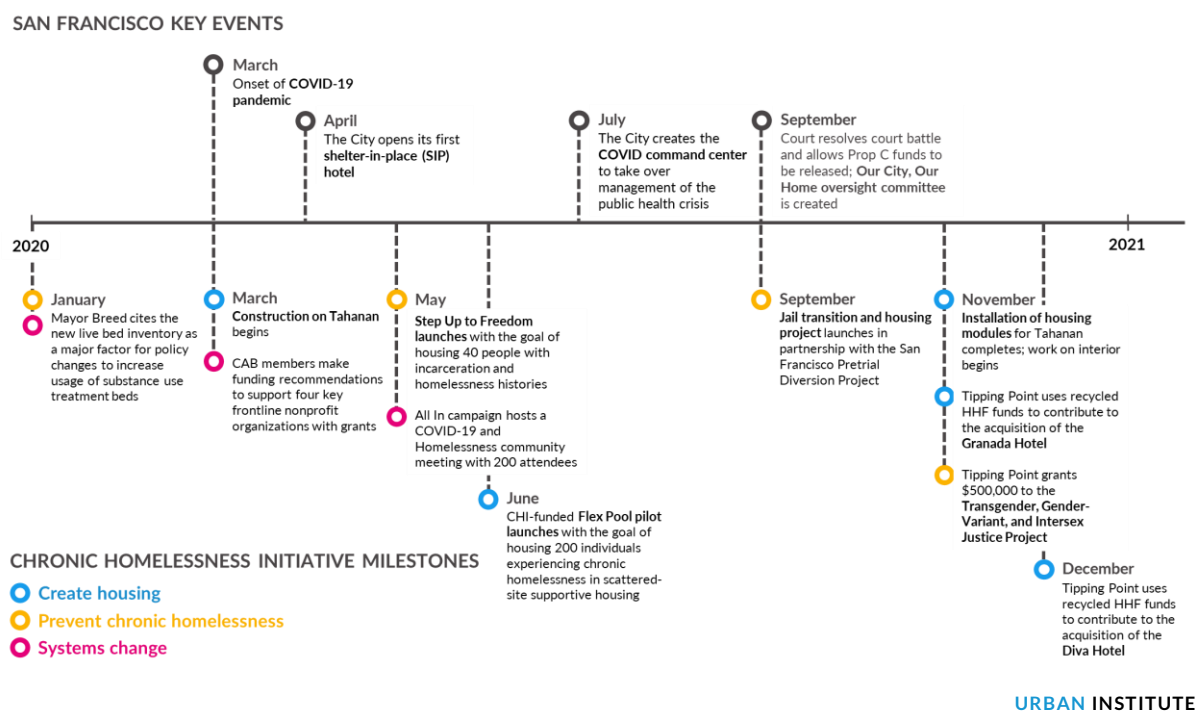
Gender-Variant, and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP) to support transgender people of color who are justice-involved and experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Throughout this year, work continued to scale behavioral health beds in partnership with DPH.

Efforts to address systems change shifted toward pandemic-related issues: the CAB provided recommendations to support key front-line nonprofits that resulted in small grants for four organizations, and Tipping Point supported efforts to staff nonprofit agencies that were struggling with capacity as a result of the pandemic.

One significant milestone for the sustainability of CHI efforts occurred in September 2020: an appellate court released Prop C funds, resolving the court battle. Subsequently, the Our City, Our Home oversight committee was created to make recommendations on the use of the new tax revenue. CHI staff and partners provided planning support and guidance to the committee. Prop C funds would eventually dramatically expand the size of the Flex Pool.

FIGURE 9

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Year 3, January–December 2020



Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

2021

2021 started with additional leadership changes at Tipping Point and government agencies, particularly HSH. In March 2021, Chris Block left his role as the director of CHI to start the Office of Housing Opportunities within the City's COVID command center. He was succeeded as CHI director by Andrea Evans, a CHI staff member who had been with Tipping Point since the start of the effort. In April, Mayor Breed appointed a new leadership team for HSH, comprising members who had experience running City agencies or homelessness expertise.

Every step of the way, Brilliant Corners was there if we needed any help. They offered me help the whole way, and they even gave me pots and pans and a comforter and pillows and a towel.

—Flex Pool program participant

Work on creating new housing continued, with full construction on Tahanan completed in November. Throughout 2021, the Flex Pool, Rising Up, Step Up to Freedom, and other housing programs intended to end and prevent chronic homelessness continued to receive referrals and house participants. Additionally, the CHI-funded respite center, Hummingbird Valencia, opened in May, and Tipping Point partnered with UpTogether to implement a six-month cash transfer pilot in December. The program intended to provide direct cash transfers to 30 participants who were completing a rapid re-housing subsidy and who were at high risk of chronic homelessness.

Also in 2021, the CAB and Tipping Point found different ways to support nonprofits during the pandemic. The CAB participated in grantmaking activities, co-creating grants with CHI to fund local organizations that they identified as filling key needs in the community. The CAB distributed more than \$200,000 through these efforts. Meanwhile, Tipping Point launched the Breaking Barriers program that would distribute more than \$1 million throughout 2021 and 2022 to area nonprofits, helping them to quickly move people out of SIP hotels and into permanent housing.

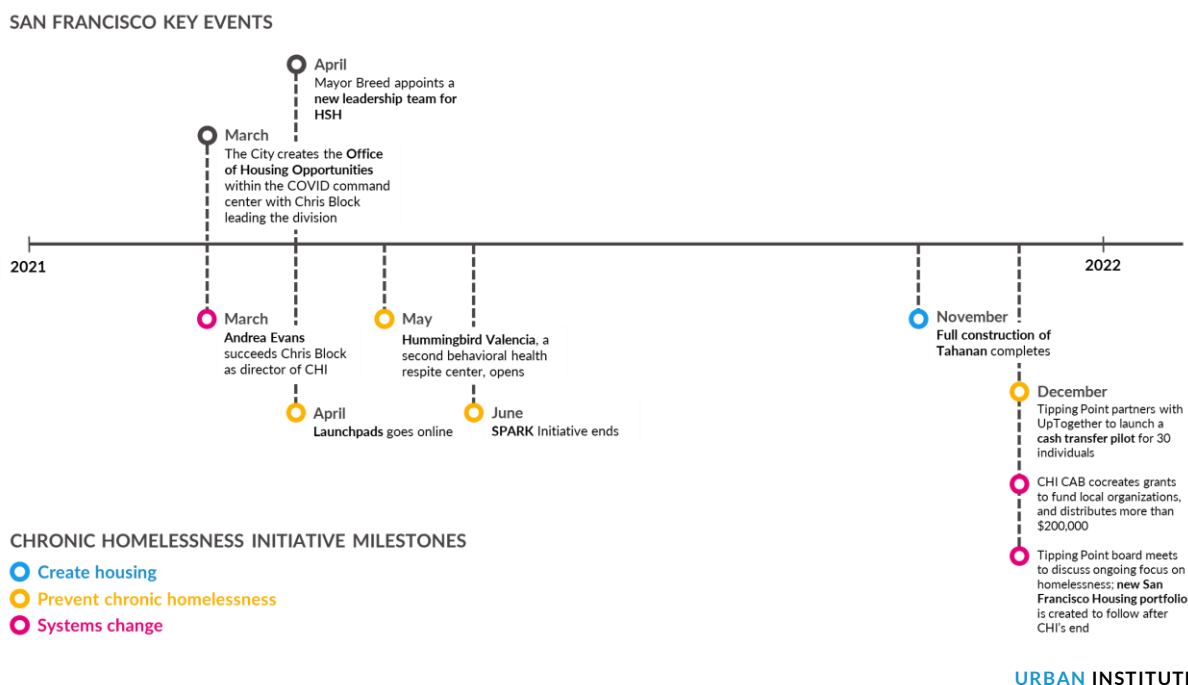
They [Tipping Point] might not have the lived experience, but they have our lived experience and they can see and do things differently than before...It gives them better knowledge of what's happening, and they can better make choices to help folks that need to get into permanent housing or help people with whatever they need in that realm. It gives them more choices and reminds them not to lose their heart.

—CHI Community Advisory Board member

In December 2021, the Tipping Point board met to discuss ongoing work on homelessness in San Francisco after CHI's end. A new San Francisco housing portfolio focused on prevention, key populations, and accountability was created at Tipping Point to follow CHI.

FIGURE 10

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Year 4, January–December 2021



Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

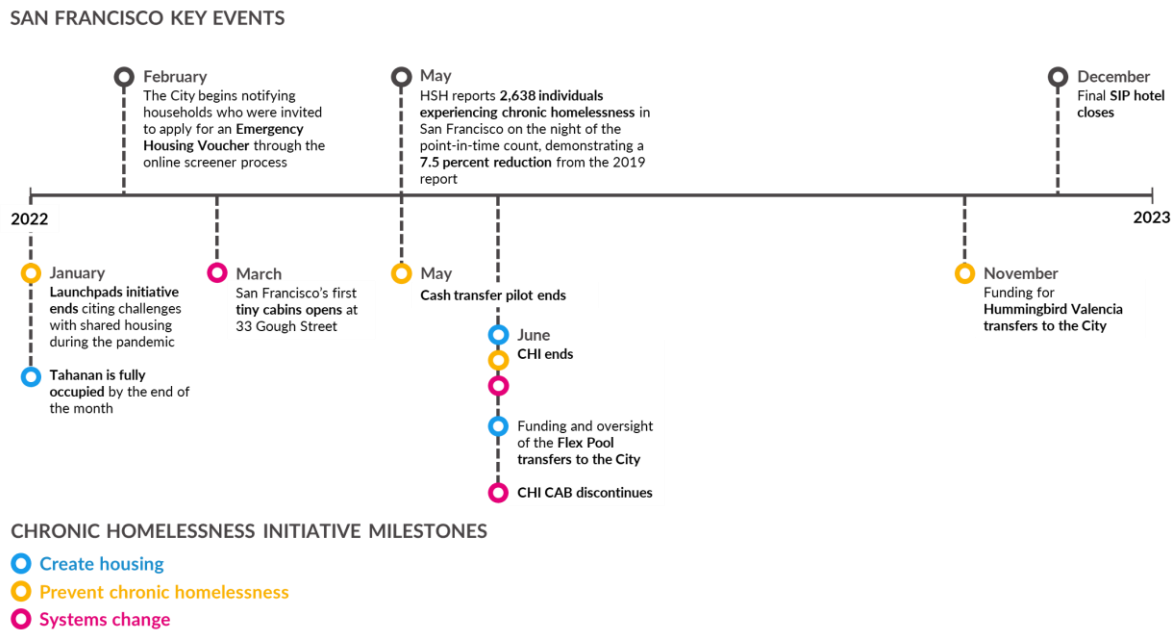
2022

By early 2022, 145 people had moved into Tahanan following the completion of construction in November 2021. CHI officially ended June 30, 2022, but placements in CHI programs continued

through the end of the year. With the end of CHI, the CAB was officially discontinued, and the Flex Pool fully transferred to City funding with the City fully supporting participants who enrolled in both the philanthropically funded Flex Pool and the expansion funded through Our City, Our Home (Prop C funds).

FIGURE 11

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Timeline of Key Events, Year 5, January–December 2022



URBAN INSTITUTE

Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

Meeting the CHI Goal: Housing Placements

Meeting the goal of halving chronic homelessness hinged in large part on successfully housing people experiencing chronic homelessness. The original theory of change projected the need to house at least 5,500 people. From 2017 to 2022, Tipping Point and San Francisco partners far exceeded this number by placing an estimated 7,767 people who were experiencing chronic homelessness into housing (table 2). Beginning in 2019, the number of placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness increased year over year, from 970 in 2019, to 1,001 in 2020, to 1,407 in 2021, and finally to 2,078 in 2022. Of note, increases in placements occurred across nearly every programming type.

The largest number of placements over the course of CHI was in existing PSH ($n = 5,759$, or 74 percent of all placements), as projected. Existing PSH units are those that turn over when a current

tenant exits a program. CHI programming directly contributed to placements in existing PSH through the Moving On Initiative. Between 2017 and 2022, 373 Moving On placements created vacancies in existing PSH units for people experiencing chronic homelessness. Placements in existing PSH were the lowest in 2019 and 2020, when the Moving On Initiative stalled due to challenges at SFHA and the City was struggling with more vacant PSH units than usual.

Placements in new PSH were the second-largest placement type between 2017 and 2022, with 566 total placements. These types of placements dramatically increased in 2021, driven in large part by acquisitions made as part of the Homekey program.¹⁶ This included the Granada and Diva hotels, which had a total of 118 placements in 2021 and 20 more in 2022. Additionally, after the completion of the construction of Tahanan in November 2021, 98 people moved in before the end of the year and another 47 were placed in early 2022.

The remaining placements were made in other CHI-supported programs, including the Flex Pool pilot and Rising Up, and other interventions such as voucher and subsidy programs and rapid re-housing for adults. The surges in placements in 2021 and 2022 were primarily driven by the expansion of the Flex Pool through Prop C funding and the use of Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) introduced during the pandemic. Tipping Point's investments contributed to 184 placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness in the Flex Pool and 203 placements using EHVs.

TABLE 2

Progress toward Housing Placement Targets in San Francisco, by Key Homelessness Programming Type

Number of housing placements among people experiencing chronic homelessness, 2017–2022

Program	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Total placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness	1,156	1,155	970	1,001	1,407	2,078	7,767
Existing permanent supportive housing	1,080	1,034	806	638	725	1,476	5,759
New permanent supportive housing	–	7	13	94	341	111	566
Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool pilot	–	–	–	52	76	6	134
Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool expansion	–	–	–	–	129	151	280
Voucher/subsidy	–	15	17	64	47	221	364
Problem-solving	72	92	77	29	33	18	321
Adult rapid re-housing	4	7	33	32	45	94	215
Rising Up	–	–	24	92	11	1	128
Moving On*	61	122	59	26	51	54	373

Sources: San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing and Tipping Point grantee monthly and quarterly reporting.

Notes: Existing and new permanent supportive housing (PSH) placements are calculated as all placements of adults and transition-age youth (18 to 24 years old) in permanent supportive housing programs as reported by the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH). PSH placements reported between 2017 through June 2018 could not be broken out in the table by existing or new programs due in part to the rollout of the ONE System in mid-2017 and its full implementation in 2018. Voucher/subsidy placements are placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness through the Mainstream Voucher and Emergency Housing Voucher programs. CHI supported 50 Mainstream Vouchers as part of the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (Flex Pool) pilot, and these are categorized as “voucher/subsidy” placements in the table. Program data also showed five Flex Pool pilot placements before the pilot began in 2020; we assume that these are related to the Mainstream Voucher placements designated for the pilot. Problem-solving placements are calculated as 15 percent of placements through the Homeward Bound relocation assistance program reported by HSH. Homeward Bound does not reflect broader problem-solving activities in the city, but this method of estimation is consistent with HSH estimates of the share of Homeward Bound placements that were for people experiencing chronic homelessness in previous years. As of June 1, 2022, the City sunset Homeward Bound as a standalone program and integrated it into its community-based Access Points. Adult rapid re-housing placements are placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness through rapid re-housing programs.

* Moving On placements are not included in the placement totals but are reflected in the table to show the turnover of PSH units within the system.

As previously discussed, in addition to investing in strategies and interventions to house people currently experiencing chronic homelessness, Tipping Point supported efforts to prevent people from becoming chronically homeless. Placements in CHI prevention programs started in 2020, and 288 people were placed into housing through these programs between 2020 and 2023 (table 3). It is important to note that even though the programs targeted people at risk of long-term homelessness—including currently homeless young people, young people who have been involved with the child welfare system, and people who are reentering the community from incarceration and have a history of homelessness—we cannot determine whether the placements prevented an episode of chronic homelessness.

TABLE 3

Placements in Tipping Point Funded Prevention of Chronic Homelessness Programs, 2017–2022

Program	2020	2021	2022	Total
Total prevention placements	116	89	83	288
Rising Up	71	52	74	197
Step Up to Freedom	29	10	–	39
SPARK	16	2	–	18
TGIJP	–	25	9	34

Sources: San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing and Tipping Point grantee monthly and quarterly reporting.

Notes: SPARK = Stable Pathways to Achievement, Resilience, and Knowledge Initiative; TGIJP = Transgender, Gender-Variant, and Intersex Justice Project. Placements were only included if they resulted in a housing placement. A person may have received services funded by Tipping Point from one of these programs without being included in these totals.

Tipping Point and partners intended the January 2023 PIT count to be the measure of whether CHI met the goal of halving chronic homelessness. Because of the pandemic, however, a full PIT count was not conducted in 2021; instead, HUD only required counting individuals who were staying in sheltered situations. A full count was held in 2022, and there was no unsheltered count conducted in 2023, meaning there is no official measure of whether CHI met the 2023 PIT count goal. However, as part of the CHI evaluation, Urban developed a modeling tool to help estimate Tipping Point and partners' progress during the five-year initiative. As previously described, it incorporates prior PIT data, projected placements, and assumptions about inflow with the goal of aligning partners around benchmarks for placements and creating a sense of urgency for placing people into housing. Over the course of the initiative, the tool was updated regularly and integrated actual PIT count data and data on placements from the ONE System. This modeling tool was not intended as a tool to determine whether or not CHI would meet its goals; however, it was used to help partners assess which areas would help move the needle to reach the overall goal of halving chronic homelessness by 2023.

Below, we present estimates derived from the modeling tool solely for informational purposes. We do not predict what the 2023 PIT count would have been, but we do project that Tipping Point and partners would not have met the goal of halving chronic homelessness based on the 2022 PIT count, placements in 2022, and assumed inflow. The modeling tool shows decreases in chronic homelessness between the 2019 and 2022 PIT counts as placements increased, as reflected in table 4. As placement numbers increased yet again in 2022, it could be supposed that a 2023 PIT count would have decreased further if inflow remained steady.

TABLE 4

Estimates of CHI Progress on Reducing Chronic Homelessness in San Francisco

Program	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Point-in-time count of people experiencing chronic homelessness	2,112		2,855			2,638
Estimated inflow/undercount	1,003	1,003	1,003	1,195	1,195	1,195
Existing permanent supportive housing	1,080	1,034	806	638	725	1,476
New permanent supportive housing	–	7	13	94	341	111
Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool	–	–	–	52	205	157
Voucher/subsidy	–	15	17	64	47	221
Problem-solving	72	92	77	29	33	18
Adult rapid re-housing	4	7	33	32	45	94
Rising Up	–	–	24	92	11	1
Prevention	–	–	–	116	89	83
Total placements	1,156	1,155	970	1,117	1,496	2,161
Remaining need (projected PIT count for next year)	1,959	1,580	2,886	2,964	2,663	Greater than 1,056

Sources: San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing and Tipping Point grantee monthly and quarterly reporting.

Notes: Over the course of the evaluation, Urban and Tipping Point used a model similar to this one to track and project progress toward the CHI goal of halving chronic homelessness. We developed an inflow/undercount estimate that was intended to account for the number of people who become chronically homeless during a year or who could have been missed during the previous year's point-in-time count. It was a constant based on placements and changes in point-in-time counts from 2009 to 2017. This constant was increased for 2020 to 2022 to account for potential increases in homelessness because of the pandemic. See notes from tables 3 and 4 for additional information on placement types.

Successes

CHI efforts over the course of five years contributed to several important successes and systems transformations in San Francisco. These ranged from the clear outcomes from specific investments to monetary and nonmonetary contributions to systems-level efforts.

Increased Housing Placements of People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

The number of housing placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness increased each year from 2019 to 2022, and interview respondents almost universally agreed that the greatest CHI successes were CHI investments focus on creating more PSH. CHI-funded programs—specifically the Flex Pool, Rising Up, and the Tahanan, Granada, and Diva—directly placed about 600 people experiencing chronic homelessness into housing. While there is no 2023 PIT count to show the final

change in prevalence, HSH reported that chronic homelessness among individuals decreased by 7.5 percent from 2019 to 2022, a rate higher than the overall decrease observed among all people experiencing homelessness during the same period (3.5 percent) (HSH 2022). Additionally, CHI support of the Moving On Initiative resulted in the turnover of 373 units of existing PSH, and the expansion of the Flex Pool resulted in 280 additional placements.

[Program staff] gave us housing updates all the time and options for areas and what places looked like. And they were there to help us out with everything. And we found a home we really wanted.

—Rising Up program participant

Interview respondents agreed that a major CHI success was increasing placements into housing. In the first two years of CHI implementation, when asked to describe key successes or milestones for CHI, respondents consistently pointed to the Moving On Initiative first, saying that it had freed up nearly 200 units of PSH to be filled by individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. In the later years of implementation, respondents pointed to the largest investments CHI made in housing programs as its greatest successes, namely the Flex Pool, Tahanan, and Rising Up.

I do think we made a lot of progress towards the goal. What we know from last year is that the biggest decrease in homelessness the city saw was around our target population of chronic homelessness. I would put that down as a step in the right direction.

—Community stakeholder

From the earliest interviews conducted with community stakeholders to the final ones conducted after CHI ended, interview respondents almost universally reported a sense that CHI was not on track to meet the goal of halving chronic homelessness. However, interview respondents credited CHI's work and housing placements, along with the contributions of City and nonprofit partners, with preventing overall increases in chronic homelessness as a result of the pandemic.

Proof Points for Innovative Approaches

In addition to directly increasing placements through programs, a second success identified by interview respondents was that specific CHI investments served as “proof points,” making the case for continued investment or replication of programs to increase placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness in the future. The most commonly identified CHI investments in this category were the Flex Pool and Tahanan.

FLEX POOL

While the Flex Pool pilot was only a small portion of the resources spent during CHI (9 percent), it had outsize results. Across all interviews, most respondents identified the scattered-site supportive housing piloted by the Flex Pool as the most significant “proof point” from CHI (see box 8 for more information on the design, implementation, and outcomes from the Flex Pool). Respondents felt the Flex Pool addressed an urgent need in the community to increase PSH capacity, showed success, and was realized as a platform for expansion during CHI implementation.

BOX 8

Flexible Subsidy Housing Pool

San Francisco's Flexible Housing Subsidy program was launched as a pilot in July 2020 as the City's first large-scale, scattered-site supportive housing program. The Flex Pool was a key CHI investment intended to pilot a new approach to more quickly increase the permanent housing stock and reduce chronic homelessness in San Francisco, presenting a shift from the City's past reliance on site-based permanent supportive housing. While the Flex Pool originally aimed to house 200 participants by the end of CHI (June 2022), the program did not meet its goal but did successfully house 187 people formerly experiencing chronic homelessness. The Flex Pool pilot showed the feasibility of bringing on more supportive housing units through the private rental market, rather than through congregate or newly constructed units, and opened up a new way to address chronic homelessness in San Francisco.

- Ninety-five percent ($n = 74$) of participants in a study sample of 78 pilot participants were permanently housed through the Flex Pool program by August 2023. Of the remaining four participants, three were never housed and one person exited to permanent housing on their own.
- Participants reported having reduced stress and anxiety and an ability to focus on caring for their physical health. In interviews, participants felt that their overall physical and mental health either stayed the same or improved after gaining permanent housing through the program.
- On average, the time between completing a housing application and moving into housing was 83 days (2.7 months).
- The program used a variety of strategies to successfully house participants, including providing incentives to secure and retain landlords and relaxing requirements for original forms of identification to access services in the homeless response system.

One Flex Pool participant reflected, "It's been 10 years since I've lived in my own home, so everything about me has changed since I'm in a safe space. My mental health is amazing, I'm working on my relationship with my kids. My physical health is changing, I try to walk every morning, I'm doing more exercises. It feels good to be in a home, it's been a long 10 years. I'm so happy, just being in a safe space of my own changes everything about my life and myself."

Source: Samantha Batko, Pear Moraras, Lynden Bond, Kaela Girod, and Brendan Chen, "[Tipping Point Community's Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool: Evaluation of the Scattered-Site Supportive Housing Pilot](#)" (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2023).

Before CHI and the funded Flex Pool pilot, San Francisco relied heavily on project-based PSH. The Flex Pool pilot provided evidence that a scattered-site model could succeed in San Francisco and provided the platform from which the Flex Pool could be expanded through the Our City, Our Home Prop C resources. The Flex Pool expansion resulted in 280 additional placements of people

experiencing chronic homelessness before the end of 2022—approximately double the number of people housed by the pilot (Batko et al. 2023b).

Tipping Point initiated our ability to even launch a flexible housing subsidy pool with scattered-site permanent supportive housing. We have now grown that to be a few thousand subsidies.

—Community stakeholder

TAHANAN

The second most frequently named example of a CHI “proof point” was Tahanan. Tahanan created 145 new PSH units and placements, but the main value respondents saw was in the success of its novel financing and development approach, including the use of up-front private investments and off-site modular construction to decrease time and costs (Rinzler et al. 2022). From early in CHI implementation, even before any real success could be observed, one respondent described the project as “brilliant.” Throughout the years of implementation, interview respondents marked key milestones in implementation of the strategy; interview respondents who were most familiar with the project noted that it was already bringing benefits to similar projects through shared learnings.

Respondents credited Tahanan’s success to Tipping Point’s attention and focus on sticking to the timeline and budget at the outset of the project. Although the modular construction and financing approaches of Tahanan have not yet been replicated, interview respondents expressed that there was local interest and momentum to pursue this approach in the future. Additionally, a couple of respondents noted that conversations were occurring at multiple levels on how similar projects can be developed.

If [Tahanan] does ultimately spawn more replication, that is a success. Building more permanent supportive housing cheaper is a huge success for the system.

—Community stakeholder

MOVING ON

Despite challenges at SFHA that limited the potential for Moving On, respondents, particularly early in CHI implementation, noted that this program was considered an early success and proof point. In 2019, respondents consistently pointed to Moving On as a key success and milestone of the first two years of CHI. They cited several reasons for these viewpoints, including that the program had resulted in nearly 200 units of permanent supportive housing becoming available for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and that respondents saw it as a key proof point that the City could increase turnover and harness more placements out of existing PSH stock. Additionally, respondents perceived the program as an example of how CHI could leverage resources through collaboration among key partners. Interview respondents—even in later years of CHI implementation—described Moving On as a highly regarded program and a necessary intervention to create more flow in and out of PSH systems.

[Moving On was] a tremendous success story and hopefully something resurrected as a permanent strategy because every one of those units became available for someone experiencing homelessness. It's a big success.

—Community stakeholder

Building Capacity in Government and Nonprofit Agencies

Consistent with the objectives laid out in the CHI theory of change, interview respondents throughout implementation indicated that Tipping Point helped build the capacity of both government and community partners.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

In each year of CHI, respondents identified specific activities Tipping Point undertook that helped build capacity in government. In the early years, respondents described several activities but most commonly noted Tipping Point increasing capacity in HSH through the funding of two fellow positions (box 9). Respondents also cited the examples of Tipping Point funding a part-time staff member to help clean and analyze criminal justice data in the sheriff's office; hiring consultants to draft the San Francisco proposal for Whole Person Care Medicaid 1115(a) waiver¹⁷; and funding and publishing the report on homelessness and behavioral health needs.¹⁸ In the later years of CHI implementation, Tipping Point served in an advisory role to the Prop C oversight committee; signed a memorandum of understanding

with the San Francisco Controller's Office and developed an analysis of the potential systems-level effects of Prop C funding on the City's homelessness response; continued support of HSH by funding a consultant to support work on diversity, equity, and inclusion; and supported the implementation of the EHV program.

BOX 9

Tipping Point Fellows

As part of CHI's goal to create systems change and optimize the public sector, Tipping Point provided funding to support two Tipping Point fellow positions over two years within the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH). The ultimate goal was for HSH to assume the support for their salaries after the two-year fellowship period. The two fellowship positions were a director of strategic initiatives, intended to work on partnership development and serve as a liaison to Tipping Point, and a data and privacy fellow, intended to build capacity in data and accountability.

In 2019, HSH made the decision to retain the director of strategic initiatives position and hire the person in the role at the time, which meant that the salary was paid for by HSH rather than Tipping Point. This was seen as one successful example of using philanthropic dollars as "risk capital" to test new ideas that could then potentially be adopted by the public sector for long-term sustainability.

The data and privacy fellow position saw fairly high rates of turnover, with several individuals filling the position at various times. Over the course of CHI, this position was changed to focus more specifically on the implementation of and assistance with the Coordinated Entry process.

Source: Interviews and review of secondary materials.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN COMMUNITY PARTNERS

In addition to capacity building for government partners, many respondents described how Tipping Point supported essential capacity building among community partners. The most notable example is Tipping Point's support of Brilliant Corners for the development of the Housing Platform. Beginning in 2019 and continuing through the end of CHI, respondents noted that this support was the foundation for the Flex Pool pilot and its eventual expansion.

Another example cited by interview respondents was the support CHI provided to nonprofit service providers early in the pandemic, when there were expansions of noncongregate shelter programs and disruptions in staff capacity. Tipping Point funded a staffing agency to screen résumés and expedite hiring, which resulted in 500 prescreened applicants being forwarded to front-line service agencies.

Tipping Point specifically has shown itself to be good at helping agencies and helping departments to build capacity.

—Community stakeholder

Leveraging Resources

A central component of the CHI theory of change was to invest in projects that would intentionally leverage state and federal resources and be sustained by public resources. Throughout Urban's evaluation, interview respondents shared several examples where CHI investments were leveraged into sustainable public funding.

One key example of leveraging investments was Tipping Point's support of San Francisco's application for a Whole Person Care Medicaid 1115(a) waiver, which allows states to pilot and evaluate innovative approaches to serving enrolled participants. Tipping Point hired a consultant to write San Francisco's proposal for the program. The proposal was authorized and funded through California's Medicaid waiver, and Tipping Point staff who worked on the project estimated that this investment in the proposal leveraged \$22.7 million.

Other examples included:

- **Flex Pool and the Housing Platform**, which resulted in the San Francisco government assuming fiscal responsibility for people housed through the philanthropically funded pilot and significant investment in scattered-site housing through the Housing Platform by the Our City, Our Home Commission (Prop C resources).
- **Moving On**, which resulted in the vacating of hundreds of PSH units that were then refilled by people experiencing chronic homelessness.
- **Rising Up**, which stakeholders named as another example of philanthropic funding that had been leveraged into sustained public funding.
- **HSH fellows**, which stakeholders praised as a philanthropic investment that was successful and resulted in public funding assuming responsibility for those positions and adding capacity to the government.

- **Mainstream Vouchers and EHV**s, which stakeholders highlighted as examples of how flexible philanthropic funding can enhance and optimize a government program and allow it to work more effectively and efficiently.

The public-private partnerships are a great way to leverage resources and set a time-limited initiative that drives towards a goal, and it gives us a platform for communications and speaking about it that is interesting and different from your regular city program. It brings a level of interest from other donors and other parts of the community.

—Community stakeholder

When describing Tipping Point’s effectiveness in leveraging resources, respondents credited this in large part to the flexible nature of Tipping Point’s resources for CHI. Tipping Point was described as “nimble” than the San Francisco government. This meant that CHI resources could be used to make time-sensitive investments, “unstick” stalls in momentum or movement in a program, and pivot resources to right the course of a program or strategy, fill gaps, and meet immediate needs. Respondents felt that this flexibility helped maximize the effectiveness of government efforts, using the Mainstream Voucher and EHV support provided by CHI as an example.

Foundational Reports

Tipping Point funded numerous reports over the course of CHI, some of which helped leverage resources and identify opportunities for action. The most common example of this, which many stakeholders cited as a key success that resulted in lasting investment in the city, was a report on the behavioral health system. In September 2019, Tipping Point, in partnership with John Snow Inc. and the University of California San Francisco’s Department of Psychiatry, released a report detailing gaps related to homelessness across the behavioral health system, as well as recommendations for how to address these gaps. The findings and recommendations stemming from this report led to two efforts in partnership with DPH: (1) the expansion of the Hummingbird respite bed program and (2) the development of an online dashboard on use and availability of treatment beds across providers in the city (box 10). Additionally, the findings in this report contributed to San Francisco’s Behavioral Health

Bed Optimization Project recommendations, a project that focused on identifying bed capacity adjustments that improve patient flow and decrease patient wait times.¹⁹

BOX 10

Foundational Report: Behavioral Health Needs Assessment and Hummingbird Respite Center

Throughout the duration of CHI, Tipping Point made several investments targeted toward the intersection of San Francisco's behavioral health and homelessness systems. The first of these investments was a partnership with the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), in which Tipping Point and UCSF commissioned John Snow, Inc. (JSI), a health care consultancy, to conduct an assessment of San Francisco's behavioral health services and systems for people experiencing homelessness. Key areas of need identified by the report were as follows:

- Enhancements to data tracking, data sharing, and development of shared outcome goals could promote increased coordination and accountability.
- Although there are many resources available, there are gaps in treatment and bed shortages in some levels of care.
- Outreach, engagement, and effective care transitions are critical to stabilization.

The JSI report and its findings were officially announced and endorsed by San Francisco Mayor London Breed at a press conference in September 2019. Based on the findings in the JSI report, and concurrent with its release, Tipping Point also announced that it would donate \$3 million to open a new psychiatric respite center with 30 overnight beds and capacity to host an additional 20 daytime guests, as well as provide operating funds for the first 18 months. Modeled off Hummingbird Potrero, the respite center located at San Francisco General Hospital, the new center, known as Hummingbird Valencia, opened in May 2021. Hummingbird Valencia provides connections to a wide range of services, including detox and residential programs, transportation to medical services, self care and job training opportunities, assistance with obtaining an ID, or help reconnecting individuals with their families.

In its first 18 months of operation, Hummingbird Valencia had 342 admissions to its overnight program. Since November 2022, the City and County of San Francisco have taken over full funding of Hummingbird Valencia, and the site continues to serve clients with the ultimate goal of connecting people experiencing homelessness and mental illnesses with appropriate treatment and housing.

Source: Robin Haller, Rachel Metz, Mia Bladin, and Manu Singh-Looney, *Behavioral Health and Homelessness in San Francisco: Needs and Opportunities* (Boston, MA: John Snow Inc., 2019).

Respondents also identified *The View from the Outside*, a report on a survey of San Francisco voters commissioned by Tipping Point (box 11), and two reports funded by Tipping Point for HSH on equity and inclusion within the agency as foundational. The public opinion report on a survey of San

Franciscans was a report on understanding public awareness of solutions to homelessness. The survey found that respondents supported housing as a solution to homelessness and that homelessness was the top concern, with 90 percent reporting that they were “very concerned” (EMC Research and Tipping Point Community 2019). The equity reports for HSH were foundational to the agency’s continued work on diversity, equity, and inclusion.²⁰

BOX 11

Foundational Report: *The View from Outside*

In summer 2018, Tipping Point funded and published *The View from the Outside* report, which presented findings from a 27-question survey conducted by a team of peer field researchers. Using qualitative and quantitative data, the report illuminated challenges and opportunities to address homelessness in San Francisco and centered the experiences of directly affected people. Findings highlighted that most people experiencing homelessness in San Francisco had been in the city for quite some time (half of survey respondents had lived in San Francisco for more than 10 years), had experienced homelessness for longer than a year, and that homelessness disproportionately affected Black San Francisco residents.

The report not only centered people with lived experiences of homelessness but also integrated them into the data collection and development process of the report. In addition, the report repeatedly highlighted another key point: directly impacted people are best suited to address and solve homelessness.

We know that when it comes to understanding and solving the problem of homelessness, the most trusted voices are those of the people who have experienced it themselves.

—The View from the Outside report, 2

Source: Tipping Point Community, *The View from the Outside* (San Francisco, CA: Tipping Point Community, 2019).

Elevating the Voices of People with Lived Experience of Homelessness

Respondents described CHI’s implementation of the CAB as an important aspect of ensuring that the voices and experiences of people with lived experiences of homelessness were centered across CHI and the City more broadly.

These perspectives were echoed by CAB members themselves, who felt that their input and involvement were an integral part of the initiative. CAB members felt that they reminded staff of the human impact of these programs and the reality that people continue to face homelessness. One CAB member said, “The benefit of having this community advisory board is that we kind of touch upon some

of the other intersectional issues that coexist with homelessness, like how race or sexuality or gender identity or other identity issues come in to play, how homelessness impacts members of those communities and puts things into that perspective—I guess that’s what does make this a community advisory board.”

Tipping Point staff, grantees, and government and community partners also described how the CAB ensured that directly affected people had a say in the design of programs. For example, the CAB brought perspectives highlighting the potential impacts of programs on communities and individuals rather than just considering their costs. Tipping Point staff also highlighted that the CAB built on work completed earlier in CHI to document and uplift people’s lived experiences (box 12). Tipping Point staff and board members shared that having the CAB present and joining decisionmaking tables “changed the tenor” of conversations. In addition, CAB members elevated the conversation by raising concerns and challenges unique to their perspectives that had not previously been considered. Staff and committee members described making small and large changes based on CAB members’ input, ranging from adjusting language and terms to making bigger changes to program designs.

BOX 12

CHI Community Advisory Board

One of CHI's goals was to incorporate the voices of people with lived experiences of homelessness and give them an opportunity to directly shape the initiative's work. In 2019, Tipping Point created a Community Advisory Board (CAB) comprising members with lived experiences of homelessness to provide input on strategies undertaken as part of CHI. Incorporating community member input and feedback is an important mechanism for developing relevant programs and policies that meet the needs and preferences of affected communities. CABs offer one way to increase community engagement in research, policy, and practice.

To understand the role the CAB played in CHI, Urban spoke with CAB members, Tipping Point staff, CHI leadership, and board members. Interviews focused on the CAB's activities, their influence across CHI programs and the overall initiative, and peoples' experiences of serving on or working with the CAB. Urban's evaluation found the following:

- The CHI CAB provided valuable feedback and insights across strategies. CAB members and Tipping Point staff shared that the CAB played an important role in CHI's overall work to reduce homelessness.
- CHI CAB members benefited personally and professionally from their involvement with the initiative.
- CHI CAB members brought their personal experiences and insights to CHI and changed the tone and tenor of the conversation.
- Compared with other CABs across the country, the CHI CAB had similar goals and structures; the primary differences related to CAB size and level of influence.

Tipping Point's implementation of a community advisory board as part of CHI centered the expertise of people with lived experiences of homelessness. CAB members were able to provide CHI staff with valuable insights into the community's needs and preferences by sharing their experiences, knowledge, and input, which in turn shaped the initiative's programs and policies to halve chronic homelessness in San Francisco.

I think the CAB's role is to bring a ground truth to the needs of unhoused and low-income people [and] just like...inform the organization that this is what our experience of being unhoused is like, and these are the ways in which we'd like to become housed again.

—CHI Community Advisory Board member

Source: Lynden Bond, Samantha Batko, Mikaela Tajo, Abigail Williams, TJ Johnston, Travis Chapman, and Couper Orona, "Tipping Point Community's Community Advisory Board: Contributions to and Lessons Learned from the Chronic Homelessness Initiative" (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2022).

Along with the end of CHI, the CHI CAB discontinued in summer 2022. However, the commitment of centering lived expertise is now integrated more thoroughly across City initiatives and programs. For example, HSH now has a community liaison group, which acts as an ad hoc committee comprised of people with lived experiences of homelessness. In addition, HSH partnered with a team of people with lived experiences of homelessness, called community liaisons, to conduct community engagement activities to inform its strategic planning process; this work resulted in the *Community Voice Matters* report which accompanied HSH's 2023–2028 strategic plan (Talent Poole Consulting 2023).

I do see now, systemwide, a different level of commitment around centering youth voice, lived experience voice. That is now the norm and expectation.

—Community stakeholder

Advancing Equity

In addition to CHI investment in the CAB and elevating the voices of people with lived experiences of homelessness, Tipping Point set explicit goals around reducing disparities in overrepresentation and designed programs to explicitly target people experiencing homelessness who were also part of historically marginalized groups (see box 13 for more information on overrepresentation of specific races or ethnicities among people experiencing chronic homelessness and how this changed over the course of CHI).

Respondents felt that Tipping Point's investments in and work with organizations led by or primarily serving historically marginalized and underserved target populations, such as BIPOC and LGBTQ+ people, increased capacity in the system for equitable and community-driven work. Respondents praised Tipping Point for convening conversations on cultural competency for the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ community between government and grassroots organizations. Respondents believed these conversations ensured that members of these communities would have a voice in shaping city policies and allow these organizations to be trusted partners. Respondents did not believe these opportunities would have been available without Tipping Point's support. As one respondent summarized, "[Tipping Point] comes to grassroots organizations targeting populations that have been left out."

BOX 13

Race and Ethnicity and Chronic Homelessness in San Francisco

While the largest share of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness at the time of the 2017 point-in-time count was white (40 percent), more than a third (34 percent) were Black or African American, 21 percent were Hispanic or Latino, and almost a fifth (19 percent) were multiracial. The remainder were Native American or Alaskan Native (4 percent), Asian (3 percent), or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (1 percent). In comparison to the racial composition of San Francisco, Black or African American individuals were the most significantly overrepresented racial group among those experiencing chronic homelessness, while white and Asian individuals were significantly underrepresented. This overrepresentation is consistent with overrepresentation trends nationally and for homelessness overall.

While we are unable to draw any causal relationships between CHI and the 2022 point-in-time count, based on the results at that time, the proportion of Black or African American individuals experiencing chronic homelessness had decreased to 25 percent—still a significant overrepresentation but lower than at the start of CHI in 2017.

Sources: Applied Survey Research 2017; “Quick Facts: San Francisco County, California,” US Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanfranciscocountycalifornia/PST045222>; Applied Survey Research 2022.

Respondents also praised CHI investment in programs led by and serving these groups as well as people reentering from the criminal legal system (see box 14 for more information about the Transgender, Gender-Variant, Intersex Justice Project, an example of one such investment). Stakeholders stressed that these organizations may not receive city or state funding, as they were smaller than the organizations that do typically receive those types of resources.

We don't take that traditional route; we look at what's safe for our people individually... a lot of times my community don't want to go to these specific places because of the hostility and the blatant transphobia and homophobia that's underlying in the staff that are present. We've removed that, and we've created a place where we can sit down and talk to people and they see people similar to them.

—Community stakeholder

BOX 14

Transgender, Gender-Variant, Intersex Justice Project

The Transgender, Gender-Variant, Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP) is a San Francisco-based nonprofit that has historically advocated for and offered services to trans people of color who are exiting the criminal legal system and need employment. In late 2020, as part of CHI, Tipping Point made a \$500,000 grant to expand TGIJP's staff and provide financial assistance for participant housing and/or income in their reentry program and housing program for trans and gender-nonconforming San Franciscans at risk of or experiencing chronic homelessness. Tipping Point partnered with TGIJP to increase access for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals to enter housing and feel safe receiving services. With CHI funding, TGIJP reported successfully housing more than 80 clients over the last two years.

Source: Urban Institute evaluation interviews and review of secondary materials.

Convening Partners

While not an explicit goal of CHI, stakeholders almost universally commented on Tipping Point's unique position and capacity as a convener. Respondents often credited this to Tipping Point staff having the bandwidth for collaboration and convening activities, while implementation partners are often fully immersed in daily operational activities. Some respondents also credited Tipping Point's convening power to perceived neutrality among partners and effective communication strategies with diverse partner types. When discussing how Tipping Point used this convening power, respondents described the following:

- **Creating and funding programs.** The most commonly cited example of this was the Flex Pool. Respondents credited the jumpstarting of Flex Pool implementation to Tipping Point's success in bringing together funding and implementation partners to create a cohesive funding strategy and begin the pilot.
- **Building system collaboration.** Respondents from government agencies that have missions broader than ending homelessness felt that Tipping Point's role as a convener kept those leaders in conversations with the right people at other agencies to create more collaboration and communication between systems.
- **Maintaining quality services.** After launching the Flex Pool, Tipping Point continued to convene implementation partners on a regular basis to provide thought leadership, maintain the quality of services provided to participants, and navigate partner relationships during

design and expansion conversations. Additionally, Tipping Point chaired the Rising Up Steering Committee, which was the governing body for the program.

- **Sharing lessons learned.** Interview respondents familiar with the development of Tahanan shared that Tipping Point's engagement efforts on rezoning and entitlement approvals were shared with other projects. Additionally, Tipping Point's convening efforts early in the acquisition, zoning, and financing stages of the project allowed them to share lessons in real time with at least three other modular sites.

Interestingly, despite interview respondents consistently stating that Tipping Point could serve as a convener of other private funders to coordinate philanthropic efforts, this is not a strategy that was ultimately implemented in a comprehensive or public-facing way. As previously noted, early in CHI implementation, work began on a funders collaborative with Mayor Ed Lee as a primary supporter. While the funders collaborative was not created as part of CHI, Tipping Point was still able to bring new philanthropic resources to the table from diverse sources, including resources for the Flex Pool from Dignity Health.

Building Accountability

One of CHI's initial goals was to increase accountability and transparency across governmental agencies and broader systems of care. Tipping Point invested in several strategies aimed at increasing data transparency and reporting, including the Tipping Point and Urban collaboration on the modeling tool and dashboard tracking housing placements as well as a behavioral health bed tracker for DPH. Additionally, Tipping Point funded positions in City agencies to help analyze data.

Overall, respondents acknowledged that the modeling and dashboards developed in partnership between Urban and Tipping Point encouraged accountability and were helpful to CHI partners. And, across interviews with CHI stakeholders at the conclusion of the initiative, respondents described successes in terms of increasing data collection, tracking, and reporting.

Respondents also noted some areas for ongoing work. Specifically, respondents noted that data collection and analysis capacity varied across agencies and sometimes resulted in "siloes" accountability, where agencies that were more transparent with data were more likely to "be held accountable" or to be "monitored." Some respondents also called for more transparency and accountability for Tipping Point itself, namely around how decisions were made regarding what types of programming and agencies were supported.

Challenges, Facilitators, and Adaptations

Throughout the initiative, Tipping Point and partners faced and adapted to challenges and took advantage of unexpected opportunities. Some challenges, like the expensive rental market in San Francisco, existed before CHI implementation. In other instances, new challenges arose, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. And specific events served as both challenges and facilitators for CHI. In this section, we discuss the broad categories of challenges faced by Tipping Point and partners in implementing CHI, including the economic and housing market environment, changing political landscape, leadership turnover at Tipping Point and partners, the pandemic, and homelessness response challenges. In each instance, we discuss how these challenges sometimes presented opportunities or prompted change.

Economic and Housing Market Environment

From the earliest interviews conducted about CHI, respondents identified the high cost of rental housing in San Francisco and income inequality as challenges to successful implementation. These challenges predated CHI and continue today. Throughout implementation, program staff described challenges securing units, moving people into jurisdictions outside of San Francisco, and having concerns that people were unlikely to remain housed if housing assistance were to end. Program participants who were interviewed as part of program evaluations described difficulty affording housing and other essential items. Individuals in time-limited programs frequently shared that they would have to move at the end of a program. This extended to staff employed by programs as well, with interview respondents noting that the high cost of living meant that staff could not afford to live in the city; consequently, it was challenging to hire and retain case managers and other front-line staff. While respondents did not make a direct connection between these specific housing market challenges and the goal of preventing chronic homelessness, it is likely that ongoing challenges around housing affordability contributed to continued inflow into homelessness and chronic homelessness that resulted in CHI not meeting the goal of halving chronic homelessness.

There weren't limitations on neighborhood choice, it was just whether or not I could afford it...I think the limit for rent was \$2,400 a month...You can't go and get an apartment for \$2,400 if, after they stop helping you with the funds, your check is not \$2,400 every two weeks...I chose the Tenderloin because that's where I could afford, not anywhere else, mainly because of the price.

—Step Up to Freedom program participant

Following the onset of the pandemic in 2020, Tipping Point staff and partners expressed hope that there would be a sharp increase in housing placements as a result of the increased availability of units and decrease in rents. This did not seem to come to fruition based on placement data, and rents returned to and then exceeded prepandemic levels in 2021.

We've got the money. We've got the will. But can we get [our] act together? This is our chance. We have neighborhood groups, Tipping Point who are continuing to [push]. Can we get out of our own way and hit the gas?

—Community stakeholder

In the year after CHI ended, respondents continued to express concern about the housing and economic challenges in San Francisco. Funders and government partners shared their concerns that decreased government revenue as a result of the overall economic outlook in San Francisco will result in reduced budgets for key government agencies and reductions in the resources available through the Our City, Our Home Prop C funding stream. These reductions would reduce the City's capacity to respond to homelessness.

Political Landscape

At the time of CHI's launch, homelessness was the top concern identified by San Francisco voters. And, as previously noted, Mayor Lee created HSH as the consolidated government agency to address

homelessness in a more coordinated way. Over the course of CHI, mayoral turnover, Proposition C, and an ongoing spotlight on homelessness in San Francisco featured as political challenges and facilitators highlighted by interview respondents.

On December 12, 2017, six months after the announcement of CHI, Mayor Lee unexpectedly passed away. What followed was a period of quick turnover of acting and interim mayors until now-Mayor London Breed was elected in June 2018 to finish Mayor Lee's term. She was reelected in November 2019 to a full term. Respondents report that the mayoral turnover and the shortened election cycle from 2018 to 2019 resulted in the end of and delays to some CHI programs. Specifically, while respondents identified the Flex Pool as one of CHI's greatest successes, it was also delayed by Mayor Lee's passing. Additionally, respondents still mention the funders collaborative as a CHI activity that ended as a direct result of the mayoral changes.

It was not just the turnover that affected CHI implementation. Mayor Breed and the board of supervisors have also had shifting priorities that sometimes aligned with and sometimes did not align with CHI strategies. Respondents recalled times when the mayor and her political support served as a facilitator to CHI efforts. Specifically, respondents noted her support for the Hummingbird Respite program following the behavioral health report. Respondents also noted that the board of supervisors endorsed the All In campaign when it launched.

The point of misalignment most commonly identified by interview respondents was the growing support for short-term shelter strategies, specifically navigation centers, and continuing to increase funding for permanent housing. All interview respondents were clear that the mayor and her staff saw value in permanent solutions, but there were political pressures and public support for quick ways to decrease the visibility of homelessness in San Francisco. Respondents shared their belief that the delays in the Flex Pool may have been related to these competing priorities.

In addition to turnover in key political positions, homelessness remained at the forefront of local media coverage, while national and international attention increased over the course of CHI implementation. The *San Francisco Chronicle* and other local media outlets continued regular coverage, and the *Chronicle* continued its homeless project in San Francisco through 2020,²¹ including a 2019 special report where 36 reporters covered homelessness in San Francisco over 24 hours.²² Further, in late 2018, the United Nations' special rapporteur on adequate housing remarked that San Francisco's management of encampments "constitute[d] cruel and inhuman [sic] treatment and is a violation of multiple human rights" (Farha 2018). In the later years of CHI implementation, and after its conclusion in June 2022, homelessness in San Francisco started gaining increased national attention with a series

of articles in the *Wall Street Journal* and CNN.²³ One respondent reported their concern over the recent fentanyl overdose rates that were highlighted in national media as well. This type of coverage—both locally and nationally—has continued to affect public opinion on homelessness in San Francisco since CHI ended.

Leadership Changes at Tipping Point and Government Partners

Respondents highlighted leadership changes as a challenge or a facilitator in every year of CHI implementation. In some years, these leadership changes occurred at Tipping Point; in other years at government partner agencies, including HSH and DPH; and in some years in both. Ultimately, interviewees described leadership changes as net facilitators to meeting CHI goals.

In 2018 and 2019, respondents highlighted repeated leadership turnover in the CHI director position and identified inconsistent leadership and leadership quality as challenges. Respondents indicated that inconsistent leadership resulted in what appeared to outside partners to be shifts in CHI priorities—from implementation of housing strategies to a focus on prevention, especially upstream efforts to reduce the flow of youth aging out of foster care into homelessness, and inconsistent energy spent on what partners perceived as central strategies. Additionally, some respondents, particularly those interviewed in late 2019, indicated that early directors were effective at deciding on programs and beginning to implement programs but lacked a “leadership factor” that would make them an effective face of CHI. Respondents did indicate that, despite these leadership changes, grantee relationships were successfully maintained by the CHI staff who managed individual programs.

Tipping Point was not the only organization to experience leadership turnover. Leadership turnover was a frequently cited challenge across government and nonprofit grantee partners between 2017 and 2019, with many respondents specifically mentioning turnover at HSH and DPH.

Starting in 2020 and through the end of CHI implementation in 2022, respondents highlighted that despite challenges that came with turnover, some leadership changes over time led to better partnerships between Tipping Point and government agencies. In one instance, former CHI director Chris Block moved into a role at the COVID command center, bringing a stronger relationship with Tipping Point with him. This relationship facilitated troubleshooting of referral pace and housing application documentation challenges. Another leadership change highlighted by respondents as an eventual facilitator was the appointment of Dr. Anton Nigusse-Bland to a two-year appointment as the director of mental health reform. His appointment followed leadership turnover at DPH, but he was

described as a strong CHI partner for a number of behavioral health–related prevention and systems-change activities undertaken as part of CHI.

Turnover among the leaders at HSH also featured prominently in interviews with CHI staff and partners throughout CHI implementation. Respondents felt that the HSH leadership introduced in April 2021 resulted in the strongest collaboration with CHI. During this time, CHI supported equity work within HSH as well as funded consultants to support strategic planning.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The story of CHI implementation cannot be told without discussing how the pandemic interacted with it. The pandemic posed a big challenge for CHI, contributing to projected increases to homelessness, diverting attention from key CHI activities, straining nonprofit capacity, and changing the cadence of the PIT count. But in many ways, the pandemic was also a facilitator, drawing increased attention and urgency to homelessness and bringing unprecedented resources to San Francisco. Stakeholders also consistently described the positive impact of CHI and Tipping Point on the city during implementation.

At the start of the pandemic, the City was especially concerned about people experiencing homelessness, especially those experiencing chronic homelessness, because their living situations made them particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and they likely had health conditions that made them more susceptible to serious complications from infection. As a result, stakeholders recalled that the focus at the beginning of the pandemic rapidly shifted to keeping people safe by deconcentrating shelters, getting SIP hotels operational, and testing people to minimize spread of COVID-19. In many ways, these priorities did not align with CHI’s original priorities of increasing placements into permanent housing.

The pandemic added to and exacerbated challenges in the homelessness response system that existed before the pandemic, including decreased PSH turnover and challenges around agency and staff capacity. Additionally, shifts in priorities and operations during the pandemic resulted in some originally planned and launched CHI programs being discontinued, such as Launchpads, a platform that was intended to be similar to Airbnb but specific to youth at risk of homelessness.

GOVERNMENT AND NONPROFIT CAPACITY CHALLENGES

Agencies across the city experienced staffing challenges during the pandemic, particularly in the early months. Multiple respondents identified the reassignment of key staff, particularly the housing team at HSH to the emergency operations COVID command center responsible for coordinating the City’s

pandemic response, as a challenge that pulled staff capacity away from strategic planning activities at HSH.

Additionally, stakeholders frequently described the challenges faced by community nonprofit service providers that were running hotels, shelters, and PSH programs and the need they had for more staff or replacement staff. Stakeholders described this leading to disruptions in services to people who were experiencing or had previously experienced homelessness, and participants in programs sometimes described staff turnover causing confusion about who they should contact when they needed help. Tipping Point contracted with a staffing agency that ultimately forwarded nearly 500 prescreened applicants to the agencies in an attempt to address PSH vacancies at the height of the pandemic. Several stakeholders cited this as an example of when Tipping Point was able to use flexible funds from CHI to fund an urgent and time-sensitive strategy.

Starting in January 2022, COVID was really, really high. We had a lot of staff members out...[and] because SIP hotels were closing down and clients were being transitioned, we were all having a hard time finding the clients. I think there was a lapse in communication systemwide.

—Community stakeholder

INCREASED RESOURCES

While the pandemic strained program and partner capacity, it did bring a flood of resources to the city. The two most commonly noted by stakeholders as facilitators of CHI goals were the Homekey program, which contributed to acquisition of buildings, and the Emergency Housing Voucher program, which provided nearly 900 vouchers targeted to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in San Francisco. In both instances, stakeholders highlighted the role that Tipping Point and CHI resources played in helping maximize these opportunities. To provide a local funding match for Homekey—a state program intended to help facilitate the acquisition of hotels and other buildings for conversion to housing and shelter dedicated for people experiencing homelessness—Tipping Point was able to recycle funds through the Homes for the Homeless Fund (the funding mechanism for the Tahanan), allowing the City to acquire the Granada and the Diva, two buildings that would be converted to PSH. The Granada and the Diva resulted in 66 and 72 housing placements, respectively. For the EHV program, CHI

provided flexible funding to support outreach, engagement, and navigation of the voucher application and lease-up process. By the end 2022, 203 people experiencing chronic homelessness had been housed using EHV's (71 by the end of CHI in June 2022).

DECREASED PSH TURNOVER

As previously noted, placements into existing PSH units represented the largest share of placements made of people experiencing chronic homelessness over the course of CHI. These placements require “turnover,” or people exiting a PSH unit. Early in the pandemic, stakeholders highlighted decreased turnover as a challenge to increasing numbers of placements and credited that to PSH residents not leaving units at the same pace they had before the pandemic. Stakeholders thought this was attributable to both the personal preferences of residents as well as a pause in the small number of evictions that usually occur. In later years of CHI, placements in existing PSH remained challenging for other reasons, including vacant PSH units, challenges matching potential tenants to units through Coordinated Entry, and documentation requirements for navigating the leasing process.

DISCONTINUED AND DISRUPTED CHI PROGRAM ROLLOUTS

There were a number of CHI programs and strategies that were in early phases at the start of the pandemic, including the Flex Pool, Step Up to Freedom, and Launchpads. In the case of Flex Pool and Step Up to Freedom, the program enrollment timelines were affected, but both programs were eventually fully implemented. In the case of Launchpads, however, the program was ultimately discontinued. Launchpads, developed under the CHI prevention body of work, was a web-based housing platform designed to help young people transitioning out of foster care connect with landlords and host homes. After pandemic-related delays in 2020, specifically challenges with recruiting potential hosts, the program officially launched in April 2021 only to be officially discontinued in January 2022. While Tipping Point staff expressed dismay that the strategy was unsuccessful, stakeholders generally praised CHI staff for being responsive, strategic, and responsible with resources and not remaining invested in strategies that were not working. Stakeholders also described Tipping Point's ability to take financial risks on programs as an overall advantage.

CHANGE IN POINT-IN-TIME CADENCE

The primary measure of whether CHI achieved its goal was supposed to be the 2023 PIT count. As previously noted, that count did not take place, and there was an abnormally large gap in the years between PIT counts. This resulted in an incomplete understanding of chronic homelessness over that time period, and with the results of the 2022 PIT count releasing just one month prior to the end of CHI,

there was not sufficient time remaining to course correct. Tipping Point's response to disruptions in the PIT count cadence was to work on building public data infrastructure to track placements out of SIP hotels and refining the modeling tool developed in partnership with Urban.

Homelessness Response System Process and Infrastructure

Over the course of CHI implementation, the homelessness response system underwent a number of significant changes, including implementing Coordinated Entry and the ONE System and creating a portfolio of scattered-site housing programs. These changes created and highlighted some process challenges for CHI and the homelessness response system. The most frequently cited examples of these challenges identified by respondents were the inconsistent referral pace from Coordinated Entry, documentation barriers in PSH, and vacant units in PSH. Respondents appreciated the active role that Tipping Point took in helping convene partners and serving as a thought partner on solutions to these system challenges. Unfortunately, partners continue to struggle with many of these challenges.

COORDINATED ENTRY AND INCONSISTENT REFERRAL PACE

The implementation of Coordinated Entry and rollout of the ONE System were large systems changes expected at the start of CHI. Throughout CHI implementation, a common challenge identified was the inconsistent pace of referrals from Coordinated Entry to housing providers. Respondents described a cycle of inconsistent referrals, poor communication around referrals, and the inability to predict and prepare for the need for units and services. Respondents reported that this sometimes wasted program resources, such as when project funding was used to hold units that were not filled. On the other hand, there was a scarcity in the number of units available when there was an unexpected, large inflow of referrals.

The goal is 60 people [housed] a month—which would imply that there needs to be at least 50 referrals the month before—but the system is nowhere near that.

— Community stakeholder

Tipping Point, government agencies, and nonprofit community partners worked to adapt to this challenge. Following the leadership change of CHI director Chris Block moving to lead a housing referral

team in the COVID command center, partners piloted a “batch referral” process intended to increase housing placement speed. Despite these efforts, in 2022, respondents reported that the pace of referrals was slow in the beginning of the year but improved by the third quarter.

PSH DOCUMENTATION CHALLENGES

Even when programs received referrals, potential tenants faced challenges actually enrolling, leasing up, and moving in as a result of documentation requirements. Many but not all PSH programs in San Francisco require Social Security cards. This documentation challenge existed before the pandemic but was particularly exacerbated during CHI implementation because Social Security offices were closed, making it nearly impossible for potential tenants to obtain documentation. Many PSH programs also required background checks, but each program required different companies to conduct the background check. At one point during 2021, a respondent reported that, upon surveying individuals in San Francisco’s SIP hotels, only 27 percent had the required documents to get housed. Throughout 2021, Tipping Point convened partners to troubleshoot how to minimize documentation burdens. Partners hosted housing fairs where documentation issuers were on site to help as many people as possible secure documentation, and by the end of 2021, partners reported that they were testing a number of new policies to mitigate some of these issues. Yet challenges remained. The background check challenge, for example, was particularly tricky, as programs did not want to consolidate to one background check company.

PSH VACANCIES

Respondents also consistently referenced the challenge of vacancies in project-based PSH, an issue that gained increased attention in 2020 and continued through the beginning of 2022. At one point in 2020, San Francisco had an approximately 10 percent vacancy rate in PSH (as reported by an interview respondent). Respondents identified multiple causes for these vacancies, including units being offline because of maintenance needs and challenges matching tenants to units. With respect to the former, respondents cited the pandemic and shelter-in-place orders resulting in maintenance work being deferred. But some respondents disagreed, stating that the vacancy challenges predated the pandemic. Regarding the second challenge of matching tenants, respondents described a vacancy tracking system that did not connect to Coordinated Entry to match and track referred potential tenants.

This challenge remained by the end of CHI. Respondents reported that, at the beginning of 2022, PSH occupancy was down compared with the prior two quarters in 2021. Yet in late 2022, vacancies peaked with more than 1,300 vacancies reported in November 2022. Respondents shared that partners engaged multiple strategies throughout 2022 to address the issue of vacancies.

Lessons Learned

Over the course of five years, CHI efforts highlighted several lessons for San Francisco and beyond. These lessons include those regarding the role of philanthropy in addressing complex social challenges as well as lessons for communities working to end homelessness.

Lessons for Philanthropies Tackling Complex Social Problems

One primary goal of Urban’s evaluation of CHI is to describe lessons learned for philanthropic entities that want to tackle complex social issues such as homelessness. Throughout CHI, Tipping Point has played many roles, including as “an advocate, a funder, a convener, an advisor, and an overseer of government transparency” (Batko et al. 2022). Lessons learned from these roles may provide insight for other philanthropies committed to addressing complex social problems, such as homelessness.

BALANCE AMBITIOUS GOALS AND REALISM ON TIMELINES AND IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

Early in the initiative, partners praised Tipping Point for setting an ambitious goal of halving chronic homelessness by 2023. In fact, many respondents, including government partners and grantees, described the announcement as “inspirational” and an early point of success for CHI. Interview respondents said the goal garnered positive political attention at the local and state levels, contributed to a sense of urgency to strategically address homelessness, and encouraged other private sector partners to invest in ending homelessness, even if those investments were not directly coordinated with CHI.

Creating an ambitious goal, there’s a lot of value in that. Joining together to tackle this goal—now we have a direction. Now it’s achievement, even if we don’t get to 50 percent.
—Community stakeholder

As the initiative progressed, respondents reflected that the initial goal may not have adequately considered how factors outside of direct initiative-funded actions, including relationship- and rapport-building and securing buy-in, would affect Tipping Point’s ability to meet CHI’s goal within its time frame.

As the initiative concluded, interview respondents generally agreed that their earlier reflections remained true. A key lesson learned from CHI was that, despite the initiative's ambitious goals and enthusiasm around that goal, systems change takes time and the five-year timeframe may not have been long enough to realize the changes. Respondents noted that there were several factors that extended their initial timeline, including the time it took to secure buy-in for specific activities from stakeholders including funders, board members, and the public. And, as highlighted throughout this report and others, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the CHI timeline and partners' ability to meet their goals.

BUILD FOUNDATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BEFORE ANNOUNCING INITIATIVES

Tipping Point was founded in 2005 and has a long history of working to address poverty in the Bay Area. While it had supported other organizations addressing homelessness in the past, CHI was Tipping Point's first major investment in addressing homelessness at this scale. At the time of the announcement of CHI's goal to halve chronic homelessness, the newly formed HSH was also working on a strategic plan with an identical goal. Respondents generally acknowledged tension between Tipping Point and HSH early in the implementation of CHI. Government partner respondents at the time were frustrated by Tipping Point's discussions around accountability, which they indicated felt like attacks. Some respondents also credited this tension to the language used for the third primary strategy for CHI: "optimizing the public sector." Government partners expressed some resentment toward the way this was framed, despite a general recognition and acknowledgement that CHI investments were helpful in achieving HSH's goals (Batko et al. 2022). In interviews conducted during the latter half of CHI implementation, respondent criticism decreased, perhaps because there was observable support from agencies for achieving mutual goals.

When asked to reflect on overall experiences with CHI, respondents indicated that Tipping Point could have done more partnership building within the sector before announcing CHI. They felt that this would have both eased tensions with government partners who had more experience working on the issue, as well as enabled CHI strategies and programming to have been planned out more thoroughly prior to announcement and implemented earlier in the CHI timeline.

BALANCE SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS AND LONG-TERM CHANGES

A consistent theme in interviews throughout CHI was the tension between short-term investment and long-term solutions. This tension emerged in two ways. First, the CHI timeline required an emphasis on strategies that quickly change chronic homelessness trends, especially after the 2019 PIT count was released. Despite this, a stated goal for CHI was long-term systems change. Respondents described that

these two priorities might not point to the same types of activities. For instance, respondents would talk about CHI's focus on placements within the five-year time frame, as opposed to exerting force on the underlying economic circumstances and failures of mainstream systems that drive homelessness and chronic homelessness. Ultimately, CHI's focus was more on housing placements and improving the homelessness response and other adjacent response systems than addressing broader systemic challenges.

There's a difference between quick fixes and short-term success, and what we were trying to achieve was short-term success. Inefficient systems are propped up by quick fixes—just fix it a little bit, enough so it doesn't collapse in, but it never meets the challenge or solves the problem.

—Community stakeholder

The second point of tension was that the primary solution to chronic homelessness is permanent housing, but this requires a longer-term funding commitment to an operating subsidy than Tipping Point (or another philanthropic partner) could make. While the Flex Pool was generally considered by most respondents to be one of Tipping Point's biggest successes and an important proof point for the City, Tipping Point did not fund permanent housing subsidies, despite the Flex Pool being a PSH program. In order to launch the program, Tipping Point needed government commitment to take on the ongoing operating subsidy and services costs for everyone who would be housed as part of the pilot. For Tipping Point, this was a key goal for CHI—to leverage resources—but some respondents saw it as a challenge in operationalizing strategies that required a government partner commitment.

TAKE RISKS TO BUILD EVIDENCE FOR INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

When asked about the strengths that Tipping Point brought to CHI, respondents noted that it had the ability to take risks that government agencies could not. Respondents consistently noted that a key success for CHI was the creation of “proof points,” often citing strategies that had not been implemented in San Francisco, such as Moving On, Flex Pool, and Tahanan (Moving On and the Flex Pool were strategies that had been successfully implemented in other communities across the country but not yet replicated in San Francisco). As a result, one respondent described them as potentially risky for a government to invest in.

Tipping Point embraced this risk-taking role across all three of its primary strategies. Some of these risks, like the Flex Pool, were successes, while others, like Launchpads, were not as successful. But even when programs were unsuccessful, respondents appreciated Tipping Point's willingness to explore innovative solutions.

Respondents also pointed out that many of Tipping Point's prevention programs were pilot programs that were not only likely too small to substantially decrease the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness but also potentially too small to measure effectiveness. Respondents identified Step Up to Freedom, SPARK, and the cash transfer pilot as examples.

MAXIMIZE FLEXIBLE RESOURCES TO MINIMIZE CRISES AND FILL GAPS TO EXPEDITE IMPLEMENTATION

Respondents viewed Tipping Point's ability to use flexible funds as an advantage to the system. They described Tipping Point as "nimble" than the government, which is subject to more restrictions in procurement and compliance and more silos in resource allocation. As a result, respondents from government partners, grantees, and other community partners described one of Tipping Point's significant value-adds as being able to pivot resources quickly to address immediate needs or fill gaps. Interview respondents consistently reported that Tipping Point had the flexibility and capacity to leverage funds to take quick action in areas that needed improvement or immediate support. One example is Tipping Point supporting staffing needs among community nonprofits at the start of the pandemic by hiring a staffing agency to screen resumes. They were also able to support the implementation of the EHV program, with one respondent interviewed in 2021 noting how Tipping Point can "unlock" public resources through strategic investments. Other examples included providing incentives to potential PSH residents when providers were having difficulty successfully enrolling people in programs and supporting "housing fairs" where people could work on documentation, lease applications, see units, and move in, all at one event.

There's that silver lining that Tipping Point was able to be super flexible when [COVID-19] hit, that probably made sure a lot of those things were more effective than they would've been otherwise. In other parts of the state and other communities that didn't have that philanthropic resource, I don't think they saw the same kinds of results.

—Community stakeholder

CONVENE PARTNERS FOR THE PURPOSES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, TROUBLESHOOTING, AND INCLUDING HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Respondents described Tipping Point's important role as a convener for City partners, a convener of people with lived experiences of homelessness for CHI and other partners, and as an external pressure to promote transparency and accountability. Additionally, by acting as a third-party convener, Tipping Point was able to bring community partners together to engage in conversations and activities related to ensuring cultural competency and centering BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized communities.

In interviews throughout the evaluation, respondents highlighted the ways Tipping Point leveraged its capacity and convening power to create and fund programs, build systems of collaboration, troubleshoot challenges, share lessons learned with other stakeholders, and maintain and sustain ongoing relationships and services. When asked to reflect on how Tipping Point contributed to sustainable systems change, respondents consistently identified this strength as a contributor.

BUILD CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY NONPROFIT SERVICE PROVIDERS

CHI provided an example of how philanthropic investments can be used to build the capacity of nonprofit service providers. Interview respondents shared several examples of how, over the course of the initiative, CHI investments directly affected the scope of services provided by grantees. Respondents also noted that these are frequently investments that are not or cannot be made by government entities. Tipping Point also made a point of investing in organizations that are smaller than those typically funded by the government. These grantees felt that Tipping Point's investments allowed them to expand essential organizational infrastructure, such as by building data systems.

I think CHI really cares about being data driven and supported it. They paid people in HSH to create the data systems they needed.

—Community stakeholder

Lessons for Communities Working to End Homelessness

In addition to lessons learned for philanthropy, CHI produced lessons for homelessness response systems that are particularly important given the ongoing challenges facing San Francisco and communities across the country.

UNDERSTANDING INFLOW TO HOMELESSNESS, INCLUDING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS, NEEDS TO BE PRIORITIZED

Over the course of five years, Tipping Point and partners placed 7,767 people experiencing chronic homelessness into housing. Chronic homelessness declined between the 2019 and 2022 PIT counts, but not enough to meet the CHI goal. In one way, Tipping Point and partners met half of the challenge of halving chronic homelessness by housing thousands of people. They did not meet the other half, however, which involved slowing and stopping the inflow of people into chronic homelessness. While Tipping Point did implement a number of programs intended to prevent chronic homelessness, these programs were not close to the scale of housing programs dedicated to people experiencing chronic homelessness and are based on data insufficient to stem the flow of people into chronic homelessness.

As previously noted, as an evaluation partner, we developed an inflow/undercount estimate intended to account for the number of people who become chronically homeless during a year or who could have been missed during the previous year's PIT count. It was a constant based on placements and changes in PIT counts from 2009 to 2017. Within the model, increased placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness into housing, or "prevention" placements of people not experiencing chronic homelessness in Tipping Point-funded projects could offset this assumed inflow. The constant was increased for 2020 to 2022 to account for potential increases in homelessness stemming from the pandemic. Based on placement data, and the PIT counts in 2017, 2019, and 2022, inflow exceeded placement numbers, particularly between 2017 and 2019. Even with increased placements between 2019 and 2022, the pace was not sufficient to offset inflow and meet CHI's goal. It is clear that placements of people experiencing chronic homelessness alone are insufficient to end chronic homelessness.

To truly end chronic homelessness, communities must know two things—the pathways into chronic homelessness and how many people are entering chronic homelessness—in order to make decisions about prevention strategies. Then, communities must fund those prevention strategies at the level needed.

MAXIMIZE PLACEMENT IN EXISTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In every year of CHI, the most frequent type of placement for people experiencing chronic homelessness was placement into existing PSH units from turnover of people in those units. Yet the challenges most often raised by respondents in the homelessness response system were related to vacant PSH units: units were often vacant or offline for reasons including maintenance needs, difficulty matching units and residents, or barriers with paperwork related to move-in.

As previously noted, potential tenant documentation and referral pace challenges topped the list of challenges to re-housing people in existing housing units in the community. Tipping Point and partners attempted to address these challenges during CHI as well, including through a “batch” referral process—that is, sending multiple referrals to providers at a time as opposed to a single referral. These issues, however, continued beyond the implementation of CHI. We did not evaluate the batch referral process, but respondents felt that it showed promise in speeding up housing placements.

For communities working to end homelessness, addressing vacancies in PSH or any other housing type and getting to consistent referral paces should be a priority.

DIVERSIFYING PSH STOCK AND DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION STRATEGIES INCREASES CAPACITY

Since 2009, PSH capacity across the country has increased by 77 percent to a total of more than 387,000 units across the country in 2022 (HUD 2009; De Sousa et al. 2022). Before CHI, the vast majority of PSH in San Francisco consisted of project-based buildings, and the City had a development pipeline and a master-leasing strategy for adding new PSH. However, San Francisco faced challenges related to new construction, specifically related to cost, time, and permitting.

CHI demonstrated how incorporating scattered-site supportive housing (as with the Flex Pool), exploring innovative financing and construction strategies, and taking advantage of acquisition opportunities can transform and maximize PSH stock in a community. Through the unique public-private financing model used in the Homes for the Homeless Fund, Tipping Point was able to support an innovative way of developing project-based PSH buildings, leading to faster and cheaper construction of units dedicated to people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the City acquired more than 10 buildings through Project Homekey, including two with Tipping Point support, dramatically increasing the number of new PSH units available in the later years of CHI.

Sustainability and Looking Forward

Across interviews both during the initiative and after its completion, respondents reflected on how components of CHI were being sustained as well as what the next steps were—for both governmental and philanthropic entities—to continue to address chronic homelessness in San Francisco.

Sustaining and Replicating CHI–Created Programs

Part of Tipping Point’s theory of change was for key CHI strategies to be sustained and replicated after the initiative ended in 2022, ideally through public funding and resources. At the end of CHI in mid-2022, several Tipping Point investments had been sustained, either fully or partially, and others were identified for future replication. Additionally, investments across CHI were seen as providing data and information that could be used to inform future projects.

Most respondents believed that the Flex Pool best exemplified sustainable investment in CHI. After starting with 200 placements fully funded through philanthropic sources (and an additional 50 voucher placements supported), the program was expanded to include additional placement slots with ongoing funding through Our City, Our Home. Additionally, respondents stated that the scattered-site model the Flex Pool brought to San Francisco served as a foundation for expanding scattered-site housing in other program models, including rapid re-housing.

Hummingbird—another CHI investment that expanded peer respite services to people experiencing behavioral health challenges—was sustained through DPH. According to respondents, Tipping Point’s initial investment of capital start-up funds, as well as 18 months of operating costs, were then taken on by DPH. In addition to the ongoing services provided through Hummingbird, interview respondents in previous years of CHI also noted that there were other long-lasting impacts to behavioral health systems that came out of CHI: the initial investment in mental health bed optimization work led to a long-term investment in the City’s mental health system.

Although the CHI Community Advisory Board was discontinued at the formal end of CHI, several interview respondents reflected on the lasting impact of the CAB, noting that the values centered and uplifted through the CAB have been brought to the forefront throughout the City’s work. For example, HSH is intentionally including people with lived experiences of homelessness in the redesign of Coordinated Entry.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of Tahanan as a proof point for developing project-based PSH, although the model has not yet been replicated. Respondents noted certain short-term barriers but shared that, as of mid-2023, there was the potential for similar buildings to be developed and a lot of the “prework” for replication was underway.

Tipping Point's Role in Ending Homelessness Moving Forward

Tipping Point staff and staff from other government departments and community-based organizations involved with CHI said they saw Tipping Point continuing to play a role in addressing homelessness in San Francisco. Several discussed the role that they would like Tipping Point to play in ending homelessness after the conclusion of CHI and highlighted the work Tipping Point has maintained or developed since the end of the initiative.

Tipping Point is definitely still playing a role [now that CHI is over]. We have meetings with them to talk about our shared work every other week. I definitely find that really useful.

—Community stakeholder

In December 2021, the Tipping Point board created a new San Francisco housing portfolio based on CHI learnings. After CHI ended, Tipping Point continued to invest in strategies to address homelessness in San Francisco more broadly, including using data to track and monitor progress. For example, one respondent noted that since CHI has wound down, “Tipping Point’s focus on youth homelessness has ramped up.” And, in July 2023, San Francisco began a new five-year plan to reduce homelessness. Shortly after, Tipping Point launched a San Francisco Homelessness Dashboard to increase transparency and track progress toward these goals. The dashboard examines homelessness in San Francisco through five key areas: prevention, shelter, permanent housing, and affordable housing data, as well as data specifically related to better understanding racial disparities within these systems.

Some interviewees, including Tipping Point respondents, emphasized that there was work left to be done in the city. One respondent described their hope that Tipping Point would continue with its role as a convener and investor, which includes investing not just in programs but also in “intellectual and social capital.” Throughout CHI, interview respondents shared that they valued Tipping Point as a “thought partner” and hoped that Tipping Point would continue to play that role.

Conclusion

Between 2017 and 2022, San Francisco City partners, including Tipping Point, placed 7,767 people experiencing chronic homelessness in housing. This included 2,011 people in 2022 alone, the

culmination of multiple years in a row of increases in placements from 2019 to 2022. Despite this success, respondents believed—and the data suggest—that CHI and partners did not meet their goal of halving chronic homelessness in San Francisco by January 2023. Regardless, respondents felt certain that Tipping Point investments had positively shaped San Francisco’s responses to chronic homelessness. Respondents stressed the sustainable changes that came out of developing a scattered-site housing strategy through the Flex Pool and the value of Tahanan as a proof point for a faster and lower per unit cost approach to developing permanent supportive housing. Additionally, respondents described Tipping Point’s important role as a convener for City partners, a convener of people with lived experiences of homelessness for CHI and other partners, and as an external pressure to ensure transparency and accountability. It was clear that CHI achieved its goals of housing people experiencing chronic homelessness and improving the systems that respond to homelessness in San Francisco.

However, respondents identified several ongoing challenges related to addressing homelessness in San Francisco. Public opinion of homelessness remains an obstacle, including navigating the simultaneous challenges of addressing the substance use crisis (respondents particularly noted opioids) and continued negative opinions about how the City is addressing homelessness. Several respondents reflected on how the economic outlook of San Francisco could threaten the sustainability of many programs and activities needed to serve people experiencing chronic homelessness. Respondents also noted systems-level issues related to the homelessness response system, including difficulties with the current Coordinated Entry process.

People really don’t understand how people become unhoused and mental illnesses, and they don’t have a lot of patience to learn about it. I think that the challenge is huge.

—Community stakeholder

In order to ultimately end homelessness, respondents felt that San Francisco must focus on addressing the drivers and root causes of homelessness, specifically broader preservation and development of affordable housing. This includes a larger focus and effort on prevention, as well as continuing to examine and address systemic factors that can lead to homelessness—including racism.

The shift that we haven't made is that homelessness in San Francisco and other places is still acceptable. We haven't gotten to the point where people sleeping on the street is simply unacceptable.

—Community stakeholder

Appendix A. Evaluation Methods

TABLE A.1

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Evaluation Interview Respondents by Year, 2018–2023

Interview respondent type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Systems-level evaluation							
Tipping Point staff		7	2	2	3	3	16
Tipping Point board members		1	1		2		4
CHI donors		2			2	1	5
Community Advisory Board member		1	2	1			4
Grantees		4	3	4	4	4	19
Government partners		12	1	3	4	7	27
Other community partners		2		2	1		5
Moving On Initiative program evaluation							
Program staff		5					5
Program participants	18	37					55
Rising Up Campaign evaluation							
Implementing staff and partners			11				11
Program participant				10			10
Flex Pool program evaluation							
Implementing staff and partners			6		2		8
Program participants				6	10		16
Homes for the Homeless Fund (Tahanan) program evaluation							
Implementing staff and partners					8		8
Community Advisory Board program evaluation							
CAB members					3		3
Tipping Point staff and board				7			8
Other community CAB member					4		4
Step Up to Freedom program evaluation							
Implementing staff and partners					5		5
Program participants					9		9
Cash transfer pilot program evaluation							
Program participants					10		10
Total	18	71	26	35	67	15	232

Source: Urban Institute evaluation documentation.

Notes: Quarterly interviews are not included in these totals. In some instances, respondents were asked to participate in one interview that satisfied the needs of two evaluation components. For example, a Flex Pool implementing partner may have been asked questions from the systems-level evaluation and the Flex Pool program evaluation in one interview. In these instances, the respondent is counted in the systems-level evaluation line item.

Appendix B. Chronic Homelessness Initiative Investments

TABLE B.1

Chronic Homelessness Initiative Investments (Largest to Smallest), FY 2016–22

Investment	Investment amount	Percentage of total spending	Spending type(s)	Description
Homes for the Homeless Fund (Tahanan)	\$50,737,143	50%	Create housing	A partnership with the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund to pilot a new approach toward PSH in San Francisco that would reduce the development time and cost per unit. This included the purchase of a property and development of PSH units using modular construction.
Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool	\$9,143,124	9%	Create housing	A scattered-site supportive housing pilot that included funding for up to 18 months of subsidies for 200 participants
Staffing and operations	\$8,256,056	8%	CHI staffing, operations, evaluation	CHI staffing and administration
Moving On Initiative	\$3,675,000	4%	Create housing	Supported the transition of people from project-based PSH to tenant-based subsidized housing in the community to free up existing PSH units for people experiencing chronic homelessness to be re-housed. Funding was used to assist with finding and holding units, application fees, moving expenses, security deposits, and rent assistance.
Housing Platform	\$3,300,000	3%	Create housing; systems change	Capacity building to Brilliant Corners to develop and implement the Housing Platform, a program that matches property providers with tenants

Investment	Investment amount	Percentage of total spending	Spending type(s)	Description
Rising Up Campaign	\$3,100,000	3%	Create housing; prevent chronic homelessness	Partnership with Tipping Point, HSH, Brilliant Corners, and youth service partners to provide rapid re-housing or problem-solving for transition-age youth
Hummingbird Valencia	\$3,025,725	3%	Prevent chronic homelessness	Expansion of Hummingbird Place respite beds
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Advocacy pilot	\$2,841,122	3%	Prevent chronic homelessness; Systems change	Provided application assistance for Supplemental Security Income federal benefits, including legal services, to people experiencing homelessness to increase access to SSI income
All In campaign	\$2,198,730	2%	Systems Change	A campaign to engage and educate the public in a focus on long-term housing for people experiencing homelessness
Breaking Barriers	\$1,541,503	2%	Create housing; systems change	Funding to remove barriers to support moving people out of SIP hotels and into permanent housing as quickly as possible
All Home	\$1,500,000	1%	Systems change	Supported the launch of a Bay Area group working to coordinate a regional response to homelessness
Interim housing	\$1,100,000	1%	Systems change	Support the development of San Francisco's first tiny cabins at 33 Gough Street
Jail discharge	\$1,085,000	1%	Prevent chronic homelessness	Jail transition project in partnership with the Pretrial Diversion Project and the sheriff's Jail Discharge Planning Office
Emergency Housing Vouchers	\$1,044,636	1%	Create housing	Funding for staff and operations at nonprofits to support a quick and equitable distribution of EHV's
Behavioral health needs assessment report	\$920,502	1%	Systems change	Projects related to the intersection of the behavioral health system and homelessness, including the <i>Behavioral Health and Homelessness in San Francisco</i> report, the bed optimization report funded for the Department of Public Health, and the treatment bed inventory dashboard

Investment	Investment amount	Percentage of total spending	Spending type(s)	Description
Tipping Point fellows	\$890,000	1%	Systems change	Funding for two Tipping Point fellow positions housed within HSH: a director of strategic initiatives and a data and privacy fellow
Evaluation*	\$886,250	1%	CHI staffing, operations, evaluation	Urban Institute evaluation of CHI
Step Up to Freedom	\$800,000	1%	Prevent chronic homelessness	A rapid re-housing pilot that housed 40 individuals with incarceration histories and who were experiencing housing instability or homelessness. The goal of the pilot was to serve as a proof of concept for intervening with RRH during reentry with people whose histories indicate they might be at risk for long-term homelessness.
SPARK Initiative	\$699,074	1%	Prevent chronic homelessness	A three-year, three-county initiative offering peer-to-peer support to engage youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness and help connect them to housing and stabilizing services
Shared housing	\$615,297	1%	Create housing; prevent chronic homelessness	Efforts to increase local adoption of shared housing model for people exiting homelessness
Launchpads	\$555,294	1%	Prevent chronic homelessness	A prevention pilot program that used a web-based platform modeled after Airbnb to help young people transitioning out of foster care connect with host homes, landlords, and property managers
Transgender, Gender-Variant, and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP)	\$550,000	1%	Prevent chronic homelessness	TGIJP supports trans people of color who are justice-involved and experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Tipping Point partnered with TGIJP to increase access for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ individuals to enter housing and feel safe receiving services
Technical assistance consultants	\$464,023	<1%	Systems change	Consultants hired to provide technical assistance and subject matter expertise to launch a number of CHI programs, including the Flex Pool

Investment	Investment amount	Percentage of total spending	Spending type(s)	Description
Bay Area Regionalism Initiative	\$300,000	<1%	Systems change	Funding to HomeBase to conduct research, convene stakeholders, and propose a framework for creation of a Bay Area regional data sharing system on homelessness
HSH diversity, equity, and inclusion work	\$239,850	<1%	Systems change	Funding for the National Innovation Service to provide racial equity consulting services to HSH
COVID-19 response	\$234,628	<1%	Systems change	Grants to support direct service nonprofits in addressing immediate needs in response to the pandemic
Cash transfers pilot	\$209,550	<1%	Prevent chronic homelessness	A pilot program intended to provide direct cash transfers to 30 participants who were exiting rapid re-housing programs and at high risk of chronic homelessness.
Community Advisory Board (CAB)-led grantmaking	\$204,580	<1%	Systems change	Funding for the CAB to co-create grants with CHI to fund local organizations that they identified as filling key needs in the community
Miracle Messages	\$200,000	<1%	Create housing; prevent chronic homelessness	Grant to a Bay Area nonprofit that offers family reunification services, a phone buddy program, and basic income pilots for people experiencing homelessness
Targeted case management pilot	\$188,100	<1%	Systems change	A pilot to train PSH providers in targeted case management (TCM) protocols to determine whether the City should implement TCM across its PSH portfolio (i.e., get state reimbursement for time spent on case management services)
Funders collaborative	\$94,913	<1%	Systems change	A collaborative to educate potential funders and help coordinate private funding
Community Advisory Board	\$49,941	<1%	Systems change	Comprises members with lived experiences of homelessness to provide input on strategies undertaken as part of CHI

Investment	Investment amount	Percentage of total spending	Spending type(s)	Description
Our City, Our Home	\$48,985	<1%	Systems change	Consultant support to the Our City, Our Home oversight committee in getting established, soliciting community input, and developing an initial set of funding recommendations.
Total	\$100,699,025			

Sources: CHI finance reports as of June 2023 provided by Tipping Point Community and Urban Institute review of secondary materials.

Notes: Six programs (Housing Platform, Rising Up, SSI Pilot, Breaking Barriers, Shared Housing, and Miracle Messages) are categorized under two spending types. The corresponding investment amount reflects the total for the program or project, not the total for the spending type. For the evaluation line item, the amount included in this table is only the amount invoiced at the time of the financial reporting, not the full contract amount.

Notes

- ¹ The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines a person experiencing chronic homelessness as an individual who has experienced long-term homelessness—an episode lasting 12 months or longer or 4 separate episodes of homelessness in the last 3 years—and has a disabling condition. Read more at <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-esg-homeless-eligibility/definition-of-chronic-homelessness/>.
- ² The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that all communities with a Continuum of Care program conduct an annual count of the number of people experiencing homelessness in sheltered situations. HUD also requires a count of people enduring unsheltered homelessness every other year during odd numbered years. Read more at <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hdx/pit-hic/#2024-pit-count-and-hic-guidance-and-training>.
- ³ See Tipping Point Community's accountability dashboard tracking San Francisco's progress to reduce homelessness, available at <https://tippingpoint.org/dashboard/>.
- ⁴ While CHI formally ended on June 30, 2022, placements in CHI-supported programs continued throughout the remainder of 2022.
- ⁵ "Public Safety, Homelessness, and Affordability Are the Biggest Issues in 2018 SF Chamber Poll," San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, news release, February 2, 2018, <https://sfchamber.com/blog/public-safety-homelessness-affordability-biggest-issues-2018-sf-chamber-poll/>.
- ⁶ "Public Safety, Homelessness, and Affordability Are the Biggest Issues in 2018 SF Chamber Poll," San Francisco Chamber of Commerce.
- ⁷ Renée Alexander, "Can Big Data Help San Francisco's Homeless Kids?", Vice, March 28, 2017, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/nz5qyb/can-big-data-help-san-franciscos-homeless-kids>.
- ⁸ Coordinated Entry is a local process required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to help communities effectively and efficiently prioritize and refer people experiencing homelessness to available housing and service programs.
- ⁹ "Tipping Point Steps up with \$100 Million Initiative to Reduce Chronic Homelessness by Half," Tipping Point Community, May 8, 2017, <https://tippingpoint.org/bay-area-poverty-fundraising/tipping-point-steps-up-with-100-million-initiative-to-reduce-chronic-homelessness-by-half/>.
- ¹⁰ In San Francisco, problem solving is a "strategy that prevents or diverts people from homelessness by helping identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and short-term financial assistance to help them quickly return to housing." More information is available at https://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/CE-Written-Standards_9.2023_Clean.pdf.
- ¹¹ San Francisco opened shelter-in-place (SIP) hotels to provide noncongregate emergency shelter space during the COVID-19 pandemic. SIP hotels provided on-site wraparound services and linkages to the City's Coordinated Entry access points. More information is available at <https://hsh.sfgov.org/covid-19/shelter-in-place-hotel-program-overview/>.
- ¹² "Tipping Point Steps Up with \$100 Million Initiative to Reduce Chronic Homelessness by Half," Tipping Point Community.
- ¹³ Scott Shafer, "Political Uproar as Mark Farrell Replaces London Breed as S.F. Mayor," KQED, January 23, 2018, <https://www.kqed.org/news/11643930/political-outrage-as-mark-farrell-replaces-london-breed-as-s-f-acting-mayor>.

- ¹⁴ The San Francisco Housing Platform matches property providers with tenants. More information is available at <https://www.sfallin.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Brilliant-Corners-Handout.pdf>.
- ¹⁵ \$15 million of funds originally invested in the Homes for the Homeless Fund for Tahanan were recaptured through permanent financing at construction bond closing.
- ¹⁶ More information about the Homekey program is available at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/homekey>.
- ¹⁷ More information about California's Whole Person Care pilots is available at <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/WholePersonCarePilots.aspx>.
- ¹⁸ Respondents also identified developing an SSI tracking database for the San Francisco Human Services Agency, but this was never fully implemented by the agency.
- ¹⁹ "Department of Public Health Opens 70 New Behavioral Health Beds as part of Expansion to Treat People with Serious Mental Health and Substance Use Issues," City and County of San Francisco, News release, April 14, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/news/department-public-health-opens-70-new-behavioral-health-beds-part-expansion-treat-people>.
- ²⁰ More information about the San Francisco's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing's diversity, equity, and inclusion work and the equity reports funded by Tipping Point are available at <https://hsh.sfgov.org/about/research-and-reports/hrs-reports/>.
- ²¹ More information about the San Francisco Chronicle's Homeless Project is available at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/homeless-project/>.
- ²² "One Day, One City, No Relief: 24 hours inside San Francisco's homelessness crisis," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 31, 2019, <https://projects.sfchronicle.com/sf-homeless/24-hours-homelessness/>.
- ²³ Allysia Finley, "The Root Causes of San Francisco's Disorder," *Wall Street Journal*, June 18, 2023 <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-root-causes-of-san-franciscos-disorder-crime-homeless-911-auto-theft-public-disorder-a45b170c>; Sara Sidner, "A Mother Was Raising Her Son in a City She Loved. Then San Francisco Changed and Stole Her Boy," CNN, May 14, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/14/us/san-francisco-drugs-homeless-sidner-tws/index.html>.

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