



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Leslye Corsiglia

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** May 28, 2013

Approved

Date

6/3/13

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON ACTIONS TAKEN TO PREVENT AND END  
HOMELESSNESS AND TO RESPOND TO HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS**

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee accept this report and provide feedback to the Department about actions and response.

## BACKGROUND

During the 2011 point in time count, 4,034 people were found to be homeless within the City's boundaries. The annual estimate of homelessness in San Jose exceeded 12,000. A new point in time count was conducted in January 2013, and while official numbers have not yet been released, we expect to be able to verbally present details of the count at the Committee meeting.

Initial reports are that homelessness in San Jose has increased by as much as 18% since the last count. Furthermore, staff estimates that more than 1,200 people are living in encampments – or nearly 30% of the entire unsheltered population in San Jose – the majority of which are along the City's waterways.

## ANALYSIS

Responding to the City's housing needs and increased homelessness is a challenge, particularly with the loss of many of the tools we have had in the past, new strict legal requirements regulating encampment work, and the need for highly specialized strategies to deal with both the housing and service needs of the homeless individuals and families in the community.

May 28, 2011

**Subject: Homeless Encampments**

Page 2

In response, the Housing Department hired a Project Manager in November to coordinate the City's homeless efforts, including the response to encampments. In the proposed FY 2013-14 budget, homeless efforts will be centralized under a new Homelessness Response Team with a goal of providing a coordinated strategy to eliminate homelessness in San José. Key initiatives include:

- **Homelessness Response Team:** Established in 2013, this Team provides a stronger infrastructure for addressing homelessness. The Team also serves as a collaborative hub to work with key partners such as Destination: Home and the County of Santa Clara to advance regional initiatives, such as the Housing 1000 campaign, which has a local goal of housing 1,000 of the County's most vulnerable residents by 2015. In FY 2013-14, the team will manage funding streams from federal, State, and local sources to provide over \$8 million of support and capital resources to prevent and end homelessness in San Jose.
- **Homeless Outreach and Engagement:** Homeless outreach and engagement teams are a critical component of the City's efforts to meet the needs of homeless residents and respond to the concerns of the broader community. These teams provide assistance and support to homeless residents by gaining rapport and working to connect them to services, shelter, and ultimately permanent housing. By dispatching these teams to a site weeks, and ideally months, before a clean up or other enforcement activity is planned or required, we can do more than simply move residents from one unsheltered site to another. Given many homeless residents' disabling conditions and troubled pasts, the outreach workers often need considerable time to break down barriers and gain trust.

For the new fiscal year, the Housing Department is continuing current contracts with the Bill Wilson Center and Emergency Housing Consortium to provide outreach services to homeless residents, including those in encampments. A total of \$555,932 in Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funds and \$461,898 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are available in FY 2013-14 for outreach and engagement efforts. In addition, \$347,000 is devoted to Downtown Outreach, some of which targets homeless encampments.

- **Encampment Response:** At the beginning of 2013, the Housing Department took the lead in the oversight and coordination of all encampment work. Cleaning up an encampment can cost between \$5,000 and \$50,000. The City has typically had a very small budget for encampment cleanups, which has been matched by funding from the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

In response, the Administration's FY 2013-14 budget includes \$1,670,000, including \$1,500,000 in General Funds and \$170,000 from the Santa Clara Valley Water District, for encampment clean up efforts. On June 18<sup>th</sup>, the Department will bring forward an action to the City Council to select a contractor to conduct cleanups, which will consolidate work, increase overall efficiency, and limit staff exposure to potentially hazardous conditions. Also on June 18<sup>th</sup>, the Department will bring forward an action to re-enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Water District regarding clean up

May 28, 2011

**Subject: Homeless Encampments**

Page 3

efforts, and expects that additional funding will be committed as a part of that partnership. With this budget, and in conjunction with key partners, staff anticipates that there will be 48 encampment clean ups during the budget year (12 large four-day cleanups and 36 small one-day cleanups). The budget also includes additional resources for outreach staff and park rangers to prevent encampments from establishing and to respond to re-encampment. Both resources have been instrumental in responding to encampments and keeping areas free from encampment once cleaned.

On a regional level, by working closely with the Water District, Destination:Home, the County of Santa Clara, and other key partners over the past few months, we have developed a regional encampment strategy with the vision of providing “housing stability and support for homeless residents in Santa Clara County to keep waterways, parks and public space free of encampments, to protect the environment, provide safe use of public areas, and ensure that no one is unsheltered.” This strategy includes high level actions that ensure that all partners are working collectively to address encampments and are committing needed resources.

All of the described outreach and engagement initiatives operate with the goal of successfully transitioning homeless residents living in encampments and the streets to a stable living environment. However, in order for this goal to come to fruition, the City and its partners will need to identify additional affordable housing opportunities, secure additional case management resources, and increase citywide outreach and engagement efforts.

Housing Department staff will provide a detailed presentation at the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee meeting on June 13, 2013.

/s/

LESLYE CORSIGLIA  
Director of Housing

For questions, please contact Ray Bramson, Homelessness Response  
Team Manager, at 535-8234.

# Homelessness in San José: Status and Response

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A Presentation to the  
Neighborhood Services and Education Committee  
by the Housing Department  
June 13, 2013





# THE FACTS

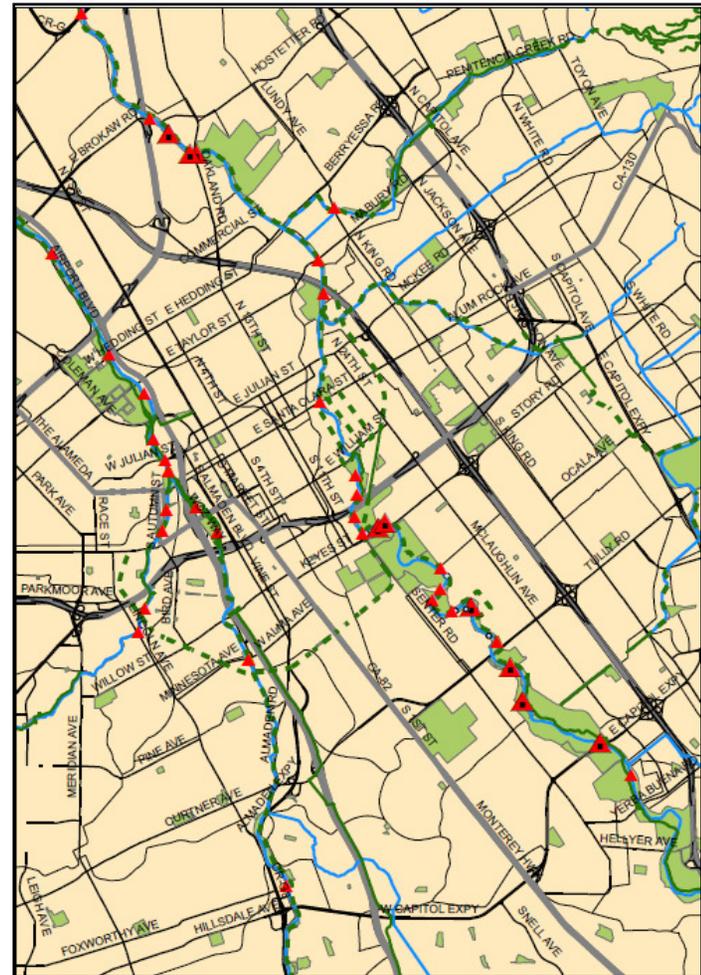
2013 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey

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- 4,770 homeless people in San José
- 18% Increase from 2011
- Profile of homelessness
  - 32% chronic
  - 10% veterans
  - 9% families
  - 18% unaccompanied children and youth
  - 73% unsheltered

# ENCAMPMENTS

- 1,230 people counted
- Unique demographics
  - Older
  - Longer length of homelessness
  - More former San Jose residents
- 96% would accept housing if offered





# COMMUNITY NEEDS AND GOALS

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- Immediate and consistent response
- Partnerships to leverage resources
- Coordinated strategy to reduce and end homelessness



# HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE TEAM

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- City-wide Outreach
- Housing and Support
- Encampment Abatement and Stakeholder Coordination
- Housing 1000



# NEXT STEPS: FY 2013-2014

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- Rapid Re-housing Demonstration Project
  - Place Based Strategy
  - Homelessness Framework
  - Collective Impact Approach
  - Measurable Impact



# COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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Feedback?

Questions?

Comments?