

**ALAMEDA**

**The Road Home:  
A Five-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent  
and Respond to Homelessness  
in Alameda**

October 2021

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the number of people experiencing homelessness in the City of Alameda on the rise, the City has developed *The Road Home: A Five-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent & Respond to Homelessness in Alameda* (“the Strategic Plan”). The primary purpose of the Strategic Plan is to provide a roadmap to:

- ✓ Prevent and reduce first-time homelessness;
- ✓ Reduce chronic homelessness;
- ✓ Shorten the period of time an individual or household remains homeless; and
- ✓ Decrease returns to homelessness.



Feed Alameda at Twin Towers United Methodist Church

### OUR EFFORTS TO DATE

The Strategic Plan is the next step in the [City of Alameda's efforts](#) to address homelessness at a local level, which have been underway in earnest since 2015:

- In 2016, the City Council tasked the City's Social Service Human Relations Board (SSHRB) with reviewing City policies and procedures around homelessness.
- In 2018, the City Council adopted the *Homelessness Report* authored by Alameda Housing Authority and SSHRB, and the City received funding for services and programs to address homelessness.
- Today, the City partners with nonprofit and faith-based organizations to provide a range of services and housing to the City's homeless and at-risk communities. Services, shelter, and permanent housing are funded through a combination of sources, including federal, state and local funding.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The City engaged in robust stakeholder engagement to obtain feedback about the current system and recommendations to better respond to homelessness. The [planning process](#) included an in-depth review of existing reports and data, community webinars, online surveys in 4 languages (English, Tagalog, Spanish and Chinese), City website updates and email notifications, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, working groups, Steering Committee meetings, and presentations to the City Council and Social Services Human Relations Board.

### A CALL TO ACTION

While any number of people living on the street or in their cars is too many, the City's homelessness challenges are solvable with the right strategies. With fewer than 300 people experiencing homelessness on any given day, and only half unsheltered, the scale of the problem makes the Strategic Plan's goals realistic, achievable, and necessary.

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF HOMELESSNESS

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The number of people living on the streets is on the rise

A 13% increase from 2017 to 2019

The homeless population is rapidly aging

The median age of people accessing services rose from 39.6 to 51 from 2008 to 2020

Stark disparities by race, ethnicity, and gender exist and are growing

Black or African American individuals are 41% of the homeless population in the city, but only 7% of the general population

Veterans experience homelessness disproportionately

Three times more veterans in the homeless population compared to the general population

## FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO HOMELESSNESS

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The high “cost burden” of housing for low-income households

41% of renters spend 30% or more of their income on housing

The number of households with special needs (e.g., people with disabilities, seniors, and large households)

Households with special needs are more vulnerable to housing instability and displacement

Hardships related to the COVID-19 pandemic

Households are being forced to move from their homes or unable to move into certain neighborhoods

The overall shortage of affordable housing availability

The city does not have enough multi-family housing units (apartments or housing with more than one unit)

## CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

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The strategic planning process used data and stakeholder feedback to identify key challenges and needs for the City to focus on in developing goals and strategies.

### A. Develop Policies & Opportunities to Increase Affordable Housing

- The City needs more affordable housing to effectively address homelessness
- Landlords are invaluable partners in helping people exit homelessness

### B. Provide Accessible and Flexible Financial Resources

- Access to flexible resources offers a cost-effective way to ensure people keep stable housing
- Ongoing small subsidies can fill the gap between a household's earned income and high housing costs

### C. Use Housing-Focused, Low-Barrier Shelter Services

- Emergency shelter that accepts everyone with no or only limited conditions is an essential component of the system
- Many people are not getting connected to services and support

### D. Enhance Supportive Services to Maintain Housing Retention

- Supportive service providers are the key to bringing people off the streets, into shelter, and ultimately into permanent housing
- There is a need for a continued source of funding for supportive services at all levels of the homeless response system

### E. Expand Local Data Collection

- The City has very little data specific to the city and the services it provides
- Local participation and data collection into HMIS is insufficient and not well coordinated

### F. Ensure Funding is Sustainable and Leveraged

- The City has begun to invest general fund dollars to ensure there is a compassionate and intelligent local response to homelessness
- The City's approach needs increased coordination and ongoing investment

### G. Improve Communication, Coordination, and Transparency

- There is a lack of up-to-date resources for those seeking services or looking to connect someone in need of services
- There are still misperceptions in the general public about homelessness in the City

## A ROADMAP FOR PLANNING

The City identified the necessary goals, strategies, and action steps for a city-specific plan. While the path is not free from obstacles, the goals and strategies provide a clear roadmap to guide the City and its partners toward preventing and ending homelessness.

	<p><b>GOAL 1: Secure a Housing Future for All Alamedans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 1.1:</b> Assess and use available public and private land for housing</li> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 1.2:</b> Protect and expand affordable housing through local policy</li> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 1.3:</b> Coordinate short- and long-term housing solutions with the County and neighboring cities</li> </ul>
	<p><b>GOAL 2: Increase Access to Homeless Emergency Response Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 2.1:</b> Develop flexible resources for diversion, prevention, and housing retention</li> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 2.2:</b> Provide low-barrier, housing-focused temporary housing</li> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 2.3:</b> Expand outreach and supportive services to unsheltered households</li> </ul>
	<p><b>GOAL 3: Mobilize the Citywide Response to Homelessness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 3.1:</b> Educate and engage the community on the regional crisis of homelessness</li> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 3.2:</b> Strengthen the homeless response system infrastructure</li> <li>✓ <b>Strategy 3.3:</b> Ensure continued funding for supportive services</li> </ul>

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## INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a complex local, regional, state, and national issue. Solutions that can enable people to move from homelessness to stable housing need to be addressed at all levels. The City has an important role to play.

To take up that responsibility, the City Council identified addressing homelessness as one key priority. As a result, the City contracted with Homebase — a national technical assistance provider on homelessness — to develop a Strategic Plan to help prioritize the resources. They engaged stakeholders to evaluate the current system, including supportive services, shelter, and housing programs, and to identify existing gaps in the system.



The homeless system in the city includes a variety of programs and efforts that are supported by local, state, federal, and private funding sources. The dedication of resources to homelessness by so many agencies and partners across the community reflects a common interest and commitment to ending and preventing homelessness in the city.

One key theme was that this community is ready to come together to address the issue of homelessness. Within the city, there are individuals and key stakeholders who are extremely passionate about this issue and its impacts on the city and the region. They care about resolving homelessness in a way that positively impacts the community in which they live. In a community survey, approximately 92% of the respondents agreed that homelessness is a serious or urgent concern in the city. Moreover, 82% of the respondents agreed that it is possible to significantly reduce homelessness.

While there are many reasons city residents may fall into homelessness – reduced work hours, medical bills or an unexpected expense, loss of a relative or a mental health issue – they are members of our community who are living without stable housing or the support to regain it.

The City and its partners have the opportunity to come together around a set of solutions that will help provide housing and services to people experiencing homelessness and improve local conditions that are most jeopardizing housing stability. The Strategic Plan provides a roadmap and role for all stakeholders and community members. **With fewer than 300 people experiencing homelessness on any given day, and only half unsheltered, the scale of the problem makes the Strategic Plan’s goals realistic, achievable, and necessary.**

The Strategic Plan is based on the latest available data and established best practices to provide an achievable roadmap to addressing homelessness in the city. A full glossary of key terms is available in [Appendix B](#), which provides definition and clarity for many of the terms used throughout the Strategic Plan.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Strategic Plan includes feedback gathered over a period of eight months in 2020/2021 from a diverse set of Alamedans. It included outreach to many sectors in the City and County of Alameda County (County), including businesses, service providers, City and County staff, people with lived experience of homelessness, and neighbors and other community members. The Strategic Plan also incorporates analysis of available data, and research on and an evaluation of the local system of care. The process involved:



Construction of Bay 37, which will include 39 units offered to very low-, low- and moderate-income households over three phases

- **An in-depth review** of existing reports and data about the City and County, including:
  - The economic well-being of the community;
  - The demographics of people experiencing homelessness; and
  - Local efforts and interventions already in place.
- **2 community webinars** with hundreds of local residents and businesses participating;
- **1,097 completed online surveys** available in 4 languages (English, Tagalog, Spanish and Chinese) where Alamedans answered questions about their local priorities and values around preventing and ending homelessness;
- City **website updates** and email notification sign up that reached over 300 subscribers;
- **13 stakeholder interviews** with representatives from City and County agencies and government, law enforcement officials, community-based organizations, service providers, and faith-based organizations;
- **1 focus group** with direct service providers;
- **2 focus groups** with people with lived experience of homelessness and local homeless services;
- **2 working groups** with business leaders;
- **2 working groups** with interdepartmental City staff;
- **5 Steering Committee meetings**, comprised of representatives from nonprofit agencies, faith-based organizations, City and County entities, law enforcement, the business community, and with lived experience of homelessness; and
- **Presentations** to, and feedback from, the City Council, Social Service Human Relations Board, and Commission on Persons with Disabilities.

## BACKGROUND: CITY OF ALAMEDA'S EFFORTS

Historically, the County has been responsible for most programs and planning to address homelessness in the County, including in the city. In recent years, however, the City has begun to work in earnest to address homelessness at a local level. In 2015, the City participated in its first Point-in-Time (PIT) count of households experiencing homelessness, providing a snapshot of homelessness in the city.

**The Point-in-Time count** uses a definition of homelessness mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This definition counts people as homeless when they are living in a place not meant for human habitation (such as an encampment, tent, or vehicle), emergency shelters, or transitional housing. People who are doubled up (more than one household in a unit meant for a single household) or couch surfing are not counted as homeless under this definition.

In 2016, the City began the development of Jean Sweeney Park, which required the dismantling of a large homeless encampment. Together with increased concerns about a shortage of housing supply in the city, this experience brought issues of homelessness, displacement, and affordability even more into focus. By the end of that year, the City Council tasked the City's SSHRB with reviewing City policies and procedures around homelessness.

In 2018, the City Council adopted the *Homelessness Report* (Report) authored by Alameda Housing Authority and SSHRB.<sup>1</sup> The Report was a critical step in laying out what Alamedans experiencing homelessness were confronting, how the City and the County were addressing the issue, and options for adopting additional intervention programs to address local needs.

That same year, the state of California dedicated funding for local communities to address the City's most immediate needs to tackle homelessness. Through Senate Bill 850 (the Homeless Emergency Aid Program – HEAP), Alameda received funding for services and programs to address homelessness in the city. As a result, fourteen initiatives were established, including meal programs, mobile shower and laundry services, case management, warming shelter, and flexible financial support, among others.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Alameda Homelessness Report, March 2018. Available at: <https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/alameda-homelessness-report.pdf>

Throughout this time, the City worked closely with the County to coordinate and align efforts around homelessness. In 2018, EveryOne Home<sup>2</sup> published the County's *Strategic Plan Update: Ending Homelessness in Alameda County* (County Strategic Plan Update), which recommended strategies and actions to reduce homelessness across the entire County, including the City. The County Strategic Plan Update has been endorsed by the City, and a crosswalk of actions is included in [Appendix D](#).

In 2021, EveryOne Home published *Centering Racial Equity in Homeless System Design* (Equity Report).<sup>3</sup> The Equity Report identified the role of structural racism in current systems of care. It highlighted interventions that would support Black or Native American individuals and households (the populations experiencing the greatest racial disparities in the County) while also improving access and services for all individuals and households throughout the County.

This five-year Strategic Plan will build on the City's past efforts, the County's Strategic Plan Update, and the learnings from the Equity report.

In parallel, the City's Planning, Building and Transportation Department also is preparing an update of the Alameda General Plan Housing Element to accommodate Alameda's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). These efforts mark the beginning of the City's next phase related to preventing and ending homelessness at the local level. With focused attention, it is realistic to envision that the people experiencing homelessness in the city can obtain stable and secure housing with the supportive services they need.

## Common Themes from County and City Reports on Homelessness

### Causes of Housing Instability

- Redevelopment efforts
- Shortage of rental housing
- High cost of development
- Increasing demand for rentals
- Lack of income compared to housing costs
- Discriminatory housing policies (exclusionary zoning)
- Stigma against those with mental health issues

### Identified Needs of the Community

- Prevention and diversion
- Increased coordination and community education
- Intensive case management and services
- Commitment to treating unhoused residents with dignity
- Dedication to improving physical and mental wellness

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<sup>2</sup> EveryOne Home is a collective impact initiative founded in 2007 to facilitate the implementation of Alameda County's plan to end homelessness, known as the EveryOne Home Plan. In 2018, EveryOne Home updated that Plan now known as the Strategic Plan Update: Ending Homelessness in Alameda County. Available at: <https://everyonehome.org/about/the-plan/>

<sup>3</sup> Centering Racial Equity in Homeless System Design, Oakland-Berkeley-Alameda County Continuum of Care, Final Report, January 2021. Available at: <https://everyonehome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Centering-Racial-Equity-in-Homeless-System-Design-Full-Report-FINAL.pdf>

## STRENGTHS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE CITY OF ALAMEDA

While homelessness continues to be a challenge in the City and across California, local goals accomplished since 2018 have established an invaluable foundation for continued progress in addressing homelessness. The following is a sampling of the many strong efforts and achievements in the City.

- ✓ The **Alameda All Faiths Coalition** began its **Dine and Connect** program in 2018. The program is run exclusively by volunteers and administratively sponsored by the **Alameda Food Bank** and provides warm sit-down meals for unhoused and housed residents in Alameda to come together. The program has expanded from a single site with a monthly meal to weekly meals served across five different church sites (the most recent slated to open August 23, 2021), serving over 350 meals a month. When COVID-19 hit, Dine and Connect pivoted to serve take-out meals only. In addition, Dine and Connect also collaborates with the City and local restaurants to coordinate the **Feed Alameda** program, providing additional weekly meals to Alameda's unhoused.



Dine and Connect volunteers assembling meals at Immanuel Lutheran Church

- ✓ The City collaborated with **Christ Episcopal Church, Urban Alchemy, and the Village of Love** for a shower and hygiene program, as well as with **Building Futures** for laundry services to unhoused Alamedans.
- ✓ Ninety-six percent of the residents in the largest supportive housing community in the County, **Alameda Point Collaborative (APC)**, maintained their permanent housing for one year or more. During one year from July 2019 through June 2020, more than 30 households gained and retained employment. Ninety percent of households living at APC increased their monthly income, either through employment or by qualifying for other forms of financial support.
- ✓ In August of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Village of Love Safe Parking Program** began to serve the unsheltered community. The program provides a safe place for residents to stay in their vehicles instead of on the streets.
- ✓ In 2020, the County launched a non-congregate shelter option in the city, called **Marina Village Inn**. The Inn was created through Project Roomkey,<sup>4</sup> a part of the state's response to COVID-19. Ninety-five percent of residents sheltered at the Inn stayed sheltered. All 75 of

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<sup>4</sup> California Project Roomkey. Available at: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/cdss-programs/housing-programs/project-roomkey>

the high-risk individuals who stated at the Inn were able to avoid getting COVID-19. Neighbors of the Inn collected holiday gifts for all Inn residents. All residents of the Inn were in the process of obtaining permanent housing when Project Roomkey ended.

- ✓ The **Village of Love's Day Center** allows unhoused residents to get supportive services to connect with housing, rental assistance, and case management to support self-sufficiency.
- ✓ The **Housing Authority of the City** (AHA) received a 2021 Golden Nugget Grand Award.<sup>5</sup> The Award recognizes AHA's leadership in planning and design of innovative housing solutions, specifically **Everett Commons**. Everett Commons is an affordable housing development located on the former Island High School site. It provides 20 homes for low-income families and formerly homeless veterans.
- ✓ The Alameda community raised over \$50,000 for **Feed Alameda**. Feed Alameda provides unhoused residents with meals from local restaurants (who also needed support during COVID). Since January 2021, the program has provided 2,800 meals (between 90 and 105 meals per week) to Alamedans.
- ✓ **St. Vincent de Paul** offers flexible, one-time emergency financial assistance of up to \$750 to individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- ✓ In 2016, the City Council created the **Alameda Rent Program** to stabilize rents and limit grounds for evictions in Alameda. In 2019, the City Council further strengthened the Rent Program by eliminating "no cause" as grounds for eviction, and establishing a cap on annual rent increases for multi-unit properties built before 1995. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City Council took a number of time-sensitive actions to further protect tenants, including: placing a "moratorium" on certain evictions for residential and commercial tenants, offering rent relief for residential tenants and small businesses, instituting a rent freeze, and regulating repayment periods to maximize tenant and homeowner protections to the extent permitted by State law. The City also funded legal services for low-income tenants.

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<sup>5</sup> The Golden Nugget Grand Award is granted by the California Building Industry Association. Available at: <https://cbia.org/>

## WHAT IS THE CURRENT HOMELESS SYSTEM OF CARE?

A range of local organizations, in partnership with the City of Alameda, provide services and housing to the City's homeless and at-risk communities led by the City's CARES Team (Collaboration Advancing Research, Efforts, and Supports for Alameda's Homeless), an interdepartmental and interagency consortium working to address homelessness.<sup>6</sup>

A complete table of service providers and the programs and housing they offer is available in [Appendix C](#).

Services specifically targeted for people experiencing homelessness in the city have historically been funded by the federal government via the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and distributed by the County to nonprofit organizations to provide services, shelter, and housing.

**Continuums of Care (CoCs):** HUD has designated regions across the United States as Continuums of Care to receive federal funding and coordinate local responses. The Alameda CoC shares the same geographic area as the County. EveryOne Home is the backbone agency that supports the County in obtaining federal funding, identifying local priorities, and carrying out the duties of a Continuum of Care, as determined by HUD.



Alameda Fire Department Assists with the FEMA trailers

Over the past three years, the State of California provided one-time funding to communities to address homelessness and housing affordability, including the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP);<sup>7</sup> the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Grant Program;<sup>8</sup> and the Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA).<sup>9</sup>

The City General Fund allocates resources for emerging strategies developed during the planning process for this Strategic Plan, including the Alameda Day Center, Safe Parking Program, Dine and Connect, Homeless Hotline, Temporary Family Housing-FEMA Trailers, street case management, and the Warming Shelter.

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<sup>6</sup> The City of Alameda CARES Team. Available at: <https://www.alamedaca.gov/RESIDENTS/Homelessness-Initiatives-and-Efforts?BestBetMatch=cares%20team|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>

<sup>7</sup> California Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). Available at [https://www.bcsd.ca.gov/hcfc/aid\\_program.html](https://www.bcsd.ca.gov/hcfc/aid_program.html)

<sup>8</sup> Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Grant Program (HHAP). Available at [https://www.bcsd.ca.gov/hcfc/hhap\\_program.html](https://www.bcsd.ca.gov/hcfc/hhap_program.html)

<sup>9</sup> Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA). Available at <https://hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/plha.shtml>

## DATA FINDINGS: WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY AND WHY

Homelessness in the city impacts everyone in the community. This section provides data on people experiencing homelessness in the city and describes the root causes of homelessness.

### WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF ALAMEDA?

#### DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

It is important to note at the outset that data specific to homelessness in the city is limited. The Strategic Plan relied on multiple sources of data, at times using projections with the best information available, to estimate demographics and calculate measurable goals. Strategies described later in the Strategic Plan highlight the [need for improved local data and increased participation in data collection systems](#) – see [Strategy 3.2](#), Action Steps 3.2.a and 3.2.b.

#### POINT-IN-TIME (PIT) COUNT

Every other year, the City conducts a Point-in-Time (PIT) count of people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. The PIT count provides the best data available on the size and characteristics of the homeless population over time.

The number of people who experience homelessness in the city over the course of a year, however, is much higher. This is because the Point-in-Time count only measures the number of people who are homeless on a given day. It does not account for the many people who fall in and out of homelessness during the rest of the year. PIT count data at the city level is also limited as it does not provide much specific information on characteristics of the population experiencing homelessness. Due to the lack of PIT data at the city level, this report complements that data with Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> HMIS data entry is often done by local homeless services providers. Not all homeless service providers participate in data collection. However, providers that receive HUD funding must enter data for their clients in HMIS.

## HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS)

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The HMIS data analyzed in this report includes the data for all clients with “ties” to the city that enrolled in a homeless service program<sup>11</sup> anywhere in the County between 1996-2021.<sup>12</sup> An individual with “ties” to the city is someone who was born, attended high school, and/or was last permanently housed in the city. The HMIS data does not clearly indicate whether a person with ties to the city was actually served by a program within the city.<sup>13</sup> As such, the HMIS and PIT data presented throughout the report should be considered carefully.

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness.

## EVERYONE HOME SYSTEM MODELING

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To enhance the HMIS and PIT data, Everyone Home developed a system modeling methodology, published in their Equity Report.<sup>14</sup> The methodology estimates that the number of people experiencing homelessness in the County over the course of a year is 15,786. Based on that number, the Equity Report estimated the number of people in each region in the County.

The region that includes the city (Mid County) has an estimated homeless population of 2,605 people. The region includes the City of Alameda and the cities of Hayward and San Leandro. Additional estimating through the Everyone Home model broke down the data for each city. According to their estimations, there were approximately 425 households experiencing homelessness over the course of a year in the city.

It is important to note that the method used to count people in each estimate was different. Everyone Home’s model estimated the number of households (one or more individuals living together), not the number of people in the households. HMIS data for the City includes

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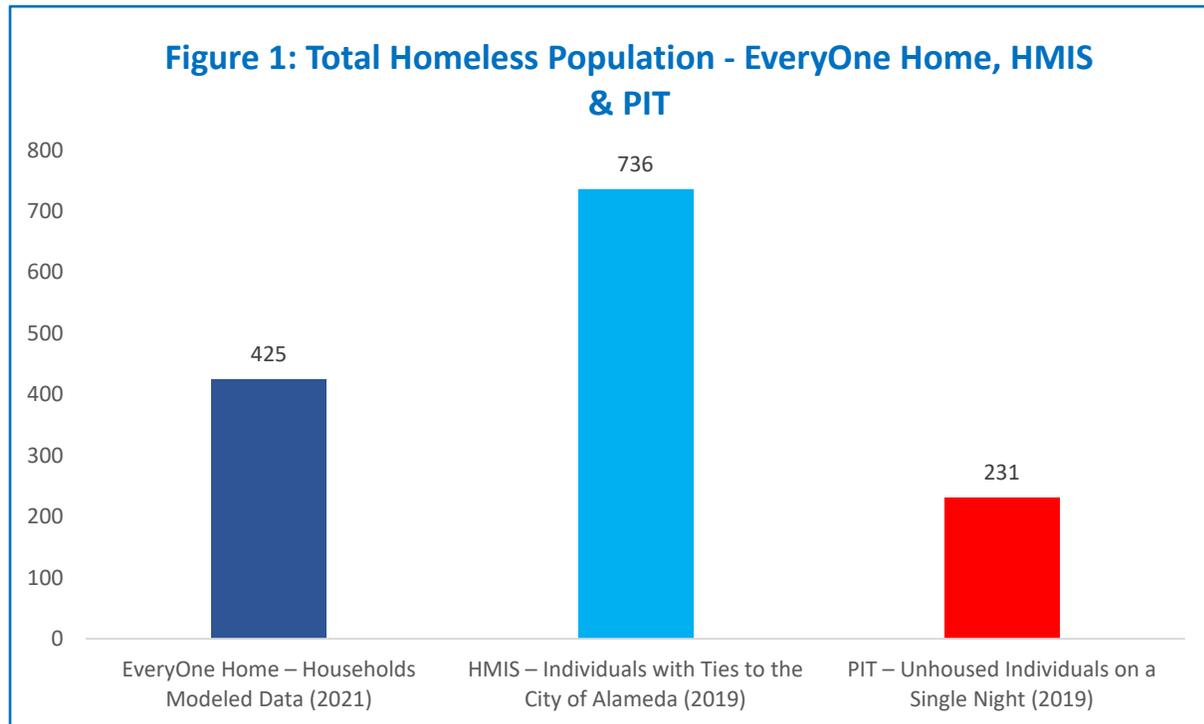
<sup>11</sup> A program that primarily provides supportive services or housing to individuals experiencing homelessness or that are at risk of homelessness.

<sup>12</sup> Most enrollments in this data set started in 2001, as the dataset only shows 5 enrollments prior to 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Throughout this report, when we refer to the people in the city experiencing homelessness, any reference to HMIS data includes those with “ties to the city” and not others.

<sup>14</sup> See Centering Racial Equity in Homeless System Design Final Report. Available at: <https://everyonehome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Centering-Racial-Equity-in-Homeless-System-Design-Full-Report-FINAL.pdf>

individuals (not households) “who have ties” to the city. PIT data includes individuals (not households) who were counted as homeless on one specific date in January.



Source: Point-in-Time count, City of Alameda, 2019, Alameda County HMIS, 2019, EveryOne Home (2021).

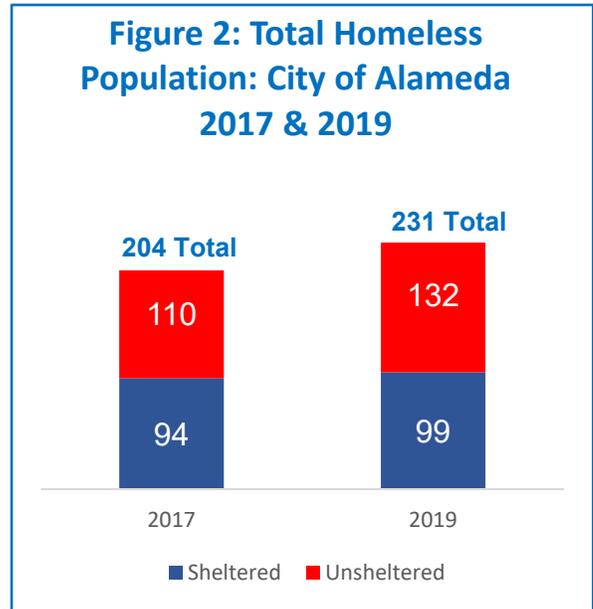
## SHELTERED VS. UNSHELTERED

In 2019, volunteers identified 231 individuals experiencing homelessness in the city on the night of the count. The city’s homeless population represents approximately 3% of the total homeless population for the County.<sup>15</sup>

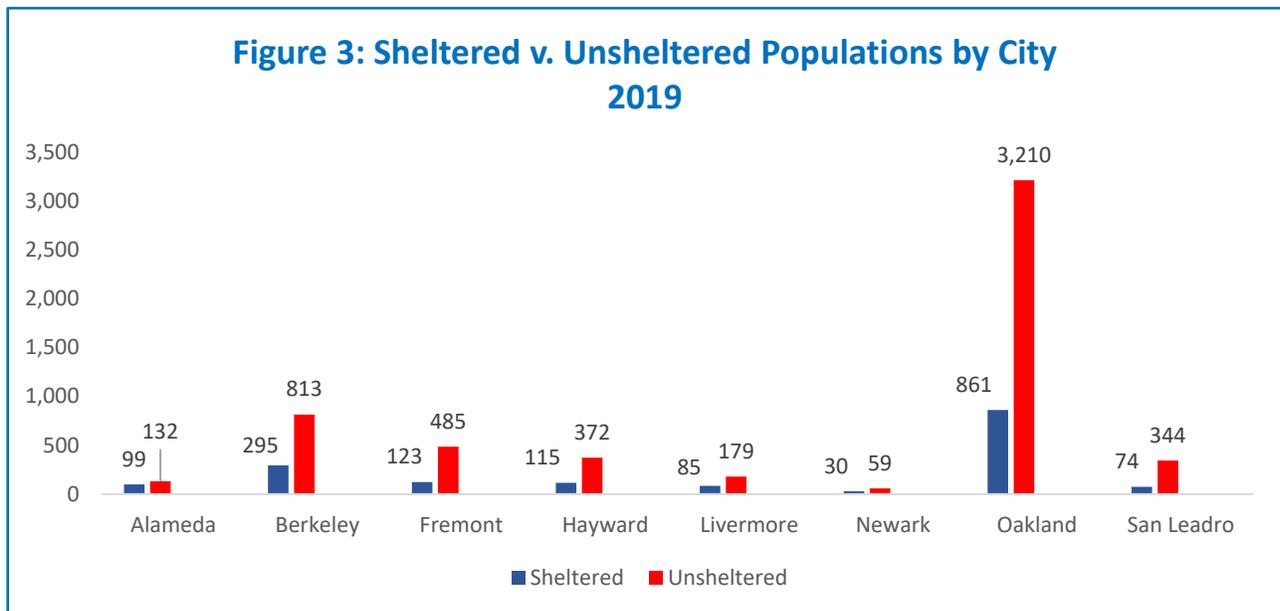
Based on PIT data, **the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the City is rising, particularly unsheltered individuals** (i.e., living on the street, in cars, or in a place not meant for human habitation).

From 2017 to 2019, PIT data indicates a 13% increase in individuals experiencing homelessness (from 204 to 231 individuals). Of particular concern is the 20% increase in individuals who lacked formal shelter (from 110 in 2017 to 132 in 2019). (See Figure 2.) The unsheltered population represents more than half (57%) of the homeless population from 2019.

The numbers indicate that there continues to be an unmet need for permanent housing in the city. Despite the growth in unsheltered homelessness, the City is well positioned to reverse the trend. There are less than 150 people who were living unsheltered at the last full PIT count. Compared to other large cities in the County, the city has one of the lowest percentage of unsheltered individuals.



Source: Point-in-Time count, City of Alameda – 2017 and 2019.



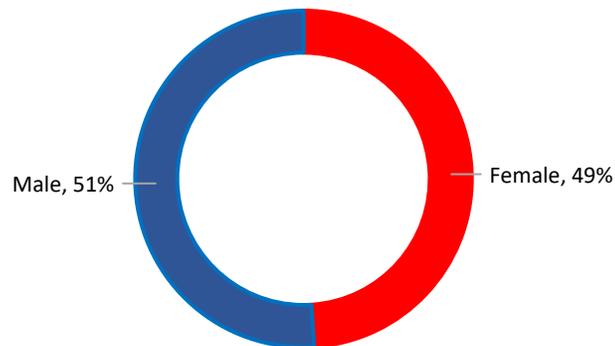
Source: Point-in-Time count, City of Alameda – 2019.

## GENDER

**Men account for a slightly larger share of those experiencing homelessness in the community.**

Approximately 50% of individuals experiencing homelessness identified as male, while 49% identified as female. Additionally, approximately 0.5% of individuals identified as gender non-conforming or transgender.<sup>16</sup>

**Figure 4: People Experiencing Homelessness, City of Alameda**



Source: Point-in-Time count, City of Alameda – 2019.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY

Using EveryOne Home modeling estimates based on County-level PIT data from 2019, **Black or African Americans and American Indian and Alaska Native individuals are almost six times more likely** to be in the homeless population in the city than the general population. Black or African American individuals are 41% of the homeless population compared to only 7% of the general population.<sup>17</sup> American Indian and Alaska Native individuals are 4% of the homeless population and 0.5% of the general population.

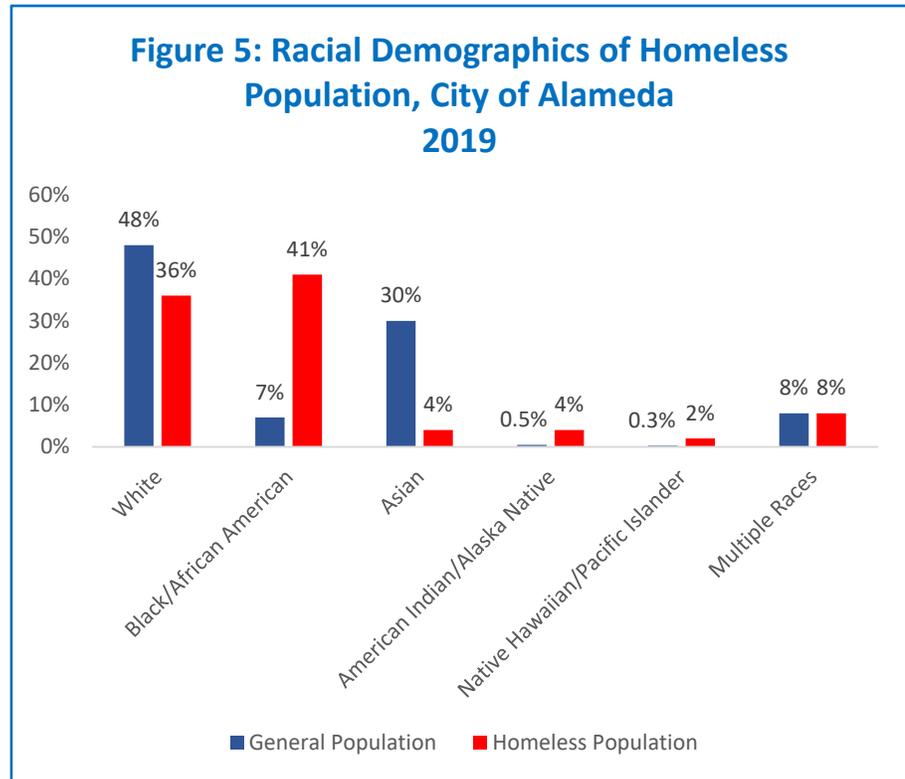
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<sup>16</sup> HMIS data set for those who reported having “ties to the city” from 2001-2021.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Census Bureau data from 2019. Available at:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/alamedacitycalifornia/PST045219>

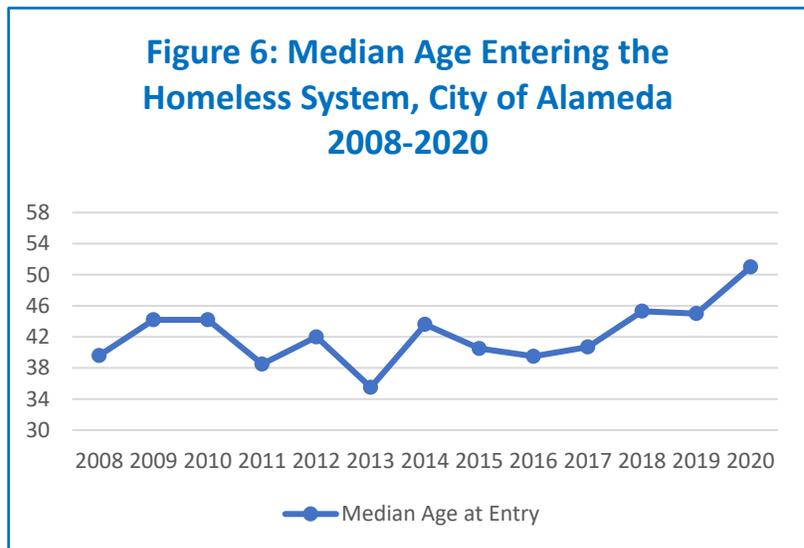
PIT data was not available for the Hispanic/Latinx community and therefore was not included in Figure 5. However, based on HMIS data, approximately 15% of people participating in homeless programs in the city were Hispanic/Latinx, while the general population in the city was 12.5%.<sup>18</sup>



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (ACS) and EverOne Home system modeling from PIT Count

## AGE

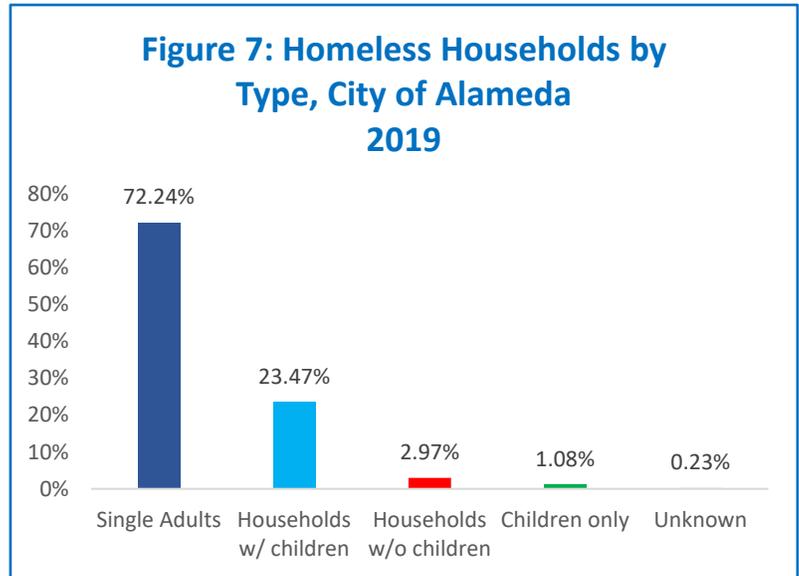
Consistent with national patterns, the **homeless population in the city is rapidly aging**. In 2008, the median age was 39.6; while in 2020, the year most impacted by COVID-19, the median age reached 51. The aging homeless population suggests a strong need for permanent housing that would allow individuals to age in place safely and securely.



Source: HMIS data 2008-2020.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. U.S. Census Bureau data from 2019.

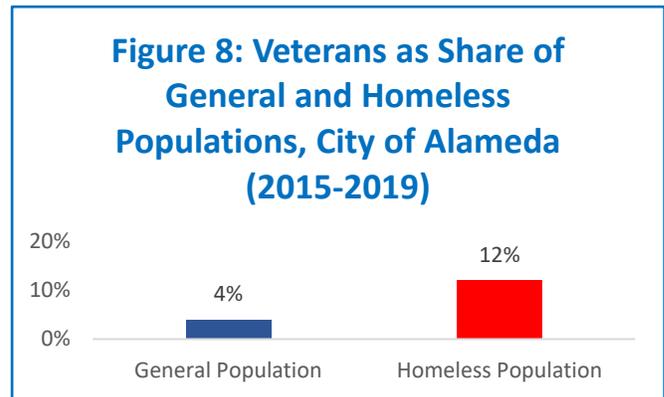
Most people in the city who accessed homeless services were single adults over age 18 years. They represent 72% of the overall homeless population. Households with children represented 23.5% of the population. Households with two or more adults but no children were 3% of the homeless population.



Source: Point-in-Time count, City of Alameda – 2019.

## VETERANS

Nationwide, veterans are at greater risk of becoming homeless. The data for the City and County illustrates that veterans experience homelessness disproportionately, **with three times more veterans in the homeless population** compared to the general population.<sup>19</sup> In 2019, 12% of the homeless population with ties to the city were veterans. However, only 4% of the total adult population in the city were veterans that year.<sup>20</sup>



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (ACS) and HMIS data, 2015-2019.

<sup>19</sup> PIT data for the County of Alameda includes data on veteran status. According to PIT data, approximately 9% of people experiencing homelessness in the County were veterans.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census Bureau data from 2019.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE

Approximately two out of every three people (66%) participating in homeless programs in the city reported having at least one physical or mental disability when they entered a program, and many have multiple chronic conditions that make it difficult to complete activities of daily living. Some of these individuals became homeless due to complications relating to their disabilities. Many others may have acquired their disabilities or had their disabilities compounded due to the trauma of being homeless. (See Figure 9.) Fifty-six percent reported having a mental health problem, while only 24% reported dealing with substance use disorder at the time of intake.<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 9: Total Population with at least one physical or mental disability, City of Alameda**



Source: HMIS data, 2019.

## REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF ALAMEDA

Despite effective programs and dedicated providers, the number of people experiencing homelessness is rising. Each year, hundreds of city residents – neighbors, friends, and co-workers – experience a crisis that results in loss of housing. And once housing is lost, it is increasingly difficult for an individual or family to get back on track.

People become homeless for many reasons. Some are unable to afford rents. Others are working low-wage jobs that do not pay enough to cover rent, maintain a mortgage, or even put down a security deposit. For those living paycheck-to-paycheck, a few reduced working hours, a costly medical bill, or unexpected family emergency can be enough to result in a housing crisis. Still others are fleeing domestic violence or struggling with mental health issues that can make it difficult to retain stable employment. Older adults on fixed incomes are struggling to find housing that is affordable.

<sup>21</sup> This includes people that reported either alcohol or drug use or both.

This section examines some of the causes of homelessness in Alameda.

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## INCOME AND WAGES

Many people in the city have financial security, but that is not the case for everyone. While the median household income in 2019 for the city was \$104,756, 7.3% of the city's population lived below the federal poverty guidelines.<sup>22</sup> The federal poverty guidelines for a family of 4 in 2021 is \$26,500<sup>23</sup> nationwide, and even adjusting for the cost of living in the metro area (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties), the HUD Extremely Low Income Limit for a family of 4 is \$41,100.<sup>24</sup>

**For many households, it is difficult to afford market rate housing.** For example, the median rent in the city was \$1,836 in 2019.<sup>25</sup> A household would need to earn more than \$73,750 annually in order to afford this level of rent and utilities without paying more than 30% of income on housing. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into an hourly wage of \$35.45/hour. (This housing “cost burden” is described in more detail in the next section.)

**Over 40% (or 12,000) of primary jobs<sup>26</sup> located in the city pay only \$40,000 per year or less.**<sup>27</sup> Many of these jobs are in industries such as food service, retail, education, and administration, which make up nearly half the jobs in the city.<sup>28</sup> Many new jobs in the market are also lower wage jobs that make it difficult for new workers in the city to secure and maintain adequate housing.<sup>29</sup> Six percent of Alameda residents were unemployed in May 2021.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Quickfinder, City of Alameda, U.S. Census Bureau. Available at:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/alamedacitycalifornia,US/HSG860219>

<sup>23</sup> 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Available at:

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines>

<sup>24</sup> HUD FY 2021 Income Limits Documentation System, FY 2021 Income Limits Summary, Oakland-Fremont, CA HUD Metro FMR Area. Available at: <https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/departments/alameda/econ-dev-amp-comm-services/community-services/hud-fy-2021-income-limits-for-alameda-county-california.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Quickfinder, City of Alameda, U.S. Census Bureau. Available at:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/alamedacitycalifornia,US/HSG860219>

<sup>26</sup> A primary job is the highest paying job in the public or private sector that an individual holds. A second or third job for one person would not be included.

<sup>27</sup> 2021 *Housing and Affordability and Displacement*: City of Alameda Report, page 38. The report is intended to meet the Measure A1 implementation policies for the Rental Housing Development Fund & Innovation and Opportunity Fund adopted by Alameda County Board of Supervisors in November 2017 to enable the City to implement a local preference for those who live and work in the city for affordable housing units.. Available at:

[https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/departments/alameda/econ-dev-amp-comm-services/r\\_alameda\\_displacementreport\\_stc\\_final.pdf](https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/departments/alameda/econ-dev-amp-comm-services/r_alameda_displacementreport_stc_final.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> 2021 City of Alameda *Housing and Affordability and Displacement* report, page 40.

<sup>29</sup> 2021 City of Alameda *Housing and Affordability and Displacement* report, page 38.

<sup>30</sup> State of California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Alameda County Labor Force Data 2020-2021. Available at: <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/alameda-county.html>

While only 34% of White households in the city earn less than \$75,000 per year, **41% of households of color earn less than \$75,000**. Alameda Unified School District data for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 found that 86% of students who are socioeconomically disadvantaged are students of color. This suggests that households of color may be particularly challenged when trying to maintain rental housing.<sup>31</sup>

Recent research indicates that increases in income for city households tend to benefit households earning over \$100,000 per year. With more resources available to households with higher incomes, the **likelihood that the city's 7,700 lower income renters (those who make \$75,000 or less) will be displaced increases**.<sup>32</sup>

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## HIGH-COST BURDEN HOUSEHOLDS

As with other cities in the Bay Area, the **cost of living in Alameda is relatively high**. From 2015 to 2019, the median value of owner-occupied housing units was nearly \$860,000, while the median monthly rent was \$1,836.<sup>33</sup>

**Renters in the city face a higher “cost burden” from housing and are at greater risk of losing their housing than homeowners**. According to HUD, cost-burdened households pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing and they may have trouble paying rent and covering others costs such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.<sup>34</sup> The number of renter households who are high cost-burdened in the city has increased since 2010.<sup>35</sup>

**Cost burden** is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs," which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

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<sup>31</sup> 2021 City of Alameda *Housing and Affordability and Displacement* report, page 6.

<sup>32</sup> 2021 City of Alameda *Housing and Affordability and Displacement* report, page 37.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Census Bureau data from 2019. More recent data for July 2021 from Zumper indicates that the median rent has increased to \$1,950. Zumper found that 80% of units for rent were priced between \$1,500 and \$3,300 per month. Meanwhile, RENTCafe reported in June 2021 that the city's average rent was \$2,462 per month for approximately an 824 square foot space. Like Zumper, they found that 84% of apartments for rent at the time listed for over \$2,000/month. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/alamedacitycalifornia/PST045219>, <https://www.zumper.com/rent-research/alameda-ca>, and <https://www.rentcafe.com/average-rent-market-trends/us/ca/alameda/>

<sup>34</sup> HUD Featured Article, *Rental Burdens: Rethinking Affordability Measures*. Available at: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr\\_edge\\_featd\\_article\\_092214.html](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr_edge_featd_article_092214.html)

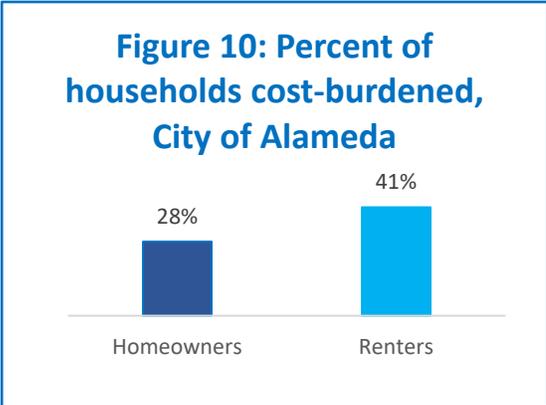
<sup>35</sup> American Community Survey, 2019 5-year estimates.

In the city, according to the most recent HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data,<sup>36</sup> **forty-one percent of renters spend 30% or more of their income on housing.** By contrast, 28% of *homeowners* spend 30% or more of their income on housing.<sup>37</sup> **Communities where residents spend more than 30% of their income on rent can expect to see an increase in homelessness.**<sup>38</sup>

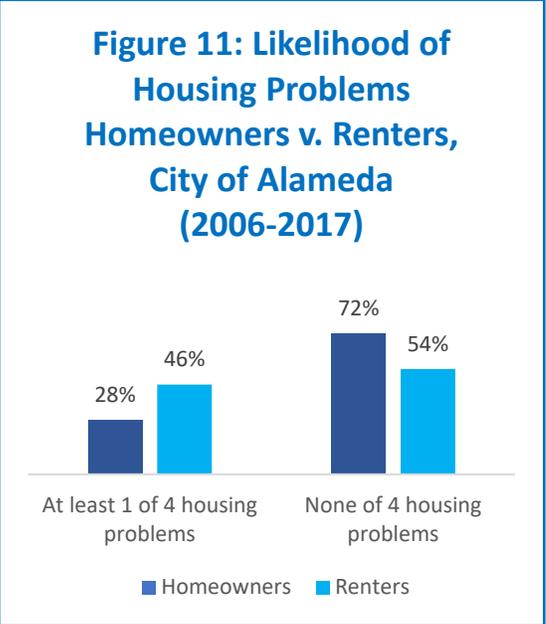
In addition to a high housing cost burden, there are three additional housing problems that place Alameda individuals and families at greater risk of losing their homes. First, many low-income families may have an apartment or home that does not have complete kitchen facilities. They may have an apartment or home that does not have complete plumbing facilities. They may live in a household that is overcrowded.<sup>39</sup>

In the city, **close to 50% of the city's renter households have one or more of the identified housing problems** (1. high housing cost burden; 2. incomplete kitchen facilities; 3. incomplete plumbing facilities; 4. overcrowded household). More than 25% of homeowners have one or more of the housing problems. **Renters in Alameda are almost twice as likely to be at risk of losing their housing because of these issues.**

**At risk of homelessness** is a status given to individuals and their families who have unstable housing and inadequate income and resources.



Source: HUD Comprehensive Affordable Housing Strategy (CHAS) data, 2006-2017.



Source: HUD Comprehensive Affordable Housing Strategy (CHAS) data, 2006-2017.

<sup>36</sup> 2013-2017 CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) data. Available at: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017\\_query](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017_query)

<sup>37</sup> Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) receives custom tabulations of American Community Survey (ACS) data from the U.S. Census Bureau. These data, known as the "CHAS" data (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy), demonstrate the extent of housing problems and housing needs, particularly for low-income households. Available at: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017\\_query](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017_query)

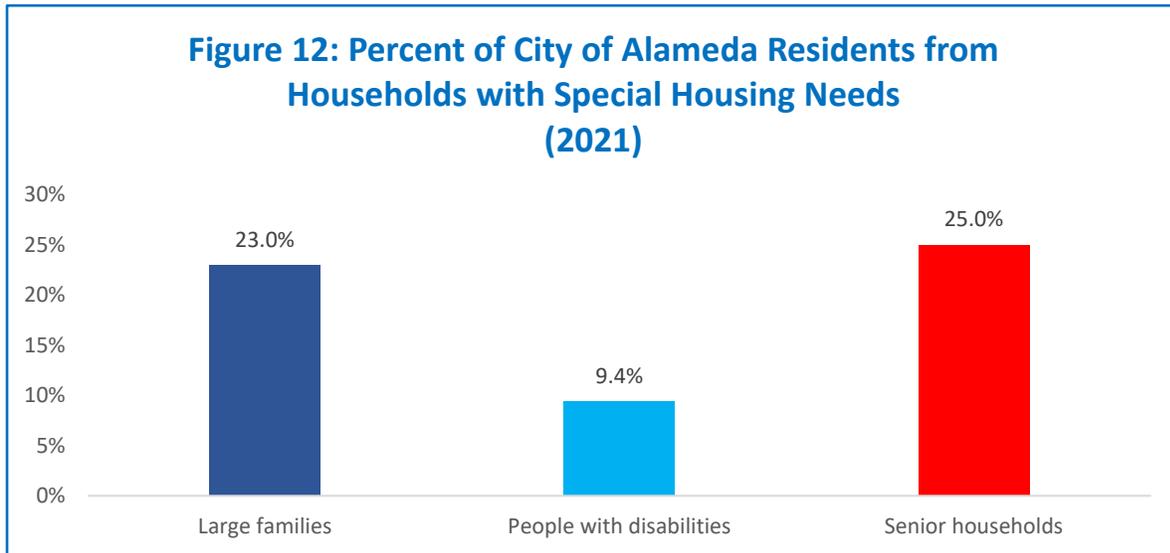
<sup>38</sup> Homelessness Rises Faster Where Rent Exceeds a Third of Income (Dec. 11, 2018). Available at: <https://www.zillow.com/research/homelessness-rent-affordability-22247/>

<sup>39</sup> 2013-2017 CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) data. Available at: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017\\_query](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017_query)

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## BARRIERS FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS

**Large families, people with disabilities, and seniors are some of the constituents in the city who live in households that have special housing needs.** Almost 10% of the city's residents have disabilities. One quarter of city households include seniors. Almost one quarter of the city's households are comprised of large families.<sup>40</sup>



Source: American Community Survey 2019, 5-Year Estimate.

**People with disabilities and seniors have functional needs that require accommodations in housing.** They also can have changing needs that sometimes can make it difficult for them to stay safely housed. Larger households have size and capacity needs that don't trigger accommodations, per se, but can also result in making it difficult to remain stably housed.

These **households with special housing needs are even more vulnerable to housing instability and displacement.** Households with children have the added burden of ensuring there is no disruption to a child's education.

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## HARDSHIPS RELATED TO COVID-19

**Recent efforts to curb spread of COVID-19 have impacted many households.** Businesses have closed or been unable to serve in person. The City Council approved an ordinance in March 2020 to protect residential and commercial tenants from eviction if their inability to pay

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<sup>40</sup> 2021 City of Alameda *Housing and Affordability and Displacement* report, page 2-3.

rent was due to COVID-19.<sup>41</sup> The City also secured state funding to help households pay rent and utilities, offered free legal services for low-income households, prohibited rent increases, deferred rent for residents of City-owned buildings, and created rent relief programs.<sup>42</sup>

At the same time, **many landlords were losing significant income when rents were not paid**. The State of California recognizing more state relief was needed to support tenants and landlords, extended its eviction moratorium through September 2021. The State also pledged to provide financial help to low-income tenants who owe rent that was not paid during the pandemic,<sup>43</sup> which would in turn support landlords.

The recent 2021 *Housing Affordability and Displacement: City of Alameda* report identified that **households are being forced to move from their homes or unable to move into certain neighborhoods**. This condition is known as “residential displacement.” The report indicated that **residential displacement is happening throughout the city**.

The *Housing Affordability and Displacement: City of Alameda* report highlighted a **need to target financial and supportive services to lower-income households and particularly to households of color**.

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## LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**The city has a significant shortage of affordable housing. There are not enough multi-family housing units** (apartments or housing with more than one unit), which are typically more affordable for low- and very low-income households than single-family housing (units for one household).

The region has affordable housing goals, known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The RHNA is California’s determination of the “the total number of new homes the Bay Area needs to build—and how affordable those homes need to be—in order to meet the housing needs of people at all income levels.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> City of Alameda Ordinance No. 3275. Available at:

<https://www.alamedarentprogram.org/files/sharedassets/housingauth/policies-and-regulations/ordinance3275.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> City of Alameda Tenant Resources. Available at: <https://www.alamedaca.gov/ALERTS-COVID-19/Tenant-Resources>

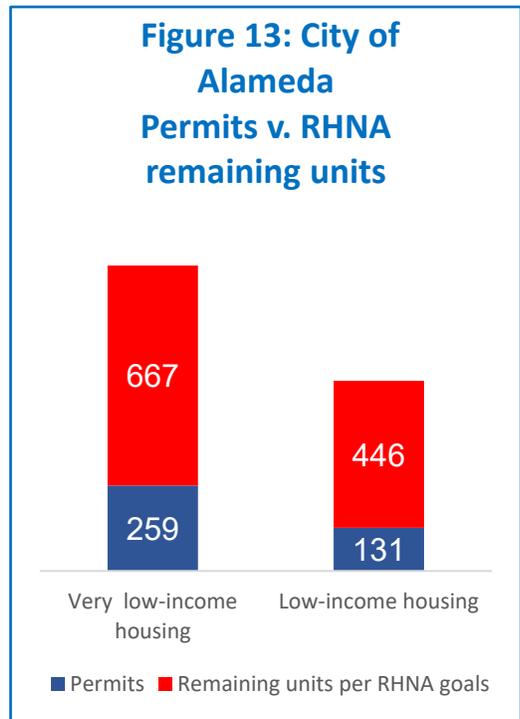
<sup>43</sup> Lower-income tenants who qualify for a state rental aid program — those who earn 80% or less of the median income in their County and were financially affected by COVID-19 — would be protected from eviction for an additional six months. From October 2021 through next March 2022, those residents would receive extra time to apply for rent relief if a property owner attempts to evict them.

<sup>44</sup> The Association of Bay Area Governments, Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). Available at: <https://abag.ca.gov/our-work/housing/rhna-regional-housing-needs-allocation>

The City established its own RHNA goal for 2023.<sup>45</sup> The State identified new RHNA goals for 2023-2031 for the County and its cities. Of the proposed 441,176 units needed Countywide, the proposal from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), allocated a little over 1% of those units (more than 5,400) to the City.

The City recently made significant progress in issuing nearly 700 new housing permits in 2019.<sup>46</sup> Due to the lack of permits issued in prior years, the city still has a gap of affordable units for lower income households. While the issuance of new housing permits is an indicator of housing being produced, not all permits will result in a completed unit.<sup>47</sup>

With the new draft projections of 5,400 additional housing units, **the City has begun a number of efforts to facilitate development of affordable housing in Alameda.** They have prepared a working draft of a site inventory for 2023-2031 and are considering a number of policy changes in order to ensure their RHNA goals can be satisfied.



Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development: Regional Housing Needs Allocation Cycles 4&5 (2007-2023).



Littlejohn Commons, completed in 2018, provides housing for low-income seniors and veterans

<sup>45</sup> 2021 *Housing Affordability and Displacement: City of Alameda Report*, page 17

<sup>46</sup> 2021 *Housing Affordability and Displacement: City of Alameda Report*, page 89.

<sup>47</sup> 2021 *Housing Affordability and Displacement: City of Alameda Report*, page 89, 90, 9; California Department of Housing and Community Development; Regional Housing Needs Allocation Cycles 4 & 5 (2007-2023).

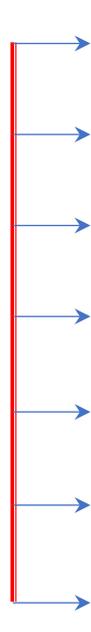
## CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

Although the City has worked hard in the past three years to build a local homeless system of care, there are still challenges and unmet needs. This section provides an overview of the challenges and needs of the current system in the City, based on feedback from survey respondents, data analysis, stakeholder interviews/meetings, and focus group convenings.

“I was displaced by a landlord's rent increase. I have friends who have had to move out of state to avoid homelessness, I have other friends who would have been homeless except for last minute interventions.”

-- Survey Respondent

The primary challenges and needs identified in the strategic planning process are:

- 
- A. Develop Policies and Opportunities to Increase Affordable Housing
  - B. Provide Flexible and Accessible Financial Resources
  - C. Utilize Housing-Focused, Low-Barrier Shelter and Services
  - D. Enhance Supportive Services to Maintain Housing Retention
  - E. Expand Local Data Collection
  - F. Ensure Funding is Sustainable and Leveraged
  - G. Improve Communication, Coordination, and Transparency

**Ninety-two percent of survey respondents agree or strongly agree that homelessness in the city is a serious and urgent concern.** While only 22% of survey respondents reported that they or someone they knew had experienced homelessness in the city, 72% said that they or someone they know has been concerned about affording a place to live in the city. Seventy-three percent either agree or strongly agree that “many people in my community could be just one or two unforeseen circumstances away from becoming homeless.”

**People with lived experience** of homelessness identified three primary needs from the current system of care:

- To be treated with dignity;
- To have their basic needs met; and
- To be offered a true path to self-sufficiency.

They shared that the City of Alameda needs to ensure that as people progress through the system and become more independent (e.g., increase their income and stability), they want a path to self-sufficiency that allows them to make improvements without taking away the assistance they rely on to make those improvements. People with lived experience believe there is a huge gap between living in a subsidized unit and being able to pay market rent with the current jobs or fixed incomes that people rely on.

The following sections provide a summary of each of the challenges, which are based on survey respondents, interviews, and focus groups.

## A. DEVELOP POLICIES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Across the surveys, interviews, focus groups, and data analyzed, there was strong consensus that the **city needs more affordable housing** to effectively address homelessness. Access to affordable housing enables individuals who have become homeless to regain housing. It also creates the foundation for housing stability. Housing stability, in turn, prevents future homelessness.

“It’s impossible to afford anything!”

-- Focus Group Participant

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

More than two out of three community survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the existing supply of housing fell short of the demand (69%). A similar majority (60%) identified the lack of affordable units as the biggest roadblock to keeping the City from ending homelessness. A majority of individuals interviewed also identified the lack of affordable housing as a concern in Alameda.

Permanent housing programs – such as permanent supportive housing (PSH) and rapid rehousing (RRH) – are some of the most cost-effective and successful strategies to address homelessness. They provide subsidized housing, combined with the supportive services the household needs to keep their housing and have long-term stability. Services can include case management, connections to employment and public benefits, and medical, mental health, and substance use treatment. The programs tailor services to the unique needs of each household. They successfully support many of the city’s unhoused residents each year to permanently exit homelessness and regain self-sufficiency.

“Five years ago, I lost my apartment when my landlord sold the triplex. I am a professional but at the time I was consulting. Because I didn’t have a regular paycheck, I couldn’t find a landlord who would rent to me. I finally had a friend lie and say I was employed by his company to get into an apartment.... After 5 years I have saved 2 years of rent just in case. I’m too ashamed to tell anybody this. I was literally a month away from living in my car.”

-- Survey respondent

The problem is that **there are not enough permanent housing options and related supportive services in Alameda.**

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## LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the need for more affordable housing opportunities, there are challenges for low-income people to access the housing that does exist. **Landlords are invaluable partners in helping people exit homelessness and get back on their feet.** Permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing programs can benefit participating landlords and are a reliable source of rent. They can support landlords trying to locate new tenants. Yet landlords are often reluctant to rent to people who were recently homeless. They are also hesitant to rent to people who have gaps in their rental history, who have bad credit, histories of past evictions, or other barriers. These views were reflected in the survey responses and stakeholder interviews.

The Steering Committee expressed an interest in undertaking a landlord engagement effort. They pointed to efforts in the County where other cities were building relationships with landlords. They recognized that considering landlord incentive programs might help increase access to affordable housing.

Stakeholders in the city shared that there are not many landlords in the region who are willing to rent to people experiencing homelessness. Community survey respondents agreed. They indicated that **some of the greatest barriers to accessing affordable housing are landlords who are unwilling to rent to tenants with certain histories** (e.g., bad credit, past history of

evictions, etc.).<sup>48</sup> Most stakeholders felt that the City can do more work to outreach to landlords and property owners.

Many communities – even those in high-cost rental markets like the City of Alameda – are highly successful in working with landlords and property managers to identify units for people exiting homelessness. Building relationships, including understanding and addressing landlords' concerns, is key.

## B. PROVIDE FLEXIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

**Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV)** are long-term rental subsidies that people experiencing homelessness can use to help pay for rent. Not all landlords will accept the vouchers. Outreach and education to landlords about the vouchers can help them better understand. With better understanding, there may be more landlords willing to accept the vouchers.

With more people experiencing homelessness and housing cost burden for renters, **access to flexible and immediate financial resources offers a cost-effective way to obtain and preserve housing for many households**. EveryOne Home's *Centering Racial Equity in Homeless Response Design* final report highlighted the need for flexible resources to prevent homelessness, especially in order to increase racial equity in the homeless response system. The EveryOne Home report stated:

*“Prevention resources include flexible funds, which can be used for car repair, back rent or utility bills, or stabilizing an extended family unit to keep one or more household members from becoming homeless. Flexible funds should not be restricted to one-time only. Prevention also takes ongoing shallow subsidies to address the gap between a household's earned income and high housing costs. This approach recognizes persistent shortfalls in income for households living from paycheck-to-paycheck and struggling to cover housing and basic living expenditures at their earned wage levels. Targeted prevention should look for opportunities to stabilize the extended family unit or household, not just the person(s) experiencing homelessness.”<sup>49</sup>*

Stakeholders indicated that they were not aware of any programs in the city that provide flexible resources to help people stay housed. They shared that they need access to more flexible funding to help families that are doubled up or seniors retain their housing. While the City has had flexible funds in the past, the one-time funding for that program ran out. The City is currently

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<sup>48</sup> One third of community members surveyed indicated that one of the top barriers to access affordable housing is landlords unwilling to accept tenants with certain conditions (e.g., bad credit, criminal history, etc.) (36%). Other top barriers identified by survey respondents included landlords unwilling to rent to people just out of homelessness (24%) and landlords unwilling to accept subsidies or rental assistance (29%).

<sup>49</sup> See *Centering Racial Equity in Homeless System Design Final Report*, p. 27/. Available at: <https://everyonehome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Centering-Racial-Equity-in-Homeless-System-Design-Full-Report-FINAL.pdf>

developing a proposal to provide more flexible funds through the state HHAP program in the upcoming year.

Focus group participants who had lived expertise of homelessness suggested assistance that allowed a person to set aside one third of their income for rent, but an additional one third for savings to help build a safety net for self-sufficiency when program participation ends.

### C. UTILIZE HOUSING-FOCUSED, LOW-BARRIER SHELTER AND SERVICES

For those who are waiting for housing, or believe it to be unobtainable, **emergency shelter that accepts everyone with no or only limited conditions is an essential component of the system.** Alameda has more than 100 people who live outside because they have nowhere else to go.

The city's main shelter, Midway,<sup>50</sup> provides support to single women and women with children seeking assistance. Yet, the majority of people in the homeless system of care are single adults without children. While there remains a clear need for sheltering women and women with children, **there is also a significant gap in shelters for men.** The city has no year-round, 24-hour options for single adults, specifically males. There is also a lack of shelters that will allow families with a male presence.

Ending homelessness for individuals and families who have long been homeless often requires frequent and repeated engagement over time, especially services that include street-based mental health. With a limited number of outreach resources available for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the current system, **many people are not getting connected to services and support.**

**Emergency Shelter** is any facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless population.

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<sup>50</sup> According to the East Bay Times, the entire sheltered population consists of women and women with children in Midway Shelter, a shelter for domestic violence survivors in the city. (Alameda Briefs: City working to address homeless issues, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019). Available at: <https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2019/08/15/alameda-briefs-city-working-to-address-homeless-issues/>

Emergency shelters are an important part of a community's response to homelessness. They are also a valuable link to permanent housing for people who have been homeless for a long period of time who might be reluctant to get help.

The most effective shelters are "housing-focused." Housing-focused means that they are low-barrier with few requirements to participate. These programs tailor their services to support households with the goal of exiting homelessness and offer voluntary case management that assists households to create an action plan to get housing.



Picking up food from Feed Alameda for Village of Love clients

Stakeholders indicated that local providers are committed to being low barrier. Shelters do not require drug testing or sobriety. In most city shelters, rules are based on behavior. Not all shelters have been able to allow pets, partners, and possessions. Some providers are evaluating and developing plans to accommodate pets, partners, and possessions. For example, Midway shelter cannot accept pets, but has partnered with a local animal shelter to house pets overnight – and offer free vaccinations and licensing.

## D. ENHANCE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES TO MAINTAIN HOUSING RETENTION

While housing is the solution to homelessness, **well-staffed, coordinated, and trained supportive service providers are the key to bringing people off the streets, into shelter, and ultimately into permanent housing.** Supportive services help people achieve housing stability.

People with lived experience, other focus group participants, stakeholders and survey respondents all agree that the City needs to continue to offer supportive services. There is a **need for a continued source of funding for supportive services at all levels of the homeless response system.** The City cannot be expected to fund the full need for supportive services on their own. The City can prioritize existing

"Plan should focus on inclusiveness, diversity, equality - making sure programs are based on these and people are welcome"

-- Focus Group Participant

and new funding to target households who have already received financial assistance to obtain or maintain housing.<sup>51</sup>

**People with lived experience** shared the desire to have services that help them meet their basic needs. They identified a wide range of services, which included:

“[We] get caught in the system. If you make too much, then you will be denied the services you need. [We] need different paths to income/ education and then some level of ongoing support to afford housing.”

-- Focus Group Participant

	<i>Access to mailboxes</i>
	<i>Access to city-wide wi-fi</i>
	<i>Access to telephone charging stations</i>
	<i>Better transportation: not only buses, but also access to ride share programs</i>
	<i>Availability of handwashing stations and port-a-potties</i>
	<i>Access to real showers more than just once a week: "Sometimes they say there are going to be some, but then there are funding issues and then showers stop"</i>
	<i>Clothing that fits, especially for cold weather</i>

<sup>51</sup> Even with some resources in place, when asked what services were most needed, three out of four survey respondents indicated that mental health support services were needed (75%), two out of three said case management/housing counseling services were needed (64%), and half of the respondents felt that substance use treatment services were needed (52%).

A recurring theme from people experiencing homelessness was they are at risk of losing their housing when they increase their earnings. As a result, they felt that many programs really do not provide a true path to self-sufficiency.

**Crisis Mobile Unit:** In July of 2021, City Council approved the Alameda Fire Department's plan to create a pilot "Crisis Mobile Unit" to respond to calls for mental health services. The Unit would respond to, treat, and/or transport non-violent members of the community who are in need of mental health services to County facilities appropriate for the client's needs and provide services within the city related to mental health emergencies. In addition, the City plans to hire a mental health clinician to follow-up with clients.

## ADDRESS SYSTEM DISPARITIES

**Ensuring that all programs are available and accessible to all people experiencing homelessness allows the community to get the most out of its existing resources.** Data for the city suggest that there are some disparities in services that can be addressed.



**GENDER:** Gender differences exist when it comes to shelter access. While there are slightly more males experiencing homelessness, **the city has no year-round, low-barrier shelter for single males.** Men are limited to accessing safe parking sites, the day center, and seasonal shelters.



**RACE:** EveryOne Home modeling showed that **Black or African Americans, American Indian, and Alaska Native individuals are almost six times more likely to be in the homeless population in the city than the general population.**

The problem is a systemic issue beyond the direct control of the City. However, the City could collect and analyze data to understand the policies and processes that have resulted in a disproportionately high number of Black or African American, American Indian, and Alaska Natives in the homeless system of care. With better demographic data in hand about people experiencing homelessness, Alameda can begin to address the barriers for people of color, better targeting services, ensuring cultural competency, and reducing disparities.



**AGE:** The data also indicates that the **population of people experiencing homelessness is rapidly aging.** Ten years ago, the median age of the homeless population was 42 years old. By 2020, the median age had reached 51 years.

Providers, people with lived experience, and members of the community all reported concern for seniors aging in place who may be at risk of homelessness. Many who retire in the city live on fixed incomes and therefore cannot keep up with rental prices, home upkeep (hoarding issues are a big concern), or resources when facing instability.

## E. EXPAND LOCAL DATA COLLECTION

Data specific to homelessness in the city is limited. The lack of data highlights the need for improved local data. It also indicates the need for increased participation in data collection systems. For a number of reasons, **the City has very little data specific to the city and the services it provides.**

The city is part of the larger CoC that includes all of the County. The data provided for this report from the CoC did not fully represent people receiving services in the city. Instead, the data included people with “ties to Alameda” (e.g., born in the city, worked in the city, etc.). It remains unclear whether the people with ties to the city actually need and/or receive services in the city.

Most of the data that are city specific are around whether people are living sheltered or unsheltered. Stakeholders, including the City, identified the need for a local homelessness survey (perhaps alongside the Countywide PIT count) to collect city unhoused resident demographics such as age, race, ethnicity, and gender.

Furthermore, **local participation and data collection into HMIS is insufficient and not well coordinated.** There is no requirement that local providers participate in the County-led HMIS. The City currently cannot determine which local providers participate in HMIS. Additional participation, trainings, and communication would bolster local providers ability to leverage HMIS and refer people to Coordinated Entry.

Stakeholders seek a “no wrong door” approach to access local homeless services. They want the City to ensure that access to Coordinated Entry is centralized together with the Homeless Hotline, Building Futures, and 2-1-1 (as they cover off hours). Stakeholders also seek a way to share data about their clients with each other. They feel like it can be done through HMIS or the CoC’s by-name list. The CoC collects information about individuals seeking help by name. They use the by-name list to discuss and coordinate supportive services and to help prioritize who is next when housing is available throughout the County.

Stakeholders seek more training and/or funding for organizations that participate in data collection and reporting and suggest obtaining more data tracking and evaluation to develop metrics and measure outcomes. Without adequate data tracking, it is difficult to know if local funding is sufficient and if interventions are working.

**The Coordinated Entry System (CES)** is a countywide front door, required by HUD, which prioritizes eligible households for available permanent housing resources base on vulnerability. (See [Appendix B](#) for more details.)

**City of Alameda By-Name List** would be a complete and inclusive list of every person experiencing homelessness in the City of Alameda. It would include information collected and shared with the individual’s consent like their name, history, health considerations, and housing needs. (See [Appendix B](#).)

## F. ENSURE FUNDING IS SUSTAINABLE AND LEVERAGED

The City has sought federal, state, and county funding to serve people experiencing homelessness locally. The City has begun to invest general fund dollars to ensure there is a compassionate and intelligent local response to homelessness. Stakeholders believe that local programs are having a meaningful impact on many Alamedans.

Yet, residents are often unaware of new initiatives or program closures. In addition, long startup and wind down processes reduce overall efficiency and impact. One of the most common comments heard in focus groups of people with lived experience and direct service providers is that **the City's approach needs increased coordination and ongoing investment**. A coordinated process can ensure funding is used effectively. Ongoing investments can ensure programs stay in effect beyond pilot stages or one-time funding.

For example, the Safe Parking and Day Center have been primarily funded through HEAP, which is one-time funding. For consumers, both of these programs have been great resources. Local stakeholders would like to see both of them continued and expanded.

The City does provide ongoing funding for some services. Currently, it is not clear which services will consistently receive ongoing City-controlled funding. Funds that are under the City's control should be awarded in alignment with the goals of this Strategic Plan.

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### ROLE OF THE CITY

In the city, many of the shelters and services are currently city supported. To that end, City funding is needed to ensure local unhoused residents have local programs that can help them move to housing stability.

Stakeholders seek clear communication about what services exist and are available for the city's unhoused residents, who the services are currently serving, how effective the services are, how much they cost, and what practices/interventions are proven to work.

Stakeholders also want the City to communicate and collaborate more with the County homeless system of care and neighboring cities. They'd like to see a strategy developed together with the County and other cities for purchasing, rehabilitating, or developing low-income housing. Stakeholders shared **that it is not clear to residents where to contact the City for support around issues of homelessness**. Multiple City department staff talked about receiving telephone calls for services that were not appropriate for the receiving department.



Providers and City staff believe the local Homeless Hotline could be a centralized resource for the City and its partners to access information about homeless services. Current funding limits the Hotline to daytime hours, therefore 2-1-1 has to provide off-hour services during nights and weekends. The Hotline is meant to be a citywide resource for anyone looking for services, as well as a place someone can call if they think someone needs services.

## G. IMPROVE COMMUNICATION, COORDINATION AND TRANSPARENCY

Through community meetings, focus groups, and surveys, participants shared a frustration with **a lack of information about the City's response to homelessness and up-to-date resources for those seeking services or looking to connect someone in need of services.** There was also concern about the enduring misperceptions about people experiencing homelessness.

### MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

There are still misperceptions in the general public about homelessness in the city. Over half of community survey respondents agree or strongly agree that many of the people homeless in the city come from somewhere else. While the breakdown is not available for the city, the reality for the County is that 8 out of 10 people in the County who were homeless in 2019 were from the County.<sup>52</sup>

Close to half of the respondents agree or strongly agree that offering additional services in the city would attract more people experiencing homelessness. However, PIT count data shows that three in four people experiencing homelessness lived in the County before they lost their housing, with more than half living in the county for more than 10 years.

“Many of homeless people out here are really talented. There's a wealth of talent that businesses could use. We're employable people.”

-- Focus Group Participant

One quarter of respondents agree or strongly agree that most people experiencing homelessness are doing so by choice.

Yet, data shared above makes clear that many households are unable to afford housing in the city. Close to half of the city's renters spend 30% or more of their income on housing.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, the hourly wage needed to afford the average rent in the city is significantly more than twice the minimum wage.<sup>54</sup>

**People experiencing homelessness** feel the misperceptions acutely. In focus groups, they shared that dignity and respect are of utmost importance to them. Some believe that the City would prefer to ship them elsewhere; that “the local government doesn't want us here.” Others

<sup>52</sup> Alameda County Homeless Count and Survey, Comprehensive Report, 2019.

<sup>53</sup> 2013-2017 CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) data. Available at: [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017\\_query](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/cp.html#2006-2017_query).

<sup>54</sup> For more context, see page 30, Income and Wages in the section above entitled *Reasons for Homelessness in the City of Alameda*.

shared that they want people to know that homeless people are not “bums.” One person said that program-wide, “[We] get stuck being categorized as ignorant, that [we] can’t do better.”



FEMA trailers provide emergency housing to the most vulnerable residents during COVID-19 pandemic

## ROADMAP: GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND ACTION STEPS

The following section is intended to provide a roadmap to guide current and future planning by the City in its efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

	<b><u>Goal 1:</u> Secure a Housing Future for All Alamedans</b>
	<b><u>Goal 2:</u> Increase Access to Homeless Emergency Response Services</b>
	<b><u>Goal 3:</u> Mobilize the Citywide Response to Homelessness</b>

Together the three overarching **Goals** address the key challenges and needs identified in the previous section.

Each goal has beneath it a set of **Strategies** to enable the community to achieve the goal. Under each strategy, the Roadmap outlines a series of **Action Steps** that the community can undertake to move the strategy forward.

After each set of Strategies, there is a set of **Metrics** that include a set of short-term (1 to 2 years) and medium-term (3 to 4 years) Metrics for each goal. The Metrics, while not exhaustive or prioritized, identify some specific and quantifiable ways the community can measure whether and when the goals have been met.

After the Strategies, [Appendix A](#) is an **Implementation Plan**, which provides more detail and specificity for implementing the strategies, including prioritization of the Action Steps.

**Alignment with the County's Strategic Plan Update** is discussed in [Appendix D](#).

## GOAL ONE: SECURE A HOUSING FUTURE FOR ALL ALAMEDANS

Goal One addresses the following identified **challenges and needs**:

- Develop Policies and Opportunities to Increase Affordable Housing (Challenge/Need A)
- Improve Communication, Coordination, and Transparency (Challenge/Need G)

### STRATEGY 1.1: ASSESS AND USE AVAILABLE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND FOR HOUSING

#### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 1.1.a: Collaborate with the Planning Building and Transportation Department as they conduct an inventory of unused, underutilized, and available properties.<sup>55</sup>
- 1.1.b: Identify the most suitable sites for rehabilitation or development of permanent housing and initiate planning.
- 1.1.c: Assess housing sites' proximity to amenities to support affordable housing (e.g., transit, parks, food).
- 1.1.d: Evaluate and determine the City's role in owning or managing City-owned properties.
- 1.1.e: Secure City-owned housing sites to be owned by the City or the Alameda Housing Authority in order to obtain and maintain affordable housing for all Alamedans.
- 1.1.f: Rehabilitate vacant or underutilized properties to create permanent supportive housing.
- 1.1.g: Explore master lease, lease to own, or create other agreements with existing lodging in the community (e.g., motels) to create PSH.

### STRATEGY 1.2: PROTECT AND EXPAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH LOCAL POLICY

#### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 1.2.a: Adopt the specific policy directions in the draft General Plan that support and prioritize the reduction of homelessness in Alameda.
- 1.2.b: Evaluate current City policies to identify any rules or programs in place that inhibit development of affordable housing. Identify changes that would reverse the negative impacts of those policies.
- 1.2.c: Consider revisions to City policies to expand and streamline, by-right, a wide variety of resources, services, and housing for people experiencing homelessness, including the development of rent controlled apartment buildings, multi-family

The City's **Inclusionary Housing Requirements for Residential Projects** ordinance requires almost all developments to include affordable housing on-site, rather than pay an in-lieu fee, which accelerates the development of inclusionary units in alignment with the Housing Element, covers the true cost of development, and ensures mixed income projects.

<sup>55</sup> Alameda City Council, in approving the Strategic Plan on October 5, 2021, noted the need for an equitable distribution of program sites across the full geography of the city.

- housing units, in-law units, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- 1.2.d: Develop a local policy that prioritizes placement in new housing developments to households who live or work in the city, as permitted by law.
  - 1.2.e: Evaluate the need for a local policy that prioritizes households who were displaced from the city for placement into new housing developments.
  - 1.2.f: As part of the City’s Housing Element update, continue to identify and implement opportunities to streamline City approvals for housing and service locations for formally and currently homeless households (e.g., year-round overnight shelter, community cabins, safe parking, and permanent supportive housing).

**The Housing Element Update 2022** is Alameda’s housing plan for the years 2023-2031. It is required by State law. (See [Appendix B](#) for more details.)

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### STRATEGY 1.3: COORDINATE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM HOUSING SOLUTIONS WITH THE COUNTY AND NEIGHBORING CITIES

#### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 
- 1.3.a: Identify cost-sharing opportunities for partnership with the County, or other cities within the County, to secure sites for housing.
  - 1.3.b: Work with the County and/or neighboring cities to create or build on existing landlord incentive programs to secure rental units for households experiencing homelessness.
  - 1.3.c: As contracts permit, and in alignment with County and other cities, require existing and new permanent housing providers to commit to being low-barrier and adhere to Housing First principles to receive ongoing funding from the City.
  - 1.3.d: Leverage County-level programs, and expand locally as needed, to educate landlords about laws against discriminating against applicants based on source of income.
  - 1.3.e: Incentivize absent landlords to sell or develop properties (e.g., residential vacancy tax or other similar efforts, including County-level approaches).
  - 1.3.f: Ensure the City’s plans are in step with the County’s homelessness strategic plan.

**GOAL ONE METRICS: Secure Housing Future for All Alamedans**

Short-Term	Medium-Term
<p><b>Metric 1.1:</b> By 2023, implement a preference to prioritize those who live or work in the city for all new supportive and affordable housing developments, as permitted by law.</p>	<p><b>Metric 1.2:</b> By end of 2024, develop at least one landlord incentive program. The program will help secure market rate units that can be subsidized through City, County, state, or federal funding.</p> <p><b>Metric 1.3:</b> By 2026, develop at least one housing pilot project in partnership with the County or a neighboring city. The project will be targeted partially or in whole at housing people experiencing homelessness in the city.</p> <p><b>Metric 1.4:</b> By 2026, ensure that 120 new PSH units are purchased, built, or rehabilitated for people experiencing homelessness.</p>

**GOAL TWO: INCREASE ACCESS TO HOMELESS EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES**

Goal Two addresses the following identified **challenges and needs**:

- Provide Flexible and Accessible Financial Resources ([Challenge/Need B](#))
- Utilize Housing-Focused, Low-Barrier Shelter and Services ([Challenge/Need C](#))
- Improve Communication, Coordination, and Transparency ([Challenge/Need G](#))

**STRATEGY 2.1: DEVELOP FLEXIBLE RESOURCES FOR DIVERSION, PREVENTION, AND HOUSING RETENTION**

**ACTION STEPS:**

- 2.1.a: Expand the availability and amount of flexible funds to support homeless and at-risk households through both one-time and short-term, recurring financial assistance to solve acute housing crises and emergencies. In the past, the one-time limit has been set at \$750.
- 2.1.b: Develop a process to work with the Alameda Unified School District’s McKinney-Vento Program Liaison to ensure early identification of families facing housing instability.
- 2.1.c: Collaborate with College of Alameda to identify transition age youth experiencing homelessness.

- 2.1.d: Survey the housing needs of senior residents aging in place to ensure physical and mental well-being and housing stability. Consider long-term flexible funding for those identified at risk of losing their housing when a small monthly subsidy would eliminate the risk.

**Flexible funds** have increasingly been permitted and encouraged as an allowable expense by federal, state, and County funders. Flexible funds can be used for different purposes. They can pay for costs that will result in an immediate solution of a housing crisis. They can bridge the gap while permanent housing is secured. They can cover household needs that will help people keep their housing. (See [Appendix B](#) for examples of flexible funding.)

**Diversion** is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

**Prevention** is a strategy intended to target people who are at imminent risk of homelessness (whereas diversion usually targets people as they are initially trying to gain entry into shelter)

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## STRATEGY 2.2: PROVIDE LOW-BARRIER, TEMPORARY HOUSING SOLUTIONS

### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 2.2.a: Assess the need for, and feasibility of, ongoing non-congregate shelter facilities, in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic and other learned benefits of non-congregate spaces.
- 2.2.b: As contracts permit, require existing and new temporary housing providers to commit to being low-barrier and adhere to Housing First principles in order to receive funding from the City.
- 2.2.c: Expand low-barrier shelter capacity, incorporating Housing First principles to existing shelters, and to any new or expanded shelters (e.g., allow partners, pets, possessions; not require sobriety or mental health counseling to enter).
- 2.2.d: Ensure access to shelter is full-time (24/7), year-round, and housing-focused (e.g., provides supportive services and case management to help people transition to permanent housing).
- 2.2.e: Prioritize new shelter development for underserved populations (e.g., single men).

**Shelter** is defined as temporary or interim places for people to stay, which include year-round emergency shelters, winter and warming shelters, navigation centers and transitional housing. These types of shelter have varying hours, lengths of stay, food service, and support services.

- 2.2.f: Enact a citywide Emergency Ordinance to facilitate the rapid implementation of temporary shelter and other housing policies that prevent and end homelessness.
- 2.2.g: Integrate behavioral health services (e.g., mental health, alcohol, and substance use services) into major shelters, expanding the wrap around services that are currently provided.

**Low-barrier programs** have few preconditions for admission. They don't require people to be sober, have identification, proof of income, etc., They limit the barriers to entry by allowing some flexibility (e.g., partners and pets are allowed, they can store personal belongings, and there is a flexibility of hours whenever possible). (See [Appendix B](#) for more details.)

**Housing First** is a well-accepted, national, evidenced-based best practice that eliminates barriers to housing, ensuring individuals and families can exit homelessness as quickly as possible.

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## STRATEGY 2.3: EXPAND OUTREACH AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES TO UNSHELTERED HOUSEHOLDS

### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 2.3.a: Define and publicize clear roles and rules of engagement of entities who may encounter the unsheltered community, including homeless and health outreach teams, Fire and Police Departments, Community Development, Recreation and Parks, and Public Works.
- 2.3.b: Coordinate existing and new hygiene, shower, and laundry service providers so services are available daily.
- 2.3.c: Assess the cost and impact to develop a local "Ambassador" program. An Ambassador program would provide local outreach to unhoused residents, hospitality and safety services for the community, maintenance and cleaning of public spaces, and employment opportunities for those with lived experience of homelessness.
- 2.3.d: Continue to ensure diversity of street outreach staff to include people with lived experience by lowering barriers to employment and recruitment.
- 2.3.e: Implement trainings on best practices for nonprofit providers and City staff, including trauma-informed care, critical time intervention, motivational interviewing, and use of technology.
- 2.3.f: Expand behavioral health outreach teams (e.g., mobile crisis).

## GOAL TWO METRICS: Increase Access to Homeless Emergency Response Services

Short-Term	Medium-Term
<p><b>Metric 2.1:</b> By the end of 2022, expand year-round, low-barrier shelter capacity to serve an additional ten individuals experiencing homelessness; then create capacity for thirty additional individuals yearly through 2026.</p>	<p><b>Metric 2.3:</b> The 2025 PIT count will show 115 or fewer unsheltered individuals in the city, representing a 50% reduction from the 2019 PIT count.</p>
<p><b>Metric 2.2:</b> By 2023, double the cap on one-time flexible funding grants from \$750 to \$1,500, without reducing the number of individuals served.</p>	<p><b>Metric 2.4:</b> By 2026, provide <i>daily</i> shower and hygiene services accessible to people experiencing homelessness in the city.</p>

## GOAL THREE: MOBILIZE THE CITYWIDE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS

Goal Three addresses the following identified **challenges and needs**:

- Enhance Supportive Services to Maintain Housing Retention (Challenge/Need D)
- Expand Local Data Collection (Challenge/Need E)
- Ensure Funding is Sustainable and Leveraged (Challenge/Need F)
- Improve Communication, Coordination, and Transparency (Challenge/Need G)

### STRATEGY 3.1: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY ON THE REGIONAL CRISIS OF HOMELESSNESS

#### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 3.1.a: Design an ongoing education and participation campaign for Alameda residents, employees, and businesses to inform the community about specific local needs and the work the City is doing to meet those needs (e.g., Homeless Hotline). Highlight City programs and services, data-driven best practices, opportunities for community members to get involved, and examples of impact and success.
- 3.1.b: Create resident- and business-focused initiatives that match local employers with individuals facing housing instability. Initiatives can include training, in addition to offering employment, scholarship, mentorship, or housing opportunities.
- 3.1.c: Consult and partner on an ongoing basis with local faith-based organizations to leverage their strengths in building community, providing essential services, and coordinating volunteers and resources.

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## STRATEGY 3.2: STRENGTHEN THE HOMELESS RESPONSE SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE

### **ACTION STEPS:**

#### *Data collection and analysis*

- 3.2.a: Ensure local programs that primarily serve people experiencing homelessness can access and fully participate in the County-led Coordinated Entry System and can enter data into the Countywide HMIS.
- 3.2.b: Conduct local City homeless surveys (through PIT counts or other means) to collect demographic data (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, veteran, disabled, language) about people experiencing homelessness in the city.

#### *Coordination and strategy*

- 3.2.c: Center racial equity and the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness in homeless services design. In practice, this involves lowering barriers to entry to outreach, shelter, and housing interventions; as well as emphasizing the goals of each individual and their unique barriers to housing stability.
- 3.2.d: Develop a local “by-name list” that records all known households in need of housing and services in the city. The by-name list can supplement Countywide HMIS data, as not everyone seeks formal assistance through the County. Use the by-name list to structure the City’s response to homelessness. Train and coordinate providers to use the local “by-name” list and target services to places where people who are living unsheltered are staying.
- 3.2.e: Expand the use of the local Homeless Hotline to operate 24/7 as the publicly available contact point that supports unhoused and housed residents in need of case management or behavioral health services, shelter or housing, or public works/sanitation/safety support.
- 3.2.f: Add additional monthly provider meetings (one for executives and the other for providers) to bring together executive leadership, middle management, and direct service teams to share resources and improve coordination.
- 3.2.g: Prioritize local funds toward activities that serve as a source of match for new and existing federal, state, and County funding.
- 3.2.h: Secure an additional staff member to support the coordination of local housing and supportive services, implementation of the Strategic Plan and report on objective system performance measures.
- 3.2.i: Develop an annual or biennial work plan with prioritized action steps to guide implementation. Regularly provide updates on progress made on Strategic Plan goals, strategies, and metrics, and refine action steps as needed.

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## STRATEGY 3.3: ENSURE ONGOING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FUNDING FOR ASSISTED HOUSEHOLDS

### **ACTION STEPS:**

- 3.3.a: Invest in (or prioritize, at a minimum) local funding for case management, physical, behavioral health, and substance use services for households receiving financial assistance.
- 3.3.b: Identify a partner to build out workforce development programming specifically for households who are unhoused (or formerly unhoused) who have secured or maintained housing with a one-time grant or ongoing rental subsidy/voucher.
- 3.3.c: Require all local housing and rental assistance providers to annually assess whether any of their tenants who have received past financial support need additional support to prevent re-entry into homelessness.

### **GOAL THREE METRICS: Mobilize the Citywide Response to Homelessness**

#### Short-Term

**Metric 3.1:** By the end of 2022, the City will launch its first outreach initiative to help residents learn about services and housing, demographics and data, outcomes and success, and opportunities to get involved.

**Metric 3.2:** By 2022 and annually thereafter, match five individuals experiencing homelessness or who have recently experienced homelessness to business and/or community-led initiatives that lead to job placement or education opportunities.

**Metric 3.3:** By the end of 2022, ensure 90% participation in the Countywide HMIS, from City, County, and nonprofit providers who primarily serve individuals experiencing homelessness.

# APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## Goal 1: Secure a Housing Future for All Alamedans

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
<p><b>Strategy 1.1:</b> Assess and use available public and private land for housing</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>1.1.a: Collaborate with the Planning Building and Transportation Department as they conduct an inventory of unused, underutilized, and available properties that would be appropriate for rehabilitation or development for permanent housing purposes.</p> <p><b>Medium-Term</b></p> <p>1.1.b: Identify the most suitable sites for rehabilitation or development of permanent housing and initiate planning.</p> <p>1.1.d: Evaluate and determine the City’s role in owning or managing City-owned properties.</p> <p><b>Long-Term</b></p> <p>1.1.c: Assess housing sites’ proximity to amenities to support affordable housing (e.g., transit, parks, food).</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>1.1.f: Rehabilitate vacant or underutilized properties to create permanent supportive housing. (\$\$)</p> <p>1.1.e: Secure City-owned housing sites to be owned by the City or the Alameda Housing Authority in order to obtain and maintain affordable housing for all Alamedans. (\$\$\$)</p> <p>1.1.g: Explore master lease, lease to own, or create agreements with existing lodging in the community (e.g., motels) to create PSH. (\$\$)</p>	<p>Community Development Planning, Building, Transportation</p>	<p>Housing Authority Housing Developers Local Business/Realty Foundations Funders People with Lived Experience Residents Alameda County Alameda Point Collaborative Building Futures Operation Dignity</p>	<p>General Fund CoC Program CA State</p>

<i>Activity</i>	<b>Steps</b> (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
<p><b>Strategy 1.2:</b> Protect and expand affordable housing through local policy</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>1.2.a: Adopt the specific policy directions in the draft General Plan to support and prioritize the reduction of homelessness in Alameda.</p> <p>1.2.b: Evaluate current City policies to identify any rules or programs in place that inhibit development of affordable housing. Identify changes that would reverse the negative impacts of those policies.</p> <p>1.2.c: Consider revisions to City policies to expand and streamline, by-right, a wide variety of resources, services, and housing for people experiencing homelessness, including the development of rent controlled apartment buildings, multi-family housing units, in-law units, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).</p> <p>1.2.f: As part of the City’s Housing Element continue to update, identify and implement opportunities to streamline City approvals for housing and service locations for formally and currently homeless households (e.g., year-round overnight shelter, community cabins, safe parking, and permanent supportive housing).</p> <p><b>Long-Term</b></p> <p>1.2.d: Develop a local policy that prioritizes placement in new housing developments to households who live or work in the city, as permitted by law.</p> <p>1.2.e: Evaluate the need for a local policy that prioritizes households who were displaced from the city for placement into new housing developments.</p>	<p>Community Development Planning, Building, Transportation</p>	<p>Alameda County Alameda CoC Residents Housing Developers Housing Authority</p>	<p>General Fund</p>

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
<p><b>Strategy 1.3:</b> Coordinate short- and long-term housing solutions with the County and neighboring cities</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>1.3.a: Identify cost-sharing opportunities for partnership with the County, or other cities within the County, to secure sites for housing.</p> <p>1.3.c: As contracts permit, and in alignment with County and other cities, require existing and new permanent housing providers to commit to being low-barrier and adhere to Housing First principles to receive ongoing funding from the City.</p> <p>1.3.f: Ensure the City’s plans are in step with the County’s homelessness strategic plan.</p> <p><b>Long-Term</b></p> <p>1.3.d: Leverage County-level programs, and expand locally as needed, to educate landlords about laws against discriminating against applicants based on source of income.</p> <p>1.3.e: Incentivize absent landlords to sell or develop properties (e.g., vacancy tax or other similar efforts, including County-level approaches).</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>1.3.b: Work with the County and/or neighboring cities to create or build on existing a landlord incentive programs to secure rental units for households experiencing homelessness. (\$)</p>	<p>Community Development</p>	<p>Neighboring cities Alameda County Landlords Local business Local motels Housing developers Veterans Affairs Housing Authority Alameda Point Collaborative Building Futures Operation Dignity</p>	<p>General Fund Alameda County CA State Neighboring cities</p>

## Goal 2: Increase Access to Homeless Emergency Response Services

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
<p><b>Strategy 2.1:</b> Develop flexible resources for diversion, prevention, and housing retention</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>2.1.b: Develop a process to work with the Alameda Unified School District’s McKinney-Vento Program Liaison to ensure early identification of families facing housing instability.</p> <p>2.1.c: Collaborate with College of Alameda to identify transition age youth experiencing homelessness.</p> <p><b>Medium-Term</b></p> <p>2.1.d: Survey the needs of senior residents aging in place to ensure physical and mental well-being and housing stability. Consider long-term flexible funding for those identified at risk of losing their housing when a small monthly subsidy would eliminate the risk.</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>2.1.a: Expand the availability and amount of flexible funds to support homeless and at-risk households through both one-time and short-term, recurring financial assistance to solve acute housing crises and emergencies. The current one-time limit is set at \$750. (\$) </p>	<p>Alameda Unified School District McKinney-Vento Program Liaison College of Alameda Community Development</p>	<p>Alameda CoC Homeless Service Providers St. Vincent de Paul / St. Barnabas Seniors People with lived experience</p>	<p>General Fund CoC Program CA State</p>

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
<p><b>Strategy 2:2:</b> Provide low-barrier, temporary housing solutions</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>2.2.a: Assess the need for, and feasibility of, ongoing non-congregate shelter facilities, in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic and other learned benefits of non-congregate spaces.</p> <p>2.2.b: As contracts permit, require existing and new temporary housing providers to commit to being low-barrier and adhere to Housing First principles in order to receive funding from the City.</p> <p><b>Long-Term</b></p> <p>2.2.f: Enact a citywide Emergency Ordinance to facilitate the rapid implementation of temporary shelter and other housing policies that prevent and end homelessness.</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>2.2.c: Expand low-barrier shelter capacity, incorporating Housing First principles to existing shelters, and to any new or expanded shelters (e.g., allow partners, pets, possessions; not require sobriety or mental health counseling to enter). (\$\$)</p> <p>2.2.d: Ensure access to shelter is full-time (24/7), year-round, and housing-focused (e.g., provides supportive services and case management to help people transition to permanent housing). (\$\$)</p> <p>2.2.e: Prioritize new shelter development for underserved populations (e.g., single men). (\$\$)</p> <p>2.2.g: Integrate behavioral health services (e.g., mental health, alcohol, and substance use services) into major shelters, providing more wrap around services than are currently provided (\$)</p>	<p>Community Development Planning, Building, Transportation</p>	<p>Alameda CoC People with lived experience Homeless service providers Building Futures Village of Love</p>	<p>General Fund CA State ESG Program</p>

<i>Activity</i>	<b>Steps</b> (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
<p><b>Strategy 2.3:</b> Expand outreach and supportive services to unsheltered households</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>2.3.a: Define and publicize clear roles and rules of engagement of entities who may encounter the unsheltered community, including homeless and health outreach teams, Fire and Police Departments, Community Development, Recreation and Parks, and Public Works.</p> <p>2.3.d: Continue to ensure diversity of street outreach staff to include people with lived experience by lowering barriers to employment and recruitment.</p> <p><b>Medium-Term</b></p> <p>2.3.c: Assess the cost and impact to develop a local “Ambassador” program. An Ambassador program would provide local outreach to unhoused residents, hospitality and safety services for the community, maintenance and cleaning of public spaces, and employment opportunities for those with lived experience of homelessness.</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>2.3.b: Coordinate existing and new hygiene, shower, and laundry service providers so services are available daily. (\$\$)</p> <p>2.3.e: Implement trainings on best practices for nonprofit providers and City staff, including trauma-informed care, critical time intervention, motivational interviewing, and use of technology. (\$)</p> <p>2.3.f: Expand behavioral health outreach teams (e.g., mobile crisis). (\$\$)</p>	<p>Community Development</p>	<p>Homeless service providers</p> <p>Law enforcement (Alameda Police Department)</p> <p>Alameda County (Behavioral Health)</p> <p>Recreation and Parks</p> <p>Public Works</p> <p>Operation Dignity</p>	<p>General Fund</p> <p>Alameda County</p>

## Goal 3: Mobilize the Citywide Response to Homelessness

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
<b>Strategy 3.1:</b> Engage the community on the regional crisis of homelessness	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>3.1.c: Consult and partner on an ongoing basis with local faith-based organizations to leverage their strengths in building community, providing essential services, and coordinating volunteers and resources.</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>3.1.a: Design an ongoing education and participation campaign for Alameda residents, employees, and businesses to inform the community about specific local needs and the work the City is doing to meet those needs. Highlight City programs and services, data-driven best practices, opportunities for community members to get involved, and examples of impact and success. (\$)</p> <p>3.1.b: Create resident- and business-focused initiatives that match local employers with individuals facing housing instability. Initiatives can include training, in addition to offering employment, scholarship, mentorship, or housing opportunities. (\$)</p>	Community Development Providers	Residents of City Local businesses People with lived experience Homeless service providers	General Fund Private donations

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
<b>Strategy 3.2:</b> Strengthen the Homeless Response System infrastructure	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>3.2.a: Ensure local programs that primarily serve people experiencing homelessness can access and fully participate in the County-led Coordinated Entry System and can enter data into the Countywide HMIS.</p> <p>3.2.c: Center racial equity and the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness in homeless services design. In practice, this involves lowering barriers to entry to outreach, shelter, and housing interventions; as well as emphasizing the goals of each individual and their unique barriers to housing stability.</p> <p>3.2.f: Add additional monthly provider meetings (one for executives and the other for providers) to bring together executive leadership, middle</p>	Community Development	Alameda CoC EveryOne Home CoC HMIS Lead Homeless service providers City of Alameda departments Eden I&R/2-1-1 Building Futures	CoC Program (HMIS) Alameda County General Fund

Activity	Steps (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	Responsible Parties	Stakeholders	Funding Source
	<p>management, and direct service teams to share resources and improve coordination.</p> <p>3.2.i: Develop an annual or biennial work plan with prioritized action steps to guide implementation. Regularly provide updates on progress made on Strategic Plan goals, strategies, and metrics, and refine action steps as needed.</p> <p><b>Medium-Term</b></p> <p>3.2.b: Conduct local City homeless surveys (through PIT counts or other means) to collect demographic data (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, veteran, disabled) about people experiencing homelessness in the city.</p> <p>3.2.d: Develop a local “by-name list” that records all known households in need of housing and services in the city. The by-name list can supplement Countywide HMIS data, as not everyone seeks formal assistance through the County. Use the by-name list to structure the City’s response to homelessness. Train and coordinate providers to use the local “by-name” list and target services to places where people who are living unsheltered are staying</p> <p>3.2.g: Prioritize local funds toward activities that serve as a source of match for new and existing federal, state, and County funding.</p> <p>3.2.h: Secure an additional staff member to support the coordination of local housing and supportive services, implementation of the Strategic Plan and report on objective system performance measures.</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>3.2.e: Expand the use of the local Homeless Hotline to operate 24/7 as the publicly available contact point that supports unhoused and housed residents in need of case management or behavioral health services, shelter or housing, or public works/sanitation/safety support. (\$)</p>			

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Steps</b> (\$ → \$\$\$ scale indicates initial cost from low to high)	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
<p><b>Strategy 3.3:</b> Ensure ongoing supportive services funding for assisted households</p>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <p>3.3.c: Require all local housing and rental assistance providers to annually assess whether any of their tenants who have received past financial support need additional support to prevent re-entry into homelessness.</p> <p><b>Medium-Term</b></p> <p>3.3.b: Identify a partner to build out workforce development programming specifically for households who are unhoused (or formerly unhoused) who have secured or maintained housing with a one-time grant or ongoing rental subsidy/voucher.</p> <p><b>Requires new funding</b></p> <p>3.3.a: Invest in (or prioritize, at a minimum) local funding for case management, physical health, behavioral health, and substance use services for households receiving financial assistance. (\$)</p>	<p>Community Development</p>	<p>Homeless service providers</p> <p>People with lived experience</p> <p>Business community</p> <p>Alameda County</p>	<p>Alameda County General Fund</p> <p>CoC Program</p> <p>Targeted Case Management, Medi-Cal</p>

## APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

**Ambassador Program** is a program which would provide local outreach to unhoused residents, hospitality and safety services for the community, maintenance and cleaning of public spaces, and employment opportunities for those with lived experience of homelessness.

**At risk of homelessness** is a status given to individuals and their families who have unstable housing and inadequate income and resources.<sup>56</sup>

**Behavioral Health** describes the connection between a person's behaviors and the health and well-being of the body and mind.<sup>57</sup>

**California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH) Program** provides funds for a variety of activities to assist persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Funds primarily may be used for five primary activities: housing relocation and stabilization services (including rental assistance), operating subsidies for permanent housing, flexible housing subsidy funds, operating support for emergency housing interventions, and systems support for homelessness services and housing delivery systems.

**Case management** includes assessment, planning, facilitation, care coordination, evaluation and advocacy with people experiencing homelessness. Staff work with individuals and families to address their comprehensive needs to help them exit homelessness and stay housed.

**Chronically Homeless** is when a person has been homeless for at least a year, either 12 months consecutively or over the course of at least 4 separate occasions in the past 3 years. To be chronically homeless, the individual or head of household must also have a disability.

**City of Alameda “By-Name” List** would be a complete and inclusive list of every person experiencing homelessness in the City of Alameda. It would include information collected and shared with the individual's consent like their name, history, health considerations, and housing needs.

**Collaboration Advancing Research, Efforts, and Supports for Alameda's Homeless (CARES) Team** is the primary homeless outreach team that coordinates programs and organizations serving people experiencing homelessness. The Team provides a regular, organized method of coordination, bringing together social service providers, first-responders, and organizations and provides a unified City-lead face to homeless services in Alameda.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** is a flexible program run by HUD that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.

**Continuum of Care (CoC)** is the group organized to carry out the responsibilities prescribed in the CoC Program Interim Rule<sup>58</sup> for a defined geographic area. A CoC is composed of representatives of organizations including: nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons. Responsibilities of a CoC include operating the CoC, designating and operating an HMIS, planning for the CoC (including coordinating the implementation of

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<sup>56</sup> See 24 C.F.R. § 576.2 for complete definition of “at risk of homelessness” under the Emergency Solutions Grant Program.

<sup>57</sup> CDC, The Critical Need for a Population Health Approach: Addressing the Nation's Behavioral Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond. Available at: [https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2020/20\\_0261.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2020/20_0261.htm)

<sup>58</sup> CoC Interim Rule, <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>

a housing and service system within its geographic area that meets the needs of the individuals and families who experience homelessness there), and designing and implementing the process associated with applying for CoC Program funds.

**CoC Program** is designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and state and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

**CoC Program Interim Rule** focuses on regulatory implementation of the CoC Program, including the CoC planning process. The CoC Program was created through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as amended by the HEARTH Act of 2009.<sup>59</sup>

**Coordinated Entry System (CES)** provides a centralized approach to connect the region's most vulnerable homeless residents to housing through a single community-wide assessment tool and program matching system.

**Congregate Shelters** are facilities with overnight sleeping accommodations, in shared quarters, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless.

**Cost burden** is the ratio of housing costs to household income. For renters, housing cost is gross rent (contract rent plus utilities). For owners, housing cost is "select monthly owner costs," which includes mortgage payment, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

**Day center or day services** offer showers, internet access, case management, housing navigation, and other supportive services during traditional daytime hours. In most cases these services are free.

**Diversion** is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

**Emergency Ordinance** is an ordinance declared by the City Council to be necessary on a faster timeline and with less process for the health, safety, and wellness of the community.

**Emergency Shelter** is any facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless. Shelter may include year-round emergency shelters, winter and warming shelters, navigation centers and transitional housing. These types of shelter have varying hours, lengths of stay, food service, and support services.

**Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)** provides funds to assist people to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

**Fair Market Rent (FMR)** is a statistic developed by HUD in order to determine payments for various housing assistance programs. It is generally calculated as the 40th percentile of gross rents for regular, standard quality units in a local housing market. It excludes low-quality, subsidized, or units that have been built in the last 2 years. FMR rent data is typically taken from recent move-ins rather than long-term tenants. FMR includes core utilities, like water and power, but does not include internet and other optional services.

**Federal Poverty Guidelines** are issued each year by the federal Department of Health and Human Services. The guidelines are a simplification of the federal poverty thresholds and are used to determine financial eligibility for certain federal programs.

**Flexible Funds** have increasingly been permitted and encouraged as an allowable expense by federal, state, and County funders. Flexible funds can be used for different purposes. They can pay for costs that will result in an immediate solution of a housing crisis. They can bridge the gap while permanent housing is secured. They can cover household needs that will help people keep their housing. Flexible funding can be used to purchase grocery cards, gas cards, certificates or licenses to work, car repair, furniture, pest extermination, storage, essential minor repairs to make living space more habitable, transportation vouchers/passes, costs for birth certificates or other documents, bus or train tickets, shipping belongings, housing application fees, credit checks, rental deposits, past due rent, one-month rent on new units, utility deposit, and/or utility payments.

**General Plan** is a statement of goals, objectives, policies, and actions that describe the community's priorities for the next 20 years. California State law requires that every city adopt and maintain an up to date, internally consistent General Plan. The City's current General Plan has not been comprehensively updated since 1990, and many new and important challenges are facing the Alameda community.

**Geographic Information System (GIS)** is a computer system for gathering, managing, and analyzing geographic and spatial data. This data can be used to capture and organize geographic and demographic information to help end homelessness and insure equity in homeless and housing outreach and services.

**Homeless** is defined by HUD in four categories:

- (1) individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes a subset for an individual who resided in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided;
- (2) individuals and families who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence;
- (3) unaccompanied youth and families with children and youth who are defined as homeless under other federal statutes who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition; and
- (4) individuals and families who are fleeing, or are attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member.

**Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP)** is a \$500 million one-time block grant program designed to provide direct assistance to cities, counties and CoCs to address the homelessness crisis throughout California.

**Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH Act)** was signed into law in 2009. HEARTH reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Act. It also provided substantial changes to the law, updating the definition of homelessness and chronic homelessness, as well as other changes including consolidating competitive grants, simplifying match requirements, and providing prevention resources.

**Homeless Hotline** connects individuals who are currently homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless with homeless services and programs in the city. The telephone line can be reached by calling (510) 522-HOME (4663) Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Program** is a \$650 million one-time block grant that provides local jurisdictions with funds to support regional coordination and expand or develop local capacity to address their immediate homelessness challenges.

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness.

**Homeless student** is defined under the McKinney-Vento Act as a child without a regular adequate residence, which includes any students living in shelters, in substandard housing, doubled up with friends or relatives because they have no other place to go and cannot afford a home. The other living arrangements included are single room hotels, cars, parks, and public places.

**Homeless system of care** is another way of describing the Continuum of Care (CoC) and the network of partners who come together to work to support people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

**Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of**, is the federal agency responsible for national policy and programs that address housing needs, improve and develop communities, and enforce fair housing laws.

**Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs), formerly known as the Section 8 program**, are long-term rental subsidies funded by HUD and administered by Public Housing Authorities that can be used to help pay for rent.

**Housing Element** is the City's plan to meet the housing needs of everyone in the community and is incorporated into the City's General Plan, or blueprint for how the city will grow and develop. *Housing Element Updates* are required every five years by the California Department of Housing and Community Development to guide the creation of housing policy in Alameda.

**Housing First** is a well-accepted, national, evidenced-based best practice that eliminates barriers to housing, ensuring individuals and families can exit homelessness as quickly as possible. Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered on a voluntary basis to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry.<sup>60</sup>

**Housing-focused shelter** (also sometimes called "Navigation Centers") help people connect long-term solutions to homelessness and address the barriers that keep them from becoming housed. The goal is to help people exit homelessness as rapidly as possible. Once housed, people can work on the underlying challenges that undermine their stability. Housing-Focused Shelters typically offer: admissions policies that screen-in (not screen out) households, and welcome pets, partners, and possessions; minimal rules and restrictions that focus on safety (e.g., no weapons) and ability for people to come and go, with 24-hour operations; client-centered services tailored to support a household's ability to exit homelessness (e.g., job training, benefits enrollment); physical layout and aesthetics that include community spaces, outdoor spaces for pets, storage for possessions, mixed-gender dormitories that allow partners to request beds next to one another, and other design elements that promote a welcoming environment; staff with cultural competencies who treat residents with respect and dignity and caseloads that are kept small enough for staff to spend adequate time with each client; and co-location of benefits eligibility workers, health care, Department of Public Health, and other services. Partnerships with programs such as meals-on-wheels can assist with providing food.

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<sup>60</sup> *What Housing First Really Means*, National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), <https://endhomelessness.org/what-housing-first-really-means/>

**Housing wage** is an estimate of the hourly wage a full-time worker must earn to afford a rental unit at HUD's Fair Market Rent (FMR) without spending more than 30% of income on housing costs, the accepted standard of affordability.

**Inclusionary Housing Programs** are designed to counteract economic and racial segregation by requiring developers to create affordable housing units or contribute to the development of affordable housing.

**Landlord incentive programs** provide education and incentives to landlords to make it more likely they will rent to people experiencing homelessness. They can provide funding to support risk mitigation (compensating landlords if tenants harm their premises) and financial incentives that make landlords more likely to rent to people transitioning out of homelessness. Most programs include an education component and address racial inequities in voucher acceptance and access to housing.

**Local preference** is a housing policy that ensures affordable housing units developed in the city would be first made available to local residents and/or workers (to the extent permitted by law) in order to help address displacement and increase the availability of affordable housing.

**Low-barrier shelters** are emergency shelters that have removed most requirements/obstacles for entry into the program so that households are more likely go indoors to connect to services rather than stay on the street. For example, unhoused residents are allowed to bring their pets and possessions, to live with their partners, and do not have to exit the shelter each morning. They are not expected to abstain from using alcohol or other drugs, so long as they do not engage in these activities in common areas of the shelter and are respectful of other residents and staff.

**McKinney-Vento Act** is a federal statute that has a more expansive definition of homelessness than the HUD definition. The Act requires schools to track students experiencing homelessness. For public education programs up through high school, homelessness includes people experiencing homelessness under the HUD definition, but also includes youth who are couch surfing or doubled-up (e.g., with multiple families sharing the same space).

**Motivational Interviewing** is a client-centered, evidence-based approach used by direct service providers working with people experiencing homelessness. It focuses on allowing individuals to direct their own path toward the change they seek, rather than trying to convince them of what they need to do. The provider builds trust, listens, and then acts as a guide to help the client to identify their own personal next steps.

**Navigation Centers** are housing-focused facilities that provide shelter and comprehensive onsite services to support participants to exit homelessness permanently. *See "Housing-focused shelter," above, for more details.*

**Non-congregate shelters** provide overnight sleeping accommodations with individual quarters, such as hotels, motels, and dormitories.

**People with lived experience** is a term used to refer to people who have lived through the experience of homelessness and have first-hand knowledge of what it feels like to live unsheltered and/or to move through the homeless system of care.

**Point-in-Time (PIT) count** is a biennial process required of CoCs by HUD to count the number of people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. The PIT count provides a snapshot of data available on the size and characteristics of the homeless population in a CoC over time.

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** provides long-term housing with intensive supportive services to persons with disabilities. These programs typically target people with extensive experiences of homelessness and multiple vulnerabilities and needs who would not be able to retain housing without significant support.

**Prevention** is a strategy intended to target people who are at imminent risk of homelessness (whereas diversion usually targets people as they are initially trying to gain entry into shelter).

**Rapid Rehousing (RRH)** provides rental housing subsidies and tailored supportive services for up to 24-months, with the goal of helping people to transition during that time period to more permanent housing.

**Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)** is required under California housing law as part of a City's General Plan. For the City of Alameda, the local Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) quantifies a specific need for housing for each city.

**Shared housing** is a living arrangement between two unrelated people who choose to live together to take advantage of the mutual benefits it offers. Families, students, young adults, seniors, and veterans have been using this arrangement for generations. It is now recognized as a viable option for people exiting homelessness. In Alameda, First Place for Youth provides 8 units of shared housing for young people, while Operation Dignity provides Transitional Housing using a Shared Housing model.

**Street outreach** involves multi-disciplinary teams who work on the streets or in encampments to engage with people experiencing homelessness who may be disconnected or alienated from services and supports that are offered at an agency.

**Supportive services** include assistance applying for benefits, mental health and substance use services, outpatient health services, information and referral services, child care, education, life skills training, employment assistance and job training, housing search and counseling services, legal services, outreach services, transportation, food assistance, risk assessment and safety planning (particularly for individuals and families experiencing domestic violence), and case management services such as counseling, finding and coordinating services, and monitoring and evaluating progress in a program.

**Transition Age Youth (TAY)** are persons between age 18 and 24 who are transitioning from childhood to adulthood.

**Transitional Housing (TH)** provides temporary housing accommodations and supportive services. While many households benefit most from direct connections to permanent housing programs such as RRH or PSH (which are often more cost-effective over the long term), transitional housing can also be an effective support in the intermediary. In particular, certain subpopulations, such as people fleeing domestic violence and transitional age youth, can meaningfully benefit from a transitional housing environment.

**Trauma-informed care** is a practice that focuses on understanding and compassion, especially in response to trauma. The practice utilizes tools that empower people to work toward stability. It recognizes a wide range of trauma that can impact people experiencing homelessness; physical, psychological, social, and emotional trauma. It emphasizes the safety of both clients and providers.

## APPENDIX C: SNAPSHOT OF AVAILABLE PROGRAMS AND HOUSING IN ALAMEDA

Please note that the Table below represents a snapshot in time of available programs and housing in Alameda, and that these programs are evolving quickly.

**Table 1: Description of Organizations and Projects in the City of Alameda**

ORGANIZATION	PROJECTS	DETAILS
<b>Permanent Supportive Housing</b>		
Alameda Point Collaborative	Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Other Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Programs (APC Naval Air Station, APC PSH Perm APP and APC PSH Perm Spirit of Hope)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largest provider of housing in the County</li> <li>• Provides critical rental assistance, permanent supportive housing, transitional housing and case management for youth, adults, families, seniors, and veterans</li> <li>• Also provides other support to residents, such as employment and social enterprise services</li> <li>• Total of 71 PSH units (273 beds)</li> </ul>
Building Futures	Bessie Coleman Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total of 52 PSH units (53 beds) and 45 Emergency Shelter beds</li> </ul>
<b>Public Housing Authority</b>		
Alameda Housing Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Housing Vouchers</li> <li>• Housing Choice Vouchers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides community-based affordable housing in the city</li> <li>• Mission not confined to serving people experiencing homelessness</li> <li>• Available to households whose income cannot support market rate housing prices and require subsidies<sup>61</sup></li> <li>• Owns and manages multiple complexes and condominiums</li> <li>• Maintains waiting lists for all properties so that as units become vacant, interested applicants can be contacted</li> <li>• Administers the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program</li> <li>• Awarded 57 Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)) to assist individuals and families who are homeless; at-risk of homelessness; fleeing violence, were recently homeless, or have a high risk of housing instability<sup>62</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Transitional Housing</b>		
Operation Dignity	Dignity Commons Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides critical rental assistance, permanent supportive housing, transitional housing and case management for youth, adults, families, seniors, and veterans</li> <li>• Provides emergency shelter, housing, outreach, and supportive services</li> <li>• Focus on veterans</li> <li>• Dignity Commons is a transitional housing project for veterans and their children that also offers some PSH units, as well</li> <li>• Total of 8 units (29 TH beds) beds</li> </ul>

<sup>61</sup> Housing Authority of the City of Alameda website. Available at: <http://www.alamedahsg.org/>

<sup>62</sup> Per HUD regulations, the 57 EHV vouchers cannot be reserved for homeless Alamedans. The County of Alameda, not the Alameda Housing Authority, determines distribution of the EHV vouchers.

Emergency Shelter		
Building Futures	Midway Shelter Warming Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides critical rental assistance, permanent supportive housing, transitional housing and case management for youth, adults, families, seniors, and veterans</li> <li>Provides housing and domestic violence services</li> </ul>
Village of Love	Safe Shelter Program/ FEMA trailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides shelters and trailers for seniors and people with pre-existing conditions at-risk for COVID-19</li> <li>Provides meals, health, and other social services</li> </ul>
Supportive Services		
Alameda All Faiths Coalition and Alameda Food Bank	Dine and Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer-based program</li> <li>Provides weekly sit-down meals, connecting both housed and unhoused residents at a shared table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During COVID-19, modified their system to provide take-out meals</li> </ul> </li> <li>Majority of food supplies come from the Alameda Food Bank</li> <li>Alameda Food Bank providers administrative and fiscal oversight.</li> </ul>
	Feed Alameda (in partnership with the City)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides over 100 meals/week to local unhoused residents</li> <li>Supports local restaurants impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by contracting for meals</li> <li>Alameda residents raised over \$50,000 for Feed Alameda since launching in January 2021</li> </ul>
Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless (ACHCH), Alameda County Health Care Services Agency	Shelter Health (at Dine and Connect) Street Health (with Tiburcio Vasquez)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A federally-funded health center program that is contained within the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency</li> <li>Coordinates a network of health clinics and organizations to improve access and care for individuals experiencing homelessness</li> <li>Services include primary care with integrated behavioral health sites across County, urgent care, and street medicine at shelters and on the streets, substance use outreach and treatment, dental and optical care, and case management</li> <li>Services are free for persons who are unable to pay</li> </ul>
Alameda Unified School District	McKinney-Vento Homeless Program <sup>63</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps ensure homeless children have equal access to a free public education that is available to all children in the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD)</li> <li>Helps families by providing bus passes, backpacks, school supplies</li> <li>Local partners have expanded services for homeless children in the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All children can be automatically enrolled in Head Start</li> <li>Midway Shelter partnership provides bus passes, computers, and other services</li> <li>APC staff attend Individualized Education Plans (or IEPs) and work with parents to support school attendance and performance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>63</sup> McKinney-Vento Homeless Program for the Alameda Unified School District. Available at: <https://www.alameda.k12.ca.us/mckinney-vento>

Alameda Police Department	Homeless Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The homeless liaison is a law enforcement officer who specifically attends to the unhoused community in the city</li> <li>• The liaison has become a key member of the homeless outreach team, who closely understands the experiences and goals of those living on the street or in their cars</li> <li>• The liaison is a bridge to local community supports and to family</li> </ul>
Family Violence Law Center	Domestic Violence Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers domestic violence survivor-centered legal and crisis intervention services for communities in the County, as well as educational services and policy work</li> </ul>
Mastick Senior Center	Senior Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a variety of programs and services in the areas of health, education, and recreation to meet the needs of adults aged 50 and older</li> <li>• A division of the City of Alameda Recreation &amp; Park Department</li> </ul>
Operation Dignity	Mobile Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides visits from outreach workers</li> <li>• Services are provided at different sites, including encampments, parking lots, bridge underpass, tunnels, and parks</li> </ul>
Saint Vincent de Paul	Basic Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides hot meals, job training assistance, rent assistance, access to health care, furniture, clothing, and respite from life on the street</li> </ul>
Village of Love	Alameda Day Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connects individuals with peer counselors and referrals for services and housing</li> <li>• Offers showers, activities and events, TV and movies, classes, support groups, phone charging stations, computers, Wi-Fi, and phones</li> <li>• Provides breakfast, lunch, and snacks</li> <li>• Funded through the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP)</li> <li>• Open on weekdays 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and weekends 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.</li> </ul>
	Safe Parking Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched during the COVID-19 pandemic</li> <li>• Provides safe and secure space for people living in cars or vans to park at night</li> <li>• Facilities include bathrooms and Wi-Fi</li> <li>• Outreach workers and housing navigators are available on site to connect clients to services</li> <li>• Provides a critical space for respite and services</li> <li>• Funded through the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP)</li> <li>• Open 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. seven days/week</li> </ul>

Emergency Financial Assistance		
St. Vincent de Paul / St. Barnabas	Flexible Account for Homeless Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides one-time emergency financial assistance of up to \$750 to individuals and families experiencing homelessness</li> </ul>
	Flexible Account for People At-Risk of Becoming Homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevents at-risk individuals and families from becoming homeless by providing one-time emergency financial assistance of up to \$750</li> <li>Funds may be used to assist with rent, utility bills, car repairs, medical bills, traffic tickets, document application, emergency motel stays, etc.</li> </ul>
	Rental Assistance and Subsidies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides emergency rent relief, move-in deposits and fees, and other necessities to prevent individuals and families from losing their home or to secure housing</li> <li>Also covers emergency motel stays. Assists clients with financial management planning</li> </ul>
Coordinated Entry System		
Building Futures	Front Door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the City's primary physical access point to the Coordinated Entry System (CES)</li> </ul>
Eden I&R / 2-1-1	Homeless Hotline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The central phone-based access point for homeless services</li> <li>Connects individuals in need of services or housing to the appropriate local provider</li> <li>Only available during weekday business hours</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX D: ALIGNMENT WITH COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

In 2018, EveryOne Home<sup>64</sup> published the County's *Strategic Plan Update: Ending Homelessness in Alameda County* (County Strategic Plan Update), which recommended strategies and actions to reduce homelessness across the entire County, including the City. The Goals and Strategies of *The Road Home* are aligned with the County Strategic Plan Update. This includes the following **strategies**: expand capacity; increase investment; build stronger partnerships; and align public policies.

The Roadmap is also aligned with the County Strategic Plan Update's **actions**, tailored to the local context of the City of Alameda (relevant strategies in parentheses):

### Expand Housing Opportunities

- Use land for housing efficiently (1.1)
- Meet Inclusionary Zoning policies and Housing Plan targets (1.2)
- Expedite the development of affordable housing (1.2)
- Establish a dedicated revenue stream for housing operations and services (3.2)
- Prioritize the most vulnerable for affordable housing (1.2)
- Expand landlord partners (1.3)
- Increase permanent supportive housing (1.1, 1.2)
- Increase stock of and accessibility to alternative housing opportunities (1.1)
- Expand supportive services to help people stay housed (2.3, 3.3)

### Prevent People from Becoming Homeless

- Adopt policies to keep renters in their homes (2.1)
- Increase the availability of flexible temporary financial assistance (2.1)
- Increase connection to income and benefits (2.3, 3.1)

### Protect the Dignity of People Experiencing Homelessness

- Repeal or stop enforcing policies that criminalize homelessness (2.3)
- Develop a humane and consistent response to the needs of unsheltered people (2.3)
- Evaluate access to and outcomes of the Housing Crisis Response System (3.2)
- Engage the leadership of people experiencing homelessness (3.2)
- Provide services for health and sanitation (2.3)
- Expand language accessibility to the Housing Crisis Response System (3.2)
- Expand, coordinate, and enhance street outreach (2.3)
- Stabilize existing shelter capacity and provide additional shelter/safe spaces (2.2)

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<sup>64</sup> EveryOne Home is a collective impact initiative founded in 2007 to facilitate the implementation of Alameda County's plan to end homelessness, known as the EveryOne Home Plan. In 2018, EveryOne Home updated that Plan now known as the Strategic Plan Update: Ending Homelessness in Alameda County. Available at: <https://everyonehome.org/about/the-plan/>