



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Erik L. Soliván  
John Ristow  
Jon Cicirelli  
Lori Mitchell  
Nanci Klein  
Omar Passons

**SUBJECT:** See Below

**DATE:** October 3, 2024

Approved

Date

10/3/2024

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:** Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report and Implementation Plan Update

## RECOMMENDATION

- a) Accept the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 City of San José's Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report and the Annual Implementation Plan Update; and
- b) Cross-reference this report to the November 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

## SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

Responding to the unprecedented homelessness crisis and Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness is a top Focus Area of the City of San José. The City is committed to both supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and addressing the impacts on the neighborhoods and waterways in which they reside.

In the past, the City has reported on the homelessness crisis through multiple separate channels. Traditionally, the Housing Department provided a stand-alone annual homelessness report focused exclusively on outcomes related to programs funded and administered by the Housing Department. Separately, the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department offered regular updates on encampment management, including sanitation programs and efforts to maintain cleanliness across San José. Other departments, such as Environmental Services and Transportation, contributed reports on specific components of the City's homelessness response, addressing environmental and vehicle-related challenges.

In place of those multiple department-focused reports, this memorandum presents two reports that together summarize the entire City of San José's efforts and approach over the past fiscal year: the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report (Attachment A) describes in seven sections key themes in the City's evolving response and the Annual Implementation Plan Update (Attachment B) details the City's contribution to the broader regional plan to end homelessness.

Together, these reports provide City Council, City staff, and the public with a holistic view of the City's efforts to address homelessness. By providing this information at the same time and in a single memorandum, staff's intent is to foster meaningful discussions about the scale of the crisis, identify service gaps, and support long-term planning and decision-making toward sustainable solutions.

### Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report

The Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report represents the City's first-ever comprehensive overview of all the major departmental operations involved in addressing homelessness. Organized into seven sections, the report explores the most significant aspects of the City's response. Each section highlights an important theme and describes key outcomes from the previous fiscal year and the collaborative efforts to implement City Council directives and key priorities:

- **Section I:** Housing and Support: Preventing and Ending Homelessness
- **Section II:** Encampment Management and Action: Addressing impacts in the community
- **Section III:** Lived-in and Oversized Vehicles: A new direction for our response
- **Section IV:** Environmental Leadership: Stormwater and environmental change
- **Section V:** Economic Impacts and Opportunities: Recognizing challenges and accelerating progress
- **Section VI:** Data and Technology: Leveraging information to drive quality service
- **Section VII:** Other Significant Department Roles

### Annual Implementation Plan Update

As part of a regional effort to end homelessness, cities across Santa Clara County committed to adopting annual implementation plans for their jurisdictions that aligned with shared goals from the regional Community Plan to End Homelessness 2020-2025<sup>1</sup>. The City of San José's inaugural Implementation Plan<sup>2</sup> was adopted by the City Council in January 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://housingtoolkit.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb501/files/CommunityPlan\\_2020.pdf](https://housingtoolkit.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb501/files/CommunityPlan_2020.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/111629>

This memorandum provides updated information for the City's Implementation Plan, integrates data that was unavailable when the City's inaugural Implementation Plan was adopted, and provides responses to recommendations from the State Homelessness in California audit report.

The Implementation Plan Update reports on the City's progress in meeting its Fiscal Year 2023-2024 goals, identifies lessons learned for future improvements, and, where applicable, sets new goals for the upcoming fiscal year. The update highlights conditions that contributed to the success, allowing the City to focus on replicating and expanding those favorable factors.

The Implementation Plan Update is organized around the vision of A San José for Everyone with four key pillars:

- **End Suffering on the Street:** Permanent and Temporary Homes and Safe Alternatives;
- **Share and Protect Public Spaces:** Embrace natural resources such as waterways while responsibly sharing public space. Balance providing access to spaces such as waterways, trails, parks and public plazas for all while maintaining clean, welcoming places;
- **Expect Cleanliness:** Hold each other accountable for having a clean community; and
- **Create Opportunity:** Expand inclusive economic opportunities for upward mobility and security.

The Implementation Plan Update details progress toward achieving 71 specific actions in support of these pillars.

Acceptance of these two reports will provide the City Council with a more comprehensive understanding of progress made in the City's homelessness response efforts.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City has made considerable efforts to address the homelessness crisis over many years. This has included significant investments in long-term solutions, such as homelessness prevention and the construction of permanent affordable housing. In recent years, the City has also aggressively pursued interim solutions, such as interim emergency housing and Beautify San José, that provide immediate relief to unhoused residents while promoting greater accountability in maintaining a cleaner, more welcoming city.

### Expanding Efforts to Address Homelessness

In 2023, City Council funded several new homelessness response initiatives and identified Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness as a City Focus Area. This effort included the approval of more than 600 interim housing beds/units, the acceleration of approaches to encampment management, and enhanced coordination among City departments.

Building on this momentum in the spring of 2024, the City intensified its efforts by launching a new team structure, bringing more people into the work, incorporating Agile methodologies that drive delivery, streamlining reporting structures, and reprioritizing other departmental work. This strategic shift ensured that this work became a clear top priority across departments, fostering a more coordinated and efficient response to the homelessness crisis. In the first 90 days since the approval of the budget this new team has accomplished over 580 key tasks and actions directly related to building new shelter, supporting homeless individuals, managing impacts on neighborhoods and waterways, and increasing the team's productivity and capacity.

### State Mandate – Responding to Stormwater Permit Challenges

Under the City's Stormwater Permit, which implements the Federal Clean Water Act, the City is required to address any discharges that could potentially enter its waterways. San José has approximately 140 miles of waterways, and a significant number of residents experiencing unsheltered homelessness reside along these areas. A substantial source of trash and pollution in the waterways comes from direct discharges by people encamped near or in these areas.

To maintain compliance with the City's Stormwater Permit, the City sought approval from the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board to continue with an updated Direct Discharge Plan. This Plan represents a commitment that requires substantial investments in addressing discharges related to the unsheltered population and outlines strategies to protect the waterways.

The City Council approved an unprecedented \$27 million investment in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget to meet Stormwater Permit requirements. This funding is primarily allocated for homelessness response efforts, clearing sections of waterways, and preventing re-encampments. These actions are aimed at restoring the waterways to their natural condition. This work is being coordinated through the newly established team structure described above.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report**

Key actions and progress in the City's efforts to address homelessness are highlighted below.

- **Section I: Housing and Support: Preventing and Ending Homelessness**
  - The Housing Department's implementation strategy is focused on meeting the demands of the City's unhoused population through providing temporary shelter, as well as interim and permanent housing options to meet the demands of the City's unhoused population and housing instability.
  - The Housing Department is working to expand public-private partnerships.
- **Section II: Encampment Management and Action: Addressing impacts in the community**
  - Adding approximately 40 additional sites to the regular weekly trash service routes that were not previously serviced.
  - Scaling the RVP3 program from servicing 150 vehicles in 2023-2024 to servicing 600 vehicles in 2024-2025 as part of a regular service route to help reduce the impacts of biowaste on our community.
  - A revised and expanded Good Neighbor policy will allow BSJ Teams to further reduce the footprint of unhoused residents and further mitigate the impacts of homelessness.
  - Prioritized developing shared areas for unhoused residents while creating greater accountability for cleanliness and following the law.
- **Section III: Lived-in and Oversized Vehicles: A new direction for our response**
  - Two citywide on-street inventory counts of oversized and lived-in vehicles parked on city streets.
  - Using the inventory data, staff will develop a list of priority sites based on the proximity and impacts to the surrounding area and priority objectives of the City, including, but not limited to K-12 schools, waterways, and emergency interim housing sites.
  - Beginning in January 2025, and approximately every week throughout the remainder of this initial pilot year (through June 2025), DOT will initiate treatment at a new site deploying temporary tow-away signage to encourage vehicle relocation.

- **Section IV: Environmental Leadership: Stormwater and environmental change**
  - Develop a shared, One Team approach to how the City addresses homelessness with an equity lens related to water quality and climate change.
  - Ongoing work of clearing sensitive areas, in line with stormwater mandates, and then holding those areas clear of re-encampment will further facilitate environmental protection impacted by encampments.
- **Section V: Economic Impacts and Opportunities: Recognizing challenges and accelerating progress**
  - The Real Estate Services Division of the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs has led efforts to secure land suitable for the development of emergency housing, Safe Outdoor Sleeping (SOS) sites, and Basic Needs Sites (BNS).
  - To support the efforts in the downtown area, the Housing Department has focused contractual outreach efforts with PATH to support engagement with the unhoused community.
  - The Upward Mobility Initiative is dedicated to fostering equitable access to upward mobility for all individuals with a particular focus on people of color and other marginalized groups.
  - Work2Future is creating workforce opportunities for unstably housed youth and adult residents.
- **Section VI: Data and Technology: Leveraging information to drive quality service**
  - Transform the City's approach to data related to homelessness to better inform the City's decision-making and serve the public more efficiently.
  - Sharpening the City's analytical capacity with improved data reliability and coordination.
- **Section VII: Other Significant Department Roles**
  - San José Clean Energy seeks to improve energy affordability and reduce customer disconnections of electricity service.
  - Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department is working on additional updates to ensure that specific use regulations for emergency residential shelters are Housing First and low barrier to housing, and allow shelters within the Airport Influence Area to use the City's ministerial approval process.

### Annual Implementation Plan Update

The scope of the Implementation Plan Update reflects the extensive work undertaken by the City in coordination with many regional partners committed to ending homelessness. The City's effort has led to successes as well as lessons learned.

In the first year of the City's Implementation Plan, the City successfully completed **47 of 71** outcome goals, representing a **66% completion rate**. While this progress marks meaningful strides, it also highlights that 34% of goals—**24 of 71**—remain unmet, with significant work still required. The 47 goals achieved reflect the extensive efforts across more than a dozen City departments, in collaboration with community groups, the County of Santa Clara, the Santa Clara County Housing Authority, Destination: Home, the business community, and other stakeholders.

In this final year of the Implementation Plan, the City's work will focus on driving delivery of Council direction to reduce unsheltered homelessness and begin restoring our waterways and neighborhoods at scale. When the next iteration of the Community Plan to End Homelessness is developed, the City will work to ensure this focus on reducing unsheltered homelessness and restoring waterways and neighborhoods is prominent.

### EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

City staff will provide an annual update on the City's efforts to address homelessness to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee.

In addition to annual reporting, progress will be tracked and reported quarterly. These quarterly updates will provide more frequent information on the City's efforts, allowing for timely adjustments and more agile responses to the challenges faced.

This memorandum will be cross-referenced to the City Council meeting on November 5, 2024.

### COORDINATION

The preparation of this memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Budget Office.

### PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee's website for the October 10, 2024, meeting and the City's Council Agenda website for the November 5, 2024, City Council meeting.

## **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT**

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action.

## **CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP17-008, General Procedure and Policy Making resulting in no changes to the physical environment.

## **PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING**

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

/s/  
Erik L. Soliván  
Housing Director

/s/  
John Ristow  
Director, Department of Transportation

/s/  
Jon Cicirelli  
Director of Parks, Recreation  
and Neighborhood Services

/s/  
Lori Mitchell  
Acting Director, Environmental Services  
Department

/s/  
Nanci Klein  
Director of Economic Development  
and Cultural Affairs  
Director of Real Estate

/s/  
Omar Passons  
Deputy City Manager

The principal author of this memorandum is Jiri Rutner, Assistant to the City Manager, Homelessness Solutions Enterprise Manager, Office of the City Manager. For questions, please contact at [Jiri.Rutner@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:Jiri.Rutner@sanjoseca.gov).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: City of San José's Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Consolidated Annual Homelessness Report

Attachment B: City of San José's Annual Implementation Plan Update