

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: MEGAN BASINGER, DIRECTOR
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2027) –
YEAR THREE REPORT (2025)

AGENDA ACTION: ACCEPT

RECOMMENDATION

The Housing and Community Services Department recommends that the Council receive a Year Three Report (2025) on the implementation of the Homelessness Solutions Strategic Plan (2023-2027). This item has no impact on current fiscal year budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 15, 2022, Council approved the Homelessness Solutions Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) for the five-year period beginning January 2023 through December 2027. The Strategic Plan provides key strategies and actions that focus on bolstering the City's response to the homelessness crises, aligning efforts with the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition (our local County Continuum of Care) to achieve the regional goal of "Functional Zero" homelessness by 2027. A system of care achieves "Functional Zero" when a person's experience with homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. Council previously received Year One (2023) and Year Two (2024) reports on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This report highlights the City's progress toward implementing Year Three (2025) of the five-year Strategic Plan.

GOAL

This item relates to Council Goal #5 - Plan for and Encourage Housing for All and Reduce Homelessness as it highlights the City's efforts to address homelessness.

BACKGROUND/PRIOR COUNCIL REVIEW

1. On November 15, 2022, Council approved the Strategic Plan for the five-year period beginning January 2023 through December 2027 and authorized the City Manager to make minor or non-substantive modifications to amend the Strategic Plan to

ensure alignment with the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition’s regional plan. Since its adoption, Council has received annual reports on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including a Year One Report (2023), on February 13, 2024, and Year Two Report (2024), on January 28, 2025. These reports have corresponding implementation plans described below.

2. To operationalize the visionary Strategic Plan, staff have developed annual implementation plans. The Year Three Implementation Plan (2025), attached, prioritizes key actions into two tiers and also identifies regional initiatives. Tier one includes eight action items focused on implementing each of the Strategic Plan’s three overarching strategies (summarized below); tier two items are intended to supplement tier one priorities. Staff updated the Year Three Implementation Plan (2025) regularly throughout the year and made this information available on the City’s website.
3. The Strategic Plan’s three overarching strategies and Year Three (2025) accomplishments are summarized below:

Strategy One: Improve the Performance of the City’s Homeless Response with the Regional Homeless Response System
2025 Key Accomplishments • Administered \$3.9 million countywide homelessness prevention pilot program (Keep People Housed (KPH) – Sonoma) with All Home, County of Sonoma, City of Petaluma, and COTS (Committee on the Shelterless); • Participated in Sonoma County Homelessness Working Group to further develop regional funding tracker and resource prioritization framework; • Coordinated Santa Rosa-specific By Names List (BNL); and • Administered \$2.3 million from the HOME Investment Partnerships - American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) program to provide supportive services to qualifying populations.
Strategy Two: Expand Service-Oriented Responses to Unsheltered Homelessness
2025 Key Accomplishments • Administered \$3.8 million from State of California’s Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) program to provide comprehensive services for individuals residing in encampments in the Southwest and Southeast areas of the City; • Recommended for award of \$979,000 from County of Sonoma’s Department of Health Services (DHS) to continue operations of the Safe Parking Program through Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and • Implemented the City Encampment Team to proactively address the health, safety, and environmental concerns associated with encampments.

Strategy Three: Continue and Enhance Collaboration in Regional Homelessness Solutions with Key Stakeholders
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2025 Key Accomplishments

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed Year Three Implementation Plan (2025); developed Year Four Implementation Plan (2026);• Evaluated contractors' client engagement and feedback efforts and incorporated additional reporting requirements in homeless services contracts; and• Presented findings to the City Council on investments in homeless services, affordable and supportive housing (Year Three Report 2025). |
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ANALYSIS

1. Santa Rosa continues to make progress toward implementing its Strategic Plan through investments in homeless services and affordable housing, and collaboration with regional partners through the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition. The City invests approximately \$5 million annually for homeless services plus one-time funds from local, state, and federal resources to augment its efforts. To assist in addressing a General Fund deficit, Council reduced this investment to \$4.3 million for Fiscal Year 2025/2026.
2. In Fiscal Year 2024/2025, 718 individuals were housed through City sponsored programs, a 24% increase over the prior fiscal year. The City also prevented 245 households from falling into homelessness, through the first year of implementing the two-year regional homelessness prevention pilot program (KPH – Sonoma).
3. These efforts are coupled with \$39.4 million from a variety of sources administered by the City and the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Rosa, increasing housing opportunities through the production of 529 affordable housing units completed in the past 24 months, 100 units that are under construction, and 105 Emergency Housing Vouchers administered by the Housing Authority, which are fully leased up.
4. Between 2022 and 2025, the first three years of the five-year Strategic Plan, homelessness decreased in Santa Rosa by 31 percent from 1,658 persons to 1,140. The most significant decrease (30 percent) occurred between 2022 and 2023 from 1,658 persons to 1,160 due in part to one-time funding available during the COVID-19 pandemic and increased resources from the State of California's Homekey program. This was followed by an 18 percent increase between 2023 and 2024 from 1,160 persons to 1,365 and then a 16 percent decrease between 2024 and 2025 from 1,365 persons to 1,140.
5. Staff have developed a Year Four Implementation Plan (2026). Key areas include continue administration of one-time funds (ERF and HOME-ARP) to provide enhanced supportive services to persons experiencing or at-risk of homelessness; continue operation of the Safe Parking Program with one-time funds from DHS; overseeing year two of KPH – Sonoma; continue coordination of a Santa Rosa-

specific BNL; and continuing enhanced support to disproportionately impacted neighborhoods via the City Encampment Team.

6. Since its inception in 2022, the City Encampment Team’s proactive approach has successfully prevented the formation of large encampments (10 or more dwellings) which present significant health and safety risks. Additionally, the team has reduced the number of occupied recreation vehicles (RVs) and vehicles by 95 percent citywide (211 dwellings to 11) and the overall number of encampments by 49 percent (35 total encampments to 18).

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the recommended action is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the recommended action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the recommended action may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Year Three Implementation Plan (2025)

PRESENTER(S)

Sasha Brown, Program Specialist II