SANTA CLARA COUNTY

COMMUNITY PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

2026–2030

Acknowledgements

The Community Plan Steering Committee would like to thank the many community stakeholders, people with lived experience of homelessness, local government officials, and organizations for their valuable input and deep engagement in the process to develop this plan. For a full list of organizations that participated in the process, see "Our Appreciation", page 24.

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Introduction

For over two decades, the Santa Clara County community has worked to build an effective and streamlined coordinated response to homelessness. Community members, service providers, public agencies, advocates, and other key stakeholders have come together to understand the changing needs of people experiencing homelessness and create a shared vision for action. This collective action laid the foundation for Santa Clara County's first collaboratively developed Community Plan to End Homelessness (2015-2020). This Plan helped position our community to take bold new action, including launching a brand-new Homelessness Prevention System and leveraging Measure A, a $950 million affordable housing bond approved by voters in 2016, to expand our county's supply of deeply affordable housing.

Building on this progress and recognizing the work ahead, the 2020–2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness defined a renewed roadmap focused on scaling proven solutions, strengthening our system to respond to homelessness, and expanding efforts to prevent homelessness in the first place. Developed through extensive community engagement and informed by evidence-based practices and local data, the Plan guided our community's response to homelessness and drove significant system investments and improvements during an unprecedented time marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, economic disruption, and rapidly evolving community needs.

From 2020-2025, we connected nearly 21,000 unhoused individuals to permanent housing, nearly doubled emergency shelter capacity, increased the Homelessness Prevention System capacity by 75%, and leveraged historic investments such as Measure A to expand affordable housing.

OUR PROGRESS: 2020-2025

20,830
People housed since 2020
GOAL ACHIEVED!

19% Decrease in new households becoming homeless since 2019

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

20,830 People Connected to Stable Housing

27,037 People Placed in Temporary Housing & Shelter

38,060* People Received Homelessness Prevention Assistance

* Includes all prevention programs in HMIS including COVID and Emergency Rental Assistance programs

IN 2025

For every 1 household housed another 1.9 become homeless

IN 2019

For every 1 household housed another 2.5 become homeless

KEY INITIATIVES

Building More Permanently Affordable Housing

Our community is aligning public resources — like the Measure A housing bond, Housing Authority vouchers and San Jose's Measure E transfer tax — and private funds from partners such as Cisco and Apple, to spur 56 deeply affordable and supportive housing developments.

More than 6,500 homes are open, under construction or in the pipeline

Preventing Homelessness

Launched as a pilot seven years ago, a broad public-private partnership has expanded the countywide Homelessness Prevention System to serve nearly 2,700 households a year, providing at-risk households with financial assistance and key support services.

93% of households remained stably housed while enrolled

Deploying New Shelter Models

Local jurisdictions are embracing new emergency and interim shelter models - like modular developments, tiny homes and hotel conversions - to quickly provide dignified shelter for people on their path to permanent housing. More than 280 additional units are in development.

280 additional units are in development

Ending Family Homelessness

In 2021, partners launched the HEADING HOME campaign to end family homelessness. Leveraging federal emergency housing vouchers and other resources, the campaign has enrolled all eligible families with children in a housing program.

More than 2,600 families connected to permanent housing

Despite this progress, homelessness continues to affect more people than current resources can serve. The 2025 Point-in-Time Count identified 10,711 people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. At the same time, shifting federal policies and funding priorities continue to reshape our community's response to homelessness, reinforcing the need for a coordinated and strategic response developed and owned at the **community** level.

In response to these realities, Santa Clara County launched a community-driven process to develop this **2026–2030 Community Plan to End Homelessness.**

The planning process began with a review of feedback from over 20 reports, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and feedback sessions conducted between 2023 and 2025 with people experiencing homelessness, service providers, system partners, and community stakeholders. This analysis highlighted key priorities, emerging trends, and additional perspectives needed to inform Community Plan development.

Building on this foundation, the Community Plan was shaped through 15 months of extensive engagement with the people, communities, and systems most closely impacted by homelessness.

Community engagement reinforced that while homelessness is a countywide challenge, needs and priorities vary across regions and populations. As a result, this five-year plan incorporates a strengthened subregional approach across North County, West Valley, South County, and the City of San José, recognizing that local implementation strategies must reflect the distinct needs, assets, and opportunities of each community. *Please see the Appendix for more detailed information about the community engagement process that informed the development of the Community Plan to End Homelessness.*

The 2026–2030 Community Plan to End Homelessness also aligns with broader countywide efforts to improve health, housing stability, safety, and well-being. This alignment recognizes we serve many of the same households across sectors and ensures shared accountability as we work to be more responsive and effective at addressing the complex challenges facing our community. These related efforts include:

- The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Coordinated Community Plan to Address Youth Houselessness
- Commission on the Status of Women Reports & Recommendations
- Latino Health Assessment Action Plan
- Latino Health Assessment Housing and Health Crisis Brief
- Behavioral Health Services Act Integrated Plan

The 2026–2030 Community Plan to End Homelessness builds on more than a decade of community partnership and collective action to establish a renewed framework for preventing and reducing homelessness in Santa Clara County. It reflects our community's ability to come together around shared priorities and advance coordinated strategies that will guide policy, investment, partnership, and implementation efforts over the next five years.

Our 2026-2030 Community Plan Focus Areas

1. **Prevent People from Becoming Homeless**
2. **Continue to House People and Support Housing Retention**
3. **Strengthen Access to Care and Services for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**
4. **Center and Invest in People with Lived Experience of Homelessness**

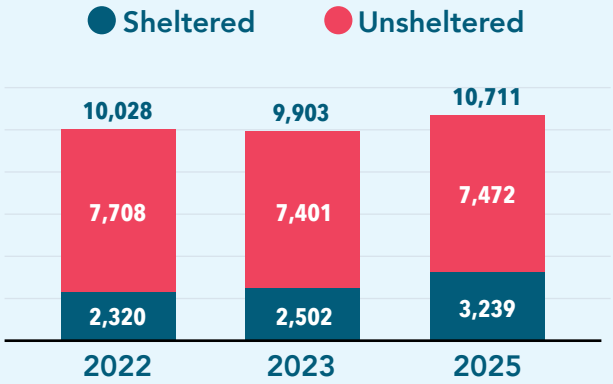
Our Homelessness Crisis

Today, Santa Clara County faces a complex housing and homelessness crisis. While our region is known as a global hub of technology and economic growth, over ten thousand of our residents are unhoused, with tens of thousands more on the brink of homelessness every day. Our current crisis reflects persistently high rates of homelessness and housing instability reported countywide.

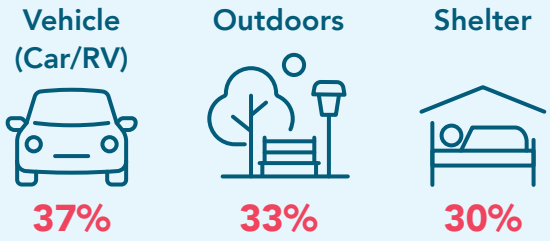
While there is no perfect way to accurately count all who are experiencing homelessness, the 2025 Point in Time (PIT) Count found 10,711 people experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County on a single night.[1] Seventy percent of unhoused individuals identified in the 2025 PIT Count were living unsheltered, meaning outdoors, on the street, in vehicles or other locations not meant for habitation.[2]

Further, we see the impacts of our housing affordability crisis on our long-time neighbors, as 83% of people who are currently experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County were already living in the county when they became homeless, and 70% had lived here for more than a decade before losing their housing.[3]

CENSUS POPULATION TREND



SLEEPING LOCATIONS



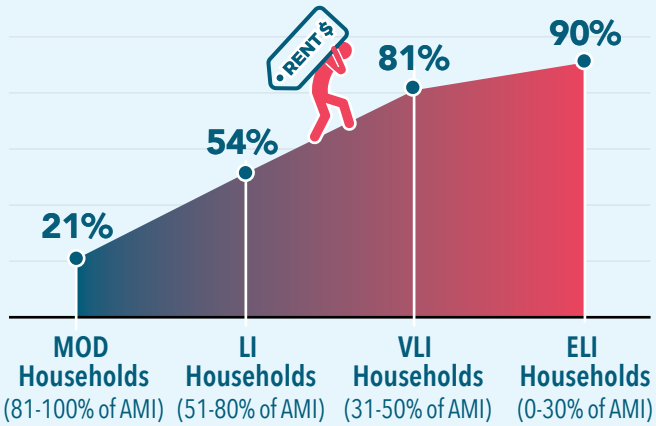
Source: 2025 Point in Time (PIT) Count

Despite significant progress in recent years, homelessness remains entrenched because people are entering homelessness faster than they can be rehoused. Today, for every household our community connects to stable housing, nearly two households become homeless.[4] Thousands of our neighbors are living in housing conditions that place them at heightened risk of homelessness:

- More than half (54%) of low-income households in Santa Clara County spend over half of their income on housing, leaving them one emergency away from losing housing.[5]

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS SEVERELY RENT-BURDENED

San Jose Metropolitan Area: 2024



Note: Renter households spending more than 50% of their income on rent and utilities are severley rent-burdened.

Source: The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes (2026), via Destination: Home

- Eviction filings have risen sharply since the end of COVID-era eviction protections and emergency rental assistance programs, with more than 4,000 eviction lawsuits filed between July 2023 and July 2024.[6]
- Overcrowded housing conditions affect more than 21,000 rental households in Santa Clara County.[7] These conditions place significant strain on families and housing conditions while contributing to challenges related to health, privacy, and safety, including increased vulnerability to interpersonal harm and abuse among household members.[8]
- Our community faces a shortage of housing and services, including those designed for specific subpopulations who are disproportionately impacted by homelessness and its outcomes such as older adults, LGBTQIA+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and survivors of domestic violence.

[1] Source: Santa Clara County Point in Time (PIT) Count (2025).
[2] Ibid.
[3] Source: Santa Clara County Point in Time (PIT) Count (2025).
[4] Source: The State of the Supportive Housing System in Santa Clara County: 2025 Annual Report (2026).
[5] Source: The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes (2026).
[6] Source: Evictions in the Nine-County Bay Area (2026).
[7] Overcrowded housing is defined as a housing unit with more than one person per room, excluding bathrooms and kitchens.
[8] Source: ACS 2023 5-year estimates via SV@Home.

COMMUNITY HOUSING QUEUE DATA

As of June 2026, approximately 6,000 households experiencing homelessness were on the Community Housing Queue awaiting permanent housing after undergoing an assessment through the Santa Clara County coordinated entry system. Data from the Community Housing Queue provides a snapshot of who is experiencing homelessness in our community:

HOMELESS HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

92% single adult households

8% families with children

HOMELESS HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

44% Survivors of Domestic Violence

43% Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

2% Veteran Households

28% Employed

35% Mental Health or Cognitive Impairments

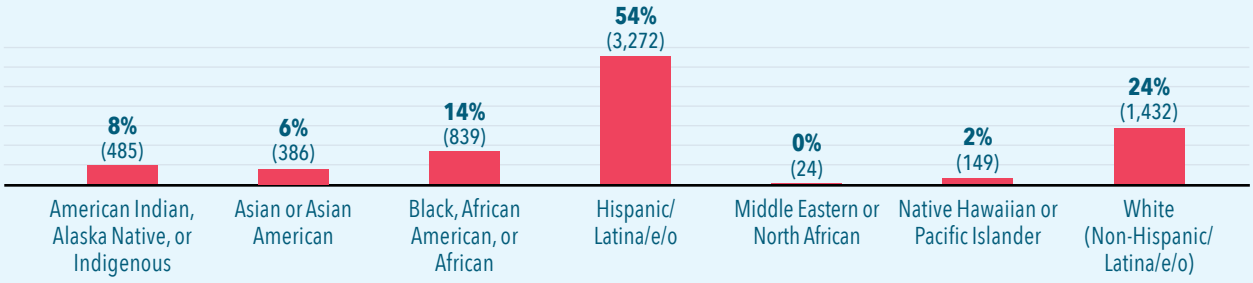
76% Disabling Condition(s)

History with the Criminal Legal System

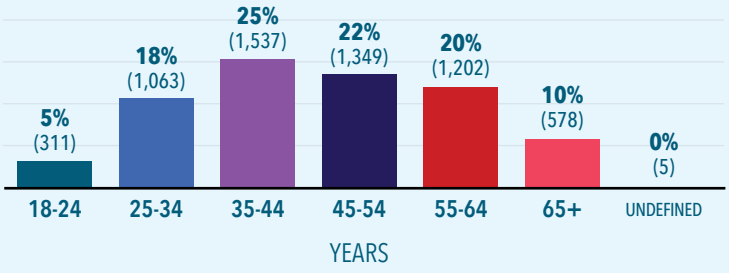
74% had a history of incarceration at any time

34% had been incarcerated within the past 6 months

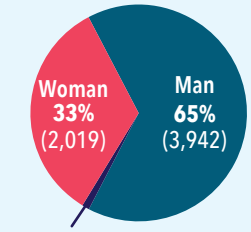
By Race/Ethnicity *(Multiple Responses Allowed)*



Age



Gender



Other Gender/ Data Not Collected **1%** (85)

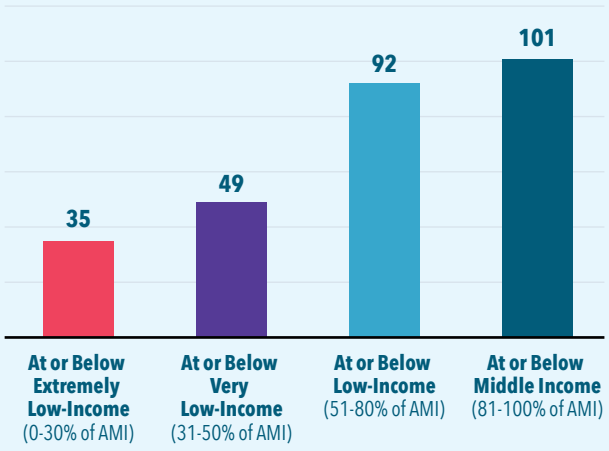
In Santa Clara County, we recognize that although our interventions need to be individualized and person-centered, homelessness is primarily rooted in structural and systemic forces that push more of our neighbors into homelessness every day. These forces include an increasingly uncertain funding landscape, a severe shortage of affordable housing, high housing costs, and growing economic inequality.

Our resources to respond to homelessness are being cut and threatened.

Federal policy changes are shifting priorities away from evidence-based permanent housing programs toward shorter-term interventions with requirements related to sobriety, treatment participation, and employment. These changes, along with proposed changes to the Continuum of Care (CoC) program, make it more difficult for our unhoused neighbors to access permanent, supportive housing that is flexible and responsive to their needs. At the same time, COVID-era funding has largely ended, state homelessness investments are beginning to decline, and all 2016 Measure A bond funds have been committed. These shifts create uncertainty about the future of homelessness response resources and reinforce the need to protect existing housing investments while identifying new, sustainable funding opportunities.

We continue to face a critical shortage of affordable and available housing.

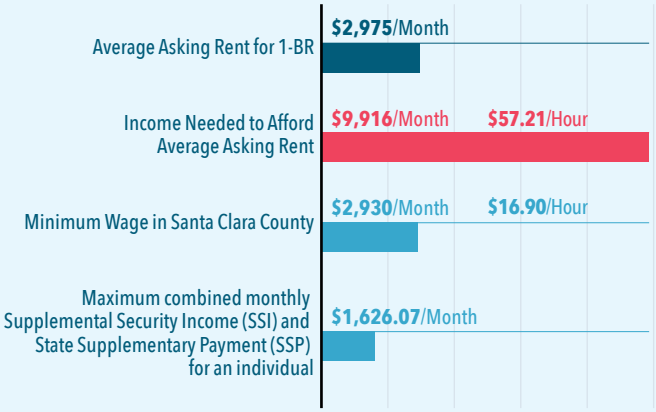
AFFORDABLE & AVAILABLE RENTAL HOMES "PER 100 RENTER HOUSEHOLDS"
San Jose Metropolitan Area: 2024



Source: The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes (2026), via Destination: Home

Housing is too expensive for low-income residents, including seniors and people with disabilities.

AVERAGE RENT COMPARED WITH MINIMUM WAGE AND SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME

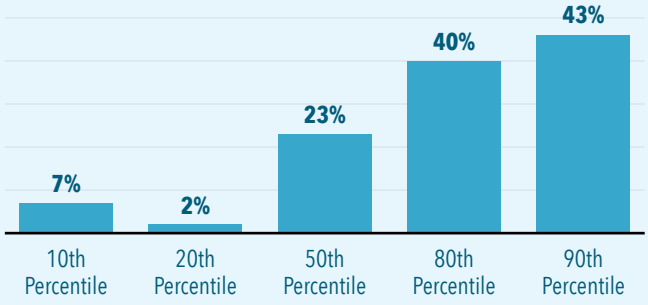


Source: Out of Reach (2025), via Destination:Home, California Department of Social Services

Our homelessness crisis is compounded by our region's growing income gap.

Income inequality grows, as shown in the chart below, as wages in Santa Clara County rise substantially for our highest-wage workers and show little growth for our lowest-wage workers. The concentration of high-wage earners contributes to a higher cost of living and extremely high housing costs that are increasingly out of reach for lower-wage workers whose incomes have not kept pace.

EARNED-INCOME GROWTH FOR FULL-TIME WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY (2000-2024)



Source: IPUMS USA | Bay Area Equity Atlas

Our systems continue to be shaped by structural and systemic racism.

Black or African American residents are overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness

County's Population		Homeless Population
3%	— 5× →	15.2%

American Indian, Alaska Native, and Indigenous residents are overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness

County's Population		Homeless Population
1.2%	— 7× →	7%

Hispanic and Latina/e/o residents are overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness

County's Population		Homeless Population
25%	— 2× →	53%

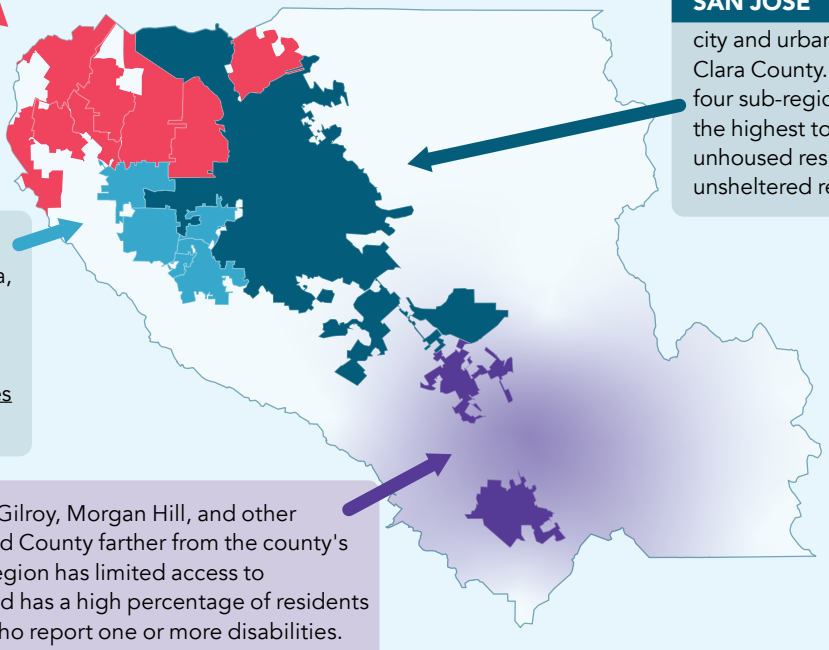
They are also disproportionately represented among:

- **Families with Children**
- **South County Residents**
- **Youth Ages 18–24**

Source: Santa Clara County CY 2025 HMIS Homeless Population data.

We also recognize that Santa Clara County is not one single community, but a collection of distinct communities that shape our collective whole. Moving the needle on ending homelessness countywide requires us to respond to the unique conditions, needs, and challenges of each subregion and its communities:

NORTH COUNTY includes Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, and Milpitas. A key characteristic of this sub-region is that the proportion of unhoused residents living in vehicles is higher than in other regions in Santa Clara County.



SAN JOSÉ is the largest city and urban center in Santa Clara County. Among the four sub-regions, it includes the highest total number of unhoused residents, including unsheltered residents.

WEST VALLEY includes Cupertino, Campbell, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, and Los Gatos within a largely suburban landscape. West Valley completed a Homeless Services Needs Analysis in 2025.

SOUTH COUNTY includes Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and other communities in unincorporated County farther from the county's main service areas. This sub-region has limited access to transportation and services and has a high percentage of residents experiencing homelessness who report one or more disabilities.

Our Commitment to Collective Action

This Plan reflects our community's commitment to taking bold and coordinated action to prevent and end homelessness in Santa Clara County. We need to set ambitious goals because every person in our community deserves safe and stable housing. The current scale of homelessness in Santa Clara County is unacceptable, and meaningful progress will require collective action across systems, sectors, and communities.

Developed through extensive community engagement, this Plan was shaped by and for the diverse communities that make up Santa Clara County. Its success depends on our continued investment in a collective impact model that has helped transform our system of care for tens of thousands of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

The values that emerged from this process reflect what community members, providers, and people with lived experience told us matters most: shared power, equity, accountability, and collaboration. The Santa Clara County Continuum of Care (CoC), comprised of a broad group of stakeholders dedicated to ending and preventing homelessness in our community, commits to the following values to guide our work through the adoption and implementation of this Plan:

- Centering racial equity in all of our work to prevent and end homelessness, with specific racial equity commitments identified for each focus area of this Plan.
- Continuously centering the voices, experiences, and leadership of people with lived experience of homelessness.
- Meaningfully sharing power with unhoused and recently housed community members to make decisions about our response to homelessness.
- Advancing policies and practices that reduce disparities in housing stability and homelessness, particularly for communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness.
- Strengthening collaboration across systems, sectors, and communities to support coordinated and effective responses to homelessness.
- Intentionally assessing existing and planned investments to strengthen the accessibility, cultural responsiveness, safety, and effectiveness of services for diverse populations and levels of need.
- Holding ourselves accountable to the goals, strategies, and outcomes outlined in this Plan and to the community we serve.
- Continuously evaluating and improving our efforts based on feedback from community partners and people with lived experience.

Collective impact is a model for addressing complex community challenges in which organizations and sectors work together toward a shared goal and community-wide impact by using coordinated strategies, shared measures of progress, and continuous communication.

Our Plan

This Plan builds on more than two decades of work to address homelessness in Santa Clara County. It reflects the lessons we have learned, the progress we have made, and the voices of people with lived experience, service providers, partners, and community members. Guided by data, evidence, and community input, the Plan focuses on four key areas to strengthen our response, improve outcomes, and ensure lived experience remains at the center of our work.

1. **Prevent People from Becoming Homeless**
2. **Continue to House People and Support Housing Retention**
3. **Strengthen Access to Care and Services for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness**
4. **Center and Invest in People with Lived Experience of Homelessness**

Our Targets

By 2030, we will accomplish the following goals[9]:

GOAL 1 Increase Homelessness Prevention System capacity by 20%.

3,000 households served annually by 2030

PERFORMANCE GOAL

Demonstrate that at least **85%** of households remain stably housed while receiving prevention assistance and for at least 12 months after the termination of assistance.

GOAL 2 House 15,000 people.

PERFORMANCE GOAL

- **97%** of people in permanent supportive housing programs retain their housing after 12 months.
- **78%** of people in RRH exit to permanent housing destinations.

GOAL 3 Maintain temporary housing capacity countywide.

3,643 temporary housing units[10]

327 behavioral health shelter units

PERFORMANCE GOAL

Households served in temporary housing have a **40%** exit rate to permanent housing.

GOAL 4 Embed people with lived experience of homelessness as experts and leaders in the design, governance, and decision-making of our housing and homeless response system, supported by dedicated funding for recruitment, training, stipends, and leadership development.

GOAL 5 Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in access, service delivery, and housing outcomes within the homelessness response system for the most disproportionately impacted populations.

[9] Our partners with lived experience who helped shape our goals emphasized that progress toward meaningful engagement and racial and ethnic equity cannot be captured through numeric targets alone. A system can meet a participation goal without meaningfully sharing power, and disparities can change without people experiencing the system as more equitable or responsive. For Goals 4 and 5, outcomes will be defined and assessed in an ongoing manner with the people most affected by homelessness and the systems intended to address it.

[10] Temporary housing includes units from emergency shelter (traditional shelter and interim housing), transitional housing, and safe parking.

Our Strategies

Making meaningful progress toward these targets will require intentional cross-system collaboration and a shared commitment to collective action among the people, programs, and systems that work to prevent and end homelessness in our community. Our strategies build on proven, evidence-based practices that have shaped our community response to homelessness while advancing new solutions, strengthening partnerships, and better aligning efforts to maximize resources and impact.

Our 2026-2030 strategies are organized across four interconnected focus areas that provide a consistent framework for implementation. Each focus area addresses the following priorities that will drive the expansion and enhancement of our community's response to homelessness:

Capacity and Access: ensuring access to housing and services across Santa Clara County's geography and for all populations experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Service Delivery: refining services and strengthening efficient, effective service delivery for individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

System Coordination: Collaboration across education, employment, safety net services, healthcare, behavioral health, criminal legal, foster care, housing development, property management, business, and other sectors to strengthen our collective response to homelessness.

Our Commitment to Racial Equity

Across all four focus areas, we commit to centering racial equity in our work to end homelessness. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American, Native American/Alaska Native, and Latinx communities are overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness in our community today. While the specific measures and data will vary across focus areas, we commit to disaggregating data by race and ethnicity, identifying inequities, acting on what we find, and reporting progress back to the community. For each focus area, specific gaps and disparities have already been identified and measures to address those disparities are included in our plan. As we continue to analyze outcomes by race and ethnicity over the next five years, additional measures may be added.

FOCUS AREA 1

Prevent People from Becoming Homeless

Our first focus is on preventing people from becoming homeless, one of the most effective, humane, and cost-efficient interventions available. Since our last Community Plan, the Santa Clara County Homelessness Prevention System has expanded its capacity to serve nearly 2,700 households annually and has demonstrated strong, evidence-based results. A randomized controlled trial by the Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities (LEO) at the University of Notre Dame affirmed what our community has observed locally: immediate financial assistance can help families remain housed and is a cost-effective way to address homelessness before it begins. Guided by these findings, the national Right at Home initiative is now bringing this proven model to communities across the country, with the goal of helping thousands of families avoid homelessness while creating an evidence-based blueprint for a national homelessness prevention strategy.

Building on this success will help more households remain stably housed and avoid the trauma and disruption of homelessness. In these times, where resources to respond to homelessness are threatened, our strategies focus on stopping homelessness before it starts. At the same time, we recognize that the deeper structural drivers of homelessness, such as rising housing costs, income inequality, and systemic inequities, require longer-term solutions and investments beyond the scope of this Plan.

Strategy A: Expand programs and investments to prevent people from becoming homeless.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **A1:** Increase secure, dedicated public and private funding for homelessness prevention programs.
- **A2:** Sustain a strong homelessness prevention system that is easy to access, data-driven, and effective at helping people stay housed.
- **A3:** Increase the availability of deeply affordable, shared, and supportive housing through a variety of flexible approaches that promote stability.
- **A4:** Expand cash assistance strategies, including guaranteed income, to help households meet basic needs and retain housing.

Strategy B: Ensure services are effective to prevent people from becoming homeless.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **B1:** Prevent evictions and expand habitability protections through early identification, tenant protections, and system coordination.
- **B2:** Enforce housing protections and increase access to legal services to combat housing discrimination.
- **B3:** Leverage health care and education resources to prevent homelessness.

Strategy C: Enhance coordination across systems to prevent people from becoming homeless.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **C1:** Prevent homelessness at discharge or system exit through coordination with health care and behavioral health institutions, education, foster care, criminal legal systems, and victim service providers, including providers serving survivors of human trafficking.
- **C2:** Establish partnerships to increase income and employment for those at-risk of homelessness.
- **C3:** Strengthen partnerships with safety net services.

FOCUS AREA 1 Prevent People from Becoming Homeless

RACIAL EQUITY COMMITMENT

Strengthening a More Equitable Homelessness Prevention System

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS WE:

- Expanded equitable access to homelessness prevention for communities of color and immigrant communities through flexible eligibility and culturally responsive partnerships.
- Used data to identify disparities in participation and partnered with a trusted, Black-led organization to strengthen outreach to Black households.
- Successfully engaged households of color, who comprised up to 90% of HPS participants.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Routinely review Homelessness Prevention System (HPS) data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, and disability to ensure equitable access, experiences, and outcomes as the system evolves.
- Partner with community organizations to develop targeted strategies that improve outreach, access, and participant experiences when disparities are identified.

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS:

IDENTIFIED DISPARITY	MEASURE
Black households access HPS at rates lower than expected based on rate of experiences in the homelessness response system.	Black households access the HPS in rates equal to or greater than the rate experiencing homelessness.

FOCUS AREA 2

Continue to House People and Support Housing Retention

While preventing homelessness remains a priority, we must also support people in regaining and maintaining housing stability after experiencing homelessness. Many individuals and families continue to face homelessness due to systemic factors, including economic pressures and a shortage of affordable and accessible housing. This Focus Area strengthens the housing and service options available across the system to meet varying needs and circumstances while advancing a more consistent, safe, accessible, and high-quality response to homelessness.

As funding declines and future resources remain uncertain, expanding subpopulation-specific housing and service programs at the scale needed will be challenging over the next five years. This reality underscores the importance of maximizing the impact of existing resources and ensuring that housing and services are designed and delivered in ways that are responsive to the diverse needs of our community.

Strategy A: Increase and maintain a range of housing options that meets the need.

SUB-STRATEGIES

A1: Increase and diversify public and private funding to build more permanent housing and implement systems improvements.

A2: Increase and diversify public and private funding to expand temporary housing capacity and implement system improvements.

A3: Prioritize development of housing for extremely low-income individuals and set systemwide targets.

A4: Build up housing programs and services to reach geographically underserved areas of the county.

A5: Strengthen and diversify permanent housing capacity and options to meet varied needs and acuity levels.

A6: Strengthen and diversify temporary housing capacity and options, including Emergency Interim Housing (EIH), to increase access and meet varied needs and acuity levels.

A7: Co-design innovative and inclusive housing and service models with people with lived experience that expand access to diverse, permanent housing solutions including high-quality shared housing.

A8: Use data to ensure a range of housing options for subpopulations experiencing homelessness.

A9: Build on federal, state, and local initiatives that align with community priorities to strengthen housing, health care, income support, and other resources to help people get housed and stay housed.

Strategy B: Increase consistency, diversity, and quality of housing and services for people accessing the housing system.

SUB-STRATEGIES

B1: Implement system-wide standards for high-quality service delivery and individualized care across the housing system.

B2: Ensure all housing programs are safe, healthy, and accessible to everyone.

B3: Improve tenancy support for residents in permanent housing programs.

B4: Invest in equitable workforce development programs that reduce barriers to employment for people with current or past experiences of homelessness.

B5: Promote skill-building and career advancement opportunities for people with current or past experiences of homelessness.

B6: Support the development and implementation of programs led by people with lived experience that provide peer support, housing navigation, and mentorship.

B7: Invest in equitable compensation, benefits, staffing, training, and workforce supports for service provider staff to promote retention, well-being, and high-quality service delivery.

FOCUS AREA 2 **Continue to house people and support them in retaining their housing.**

Strategy C: Improve system coordination throughout the housing system.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **C1:** Maintain and strengthen housing retention while reducing returns to homelessness.
- **C2:** Increase coordination between property management and service providers to ensure housing stability.
- **C3:** Reduce housing search time and expand landlord capacity for scattered site housing programs.
- **C3:** Increase behavioral health support in housing programs through cross-system coordination.

RACIAL EQUITY COMMITMENT

Building a More Equitable Housing System

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS WE:

- Expanded race and ethnicity response options in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to better reflect the identities of Hispanic/Latina/e/o, Middle Eastern, and North African communities.
- Strengthened the use of disaggregated data to identify disparities in access to housing and services, exits to permanent housing, and returns to homelessness.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Partner with Rapid Rehousing (RRH) and Emergency Shelter providers to identify and address factors contributing to lower rates of exit to permanent housing for American Indian, Alaska Native, Indigenous, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander households.
- Continue using disaggregated data to identify disparities and partner with providers to develop and implement strategies that improve equitable outcomes.

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS:

IDENTIFIED DISPARITY	MEASURE
American Indian, Alaska Native, and Indigenous households have the lowest percentage of exits to permanent destinations from RRH at 62%.	Increase exits to permanent housing from RRH for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Indigenous households.
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander households in Interim Housing have an exit rate of 55% to permanent housing (11% below the system average).	Increase exits to permanent housing for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households.
Black, African American, and African households have the highest rate of return to homelessness from RRH at 25% after two years.	Reduce returns to homelessness for Black, African American, and African households.

FOCUS AREA 3

Strengthen Access to Care and Services for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

This Focus Area aims to invest in trusted and culturally responsive outreach models and improve the consistency and quality of outreach and engagement. Building on Focus Area 2, it goes deeper into the strategies and collaboration needed to reduce barriers to housing and supportive services so that we can meet our unhoused residents where they are, including outdoors, in vehicles, tents, or other spaces not designed for habitation.

While permanent housing is the goal for everyone, the reality of limited resources and reduced funding for permanent, supportive housing means that many people will experience unsheltered homelessness while they are identifying housing. During this time, we must do everything we can to reduce harm and increase safety, stability, and connection to services. These steps are necessary to ensure that people feel safe and supported in connecting to available resources and pathways out of homelessness.

Strategy A: Build capacity and expand access to trusted, culturally responsive, and coordinated services and resources throughout Santa Clara County.

SUB-STRATEGIES

A1: Identify sustainable funding for increased access to care and services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness

A2: Prioritize outreach led by people with lived experience and community-based organizations to reach populations and regions that are historically or currently isolated, underserved or overrepresented in the homeless response system.

A3: Strengthen system-wide access to accurate, real-time information about available resources so people can reliably find and connect with services.

Strategy B: Increase consistency, variety, and quality of outreach, basic, and essential needs services.

SUB-STRATEGIES

B1: Expand service delivery offerings for basic and essential needs to support stability.

B2: Equip service providers with the training, skills, and capacity to deliver trauma-informed, person-centered care that effectively serves people in unsheltered situations.

B3: Strengthen protections and expand dedicated services for people experiencing vehicular homelessness.

B4: Connect impacted populations to culturally responsive services.

B5: Invest in equitable compensation, benefits, staffing, training, and support for service provider staff working with people who are unsheltered to increase staff retention, well-being, and service delivery quality.

Strategy C: Invest in approaches that improve outcomes and reduce harm for people living unsheltered and the community at-large.

SUB-STRATEGIES

C1: Strengthen coordination between behavioral health, homeless service providers, and public safety partners to divert non-violent homelessness-related calls away from law enforcement.

C2: Expand re-entry and behavioral health services as alternatives to arrest or emergency room admission.

C3: Decrease the number of people residing in encampments and reduce criminalization of homelessness for those who are unsheltered.

FOCUS AREA 3

Strengthen access to care and services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

RACIAL EQUITY COMMITMENT

Centering Equity in Unsheltered Outreach

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS WE:

- Established the Racial Equity Action Lab (REAL) Cohort to use outreach data and community feedback to identify racial disparities and develop recommendations for more equitable and culturally responsive services.
- Expanded equitable access to resources and case management through MyConnectSV (a customer portal for HMIS), including peer support provided by the United Effort Organization (UEO) and self-service registration stations at San José Public Libraries.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Implement REAL Cohort recommendations by increasing recruitment of culturally and linguistically representative outreach staff, strengthening partnerships with culturally specific and peer-led organizations, and providing training on cultural responsiveness and mental health crisis response.
- Continue using data and community feedback to identify and address disparities in outreach access, including barriers related to language, digital literacy, and transportation.
- Expand the use of MyConnectSV to increase equitable access options for people who are least engaged with existing services.
- Address the disproportionate rate of unsheltered homelessness among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals by using data to guide outreach.

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS:

IDENTIFIED DISPARITY	MEASURE
Language barriers limit equitable access to outreach services for participants who primarily speak Spanish.	Reduce reported language barriers among Spanish-speaking participants receiving outreach services.
Asian and Native Hawaiian community members are underrepresented among people served by homeless outreach programs.	Increase participation of Asian and Native Hawaiian community members in outreach services.
American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) community members have the highest rates of living outdoors at 46%.	Reduce percentage of AI/AN community members living outdoors.

FOCUS AREA 4

Center and Invest in People with Lived Experience

This Focus Area centers the importance of investing in people with lived experience as leaders in transforming our community's response to homelessness. Their insights have been essential to the development and growth of our system over the past decade, and they must continue to drive its expansion, improvement, and transformation over the next five years.

Our ability to achieve meaningful and lasting change across all Focus Areas of this Plan, particularly in today's challenging environment, will depend on the expertise, insight, and leadership of people who have experienced homelessness or housing instability. This Focus Area lays out strategies to build workforce development pathways, expand representation in decision-making bodies, and design programs in partnership with people with lived experience to ensure services are responsive, relevant, and effective.

Strategy A: Expand the representation of people with lived experience in leadership roles and decision-making bodies.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **A1:** Build capacity of local jurisdictions and organizations to increase lived experience in leadership roles and decision-making bodies.
- **A2:** Create accessible and flexible leadership opportunities that reflect varying interests, availability, backgrounds, and identities, including representation of people with disabilities.
- **A3:** Reduce structural barriers to participation.

Strategy B: Build leadership capacity and advancement pathways for people with lived experience.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **B1:** Provide opportunities such as mentorship and education for people with lived experience to establish pathways for leadership advancement.
- **B2:** Support transitions from advisory roles to formal decision-making and leadership positions.
- **B3:** Advance equity in hiring, advancement, and retention of people with lived experience.

Strategy C: Invest in approaches that improve outcomes and reduce harm for people living unsheltered and the community at-large.

SUB-STRATEGIES

- **C1:** Establish standards and best practices to support authentic lived experience engagement.
- **C2:** Formalize processes to regularly evaluate the quality and depth of lived experience engagement and use findings to drive improvement.
- **C3:** Develop clear accountability measures to transparently demonstrate how lived experience input informs decisions and system change.
- **C4:** Partner with people with lived experience of homelessness to design and lead public awareness campaigns and narratives to minimize judgement and stigma around homelessness.

FOCUS AREA 4

Center and invest in people with lived experience to lead and transform the homeless system.

RACIAL EQUITY COMMITMENT

Advancing Equity Through Lived Experience Leadership and Engagement

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS WE:

- Invested in lived experience and community leadership through Destination: Home's Andre Ellison Equity Fund, which awarded $4 million in unrestricted, low-barrier grants to 11 grassroots organizations led by people of color and people with lived experience of homelessness.
- Centered people with lived experience in redesigning Coordinated Entry through a committee representing communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant, and undocumented communities.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, WE WILL:

- Expand opportunities for shared decision-making and power-sharing with people with lived experience of homelessness, ensuring representation from communities disproportionately impacted by homelessness and inequity.
- Provide technical assistance and resources to community partners and jurisdictions to strengthen lived experience leadership and power-sharing practices.
- Use qualitative feedback from people with lived experience to evaluate power-sharing efforts, identify gaps, and continuously improve meaningful engagement.

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS:

Our partners with lived experience who helped shape this section emphasized that meaningful engagement is not measured solely by participation, but by shared decision-making and the ability to influence policies, programs, and funding decisions. We will continue working toward a homelessness response system that is designed **with** people who have experienced homelessness, not for them, and where success is measured by the people most impacted by it.

Our Appreciation

The Continuum of Care Board would like to thank the following individuals who contributed countless hours and engaged deeply in the development of this Community Plan through their service on and in support of the Community Plan Steering Committee:

- Bill Wilson Center: Benaifer Dastoor
- Carry the Vision: Vanessa Ashford
- City of Morgan Hill: Edith Ramirez
- City of Palo Alto: Melissa McDonough
- City of San José: Cupid Alexander, Sarah Fields
- Destination: Home: Ray Bramson, Chelsea Muller
- Elevate Community Center: Sharine Xuan
- HomeFirst Services: Jayson Ramos, Kelly Vazques
- Lived Experience Advisory Board Silicon Valley (LEABsv): Elizabeth Colorado, Debra Townley
- Momentum for Health: Bindu Khurana-Brown
- Razing the Bar: Dontae Lartigue
- Sacred Heart Community Service: Erin Stanton
- Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services Department: Dr. Cheryl Ho
- Santa Clara County Housing Authority: Angie Garcia-Nguyen
- Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing: Hilary Armstrong, KJ Kaminski, Jessica Orozco, Leila Qureishi, Laura Urteaga-Fuentes
- Youth Action Board (YAB): Brendan Dickson, Lilliana Martinez
- YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley: Jennifer Lopes

The Steering Committee would like to thank the many people who are currently or formerly unhoused who shared their input and experiences to inform the community plan, including:

- Community Plan to End Homelessness Lived Experience Work Group
- Lived Experience Advisory Board Silicon Valley (LEABsv)
- Youth Action Board (YAB)
- Participants in focus groups centered on:
  - Experiences of residing in RVs in North County
  - Experiences of homelessness in San José
  - Unsheltered homelessness in San José
  - Experiences of homelessness in South County
  - Older adults and seniors
  - Youth and young adults
  - LGBTQIA+ youth
  - Racial and ethnic communities overrepresented and disproportionately impacted by homelessness
- Community members who participated in Community Plan engagement convenings, including:
  - South County community meeting in Gilroy (April 28, 2026)
  - West Valley community meeting in Campbell (April 29, 2026)
  - North County community meeting in Palo Alto (April 30, 2026)
  - San José community meeting at the Roosevelt Community Center (May 14, 2026)
  - Virtual community meeting for members of the Santa Clara County Continuum of Care and the public (May 21, 2026)

The Steering Committee would also like to thank the following community stakeholders, agencies, and organizations for participating in the process:

- Applied Materials
- Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI)
- Bill Wilson Center
- Board of Supervisors
- Carry the Vision
- Cisco
- City of San José
- Commission on the Status of Women
- Community Solutions
- County of Santa Clara:
  - Behavioral Health Services Department
  - District Attorney's Office
  - Independent Defense Counsel Office
  - Office of Pretrial Services
  - Office of Supportive Housing
  - Office of the County Executive
  - Office of the Medical Examiner-Coroner
  - Probation Department
  - Public Defender Office
  - Sheriff's Office
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Destination: Home
- Elevate Community Center
- Gilroy City Council
- HomeFirst Services
- Lived Experience Advisory Board Silicon Valley (LEABsv)
- All Things Disability Equity
- Milpitas City Council
- Momentum for Health
- Palo Alto City Council
- Razing the Bar
- Roots Community Health
- Sacred Heart Community Service
- Santa Clara City Council
- Santa Clara County Cities Association
- Santa Clara County City Managers Association
- Santa Clara County Housing Authority
- Santa Clara County School Boards Association
- Santa Clara County Youth Task Force
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Sunnyvale City Council
- Ujima Adult and Family Services, Inc.
- Valhalla Foundation
- Vally Transportation Authority (VTA)
- Valley Water Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee
- Youth Action Board (YAB)
- YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley

We would also like to thank staff from the 15 cities and towns in Santa Clara County for their participation in the process, including sharing feedback, assisting with community convenings, and participating in sub-regional meetings to discuss sub-region-specific strategies and alignment.

- City of Campbell
- City of Cupertino
- City of Gilroy
- City of Los Altos
- Town of Los Altos Hills
- Town of Los Gatos
- City of Milpitas
- City of Monte Sereno
- City of Morgan Hill
- City of Mountain View
- City of Palo Alto
- City of San Jose
- City of Santa Clara
- City of Saratoga
- City of Sunnyvale

Plan adopted August 19th, 2026 by the Continuum of Care Board:

- Jennifer Loving, Destination: Home
- Consuelo Hernandez, County of Santa Clara
- Preston Prince, Santa Clara County Housing Authority
- Vanessa Butera, City of San Jose
- Vivian Wan, Abode Services
- Jocelyn Arenas, Youth Action Board
- Dontae Lartigue, Razing the Bar
- Claudine Sipili, Destination: Home
- Rob Eastwood, City of Campbell
- Jennifer Lopes, YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley

APPENDIX

2026-2030 COMMUNITY PLAN ENGAGEMENT: AT A GLANCE

40+ Distinct Community Plan Engagement Opportunities

Between June 2025 and June 2026, over 40 opportunities were hosted to help shape the 2026-2030 Community Plan to End Homelessness, including:

- Focus groups
- Listening sessions
- Community convenings
- Surveys
- Roundtables
- Study sessions
- Meetings and discussions with subject matter experts

Lived Experience Engagement

- 80% of community members engaged through focus groups, listening sessions, surveys, and community convenings had current or past lived experience of homelessness.
- Members of the Lived Experience Advisory Board Silicon Valley (LEABsv) and Youth Action Board (YAB) contributed to the development of the Community Plan through the Steering Committee and broader community engagement process.

Regional Community Convenings

- 152 community members from across Santa Clara County participated in regional community convenings.
- In-person convenings were held in North County, South County, West Valley, and San José to ensure regional perspectives shaped the Community Plan.
- More than 70% of participants had lived experience of homelessness.

Language Access and Culturally Responsive Engagement

- All community engagement opportunities were offered in the four most common languages spoken in Santa Clara County (English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Mandarin).
- On-site interpretation and culturally appropriate language services were available through the Santa Clara County Language Access Unit.
- More than 40 monolingual Spanish-speaking residents participated in community engagement events.

Engaging Populations with Unique Experiences and Needs

Targeted outreach and engagement were conducted with populations that face unique barriers or have distinct experiences and needs related to homelessness, including:

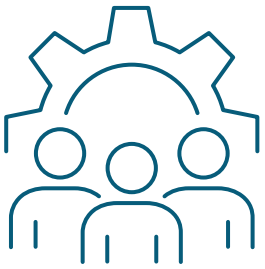
- North County Residents Living in RVs
- San José Residents with Lived Experience of Homelessness
- San José Residents Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
- South County Residents
- Older Adults and Seniors
- Youth and Young Adults
- LBGTQIA+ Youth
- Over-represented racial/ethnic groups

Local Government Partnerships

Elected officials, city staff, and county leaders were engaged throughout the planning process, including through:

- Five City Council meetings.
- Presentations to the Santa Clara County Cities Association and City Managers Association.
- Regular meetings with city staff across all four subregions.
- Briefings with each County Supervisor and their staff.

Subject Matter Expertise Across Systems



Input was gathered from partners across diverse partner agencies and systems, including:

- Criminal legal service providers
- Behavioral health providers
- Affordable housing developers
- Philanthropic organizations and community foundations
- Disability advocates and community partners
- Santa Clara County School Boards Association
- Valley Water Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee
- Santa Clara County Youth Task Force
- Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Staff
- Commission on the Status of Women