



DATE: December 8, 2020

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: Community Development,
City Manager's Office

TITLE: **Adopt a Resolution to Endorse the
Community Plan to End
Homelessness 2020-2025**

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Mountain View Supporting the Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County 2020-2025, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider adoption of the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness. In support of this recommendation, the report provides background on the Community Plan, a summary of the City's efforts to respond to homelessness and the multiple areas of alignment between the City's efforts and the Plan, and next steps.

Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County 2015-2020

Nearly five years ago, the City Council adopted the Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County (2015-2020) (2020 Community Plan), the County's first regionwide plan to address the significant and growing challenge of homelessness. Since the 2020 Community Plan's adoption, Countywide partners, including the City, worked collectively to achieve many notable accomplishments, including, but not limited to, the following (source: Santa Clara County):

- Resolving homelessness for nearly 9,000 households representing over 14,000 people.
- Doubling the number of supportive housing units in Santa Clara County and temporary housing and emergency shelter capacity.

- Launching new homelessness prevention system, which now serves about 1,000 households annually.
- Housing more than 1,600 veterans, supported by nearly 800 private landlords in the effort.
- Passing Measure A in 2016, providing \$950 million to develop permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing.
- Raising another \$100 million in private contributions to support the implementation of this Community Plan.

Community Plan to End Homelessness in Santa Clara County 2020-2025

Despite the accomplishments achieved during the period of the 2020 Community Plan, the issue of homelessness remains and has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The development of the 2020-2025 Community Plan (2025 Community Plan) seeks to build on the accomplishments over the past five years while seeking to address the underlying, systemic causes of homelessness through three key strategies:

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

Several actions under each of the three strategies are identified in the 2025 Community Plan to help meet five key target outcomes:

- Achieve a 30 percent reduction in annual inflow of people becoming homeless.
- Housing 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.

Development of 2025 Community Plan

The 2025 Community Plan (Attachment 2) reflects the voices of over 8,000 individuals reached across the County and provides stakeholders with a shared framework that could result in large collective impact. In 2019, Destination: Home, Santa Clara County, and cities and nonprofits initiated the strategic planning effort and an extensive community engagement process to develop the 2025 Community Plan. City staff from the Community Development Department and the City Manager's Office participated in the 2025 Community Plan development process by serving on working groups, which included many meetings held over several months to discuss the strategies, actions, and desired outcomes.

Additionally, Destination: Home and the County sought input from elected officials and senior executives from cities throughout the County. In November 2019, Destination: Home and County staff met with the City. The meeting included the City Manager, the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, and other staff. The meeting included discussion about how the 2025 Community Plan could be developed to be most effective for cities, opportunities for shared regional efforts, and the potential for resources to be provided to cities for capacity-building and support in furthering local and regional efforts to respond to homelessness. Destination: Home is currently working with the cities in the County towards adoption of the 2025 Community Plan in each jurisdiction.

The 2025 Community Plan was presented to the Santa Clara County Unhoused Task Force (Task Force), on which Councilmember Ramirez serves. The Task Force reviewed the Plan and recommended its adoption.

Homelessness in the County and City

The County of Santa Clara completes a comprehensive biannual "Point in Time" homeless count, which serves as a baseline for understanding homelessness in the region. This count includes the unsheltered and unstably housed, enumerating those individuals and families who are sleeping in emergency shelters and transitional housing as well as people sleeping on the streets, in vehicles, abandoned properties, or other places not meant for human habitation.

As shown in the chart below, over the past three County point-in-time (PIT) counts, the number of homeless people in Mountain View has increased from 276 in 2015 to 416 in 2017 to 606 in 2019, increasing 46 percent over the past two years, and more than doubling in four years. The vast majority of the people counted were unsheltered. The County’s count considers residents living in recreational and other vehicles as unsheltered.

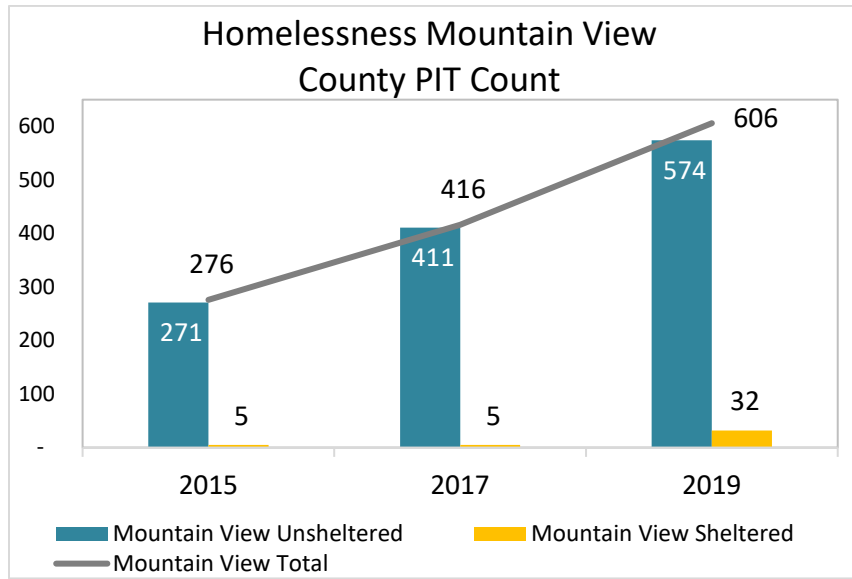


Figure 1: Homeless Mountain View – County PIT Count

Shown in the PIT chart below over the same period of time, the total number of homeless people in Santa Clara County also increased significantly, from 6,556 in 2015 to 9,706 in 2019, an increase of 48 percent. Of this total, in 2019, 82 percent were unsheltered. The number of Santa Clara County residents living in cars and recreational vehicles (RVs) has increased significantly, with the 2019 count indicating that 18 percent of unhoused County residents were living in vehicles, up from 8 percent in 2015 and 2017.

JURISDICTION	UNSHELTERED		SHELTERED		TOTAL		'17-'19 % CHANGE
	2017	2019	2017	2019	2017	2019	
Total Incorporated	5,259	7,652	1,775	1,594	7,034	9,246	31%
City of Campbell	94	74	0	0	94	74	-21%
City of Cupertino	127	159	0	0	127	159	25%
City of Gilroy	295	345	427	359	722	704	-2%
City of Los Altos	6	76	0	0	6	76	*
City of Los Altos Hills	0	2	0	0	0	2	*
Town of Los Gatos	52	16	0	0	52	16	*
City of Milpitas	66	125	0	0	66	125	89%
City of Monte Sereno	0	0	0	0	0	0	*
City of Morgan Hill	388	114	0	0	388	114	-71%
City of Mountain View	411	574	5	32	416	606	46%
City of Palo Alto	256	299	20	14	276	313	13%
City of San José	3,231	5,117	1,119	980	4,350	6,097	41%
City of Santa Clara	199	264	73	62	272	326	20%
City of Saratoga	12	10	0	0	12	10	*
City of Sunnyvale	122	477	131	147	253	624	147%
Total Unincorporated	189	270	113	89	302	359	19%
Confidential Locations	NA	NA	58	101	58	101	74%
Total	5,448	7,922	1,946	1,784	7,394	9,706	31%

**Note: Percentage change was not calculated for rows with less than 50 individuals.*

Figure 2: Total Homeless by Jurisdiction

Mountain View Living in Vehicles Count

In addition to the County count, the City also conducts its own street-by-street count of vehicles that appear to be in use for living purposes. Over the past three years, the count of vehicles in the public right-of-way (PROW) used for living has ranged from 250 to 300 vehicles. As noted previously, the residents living in recreational and other vehicles are unsheltered and captured in the County’s PIT count.

ANALYSIS

Alignment of 2025 Community Plan and City Efforts

As noted above, the 2025 Community Plan includes three strategies that work together to help the homeless access housing and services as quickly as possible and ensure that households at risk of homelessness receive the services they need to remain in their homes. Based on the input received, the clear intent of the 2025 Community Plan is to provide a range of potential options/actions to address homelessness as determined by each city and its local needs and priorities.

There is substantial alignment between the 2025 Community Plan and the City's initiatives, policies, and values, including:

1. City Council Major Goal to: "Promote a Community for All with a Focus on Strategies to Protect Vulnerable Populations and Preserve Mountain View's Socioeconomic and Cultural Diversity Protecting Vulnerable Populations."
2. City Council Major Goal to: "Improve the Quantity, Diversity, and Affordability of Housing by Providing Opportunities for Subsidized, Middle-Income, and Ownership Housing."
3. Multiple City plans and programs to increase the supply of housing (affordable and market rate), such as the North Bayshore Precise Plan, East Whisman Precise Plan, the Below Market Rate Housing Program, and the Notice of Funding Availability Program for 100% affordable housing developments.
4. City of Mountain View 2020-25 Consolidated Plan, which includes priority goals to increase the supply of affordable housing as well as responding to homelessness.
5. City of Mountain View Housing Element, which was adopted in 2014 and will soon be updated to reflect current needs.
6. City's affordable housing investment plan, which includes a goal of up to 250 units of permanent supportive housing/rapid rehousing.
7. Council direction on various special short-term initiatives like safe parking and quality-of-life measures (for example, services provided to unsheltered persons or those living in vehicles to facilitate health and hygiene) spearheaded over the last five years.

As discussed further below, many of the 2025 Community Plan initiatives are ones that the City is already implementing, including those related to local emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City's support of the 2025 Community Plan would continue to advance the goal of developing regional strategies in collaboration with other jurisdictions and agencies to end and prevent homelessness by creating permanent housing solutions and enhancing existing service systems.

City Activities to Address Homelessness

The 2025 Community Plan notes that homelessness remains a significant growing issue, driven in large part by shortfalls in resources to build the necessary number and types of

housing as well as systemic issues in areas like criminal justice and mental health. Since 2015, the City has developed programs and policies and dedicated over \$5.7 million in funding to serve homeless and unstably housed residents, going beyond the scale of what is typical for a city of Mountain View's size that has limited funding streams for homeless services. Throughout this time, the City has actively collaborated with the County and community-based organizations, including Destination: Home, Community Services Agency (CSA), Hope's Corner, LifeMoves, and MOVE Mountain View, which have staff expertise and dedicated funding streams for working with homeless and vulnerable populations.

Additionally, City staff has actively worked to increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing, including interim housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing. Having a range of housing across the continuum of needs is critically important to address the diverse circumstances of homeless persons.

City Framework

For the past five years, the City has been studying and taking action to address the challenging rise in homelessness and unstably housed individuals in Mountain View. Today, the City is a recognized leader in addressing this regional problem, looking at all options and forging strong partnerships with the County of Santa Clara and many community-based organizations. Fifteen (15) associated Council reports are available at www.mountainview/homeless.gov (Attachment 3) and have led to the development and execution of an extensive work plan, including well over 100 action items. These initiatives are discussed further in the recent update memorandum on Initiatives to Assist Homeless and Unstably Housed Residents, from October 30, 2020, also available at www.mountainview.gov/homeless (Attachment 4)

The City's current strategies to help prevent and end homelessness can be broadly grouped under the following three-pronged framework:

1. **Outreach and Engagement.**

- **Mountain View Police Department Community Outreach Officer**

Mountain View Police Department's Neighborhood Event Services (NES) unit established a Community Outreach Officer position in 2017. In addition to the normal duties of a Police Officer, the Outreach Officer acts as a liaison between social service providers and homeless individuals and families. The approach of the Outreach Officer is to balance compassion with enforcement when addressing the issues that can come up with this vulnerable population. The

last three years of data show that 241 homeless individuals/households have been referred by the NES team to CSA for assistance.

- CSA Mobile Outreach Worker/Case Manager

Council approved funding for a Mobile Outreach Worker/Case Manager based at CSA in October 2016, and funding continues through Fiscal Year 2020-21, with shared funding from the County. This program has reached out to hundreds of vehicles through multiple rounds of outreach since the program began and presently focuses on case management for safe parking. CSA has enrolled 180 clients via the Vehicle Outreach program since it began in April 2017 and has completed 204 assessments for homeless persons.

2. Services.

Over the past several years, the City has implemented services to respond to the basic and emergent needs of homeless persons, specifically services in response to COVID-19. These programs include, but are not limited to, the following (see Attachment 4):

- Food Voucher/Grocery Store Gift Card Program
- Food Access/Services
- Sanitation and Hygiene Plan
- Mobile and/or Fixed Showers
- Mobile Medical Unit
- Outreach/Communications

3. Housing Opportunities.

Homelessness Prevention Program (Google Funds via Destination: Home/Sacred Heart)

The Homelessness Prevention Program aims to provide funds to keep individuals in stable housing to prevent homelessness. Destination: Home awarded \$3.3 million, including a \$1 million grant from Google LLC for Mountain View and Sunnyvale, to a program administered by Sacred Heart Community Services to

distribute funding to the consortium of seven Emergency Assistance Network agencies (including CSA) to provide a pilot program. This grant funding continued through 2019. Ongoing homeless prevention is provided by the County. Since June 2017, 653 Mountain View-affiliated residents have been served by homeless prevention programs.

City-Funded Rental Assistance

Rental assistance is an important tool used as a part of preventing homelessness. On December 15, 2015, Council first approved funding, in the amount of \$150,000, for a rental assistance program administered by CSA. The intent of the program is to help tenants stabilize their living situations in the event of a steep and/or unexpected rent increase. To increase the use of the rental assistance program, in March 2018, the program was modified to be more flexible, and \$70,000 of the original funding amount was reprogrammed.

COVID-19 Rent Relief Program

In addition to the above-mentioned rental assistance program and in response to the pandemic, Council approved the COVID-19 Rent Relief Program (C-19 RRP) in 2020, with a total funding of approximately \$2.7 million to address urgent needs related to the economic impacts of COVID-19 on residents' ability to pay rent. CSA implements the C-19 RRP and has also raised an additional \$1.2 million in private contributions to support rent relief.

Developing Diverse Range of Housing Opportunities Along Continuum of Needs

The City is working on an extensive project pipeline that will add new affordable units across the continuum of housing needs, including:

- Affordable housing. There are currently approximately 1,300 deed-restricted affordable housing units in Mountain View and several hundred additional units in the pipeline, including the developments referenced below.
- Interim housing, such as Project Homekey, which will add 100 units of such housing to the City to serve homeless seniors and families who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Grant funding for this project was awarded by the State in a highly competitive process. The City jointly applied for this grant with LiveMoves, who will be the operator of this project.

- Rapid rehousing/permanent supportive housing. Several projects include or are being evaluated for incorporating rapid rehousing and/or permanent supportive housing units, such as La Avenida, Montecito, Lot 12, the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)/Evelyn lot, and potential projects in Terra Bella.

Note that the City has also provided funding to County-administered rapid housing/permanent supportive housing services. For example, in 2019, the City provided \$100,000 to the County's rapid rehousing program. This program provides short-term financial assistance (instead of developing units such as with Measure A funding) to rehouse Mountain View-affiliated households. The housing placements occur throughout the County and beyond, not just Mountain View, and 132 Mountain View-affiliated residents have received these services.

Additionally, the City contributes funding to Peninsula Healthcare Connection, which has provided permanent supportive housing services for 347 Mountain View-affiliated residents. The City's partnership in these Countywide service-oriented housing programs has enabled the County to serve both residents throughout the County as well as in Mountain View. Indeed, Mountain View residents are often ultimately placed into housing throughout the County if there are no available options in the City.

- Shelters and Safe Parking. The City has implemented and/or funded other housing efforts, including various shelter programs in coordination with the County and the City's Safe Parking program. While more permanent, stable housing is the ultimate goal for all persons and households, there is not enough supply of such housing. This requires other solutions along the continuum of housing needs to complement permanent housing efforts. As planned and implemented by the City over the last three years, five safe parking lots are now open to serve Mountain View participants, and all are operated by local nonprofit MOVE Mountain View. Following Council direction at its September 8, 2020 meeting, the total number of safe parking spaces that Mountain View provides is more than 100. The City also helped fund the development of three facilities that serve the homeless, and the shelters are a part of the Continuum of Care network to shelter and house the homeless. The largest program is the County's Cold-Weather Shelter Program for Mountain View and North County, which operates during the winter months; Graduate House, which is a transitional shelter operated by LifeMoves; and Quetzal House, which is a youth shelter operated by the Bill Wilson Center.

Capacity Building Support

As part of the City's involvement with developing the 2025 Community Plan and to provide capacity in Mountain View to respond to the needs of homeless persons and households, staff has been in preliminary discussions with Destination: Home to receive funding for the City's program activities. The intent is for the potential funding to be highly flexible and multi-year to best support the City's three-pronged homeless response framework as discussed above. Destination: Home recognizes the leadership the City has demonstrated in responding to its local needs as well as partnering on regional efforts. In addition, this potential capacity building funding would demonstrate Destination: Home's responsiveness to City input provided during the development of the 2025 Community Plan and commitment to partnering with the City in the important effort towards ending homelessness. It is anticipated that Destination: Home will make a determination of funding at the beginning of 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of the 2025 Community Plan, and adoption of the Plan does not commit the City to any one component of the Plan. The intent is that the Community Plan provides a menu of options for each city to determine potential actions to take based on local needs and priorities. As previously noted, the City has already undertaken many efforts consistent with the options in the Community Plan.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council adopt the 2025 Community Plan. The Plan has identified three key strategies to respond to the underlying, systemic factors that contribute to and maintain homelessness. Council adoption of the 2025 Community Plan builds on current and past efforts and will allow for continued collaboration with various agencies and organizations, including Destination: Home, in new ways. A resolution supporting the 2025 Community Plan is provided in Attachment 1.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not adopt the resolution supporting the 2025 Community Plan.
2. Provide other direction to staff.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The meeting agenda and Council report have been posted on the City's website and announced on Channel 26 cable television, and notices were sent to the County of Santa Clara, Destination: Home, CSA, Hope's Corner, LifeMoves, and MOVE Mountain View.

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- Attachments:
1. Resolution
 2. Community Plan to End Homelessness 2020-2025
 3. [Homeless Associated Council Reports](#)
 4. Update Memorandum on Initiatives to Assist Homeless and Unstably Housed Residents, Dated October 30, 2020