



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: June 10, 2025

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: City Manager's Office

TITLE: Homeless Response Strategy and Expenditure Plan Adoption

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the *Pathways to Housing*—Homeless Response Strategy Implementation and Expenditure Plan for the City of Mountain View (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

On [January 28, 2025](#), the City Council held a Study Session to review the draft *Pathways to Housing*—Homeless Response Strategy Implementation and Expenditure Plan (the Plan), a priority project in the City Council Fiscal Years 2021-23 Work Plan. At the Study Session, staff provided an overview of the Plan, which included the Plan development process, stakeholder engagement and input, and a high-level summary of key sections, including homelessness data in Mountain View and Santa Clara County; homelessness response in Mountain View and Santa Clara County; an analysis of current challenges and opportunities; a road map with vision, principles goals, strategies, and actions; and a plan for implementation and expenditures.

The Plan's guiding principles and goals are shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.



Figure 1: Guiding Principles

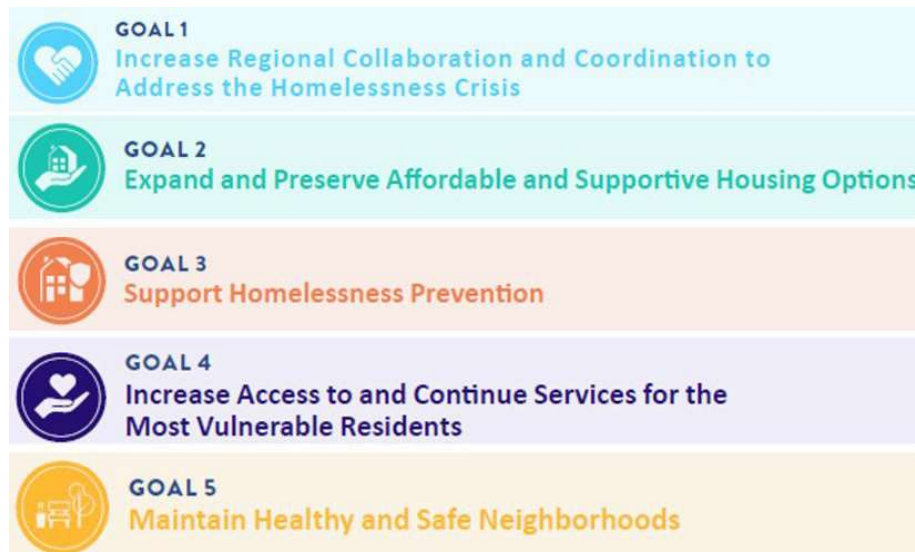


Figure 2: Goals

The purpose of the Study Session was to obtain City Council feedback on the Plan.

Council agreed with the recommended vision statement, guiding principles, and goals and strategies. In addition, Council agreed with the recommended actions for existing and enhanced initiatives and expressed a desire to explore other actions. Council's feedback is summarized in the next section.

ANALYSIS

Following the January 10, 2025 Council Study Session, staff analyzed the feedback and revised the Plan, as summarized in Table 1 and discussed further below.

Table 1: Summary of Feedback and Revisions

Theme	Feedback	Revision
Public Safety	Refine the action related to “Providing public safety services to address issues associated with homeless” to include alternative response models that are not related to the Police Department.	Action 1.2.b, the recommendation for a new multi-city street outreach team, has been revised to clarify that the team will be staffed by non-public safety personnel.
Functional Zero	Provide further information on a “functional zero” goal to end homelessness in Mountain View.	<p>The vision statement has been revised to include language on striving to narrow the gap to “functional zero.”.</p> <p>The paragraph in the Executive Summary that mentions “functional zero” has been revised to include further information about the aim to narrow the gap to “functional zero.”</p>
Interim Housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide further examples of interim solutions. 2. Refine Strategy 2.3: “Diversify affordable supportive housing options” to enhance the actions associated with interim solutions to strive for a goal of “functional zero.” 	<p>Action 2.3.c has been revised to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LifeMoves Mountain View as an interim housing community example; and 2. Language has been added about striving to narrow the gap to “functional zero.”
Metrics	Incorporate metrics of success for homeless initiatives.	The Plan includes a metrics chart, which is Appendix C.

Theme	Feedback	Revision
Communications	Improve communications and resource sharing for housed residents and unhoused residents, such as a telephone hotline and help cards.	Action 4.1.f has been added as a new action under Strategy 4.1, which refers to continuing and expanding distribution of information and referral resources to the unhoused and community-at-large.
Direct Financial Assistance	Provide direct financial assistance program instead of rent relief.	Action 3.1.d has been revised to: 1. Replace the term “rent relief” with “direct financial assistance”; and 2. Include CSA as the provider.
Shoreline, including Safe Parking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include “affordable housing” and “safe parking” as part of the Shoreline Area Plan update. 2. Add more safe parking on the existing Shoreline Lot and explore funding the program via the Shoreline Fund. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Action 2.2.a has been revised to include language about affordable housing being a part of the Shoreline Area Plan. 2. Action 4.3.d has been revised to include language about expansion being focused at Shoreline and the site being funded by the Shoreline Area Plan.
Legislative Advocacy	Engage with legislative delegation to advocate for homelessness response to be included in the next Housing Element and advocate for more state funding toward homelessness efforts.	Action 1.1.a has been revised to include language about the Housing Element.

Theme	Feedback	Revision
Enhanced Resource Hub	Explore options related to an enhanced Resource Hub and work with our community partners, including the Community Services Agency of Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills (CSA).	Action 4.1.g has been added as a new action under Strategy 4.1, which refers to exploring opportunities for CSA to host nonprofit community partners to enhance or expand services available at CSA, the City's homeless resource hub.
Housing Help Center (HHC)	Explore bolstering the City's existing HHC.	Action 4.1.h has been added as a new action under Strategy 4.1, which refers to exploring opportunities for the City to offer some HHC clinic hours at CSA and for CSA to share information about its homeless prevention and housing support services during City-based HHC clinic hours.

The changes made to the Plan are discussed below. Revised language is indicated using track changes.

Public Safety

In 2017, the Police Department created a Community Outreach Officer position as part of the Neighborhood and Events Services Unit. In addition to the normal duties of a Police Officer, the Community Outreach Officer acts as a liaison between social services providers and the unhoused.

Given the mobile nature of homelessness, particularly for those living in vehicles, collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries is critical. Effective street outreach connects with those who may not otherwise seek assistance or come to the attention of service providers. This connection helps meet people's basic needs while encouraging them to engage and supporting them along the pathway toward stable housing. This process requires collaboration among multiple partners

to make strategic use of resources while focusing on an individual-centered approach to meet people where they are.

The Implementation and Expenditure Plan includes recommendations to fund existing, enhanced, and new homeless initiatives. One of the recommended new initiatives is a pilot for multi-city street outreach at a one-time cost of \$150,000, which is currently unfunded. The pilot would be staffed by nonpublic safety personnel with experience and expertise in providing street outreach to individuals experiencing. Staff is engaging with neighboring cities in early dialogue for potential collaboration on street outreach and recommends the timeline be accelerated from medium-term (within four-to-seven years) to short-term (within one-to-three years).

Action 1.2.b has been revised to clarify that a pilot street outreach program with neighboring cities would be staffed by nonpublic safety personnel.

Revised Action 1.2.b: Pilot a street outreach program with neighboring cities to be staffed by nonpublic safety personnel.

Functional Zero

The term “functional zero” was developed by the nonprofit organization Community Solutions. The organization defines the term as “a milestone, which must be sustained, that indicates a community has measurably solved homelessness for a specific homeless subpopulation.” When the milestone is achieved, homelessness is rare and brief for that subpopulation (e.g., chronically homeless, veterans, youth, families, etc.). In order to achieve “functional zero” for a homeless subpopulation, the number of people experiencing homelessness at any given time is never exceeding the number of exits into permanent housing.

This requires a community’s system to have capacity to house everyone who is homeless within the specified subpopulation at any point in time. Considering the current and ongoing severe shortage of affordable housing across the County and state, measuring, defining, and achieving “functional zero” for a specific homeless subpopulation is incredibly complex. Thus, “functional zero” is seen more as an aspirational goal to strive to reach than an attainable measure.

The County of Santa Clara serves as the lead government agency in coordinating, planning, and distributing funding for homeless programs and services in the County and is the City’s major partner in responding to homelessness. Therefore, staff recommends aligning the City’s Plan with the County of Santa Clara. While the County of Santa Clara does not have a goal or metric related to achieving “functional zero” for a particular homeless subpopulation, it does strive to narrow the gap to “functional zero” for all unhoused subpopulations by tracking and comparing the number of individuals who complete a housing assessment for the first time to the number of individuals who are placed into a permanent housing destination each month. The City will do

its part to make meaningful progress toward the availability of sufficient housing resources to meet the needs of all individuals who experience homelessness.

The vision statement has been revised to include language on striving to narrow the gap to “functional zero” for all homelessness.

Revised Vision Statement: The City of Mountain View is committed to working with its local and regional partners to help people at risk of losing housing remain housed and help those experiencing homelessness access services and secure available and safe housing to strive to narrow the gap to “functional zero” for all homelessness.

Furthermore, the paragraph in the Executive Summary that mentions “functional zero” has been revised to include information about striving to narrow the gap to “functional zero.”

Revised Executive Summary Paragraph: The City’s Plan is aligned with the Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness, which sets clear, achievable goals to reduce homelessness throughout the County. Given the severe shortage of affordable housing, the County of Santa Clara frames this goal as striving to achieve “functional zero,” for all unhoused populations where the system has the capacity to house everyone who is homeless. Rather, the aim is to prevent homelessness wherever possible and build a system that ensures homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

Interim Housing

The County of Santa Clara Supportive Housing System is the coordinated, systemwide response to homelessness in Santa Clara County. The system provides an array of programs and services to connect County residents who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness to needed resources. Interim housing is one type of program within this system that provides a short-term environment where unhoused community members can be housed and supported with services and case management. An interim housing project can be developed through various models, such as a facility with private, modular units (e.g., LifeMoves Mountain View) or hotel/motel conversions.

In 2020, the City submitted a joint proposal with LifeMoves to the state’s Project Homekey to develop LifeMoves Mountain View, a new interim housing community with 100 private units. One of the core challenges to the project’s financing is funding the ongoing program operations. The City leveraged its limited resources by providing \$2.4 million in operating support for Fiscal Years 2023-25 through a match funding agreement with the County of Santa Clara. The City does not have additional funding for ongoing program operations beyond this period. LifeMoves continues to fundraise to support the operations of the project.

Interim housing developments, such as LifeMoves Mountain View, can play a role in narrowing the gap to “functional zero” for all unhoused populations to prevent homelessness wherever possible and building a system that ensures homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. As such, Action 2.3.c under Strategy 2.3 has been revised to include reference to LifeMoves Mountain View and how interim solutions support in striving to narrow the gap to “functional zero” for all unhoused subpopulations.

Staff will continue to explore interim housing options. As the City does not have resources to support a new project, external funding, such as grants, would be needed. Grants would likely be limited to project construction costs. Other funding sources would be needed to support ongoing operations.

Revised Action 2.3.c: Continue exploring interim housing solutions, such as the LifeMoves Mountain View project at 2566 Leghorn Street, with developers and operators to strive to narrow the gap to “functional zero” for all unhoused subpopulations.

Metrics

The Plan is intended to be a living document that will incorporate ongoing review and regular updates, with metrics aligned with both the County of Santa Clara’s Community Plan to End Homelessness and the City’s performance measures, program targets, and contractual obligations. The draft Plan did not include a metrics chart; however, one is included in the final Plan as Appendix C. The chart also includes informational-only metrics, which do not have benchmarks but provide context for homelessness data, such as counts. For convenience, the metrics chart is separately included in Attachment 2.

Communications

The City has implemented multilingual outreach strategies using a variety of communication channels to share information about available resources offered by the City, community partners, the County of Santa Clara, and CSA, the City’s official resource hub for the unhoused and unstably housed. These strategies are detailed in Attachment 3.

Staff will continue and expand distribution of information and referral resources to unhoused residents and the community at large, including distribution of existing County of Santa Clara resource cards and posting the monthly resource flyer on the City’s homeless resources webpage. This has been incorporated as a new immediate-term action under Strategy 4.1 led by the Human Services Division with no associated funding required beyond existing staff time.

New Action 4.1.f: Continue and expand outreach distribution of information and referral resources to unhoused residents and the community at large, including distribution of

existing County resource cards and monthly posting of the City resource flyer on the City's website.

Direct Financial Assistance

Since 2015, the City has funded rent-relief programs through a variety of models. During the COVID 19 pandemic, a new approach was used to provide more flexible support to Mountain View households in need. The City provided CSA and the Solidarity Fund (through the Los Altos Mountain View Community Foundation as the fiscal agent) discretionary funding for a broad range of financial assistance. This included one-time help with maintaining housing (e.g., rent, mortgage, utilities), vehicle repairs, transportation access, and medical, dental and eye care.

The Plan included a recommended new Homeless Prevention Emergency Rent Relief Program. Council provided feedback during the Study Session to revise this recommendation to be emergency direct financial assistance rather than rent relief, modeled after the successful programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Draft New Homeless Initiative: Homeless Prevention Emergency Direct Financial Assistance Program

Building off the highly successful emergency ~~rent relief~~ direct financial assistance programs as part of the larger rent relief program during the COVID-19 pandemic (\$5.3 million), the Implementation and Expenditure Plan recommends a new modest but impactful program for extremely low-income households who are unable to pay for their housing by providing their rent on a one-time discretionary funding, which can be utilized for, but is not limited to, maintaining housing (e.g. rent, mortgage, utilities), assistance with vehicle repairs, transportation access, and medical, dental and eye care and other challenging costs basis due to unforeseen circumstances. A preliminary recommendation to develop ~~an emergency rent relief~~ direct financial assistance program is included at a cost of \$100,000.

Shoreline, Including Safe Parking

At the January 28, 2025 Study Session, Council provided the following feedback regarding the Shoreline Area Plan:

- Include affordable housing;
- Include safe parking; and
- Add more safe parking at Shoreline and explore funding the site through the Shoreline Regional Park Community Fund.

Staff has confirmed that affordable housing is a part of the next update to the Shoreline Area Plan.

Following up on Council's feedback to explore additional safe parking in the Shoreline area, staff has begun reviewing opportunities for expansion. The current focus is to expand safe parking spaces at the existing Shoreline Lot B program site. This would create a continuous and cohesive program area and allow for a quicker turnaround time for implementation in comparison to the other Shoreline lots.

Expanding the safe parking program at Shoreline Lot B requires significant effort and resources, including: additional funding; close collaboration with the County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing and Department of Environmental Health, nonprofit partners, and Live Nation; contract changes; lot preparation; and environmental review and permitting.

Staff anticipates submitting a Fiscal Year 2025-26 midyear budget request seeking funding (pending availability) and authorization to expand the safe parking program. This is an accelerated timeline compared to the original recommendation in the draft Plan in an effort to have the expanded portion operational by Q3 2026, following the closure of the Evelyn safe parking site in June 2026. This request will include the use of the Shoreline Regional Park Community fund in alignment with the updated Shoreline Area Plan.

Actions 2.2.a and 4.3.d have been revised as follows:

Revised Action 2.2.a: Expand the existing affordable housing pipeline, which includes an additional 200 units of rapid rehousing/permanent supportive housing, to be included in the Shoreline Area Plan.

***Revised Action 4.3.d:** Pursue an expansion of Safe Parking capacity, maintaining base capacity at Shoreline Lot B, to be funded by the Shoreline Regional Park Community Fund~~Pursue one additional temporary Safe Parking Program site while maintaining existing base capacity at Shoreline Lot B..~~

Legislative Advocacy

At the Study Session, Council provided feedback for the Plan to include engagement with the City's legislative representatives to advocate for homelessness response to be included in the next Housing Element in addition to advocacy for more state funding toward homelessness efforts. Staff has confirmed that this is a part of the City's existing 2025 Regional and State Legislative Platform.

* The timeline for Action 4.3.d has been updated from a long-term action (more than seven years) to a short-term action (within one to three years), and the cost has been updated from a single dollar sign (less than \$149,000) to a double dollar sign (estimated to be \$150,000 to \$299,000).

Revised Action 1.1.a: Work with regional partners on legislative advocacy to obtain state and federal funding to support the Plan, to be included in the next Housing Element.

Enhanced Resource Hub

For more than 65 years, CSA has served as the lead Emergency Assistance Network (EAN) safety net provider for the City, offering a wide range of social services for residents, such as emergency financial assistance for rent and utilities, homeless services, food and nutrition, senior case management, a daily senior lunch program, outreach to vulnerable populations, and more.

In Fiscal Years 2023-24 and 2024-25, the City contributed \$1 million in each of these years for a total amount of \$2 million to CSA's capital funding campaign. Through these funding agreements, the City recognizes CSA as the official "resource hub" for information and resources for unhoused and unstably housed residents in the City. CSA, along with other EAN providers, operates with a "no wrong door" policy meaning that any individual or family seeking services from an organization will be assisted either by direct support or a warm handoff, with the goal of obtaining timely care or advocacy.

To strengthen the network of service providers in the City, CSA has plans to hardscape the front of their building to provide some physical space for other nonprofit service providers and/or volunteer groups to table and provide resources to people in need, further enhancing their role as the City's resource hub.

Staff has updated the Plan to include a new action related to enhancing and communicating about CSA's existing role as the City's resource hub. This action will have an immediate timeline for implementation (less than one year) and will not require funding beyond existing staff time.

New Action 4.1.g: Explore opportunities for CSA to periodically host nonprofit community partners to enhance or expand services available at CSA, the City's homeless resource hub.

This enhanced vision of a resource hub serves some, but not all, functions of a traditional navigation center. Such a center would be a large-scale undertaking, incurring both construction and ongoing operational expenditures, which are beyond the City's ability to fund. Staff will continue to monitor potential funding sources as part of its ongoing due diligence

Housing Help Center

The City's Housing Help Center (HHC) provides community members with support services and assistance in an effort to reduce evictions and increase access to resources to help community members stay housed. In coordination with several nonprofit organizations in the community, available services include legal resources, eviction prevention, assistance applying for affordable

housing, tenant-landlord mediation, and connecting residents with other housing programs and supportive services, such as food and financial assistance. The HHC holds regular in-person clinic hours for landlords and property owners and for tenants at the Rent Stabilization Division Office. Walk-ins are welcome. Additional clinic hours are available virtually. Clinic hours are in English and Spanish. Translation services for other languages are also available.

Staff from the Rent Stabilization Division also host pop-up events in the community by partnering with nonprofit organizations, grassroots organizations, and volunteer groups, including CSA, Day Worker Center of Mountain View, Pacific Clinics, Cafecito, Community Action Team, and Solidarity Fund. There is also an annual Summer Community Kick-Off Event for the community to learn about available resources from over 30 organizations that can support community members to stay housed. These events provide various touch points for the HHC to connect with the community.

Staff has updated the Plan to include a new action related to strengthening the partnership between the HHC and CSA. The action will have an immediate timeline for implementation (less than one year) and will not require funding beyond existing staff time.

New Action 4.1.h: Explore opportunities for the City to offer some Housing Help Center clinic hours at CSA and for CSA to share information about its homeless prevention and housing support services during City-based Housing Help Center clinic hours.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Plan sets a course for collective action to guide current and future planning for further addressing homelessness in Mountain View. The City will take a phased approach (with immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term actions) to fund continued, enhanced, and new programs and services over the next seven to 10 years.

The Plan includes recommendations to continue funding existing ongoing programs as shown in Table 2 below, which are currently funded for Fiscal Year 2024-25 using limited-period funds at a cost of approximately \$1.0 million per Fiscal Year.

Table 2: Existing Ongoing Programs

Initiative	Cost	Funding Source
Safe Parking	\$700,000	General Non-operating Fund
Permanent Supportive Housing	\$125,000	General Non-operating Fund
Homeless Prevention Case Management	\$120,000	General Non-operating Fund
Outreach to Vulnerable Populations	\$42,000	General Non-operating Fund
Hygiene and Basic Health at Program Sites	\$25,000	General Non-operating Fund
TOTAL	\$1,012,000	

Phased Approach Timeline

Staff recommends a phased approach to transition existing programs that are currently funded through one-time sources to be funded from ongoing sources, such as the Shoreline Regional Park Community fund for safe parking and the General Operating Fund for other homelessness response programs. On an annual basis, staff will make recommendations on which existing programs to transition to ongoing funding.

In addition, the Plan recommends enhancing two existing programs and introducing four new programs, either using limited-period or ongoing funding, dependent on ongoing budget circumstances. Finally, the Plan recommends four new homeless initiatives, one of which would ultimately be funded as ongoing. These programs would also be phased in depending on budget availability.

If the Plan is approved by Council, recommended funding would be built into long-range forecasts, as would any funding sources that may be developed. Until then, the City will continue to partner, leverage, and compete for federal and state level grants.

LEVINE ACT

California Government Code Section 84308 (also known as the Levine Act) prohibits city officials from participating in any proceeding involving a “license, permit, or other entitlement for use” if the official has received a campaign contribution exceeding \$500 from a party, participant, or agent of a party or participant within the last 12 months. The Levine Act is intended to prevent financial influence on decisions that affect specific, identifiable persons or participants. For more information see the Fair Political Practices Commission website: www.fppc.ca.gov/learn/pay-to-play-limits-and-prohibitions.html

Please see below for information about whether the recommended action for this agenda item is subject to or exempt from the Levine Act.

EXEMPT FROM THE LEVINE ACT

☒ General policy and legislative actions

CONCLUSION

The City developed the *Pathways to Housing*—Homeless Response Strategy Implementation and Expenditure Plan to reflect on the City’s work over the past eight years and serve as the road map for addressing homelessness in Mountain View over the next seven to 10 years through actionable goals, strategies, and a plan for expenditures and implementation. The continued focus is to work in partnership with the County of Santa Clara, nonprofit organizations, and

community volunteers to help unhoused and unstably housed residents enter and make progress along a pathway to permanent housing.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Modify one or more of the revisions for the final Plan.
2. Provide other feedback for the final Plan, including, but not limited to, the vision statement, guiding principles, goals, and strategies.
3. Do not recommend funding for more one or more of the existing, enhanced, and/or new initiatives.
4. Modify the phased funding approach timeline (to an earlier or later range time frame) for one or the funding for the enhanced and/or new initiatives.
5. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting, website and social media channels, Council meeting notices, and a copy of the report was sent to the County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing, County Supervisor Abe-Koga (District 5), the City's Coordinating Together Group, and the Pathways to Housing Advisory Committee, working sessions/focus group attendees, and interviewees.

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Attachments: 1. *Pathways to Housing*—Homeless Response Strategy Implementation and Expenditure Plan
 2. Metrics Chart
 3. Communications and Outreach Strategies Chart