



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Deanna J. Santana

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** September 4, 2003

Approved

Date

9-4-03

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON HOMELESS STRATEGY [DSE COMTE., ITEM 4c]**

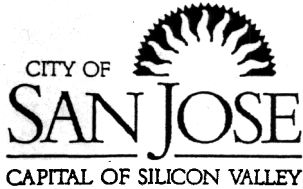
On August 25, 2003, staff made a presentation to the Driving a Strong Economy Committee on the Homeless Strategy.

Upon motion of Councilmember Reed, seconded by Councilmember Chirco, the Committee accepted staff's report "Homeless Strategy".

A copy of the staff memo is attached for your review.

DEANNA J. SANTANA  
Assistant to the City Manager

Attachment



# Memorandum

**TO:** DRIVING A STRONG  
ECONOMY COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Leslye Corsiglia

**SUBJECT:** HOMELESS STRATEGY

**DATE:** August 8, 2003

Approved

Date

August 14, 2003

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Driving a Strong Economy Committee approve the City of San José's Homeless Strategy.

## BACKGROUND

Since the creation of the Office of the Homeless Coordinator in 1991, the City of San José has been an active participant in the region's efforts to house the homeless. With an initial staff of one and the charge of coordinating with other agencies working to address the problem of homelessness, the City's response grew significantly over the past twelve years. Currently, the City's homeless program encompasses four areas: grantsmanship, policy and legislation, coordination with other homeless providers, and grant administration. Programs administered by the City's Department of Housing include: the federal Emergency Shelter Grants Program and the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDs Program, the local Housing and Homeless Fund (now called the Housing Trust Fund), the PROGRESS Program, and the Mayor's Homeless Families and Children's Initiative. The City has also provided technical assistance and information and referral services to those serving the homeless and the homeless themselves.

This year, the federal government adopted a goal to eliminate chronic homelessness within ten years and called upon the nation's cities to adopt plans to make this goal a reality. Initially a challenge from the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the federal government, the Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors have all embraced this goal. The federal government has called for 100 cities throughout the nation to adopt plans on or before January 2004 that seek to eliminate homelessness.

The City of San José has prepared the attached Homeless Strategy to direct the City's response to this ambitious goal. In approving this Plan, the City will join dozens of other communities throughout the nation seeking to revise the current approach to addressing homelessness, which, while well-intentioned, has not resulted in a significant decrease in the homeless population.

## ANALYSIS

The Homeless Strategy outlines the extent of the homeless problem in San Jose, describes the many programs and policies the City has adopted over the years, and lays out a series of policies and actions designed to eliminate chronic homelessness in San Jose within ten years. Examples include:

- **Prevention:** Emphasize programs that seek to prevent homelessness, such as one-time rent to prevent eviction.  
**Rapid Rehousing:** Continue to support existing homeless and transitional shelters, but change the focus to moving people quickly into permanent housing with transitional supportive services as seen in the successful Housing First approach.
- **Wraparound Services:** Rely on existing successful nonprofit entities to provide direct services to the homeless rather than having the City compete by providing these services.
- **Proactive Efforts:** Ensure that data systems collect the information needed to determine the needs of the homeless and the success of program efforts. Also, expand efforts to bring in new resources into the community to cover the costs associated with the provision of services.

One Housing Department staff member will be charged with overseeing the implementation of this Homeless Strategy, working in conjunction with other Housing Department staff and the City's other public and private partners. Another Housing Department staff member is in charge of administering the City's homeless assistance grant programs.

Some have expressed concerns that the ten-year goal is too ambitious. As stated in the report, the City's ability to meet this goal is contingent on a number of factors, not the least of which is the availability of federal funding to assist in meeting the Bush Administration's goal. Additionally, a concentrated regional effort that relies on the work of many groups focused on this goal is needed. The City of San Jose cannot accomplish this goal alone. Nevertheless, the actions included in this report position the City to respond to the challenge that cities are being asked to accept.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH

A focus group was assembled to assist in the development of this Strategy. Attendees included representatives from the Office of the County Executive, the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara, other cities in Santa Clara County, and a variety of nonprofit agencies specializing in housing and homeless policy issues. The focus group met several times to discuss the City's role in homelessness, changes in current policies, and future policy recommendations to help San José's most needy residents move off the streets and out of shelters and into permanent housing.

## COORDINATION

The preparation of the Homeless Strategy has been coordinated with the Council and Intergovernmental Policy Cabinet and the Office of the City Attorney,

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the Homeless Strategy will require additional funding, which will be sought from a variety of sources. The Housing Department plans to contract with a development specialist (fundraiser) experienced in accessing grant funding from federal, State and local sources to expand the City's effectiveness in bringing in financial resources. Additionally, the Department will work with the City's federal lobbyists to increase the amount of federal funding now allocated to San Jose programs. Funding for this contract and the staff needed to implement this effort is included in the FY 2003-04 Housing Department budget.

Funding associated with contracting with a nonprofit entity to provide direct services and funding for the proposed Rental Security Deposit Guarantee Program is available in the FY 2003-04 Housing and Homeless Fund (now called the Housing Trust Fund) budget.

## CEQA

Not a project.

  
LESLEYE CORSIGLIA  
Director of Housing

Attachment

