



CITY OF MILPITAS AGENDA REPORT (AR)

Item Title:	Adopt a Resolution to Endorse the 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness
Category:	Community Development
Meeting Date:	10/6/2020
Staff Contacts:	Sharon Goei, Director of Building Safety and Housing, 408-586-3260
Recommendation:	Adopt a resolution to endorse the 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness.

Background:

In 2014, the Santa Clara County Continuum of Care (CoC), in partnership with Destination: Home, developed the 2015-2020 Community Plan to End Homelessness, where the community came together to create a five-year countywide roadmap that identified innovative strategies and set goals to create new housing opportunities. To address homelessness in a comprehensive way and to access state and federal funding, the CoC is a collaborative created by a broad group of stakeholders led by the County Office of Supportive Housing to coordinate housing and services funding for homeless individuals. The Community Plan to End Homelessness, which is driven and adopted by the Santa Clara County Continuum of Care, is a prerequisite for receiving CoC funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In January 2019, the Santa Clara County Point-in-Time Homeless Census counted 9,706 homeless residents in the County. Despite the progress made in creating a coordinated supportive housing system, the housing crisis continues to grow statewide and locally. In June 2019, as the timeframe for the 2015-2020 Community Plan was ending, efforts began to develop the next five-year plan – the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness (“Community Plan”). Santa Clara County and Destination: Home implemented a community engagement process that involved various stakeholders, including people who have experienced homelessness, subject matter experts, community members and organizations, nonprofit service providers, and public agencies. City staff provided input into the process and disseminated Milpitas’ contributions to addressing homelessness. Community feedback was sought to identify challenges in the homeless system of care and to collect innovative ideas on how to reduce and end homelessness countywide.

As the plan was being updated, the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 further exacerbated homelessness. This highlighted the urgency to create a comprehensive response plan for unhoused individuals and families, as well as our residents who are at risk of homelessness.

The 2020-2025 Community Plan builds upon the previous plan and organizes strategies from the community engagement process into three main strategic areas:

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

These strategies form the basic framework of the Community Plan. On August 25, 2020, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors endorsed the Community Plan and supported working in partnership with stakeholders to implement the plan. The Community Plan is included here as **Attachment B**. Achieving the goals and advancing the strategies in the plan will require broad collaboration across sectors and communities.

Analysis:

On September 17, 2020, City staff submitted an Information Memorandum to the City Council providing a progress update on homelessness response efforts and affordable housing initiatives in Milpitas, including the various actions that the City has taken to address the issues since 2017. The memorandum is included for reference as **Attachment C**.

As discussed in the memorandum, many of the Community Plan strategies are items that the City Council and Housing Subcommittee have advanced and are now included in the Building Safety and Housing Department's work plan. The City has moved forward the three strategies in the Community Plan. For example, to address Strategy 1 and prevent homelessness, Milpitas strengthened tenant protections with the Rent Review and Just Cause Eviction Protection Urgency Ordinances. The City also ensures development of more affordable housing by implementing the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and advocating for more affordable housing with developers. In addition, the Milpitas Rent Relief Program assists the most vulnerable residents with a wide range of housing needs, most notably rental assistance. Staff and the service provider also connect residents with other supportive services depending on the residents' needs. The Rent Relief Program works to prevent tenant displacement and curb short-term homelessness. Furthermore, through Community Development Block Grant funding to support low-income residents with supportive services such as fair housing, or capital projects to preserve affordable housing, a broad range of services and resources is being provided to prevent homelessness.

The State of California created Project Homekey to protect individuals and families experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of experiencing homelessness. With the \$29.2 million Homekey grant award to the County of Santa Clara and affordable housing developer Jamboree Housing, the anticipated conversion of the Extended Stay America hotel to a 132-unit permanent supportive housing facility is proposed to expand the supportive housing system to provide housing and services to the chronically homeless, advancing Community Plan Strategy 2. For homeless outreach, assessment, and case management, staff presented several service options to the Housing Subcommittee recently and continues to research and report on ways to understand and meet the needs of unsheltered Milpitas residents, and to prioritize and coordinate services. Outreach, assessment, and case management are part of Strategy 3 to improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all.

To implement the Community Plan to End Homelessness, in September, Santa Clara County convened a 30-member Unhoused Task Force. Vice Mayor Bob Nuñez and Councilmember Karina Dominguez were appointed to serve on this task force. With the work plan of the task force guided by Strategy 3, the focus is to identify immediate strategies and emergency solutions for the unhoused that can be implemented quickly. As of the preparation of this report, the final meeting is scheduled for October 15 when the task force will conclude with specific recommendations.

The 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness provides a regional-level roadmap to tackle homelessness and its root causes. As described above for Milpitas, the City's progress and approach, as well as activities being planned or implemented, are in alignment with the three strategies to help advance the goals of the Community Plan. Preventing and ending homelessness requires collaboration and coordination of resources at all levels of government, together with community institutions, nonprofit agencies, and community-based organizations.

The recommended action to endorse the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness is consistent with the City Council's goal to address homelessness and affordable housing. With homelessness being a regional issue, a countywide plan unifies organizations and communities on long-term strategies and collective solutions to end homelessness.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendation.

California Environmental Quality Act:

The action being considered has no potential for causing a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).

Recommendation:

Adopt a resolution to endorse the 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness.

Attachments:

- A. Resolution to endorse the 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness
- B. 2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness
- C. Information Memorandum – Progress Report on City of Milpitas Homelessness Response and Affordable Housing Initiatives