

ENDING HOMELESSNESS 2021

The State of the
Supportive Housing System
in Santa Clara County



Acknowledgements

This report was compiled by Homebase, the Center for Common Concerns, on behalf of the County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing.

Special thanks to Destination: Home for their review and contributions to the report, to the Supportive Housing System clients who shared their stories, and to the many community partners whose tireless work to end homelessness in our community is highlighted in this report.

Cover photo © John Sutton (2022)

Letter from the County Executive

We are pleased to share our annual State of the Supportive Housing System Report. This report highlights the advancements Santa Clara County made during 2021 toward our collective goal of ending homelessness while simultaneously facing the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with innovative approaches that have helped transform our ongoing work to address the needs of our unhoused neighbors. We learned that we had the capacity to do more and better, and we will continue to build on that capacity as we work toward the ambitious goals and strategies laid out in the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness. The Community Plan provides a solid framework on which we are building our response to the current housing crisis. Through the collaborative efforts of system stakeholders, service providers, and local organizations – as well as the advocacy and support of residents – we have made tremendous strides toward scaling successful housing strategies, addressing the root causes of homelessness, expanding prevention efforts, and improving quality of life for unsheltered individuals.

This report opens with reflections on where we have been and where we are now. We recognize the various ways in which the community continues to strengthen our supportive housing system, build our homelessness prevention system, and expand housing resources and supports to better serve our unhoused neighbors. We highlight local efforts such as the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond that have made an extraordinary impact on housing availability in Santa Clara County, helping to address central causes of homelessness through policy change.

As we move toward greater equity and inclusivity, guidance from the Lived Experience Advisory Board and the Youth Action Board uplift and center the voices of people with lived experience in various capacities and community planning processes. Their leadership ensures that our system priorities and our actions as a community remain rooted in lived expertise and that we are advancing solutions that will most effectively support people who are currently unhoused or at risk of becoming unhoused. We truly appreciate and value our partnerships with these boards and look forward to continuing to collaborate to grow and improve our supportive housing system.

Through these efforts, we are working together to make ending homelessness a reality in Santa Clara County. Thank you for being a part of that vision.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey V. Smith, M.D., J.D.
County Executive
County of Santa Clara

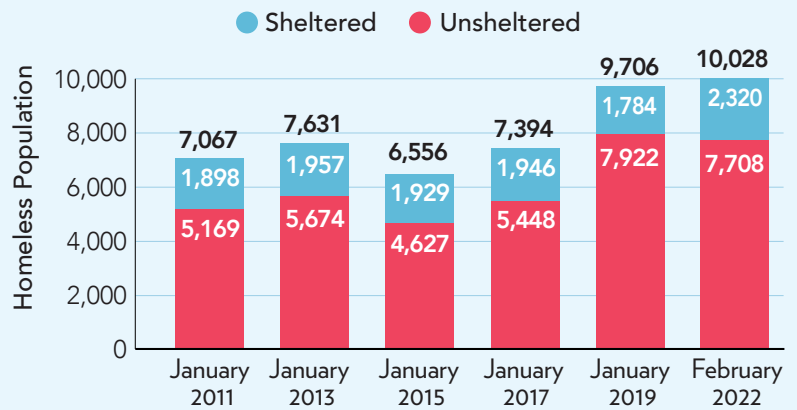
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Introduction

2021 was a year of tremendous challenges and opportunities for our community and our efforts to address the housing crisis in Silicon Valley. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact our unhoused neighbors, putting them at heightened risk. Discrimination placed barriers between people and the jobs and homes that they needed to survive. At the same time, the county made significant progress towards the goals we set in the 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness (Community Plan) and innovated new strategies and system improvements in response to the emergent needs surfaced by the pandemic.

Santa Clara County Homeless Census & Survey¹



The Community Plan zeros in on the root causes of homelessness – economic injustice, racism, sexism, stigmatization of mental illness, and the astronomical costs of housing – taking a collective impact approach involving partners across many sectors. Through these partnerships, we work together to identify inequities and redesign systems that fail to meet the needs of all people.

Two key allies include the Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) and Youth Action Board (YAB), comprised of people who have experienced homelessness. In a world where many decisionmakers are disconnected from the realities of homelessness, the LEAB and the YAB provide critical guidance that informs the County’s policymaking, planning processes, and funding decisions.

Guided by the Community Plan, we have invested in a continuum of long- and short-term housing solutions. We kept people housed by expanding homelessness prevention programs, including the Emergency Rental Assistance program, which distributed \$46 million to at-risk households. These efforts have contributed to a 33% decrease in the annual inflow of people becoming unhoused.

We have also focused on the community’s priority of decreasing unsheltered homelessness by leveraging state Homekey funds and other resources to develop innovative emergency interim housing. Local jurisdictions such as the City of Mountain View, the City of San José, the City of Palo Alto, and others have committed more funding than ever before to increase temporary housing opportunities.

Continual increases in the stock of permanent affordable housing also ensure that periods of homelessness are brief and non-recurring. Through the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond alone, we have added 3,662 new and renovated units of sustainable long-term housing. Without dedicated properties such as these, households with low incomes would struggle to maintain stability in an area with some of the highest housing costs in the nation.

Throughout this report, you will read about our community’s efforts in more detail, and also hear from some of our most impacted community members. Our hope is that you are left not only with a sense of all that remains to be done, but also all that is possible.

“ COVID is not going anywhere - COVID does not discriminate. Over time, we’re still building relationships with our community, and we do our best to keep everyone safe.

– Tara Blair, PATH COVID Vaccine Ambassador

¹ The County did not carry out an unsheltered homeless census and survey in 2021 due to COVID-19 health and safety risks and statewide public health orders in place. The 2022 unsheltered homeless census and survey was delayed by a January COVID-19 surge and was thus conducted in February. The count shows a 3% increase in people experiencing homelessness from 2019 to 2022. The small increase reflects both the progress and challenges our community continue to face in preventing and ending homelessness. This report shows that over 7,800 people have been permanently housed since 2020. Absent that progress, the increase likely would have been much larger.

² Source: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/82437/637812162753270000>

³ Source: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=61061> (affordable rent calculated based on 30% of annual income).

Where We've Been / Where We are Now



Photo © John Sutton (2022)

Expanding the Supportive Housing System

In 2021, the supportive housing system continued to expand thanks to the community's bold efforts to respond to the needs of our neighbors. In addition to the development of new supportive housing units, the community has been expanding available supports system-wide to tackle the biggest challenges faced by our region – to decrease the number of people becoming unhoused and improve the ability of people experiencing homelessness to obtain and maintain stable housing.

Reducing the Number of People Becoming Unhoused for the First Time

The County and partners are taking steps to ensure that fewer people become unhoused. In the past year, the County surpassed its goal of a **30% reduction in annual inflow of people becoming unhoused**. By the end of 2021, the number of households experiencing homelessness for the first time decreased by 33%, from 4,771 baseline in 2019 to 3,172 in 2021.

Homelessness Prevention System (HPS)

HPS brings together a network of 20 community partners to provide temporary financial assistance, legal support, and other services to help at-risk families and individuals maintain their housing and avoid falling into homelessness. Since its launch in 2017, HPS has prevented homelessness for thousands of our most vulnerable residents – 92% of 3,087 households served remained housed one year after exit from the program, and capacity has increased to around 1,600 households per year.

Eviction Prevention

Supportive housing case managers build collaborative relationships with landlords and provide critical support to anticipate and resolve disputes and prevent eviction. Landlord engagement and tenants' rights trainings, anti-eviction legal services, and mediation support this work. Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) and rent relief programs provide essential interventions that help residents retain their housing even during periods of financial difficulty. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs offer Housing First no-fail support for clients even after evictions, working with clients to address causes of eviction and find better-fit housing.

Housing Problem Solving

Housing Problem Solving offers flexible and creative solutions to help individuals and families quickly resolve housing crises, encouraging safe housing options to meet each person's unique needs and avoid homelessness. In 2021, the Continuum of Care (CoC)⁴ expanded Housing Problem Solving, with flexible funding available through a network of community partners and centrally accessible through the shelter hotline.

⁴ The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a broad group of stakeholders dedicated to ending and preventing homelessness in Santa Clara County. The key CoC responsibilities are ensuring community-wide implementation of efforts to end homelessness, as well as ensuring programmatic and systemic effectiveness.

Increasing Permanent Housing Placements

A network of public agencies and nonprofit partners works collaboratively to support people experiencing homelessness to rapidly obtain stable housing and to maintain their housing through income support and connections to employment. Through these collective efforts, 1,943 households were permanently housed in 2021.

More Housing, More People Housed

In 2021, the supportive housing system added 171 units of permanent supportive housing and 188 units of interim housing to give permanent housing clients stability during their housing search. Affordable housing developed with the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond (Housing Bond) and other funds also included 387 units for rapid rehousing clients. Additionally, funding for another 662 units was approved.

Increasing Stability in Housing

Connections to employment opportunities, interim housing between placements, and other supports help Santa Clara County community members to achieve and maintain stability in housing.

Interim housing programs

Interim housing programs such as Willow Glen Studios on Pedro Street assist people enrolled in supportive housing programs who are still in the process of finding an apartment to rent or who are waiting for a new supportive housing unit to finish construction. While the County strives to house people as quickly as possible, interim housing like Pedro Street provides a safe, clean, and comfortable residence as well as access to services to improve health, stability, and quality of life during the wait for permanent housing.

Income Support for People Who Need it

A new standard assessment allows providers to immediately identify clients who will benefit from employment services and refer them to employment and job training programs to help them grow their incomes.

New Employment Opportunities

In 2020 and 2021, the County of Santa Clara and City of San José expanded employment opportunities for unhoused and formerly unhoused adults, opening doors to new roles as call center operators, vaccine outreach ambassadors, and interim housing staff. With funding from the CalWORKs program, the community created new employment opportunities, including hiring additional staff for the Here4You hotline, the call center that centralizes referrals to temporary housing programs, and other community resources. Local interim housing and service agencies LifeMoves and Abode partnered with the County to conduct recruitment.

Destination: Work

The Destination: Work initiative is a partnership between the Office of Supportive Housing, Destination: Home, and JobTrain that connects participants with living-wage employment leading to careers in high-growth industries such as health care, technology, advanced manufacturing, building, and construction. JobTrain offers resume support, career exploration, interview skills, job search assistance, and youth-targeted paid work experience, as well as training in digital and financial literacy.



Supportive Housing System Components

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Increases affordable housing supply, providing a path to long-term housing stability for people who are unhoused and helps avoid future occurrences of homelessness caused by extreme housing costs

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

- Helps individuals and families who are about to lose their housing to remain housed where they are or move to more sustainable permanent housing

OUTREACH

- Engages with people who are unhoused on the street, in parks and other public spaces, and in vehicles
- Acts as an access point for the Coordinated Entry System and for emergency shelter
- Locates people who have been referred to housing programs by the Coordinated Entry System

COORDINATED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

- Acts as a front door to the community's housing resources
- Matches people who are unhoused to the community's transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing programs

HOUSING PROBLEM SOLVING

- Engages people in common sense conversations to identify creative solutions, unexplored options, and resources to quickly return to housing

HERE4YOU CALL CENTER

- Provides a single point of access to emergency shelter beds and centralizes emergency shelter referrals
- Offers immediate Housing Problem Solving support
- Acts as an access point to the Coordinated Entry System

INTERIM HOUSING

- Provides temporary housing for people who are unhoused and have been enrolled in a Rapid Rehousing or Permanent Supportive Housing program while they are searching for a permanent place to live

EMERGENCY SHELTER

- Provides a safe place to sleep for people who are unhoused
- Provides meals, showers, other basic needs services, and connections to community resources
- Acts as an access point to the Coordinated Entry System

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- Provides temporary housing and services for people who are unhoused and seeking a more structured living environment, especially youth and veterans

RAPID REHOUSING

- Provides supportive services and temporary rental assistance to people who are unhoused
- Helps individuals and families obtain permanent housing and increase income so that they can remain housed independently

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- Helps individuals and families with disabilities maintain permanent housing through long-term rental subsidies, connections to medical and behavioral health care, and other services



Lived Experience Advisory Board Highlight

Santa Clara County's LEAB plays several integral roles in the homeless system of care by improving the supportive housing system, dispelling myths about homelessness, and helping the broader community better understand the needs of unhoused residents. The LEAB is composed of 23 currently and formerly unhoused residents with diverse life experiences that conduct program evaluations, facilitate provider training, provide meaningful input on new countywide policies, and make recommendations for grant spending, among other endeavors. The LEAB also offers leadership development opportunities for members.

As the LEAB's membership has grown and diversified, their project portfolio and impact on the homeless system of care have continued to deepen. The LEAB draws not only on their individual lived expertise, but also on a foundation of strong relationships with the unhoused community. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the LEAB has collaborated with the Office of Supportive Housing and the City of San José to conduct a coordinated, extensive street outreach campaign throughout the county to deliver hot meals, hygiene supplies, and other critical provisions to improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals. LEAB members have not stopped at delivering food, however, and have leveraged this initiative to build rapport with encampment residents and connect them to community resources, identify strategies to meet their basic needs, and support them in resolving barriers to housing.

Tapping into this foundational connection to the unhoused community, the LEAB has played a critical role in improving the homeless system of care. Upon request by a community-based service provider and the City of San José, a task group of LEAB members comprehensively evaluated homeless street outreach and case management effectiveness, unmet needs, and areas for improvement. The LEAB surveyed staff and clients, performed field observations, reviewed staff orientation and training materials, and audited policies and procedures. In the culminating report, the LEAB proposed a series of actionable recommendations informed by national best practices to strengthen program efficacy, efficiency, and equity.

In addition to program evaluation, the LEAB has been a key partner in strengthening the supportive housing system by leading training on housing problem solving for call center, emergency shelter, drop-in center, and other program staff. LEAB members teach Housing-First-aligned, person-centered, and strengths-based strategies to empower program staff to have creative conversations that support unhoused residents in identifying and leveraging household strengths, support networks, and other resources in overcoming barriers to housing stability and identifying potential solutions to their housing crisis.





Youth and Young Adults Highlights

Youth Action Board

Established in July 2021, the YAB is a community of youth and young adults (between the ages of 18-26) who are currently or formerly unhoused or have lived experience of housing instability focused on creating collaborative, local solutions to homelessness. They advise the County of Santa Clara on issues that impact youth and young adults and drive forward the implementation of youth-focused housing programs and services.

The YAB has grown immensely since its launch and is taking steps to further organize as an autonomous group. The Board is building internal structures and policy to continue to be a powerful voice for youth and young adults in the community and contribute to community-wide efforts.

YAB member Jocelyn Arenas stated that personal experience plays a role in how YAB members show up and engage in the work. She stated that “the YAB is a group of people who want to make a difference in the community because of how their experiences have impacted them. For myself, I hold my heart really close to the work that I do.” The YAB has focused on not only building group identity, but also valuing and honoring the various lived experiences of members.

Karen Mestizo, YAB member and YHDP Community Coordinator shared that the YAB is focused on “taking action and defining what it means to be autonomous. This is a big step that requires more work and involvement, and people are very passionate about it.” Additionally, the YAB is building partnerships with other youth groups within the community and other YABs nationwide to share best practices in supporting youth leadership.

When asked what the most impactful part of this work is, Mestizo answered, “getting the opportunity to be involved in these decisions that shape our community. Its challenging, but that’s what helps aid growth. This work allows me to challenge myself and challenge the system in order to create something better for my community.”

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project Funding

In October 2021, Santa Clara County was selected by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to participate in the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). YHDP is a federal initiative designed to prevent and end youth homelessness guided by a youth-led community planning effort culminating in the Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Youth and Young Adult Houselessness. The YAB provided invaluable oversight and guidance to the community throughout the YHDP application and community planning process and established the guiding vision for the community plan, through which \$10.4 million in federal funding will go to expand efforts to tackle youth homelessness over the next two years.

The Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Youth and Young Adult Houselessness is the outcome of a six-month community planning process led by the YAB and YHDP Planning Group. The plan outlines the roadmap for YHDP implementation and represents the community’s commitment to honoring youth and youth adult leadership in system change efforts. It is centered around the following goals developed by community stakeholders and youth with lived experience:

- **Goal 1:** The community identifies all unaccompanied youth experiencing houselessness
- **Goal 2:** The community uses prevention and diversion strategies whenever possible, and otherwise provides immediate access to low-barrier crisis housing and services to any youth who needs and wants it. Diversion and prevention should encourage long-term stability and ensure that youth are adequately supported and uplifted out of houselessness.
- **Goal 3:** The community uses coordinated assessment processes to effectively link all youth experiencing houselessness to housing and services solutions that are tailored to their needs.
- **Goal 4:** The community acts with urgency to swiftly assist youth to move into permanent or non-time-limited housing options with appropriate services and supports.
- **Goal 5:** The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to prevent and quickly end future experiences of houselessness among youth.

Since the adoption of this plan, the local application and funding process for YHDP has concluded and resulted in awarded funding for five new projects serving youth and young adults.

COVID-19 Response Updates

Systems Change

Santa Clara County's supportive housing system is constantly adapting and evolving to better meet the needs of the community with the input of people with lived expertise, providers, policymakers, and lessons learned from ongoing efforts to respond to multiple crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic. One notable system change to come out of the pandemic was the creation of a centralized hotline to rapidly screen and place people in shelter according to their need. Building on the successes of the hotline during the earlier phases of the pandemic, the County launched the Here4You Call Center in Fall 2021 with the support of partners including the City of San José and the operating community-based organization, the Bill Wilson Center.

The call center builds on the shelter hotline established during the pandemic and serves as a centralized call center for any community members seeking assistance or referrals to temporary housing programs. In the past, individuals and families had to call multiple phone numbers and undergo multiple screening processes to locate services, which could be challenging under the best of circumstances and even more difficult amid a housing-related crisis. The call center provides screening, referrals, and transportation to emergency shelter programs, linkages to the Homelessness Prevention System, Housing Problem Solving services including financial assistance to resolve housing crises, and referrals to other community resources. Call center staff provide services that are low-barrier, trauma-informed, and culturally and linguistically responsive.

COVID-19 Education & Outreach Program

The COVID-19 Education & Outreach Program was a critical piece of the County's efforts to distribute information and resources regarding vaccination. The success of the program can be attributed largely to the cultural competencies and leadership of teams with lived experience -- 76% of ambassadors deployed into the community had lived experience of homelessness. Over 31,000 hours of outreach was conducted in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish beginning in November 2021 with 13,831 individuals surveyed through these efforts.

Tara Blair, a PATH COVID-19 outreach ambassador, shared that there was originally a high amount of hesitancy regarding vaccines and misinformation about their effectiveness, and building rapport with individuals in crisis was crucial to engaging in educational conversations about COVID-19 vaccines. The team reached unhoused people through in-person outreach, flyers, email and phone communications, and vaccine drives.

Staff provided resources such as food and basic needs supplies to build trust with individuals before providing education about vaccines. The diversity of the vaccine ambassador team in terms of lived experience, culture, and age coupled with their compassion for the homeless community were key to successful outreach efforts.

Regarding the impact of vaccine ambassadors, Blair said: "Our teams do a lot more than assisting folks with getting shots on their arms. It's not just COVID – people are needing and wanting services. A big portion of the community I know from my past. It makes me really grateful to serve my community."

Impact on the Ground

The Project Roomkey program is an example of the County's swift and impactful COVID-19 response, providing temporary emergency shelter to people living unsheltered during the COVID-19 pandemic and serving as a pathway to more permanent housing options.

Shannon and her elderly mother, Sarah, had been living in encampments and on the streets for more than 20 years. Prior to receiving housing and services through Project Roomkey, Shannon struggled with trauma from domestic violence, while Sarah experienced mobility issues and faced a language barrier when seeking services. Both had experienced long term post-traumatic stress disorder and feared identity theft due to past experiences.

County and Abode case management partners supported Shannon and Sarah in obtaining benefits they had not received in years, including General Assistance, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and Social Security Disability Insurance. Shannon and Sarah eventually moved into permanent housing through a Project Homekey program.

Christine Khoo, Program Manager at the County of Santa Clara, stated the following about her work with this family: "It feels amazing to get folks housed out of such a negative, scary time with a worldwide pandemic. To know that these women now feel safe, aren't exposed to the elements, and live in a place good for their physical and mental health made it very much worth it and changed the lives of chronically homeless individuals."

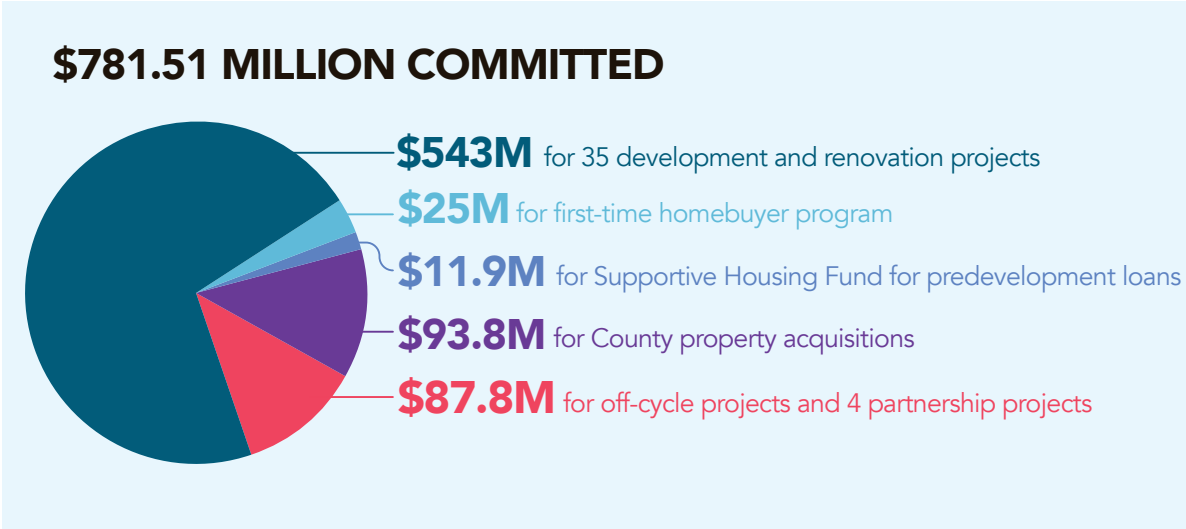
**Note: names have been changed to protect client privacy.



Calabazas Community Apartments

2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond Progress

In November of 2016, Santa Clara County voters approved a \$950 million Affordable Housing Bond to transform affordable housing in the county. The Housing Bond is projected to fund 120 new affordable housing developments over ten years, including 4,800 new units dedicated to Extremely Low-Income and Very Low-Income households, along with the establishment of rental and ownership opportunities for Moderate Income households. The Housing Bond provides the means for the County to give our community's most vulnerable residents a fresh start. Significant progress has been made across the county since the introduction of the Housing Bond, including, as of 2021:





35
DEVELOPMENTS

810
UNITS OPEN NOW

550
TO OPEN IN 2022

3,044
TOTAL NEW UNITS

+ **618**
RENOVATED UNITS

= **3,662**
UNITS TOTAL

7 CITIES | **\$25 MILLION** FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER PROGRAM

Every dollar invested through the Housing Bond incentivizes an average of \$3.50 from outside investments.

Development and renovation projects funded by the Housing Bond are in the process of adding new units of affordable, low-income, and moderate-income housing across the county.



Community Plan Implementation Update

The 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness is the product of a robust community engagement process led by the Santa Clara County CoC and building on the successes of previous years. The Community Plan recognizes that rates of homelessness continue to grow in Santa Clara County, impacting too many members of our community. The systemic factors that fuel homelessness remain ever-present – the rising income gap in our community, insufficient supply of affordable housing (particularly at the lowest income levels), and longstanding structural inequities – all compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Community Plan is a call for bold action by partners across the County, to address these roots of homelessness and provide services and housing for those in need.

Two years into implementation, the Community Plan continues to guide our County, cities, nonprofits, and other community partners as they make decisions about funding, programs, priorities, and needs. The Community Plan is organized around three core strategies:

STRATEGY 1	STRATEGY 2	STRATEGY 3
 <p>Address the root causes of homelessness through system and policy change</p>	 <p>Expand homelessness prevention and housing programs to meet the need</p>	 <p>Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all</p>

The Community Plan identifies aggressive targets designed to reverse the growth in homelessness and bring us closer to the collective goal of ending homelessness in Santa Clara County.

Community Plan: Progress Toward Goals

In partnership with local Cities, the Santa Clara County Housing Authority, nonprofit service providers, and other stakeholders, the County has made tremendous strides toward achieving Community Plan goals and putting strategies into practice during the first two years of implementation.



STRATEGY 1 Address the Root Causes of Homelessness Through System and Policy Change

Through Strategy 1, we are investing in a future where homelessness is rare, and interventions are in place to ensure that those at risk of are quickly connected with services and stable housing. The County and its partners are laying the groundwork for this future through coordination with safety net services, targeted resources for prevention, policy changes to increase affordable housing stock, increasing access to employment and income, and advocacy and education. Crucial to each of these efforts is the acknowledgement of systemic racism as a root cause of homelessness and housing instability, and racial equity must be central to all solutions.



STRATEGY 2 Expand homelessness prevention and housing programs to meet the need

While Strategy 1 aims to strengthen the social safety net and address systemic causes of homelessness, Strategy 2 aims to build the community's capacity to meet urgent needs for housing and support. This effort involves significant investment in expansion of the supportive housing system, as well as programs tailored to the needs of specific populations experiencing homelessness, including youth/young adults, older adults and seniors, families with children, and adults without children. It involves expansion of a range of supports to prevent homelessness, including both financial resources and supportive services. This work relies on an efficient, effective, state-of-the-art supportive housing system that centers the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness, invests in a qualified workforce, and addresses and eliminates biases in hiring and provision of services.



STRATEGY 3 Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all

In addition to preventing homelessness for as many people as possible, the community must address the immediate needs of people who remain unhoused due to the extreme housing crisis and increasing income inequality. To meet these needs, Strategy 3 focuses on greatly expanding the availability of temporary housing and shelter and the variety of temporary housing options throughout the county, increasing street outreach and services for unsheltered residents, and increasing accessibility of mental health and substance use services.

Our Targets

By 2025, we will



Achieve a **30% reduction** in annual inflow of people becoming homeless



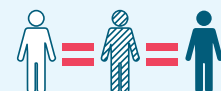
House **20,000 people** through the supportive housing system



Expand the Homelessness Prevention System and other early interventions to serve **2,500 people per year**

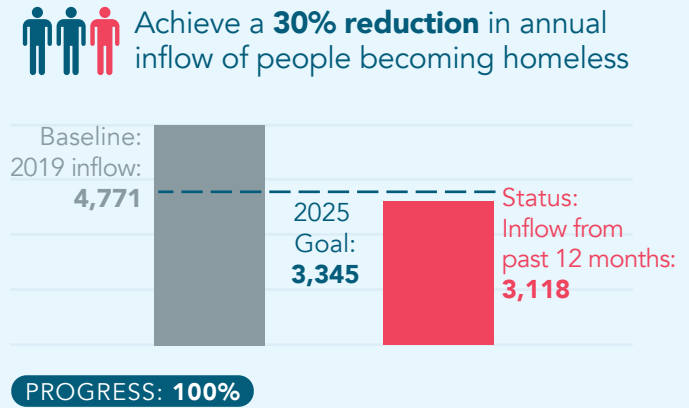
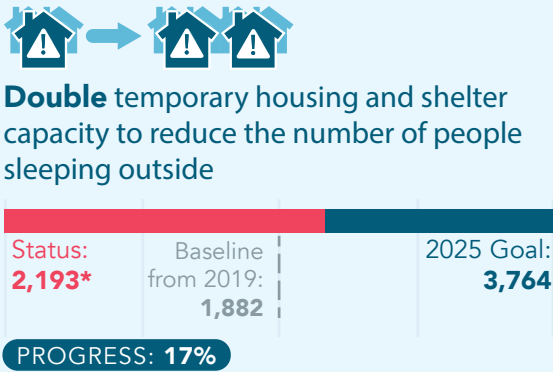
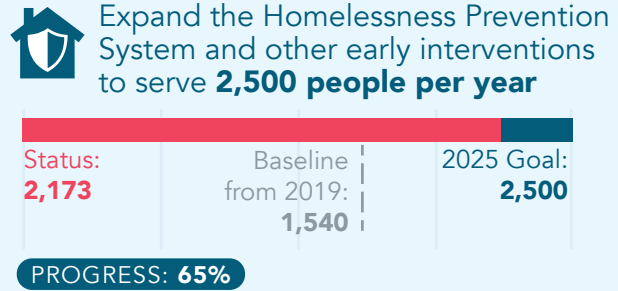
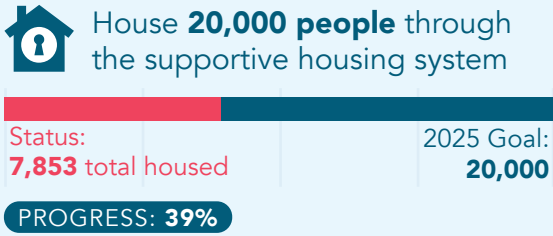


Double temporary housing and shelter capacity to reduce the number of people sleeping outside



Address the **racial inequities present** among unhoused people and families and track progress toward reducing disparities

In addition to laying out a roadmap of strategies to prevent and end homelessness, the Community Plan set aggressive targets to achieve by 2025. Here is our progress to-date against these bold goals:



* Capacity figure reflects temporary reductions in some shelters instituted to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



City Efforts Across the County

Cities are vital partners in a cohesive county-wide effort to end homelessness. Cities were critical stakeholders in the formation of the Community Plan, including many with representation on the Community Plan steering committee. All cities of Santa Clara County were invited to endorse the Community Plan after its development in 2020 and to play a role in its implementation. So far, 11 of 15 cities in the county have adopted resolutions endorsing the Community Plan: Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San José, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale. These vital partners have been working toward local goals that align with the strategies outlined in the county-wide plan and have made tremendous progress through innovative programs and partnerships.

Highlight: Morgan Hill

Morgan Hill has received a capacity-building grant from Destination: Home to support the City's work related to the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness. The three-year partnership has enabled Morgan Hill to hire a dedicated liaison on homelessness issues (with a particular focus on Strategy 3: Improving quality of life for unsheltered individuals and creating healthy neighborhoods for all) and supported the City in the development and launch of a local implementation plan with specific targets and outcomes for each of the Community Plan strategies. Morgan Hill has worked with the County Office of Supportive Housing to develop a local Housing Development Plan to identify opportunities for affordable housing, including new developments:

- The Magnolias – A 100% affordable housing project with 66 units in a variety of unit sizes reserved for low-income individuals and families, people in need of rapid rehousing, and veterans, including veterans in need of supportive services.
- Royal Oak Village – 73 affordable apartments in progress, comprised of six one-bedrooms, 37 two bedrooms, and 29 three-bedrooms, with units set aside for rapid rehousing participants, and a resident manager unit. 30 units will be set aside for extremely low-income agricultural worker households, and 24 units will accommodate individuals and families earning up to 50% of area median income.

Highlight: Mountain View

Mountain View has embarked on several efforts to reduce homelessness in line with the Community Plan. Mountain View is one year into a three-year capacity-building grant from Destination: Home to support their ability to develop deeply affordable housing and spearhead initiatives such that will help end and prevent homelessness. New developments in progress with multiple sources of funding include:

- La Avenida Apartments - 100 apartments, including 30 homes reserved for individuals experiencing homelessness with on-site support services
- Crestview Hotel - a hotel conversion creating up to 67 affordable apartments, including approximately 45 supportive housing units
- LifeMoves Mountain View – an interim housing community serving single adults and families. Built on private property, the community is funded through state Homekey funds and further supported by public and private funders. The community has 100 single and family units, a communal kitchen, playground, and meeting rooms for case management and other services.

Mountain View also prepared to pilot a groundbreaking guaranteed basic income initiative. Basic income initiatives provide unconditional, guaranteed income to help households to cover basic costs of living. Pilot initiatives test the idea that guaranteed basic income may help to raise households out of poverty by alleviating financial stress and help households to avoid extreme consequences of unplanned expenses – expenses that can mean loss of housing for low-income households. The County has its own Transition-Age Youth (TAY) Basic Income Pilot underway for former foster youth. These pilots provide useful information the effectiveness of this strategy, information that could guide decisions on how these programs could be used in the future.

The Elevate MV basic income pilot will help approximately 166 extremely low-income households bridge the gap of monthly income needed to maintain stable housing. Rising rents put our lowest-income neighbors at increased risk of homelessness. With a huge and growing gap between wages and rents, low-income families face dire housing insecurity. The program will give direct cash payments of \$500 per month for one year to 166 randomly selected eligible Mountain View residents that will elevate their basic income to provide more financial security. Program eligibility requirements include being a Mountain View resident with one or more children under the age 18 and earning at or below 30% of area mean income, which equates to an annual income of \$44,750 in 2021 for a family of three.

Highlight: Cupertino

From 2017 to 2021, the City of Cupertino has seen a significant reduction in individuals newly experiencing homelessness, indicating that fewer single adult Cupertino residents are becoming newly unhoused year over year. This decreasing trend parallels the trend in the county as a whole, which has surpassed the Community Plan goal of a 30% reduction in annual inflow of people becoming unhoused. Cupertino has developed a new affordable housing development, The Veranda (19 units for senior citizens), through the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond.

Cupertino has also set out to develop their own city-wide strategic plan in alignment with the County's Community Plan, launched in September 2021 and currently in draft stages. Planning has involved a robust community engagement process to gather input and feedback and build consensus around common goals and strategies. Input on needs and priorities were gathered from housing and service providers, representatives from health care and education, advocacy groups, the business community, housing developers, City and County staff, people with lived experience of homelessness, and the public at large. Based on this input and local data analysis, Cupertino has identified gaps in the resources available and services needed to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness in Cupertino and strategies and goals to address those needs and support the objectives of the Community Plan.

Highlight: City of Santa Clara

The City of Santa Clara, having endorsed the Community Plan, has launched a Homelessness Task Force consisting of stakeholders with a range of perspectives and experience. This group includes eight members representing a diverse set of backgrounds, including members who have experienced housing instability and/or homelessness, representatives from each City Council district, and representatives from local agencies. The Task Force is helping to identify priorities and provide recommendations related to the development of the City Plan to End Homelessness. The task force is meeting virtually once per month for the duration of the planning process, guiding the process from stakeholder engagement and analysis to the development of recommendations and plan drafting. The resulting City Plan will be focused on city strengths within the regional effort.



Photo © John Sutton (2022)

The City of Santa Clara is also developing new affordable housing through the Housing Bond. New developments include:

- Calabazas / Corvin Apartments – 145 apartment units completed, 80 of which are Permanent Supportive Housing to help individuals and families with high service needs, and the remainder are available to households earning up to 50% of area median income, with units set aside for resident managers.
- Agrihood Senior Apartments – 165 affordable units in progress, which will consist of 70 studios, 83 one-bedrooms, 10 two-bedrooms, as well as two resident manager units. A portion of the units will be leased to qualifying senior veterans and 54 of the units will be set aside as Permanent Supportive Housing for households experiencing homelessness.
- Kifer Senior Apartments – 79 affordable apartments to be developed, of which 45 will be reserved as Permanent Supportive Housing (including resident manager units), 17 will be available to households earning up to 30% of area median income, and 17 will be available to households earning up to 50% of area median income.

Community Plan: Building Momentum



Advocacy for Housing Ready Communities

Destination: Home is leading the charge to develop a climate in which policies are in place to facilitate affordable housing development and other proven solutions to prevent and end homelessness. This community-driven movement has gained the support of thousands of community members, working together to advocate for practical solutions to the housing shortage and rising costs of housing. Their voices are being heard and are driving public policy toward greater investments in housing for Extremely Low-Income households, stronger eviction protections, and greater representation in decision-making bodies by people with lived experience of homelessness.



Improving Partnerships Across the System

The community continues to make crucial investments to develop and strengthen coordination and collaboration with partners across the supportive housing system, to address pressing housing and service needs and create a stronger safety net for our residents. Future initiatives will strengthen coordination and collaboration with health care and criminal legal system partners, streamline emergency response efforts, and address basic needs to improve overall wellness of people who are unhoused.



Leadership by People with Lived Experience

People with lived experience of homelessness play a vital role in guiding progress toward ending homelessness in Santa Clara County, and this role will continue to expand in coming years. As discussed elsewhere in this report, the LEAB and YAB advise the County on a range of issues and lead important initiatives to strengthen the homeless system of care. Expansion of these initiatives drives impact across all Community Plan goals.

Conclusion

As this report concludes, we reflect on 2021 and the ways in which our community united to address homelessness. We increased capacity, opened new housing opportunities throughout the region, and adapted our systems, building on innovations necessitated by the pandemic.

As we continue to implement the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness, we must maintain our commitment to bold action to prevent and end homelessness in our community. Our systems must work to truly understand, include, and center people experiencing homelessness in our solutions. We must take steps to remedy past harms, address inequities, and prevent people from losing their homes in the future.

No one can solve a housing crisis alone. Only through the collaborative effort of the entire community – people with lived expertise, neighbors, housing providers, service providers, property owners and managers, grant makers, elected officials, and both private and public sector partners – will we move forward to end homelessness in Santa Clara County. It will require new and innovative strategies, partnerships, and tremendous effort, and we hope you will join us.



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The overall goal is that no one has to go through anything close to the same experiences we have. If we don't change the system today or tomorrow but push our way closer and closer to make it better for just one person, then we're making a difference.

– Jocelyn Arenas, YAB Member.

Photo by The Family Album Project