



Memorandum

TO: DRIVING A STRONG ECONOMY
COMMITTEE

FROM: Leslye Krutko

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: October 7, 2005

Approved

Date

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT DETAILING ACTIVITIES IN THE HOUSING
DEPARTMENT'S HOMELESS SERVICES PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the report on the activities in the Housing Department's Homeless Services Program.

BACKGROUND

On September 9, 2003, the City Council adopted a resolution approving the City's Homeless Strategy with a goal of ending chronic homelessness in ten years. The Strategy established four major areas of effort: Prevention; Rapid Re-housing (i.e. "Housing First"); Wraparound Services, and Proactive Efforts. The following report highlights the major accomplishments for the Homeless Services Program during FY 2004-2005.

Homeless Census and Survey

On December 14 and 15, 2004, the City of San Jose, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and cities throughout the county, conducted a street enumeration of the County's homeless population. Housing Department staff worked with over 400 volunteers to complete the count and survey, including approximately 200 homeless individuals familiar with the locations and strategies most likely to ensure a comprehensive count. The count identified 3,101 homeless individuals as living on the streets and in other locations "not designed for human habitation", and an additional 1,809 homeless individuals and families in either emergency shelters or transitional housing facilities, for a total of 4,910 homeless people in the City of San Jose. According to the survey respondents, some of the causes of their homelessness include drug use (20.5%), unemployment or job loss (17.5%), an inability to pay rent or mortgage (14.7%), or an argument with family or friends (12.7%). Nearly 75% of respondents reported having a current or past disabling condition. Over a third of the respondents (36%) reported having experienced mental illness or depression. The results of the census and survey will be used to inform the City's efforts to address the problem of homelessness in San Jose and as a benchmark to measure the City's progress towards ending chronic homelessness.

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Housing Services Partnership

In January 2005, the City Council approved the selection of the Housing Services Partnership (HSP) as the homeless services provider on behalf of the City and authorized funding in the amount of \$730,000 for one year. The HSP was created at the suggestion of the Housing Department and is a coalition of EHC Life Builders, InnVision and Sacred Heart Community Service. This partnership was the first of its kind in the region, and a major step for the independent nonprofit agencies that often find themselves in competition for limited funding. The partnership also improved efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery through increased hours of service and elimination of redundancy. Services provided include: homeless prevention counseling, financial assistance, case management, permanent housing placement, and referrals to other agencies for additional services. This wraparound agreement was the first step towards the City's goal of a centralized location for homeless services.

Housing Trust Fund

The City's Housing Trust Fund (HTF) was created in 2003 as an ongoing source of revenue to meet the housing needs of the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless. In Fiscal Year 2004-05, the HTF granted over \$1.2 million for services to the homeless, including: assistance for rent and security deposits, information and referral services, case management, job referral services, emergency food, and bus tokens. These services address the immediate needs of the homeless or those at risk, with a focus on enabling families and individuals to remain in safe, stable housing.

Ending Homelessness Leadership Group

The Housing Department convened a series of meetings with the Ending Homelessness Leadership Group consisting of CEOs of local homeless service and shelter organizations, as well as the County's Housing Director, the Executive Director of the Santa Clara County Housing Authority and the CEO of the United Way Silicon Valley. The purpose of the meetings is to identify gaps in the delivery of services to the homeless and develop strategies to close those gaps, and to develop goals towards creating a Housing First model. The Leadership Group has provided policy guidance and support for the development of a Housing First Pilot Program utilizing 25 Section 8 Housing Vouchers made available by the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara. The Housing Vouchers will be combined with intensive case-management and social services to be provided by participating nonprofit agencies, and will target chronically homeless individuals and families. It is anticipated that the program guidelines will be ready for implementation by November 2005.

CONCLUSION

In May 2005, the County of Santa Clara created its own 10-Year Homeless Strategy that includes many of the strategies established in the City's plan. The County's plan has been accepted by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors but has yet to be endorsed by all participating jurisdictions in the County. To promote adoption of the Plan, City and County staff has met with local communities to address concerns and resolve outstanding issues.

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In addition, staff from the Housing Department and the County's Office of Affordable Housing have been working closely to ensure that implementation efforts are coordinated to maximize effectiveness and to minimize the duplication of services.

Should you have any questions regarding any of these actions, please feel free to call me at 535-3851.

LESLYE KRUTKO
Director of Housing