



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City of Palo Alto
Prohousing Designation Application Materials for Public
Review

Posted on May 18, 2026

Updated on June 17, 2026

Online: PaloAlto.gov/ProhousingApplication

In-Person: Palo Alto Development Center at 285 Hamilton Ave.

Program Information, Application Overview & Guidelines for Public Review and Comments

About the Prohousing Designation Program

The Prohousing Designation Program (PDP) is a State program administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Prohousing Designation Program (PDP) seeks to acknowledge and support jurisdictions that go above-and-beyond state housing law to help accelerate housing production.

Jurisdictions are required to complete an application that documents that the jurisdiction meets the programs requirements, and specifically that it has housing policies in place that meet scoring criteria across four key categories. These categories are:

- **Category 1: Favorable Zoning and Land Use**
- **Category 2: Acceleration of Housing Production Timeframes**
- **Category 3: Reduction of Construction and Development Costs**
- **Category 4: Providing Financial Subsidies**

HCD has allocated 1 to 3 points for various types of policies and programs in each of these categories. Jurisdictions may also earn additional points for certain Enhancement Factors. Jurisdictions must earn at least **30 points** to receive the Designation. For scoring criteria and enhancement factor details please see pages 8-15 in this document or see pages 7-13 in the following document: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-community/prohousing-designation-program-application.docx>

A jurisdiction with a Prohousing Designation may receive priority processing or funding points when applying for several funding programs, including Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC), Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG), Transformative Climate Communities (TCC), Solutions for Congested Corridors (SCCP), Local Partnership Program (LPP), Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), and Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program (STPG). Receiving a Prohousing Designation also allows jurisdictions to apply to the Prohousing Incentive Program. PIP is designed to reward local governments with additional funding to accelerate affordable housing production and preservation.

Learn more about the program at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/planning-and-research/prohousing>.

Application Overview

The Prohousing Designation application consists of 7 appendices. **City staff recommend that public review and comments focus on Appendices 2, 3, 5 and 7.** These appendices contain the majority of the City's unique application information. Information that will be added later has been noted by Staff in red/yellow.

- Appendix 1: Formal Resolution for the Prohousing Designation Program
- Appendix 2: Proposed Policy Completion Schedule
- Appendix 3: Self-Scoring Sheet
- Appendix 4: Examples of Prohousing Policies with Enhancement Factors
- Appendix 5: Homeless Encampment Response
- Appendix 6: Diligent Public Participation Checklist
- Appendix 7: Additional Information and Supporting Documentation

Appendix 1 will be completed using HCD's resolution template. This may be viewed here: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-community/prohousing-designation-program-formal-resolution.pdf>. City Council is expected to consider this resolution, which authorizes the City Manager to finalize and submit the City's application materials, in June 2026.

Appendices 2 and 3 provide details on the City's prohousing policies, both enacted and proposed, to support HCD in their evaluation on Palo Alto's eligibility for the program. City staff has removed the sample scoring sheet included in HCD's application materials from this public review draft to avoid potential confusion.

Appendix 4 is a reference document for applicant use and does not require public review. For those interested in viewing this appendix, please see pages 22-23 in the following document: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-community/prohousing-designation-program-application.docx>

Appendix 5 is a structured template that applicants are required to complete in order to confirm that the treatment of homeless encampments within the jurisdiction is consistent with USICH's "7 Principles for Addressing Encampments."

Appendix 6 provides a checklist to confirm that a Diligent Public Participation Process was conducted. City staff will complete this following the conclusion of the public review and comment period. For those interested in viewing this appendix, please see page 26 in the following document: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-community/prohousing-designation-program-application.docx>

Appendix 7 includes additional information and supporting documentation for the application, particularly for appendices 2 and 3.

In addition to the above appendices, staff will also complete and include the following forms as part of the required application materials:

- Application Checklist
- Application Information
- Certificate and Acknowledgement
- Legislative Information
- Threshold Requirements Checklist

Drafts of these forms are included in this document for public review and comment.

Guidelines for Public Review and Comment

The draft application materials included in this document should be reviewed within 30 days of Monday May 18, 2026. Edits were made to the application materials on June 17, 2026 and the comment period was extended by 7 days to June 24, 2026.

Community members are encourage to provide written comments on these materials using the **online comment form** at PaloAlto.gov/ProhousingApplication.

Community members are also encouraged to provide oral comments at one of the following public meetings, both located at Palo Alto City Hall (250 Hamilton Avenue):

- **Community Info and Listening Session**
Wednesday May 20, 2026 in the Community Meeting Room from 4:00 to 5:00 PM
- **Planning and Transportation Commission Study Session**
Wednesday May 27, 2026 in Council Chambers starting at 6:00 PM

Oral or written comments related to the Appendix 1 resolution may be provided in writing in advance of the June 15, 2026 City Council meeting or during the public comment period for this meeting which will begin at 5:30 PM in Council Chambers at City Hall. Written comments may be sent via email to City.Council@PaloAlto.gov or mailed to the following address: *Office of the City Clerk: City Hall, 7th Floor, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94301.*

Thank you for your interest in the City's application materials. Draft application materials and key reference information begin on the next page of this document!

Application Checklist

	Yes	No
Application Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certification and Acknowledgement <i>(to be completed by City Manager before submission)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Legislative Information form is completed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Threshold Requirements Checklist is completed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A duly adopted and certified Formal Resolution for the Prohousing Designation Program is included in the application package. (See Appendix 1 for the Formal Resolution for the Prohousing Designation Program form.) <i>(to be added after June 15 Council meeting)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If applicable, the Proposed Policy Completion Schedule is completed. (See Appendix 2 .)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Self-Scoring Sheet is completed. (See Appendix 3 for the Self-Scoring Sheet and the Sample Self-Scoring Sheet.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One-page summary describing consistency with the 7 Principles for Addressing Encampments is completed. (See Appendix 5 for a template to assist.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The checklist confirming that a Diligent Public Participation process was conducted. (See Appendix 6 for the template.) <i>(to be checked off once process has been completed)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional information and supporting documentation (Applicant to provide as Appendix 7 .)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Application Information

Applicant (Jurisdiction):	City of Palo Alto
Applicant Mailing Address:	250 Hamilton Ave
City:	Palo Alto
ZIP Code:	94301
Website:	PaloAlto.gov
Authorized Representative Name	Jonathan Lait
Authorized Representative Title:	Planning and Development Services Director
Phone:	(650) 329-2679
Email:	jonathan.lait@paloalto.gov
Contact Person Name:	Julia Knight
Contact Person Title:	Senior Program Manager
Phone:	(650) 838-2839
Email:	Julia.Knight@PaloAlto.gov
Total Self-Score (Based on Appendix 3):	41

CERTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As authorized by the Formal Resolution for the Prohousing Designation Program (Resolution No. _____), which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference as if set forth in full, I hereby submit this full and complete application on behalf of the applicant.

I certify that all information and representations set forth in this application are true and correct.

I further certify that any proposed Prohousing Policy identified herein will be enacted within two (2) years of the date of this application submittal.

I acknowledge that this application constitutes a public record under the California Public Records Act (Gov. Code, § 6250 et seq.) and is therefore subject to public disclosure by the Department.

Signature: _____

(to be completed by City Manager before submission)

Name and Title: _____

(to be completed by City Manager before submission)

Date: _____

(to be completed by City Manager before submission)

Legislative Information

District	Number	Legislators Name(s)
State Assembly District	23	Assemblymember Marc Berman-DEM
State Senate District	13	Senator Josh Becker-DEM

Threshold Requirements Checklist

The applicant meets the following threshold requirements in accordance with Section 6604 of the Regulations:

	Yes	No
The applicant is a Jurisdiction.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The applicant has adopted a Compliant Housing Element.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The applicant has submitted or will submit a legally sufficient Annual Progress Report prior to designation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The applicant has completed or agrees to complete, on or before the relevant statutory deadlines, any rezone program or zoning that is necessary to remain in compliance with Government Code sections 65583, subdivision (c)(1), and 65584.09, subdivision (a), and with California Coastal Commission certification where appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The applicant is in compliance, at the time of the application, with applicable state housing law, including, but not limited to those included in Government Code section 65585, subdivision (j); laws relating to the imposition of school facilities fees or other requirements (Gov. Code, § 65995 et seq.); Least Cost Zoning Law (Gov. Code, § 65913.1); Permit Streamlining Act (Gov. Code, § 65920 et seq.); and provisions relating to timeliness of CEQA processing by local governments in Public Resources Code sections 21080.1, 21080.2, and 21151.5(a).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The applicant further acknowledges and confirms that its treatment of homeless encampments on public property complies with and will continue to comply with the constitutional rights of persons experiencing homelessness and that it has submitted a one-page summary to the Department demonstrating how the applicant has enacted best practices in their jurisdiction related to the treatment of unhoused individuals camping on public property, consistent with United States Interagency Council on Homelessness' "7 Principles for Addressing Encampments," (June 17, 2022 update), hereby incorporated by reference.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The applicant has duly adopted and certified, by the applicant's governing body, a Formal Resolution for the Prohousing Designation Program, which is hereby incorporated by reference. (A true and correct copy of the resolution is included in this application package.) (to be completed after June 15 Council meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Scoring Criteria

Category 1: Favorable Zoning and Land Use

Category	Prohousing Policy Description	Points
1A	Sufficient sites, including rezoning, to accommodate 150 percent or greater of the current or draft RHNA, whichever is greater, by total and income category. These additional sites must be identified in the Jurisdiction's housing element adequate sites inventory, consistent with Government Code section 65583, subdivisions (a)(3) and (c)(1).	3
1B	Permitting missing middle housing uses (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) by right in existing low-density, single-family residential zones in a manner that exceeds the requirements of SB 9 (Chapter 162, Statutes of 2021, Gov. Code, §§ 65852.21, 66411.7).	3
1C	Sufficient sites, including rezoning, to accommodate 125 to 149 percent of the current or draft RHNA, whichever is greater, by total and income category. These points shall not be awarded if the applicant earns three points pursuant to Category (1)(A) above. These additional sites must be identified in the Jurisdiction's housing element adequate sites inventory, consistent with Government Code section 65583, subdivisions (a)(3) and (c)(1).	2
1D	Density bonus programs that allow additional density for additional affordability beyond minimum statutory requirements (Gov. Code, § 65915 et seq.).	2
1E	Increasing allowable density in low-density, single-family residential areas beyond the requirements of state Accessory Dwelling Unit Law, (Gov. Code, §§ 65852.2, 65852.22) (e.g., permitting more than one converted ADU; one detached, new construction ADU; and one JADU per single-family lot), and in a manner that exceeds the requirements of SB 9 (Chapter 192, Statutes of 2021, Gov. Code, §§ 65852.21, 66411.7). These policies shall be separate from any qualifying policies under Category (1)(B).	2
1F	Eliminating minimum parking requirements for residential development as authorized by Government Code section 65852.2; adopting vehicular parking ratios that are less than the relevant ratio thresholds at subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of Gov. Code section 65915, subdivision (p)(1); or adopting maximum parking requirements at or less than ratios pursuant to Gov. Code section 65915, subdivision (p).	2
1G	Zoning or incentives that are designed to increase affordable housing development in a range of types, including, but not limited to, large family units, Supportive Housing, housing for transition age foster youth, and deep affordability targeted for Extremely Low-Income Households in all parts of the Jurisdiction, with at least some of the zoning, other land use designation methods, or incentives being designed to increase	2

	affordable housing development in higher resource areas shown in the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, and with the Jurisdiction having confirmed that it considered and addressed potential environmental justice issues in adopting and implementing this policy, especially in areas with existing industrial and polluting uses.	
1H	Zoning or other land use designation methods to allow for residential or mixed uses in one or more non-residential zones (e.g., commercial, light industrial). Qualifying non-residential zones do not include open space or substantially similar zones.	1
1I	Modification of development standards and other applicable zoning provisions or land use designation methods to promote greater development intensity. Potential areas of focus include floor area ratio, height limits, minimum lot or unit sizes, setbacks, and allowable dwelling units per acre. These policies must be separate from any qualifying policies under Category (1)(B) above.	1
1J	Establishment of a Workforce Housing Opportunity Zone, as defined in Government Code section 65620, or a Housing Sustainability District, as defined in Government Code section 66200.	1
1K	Establishment of an inclusionary housing program requiring new developments to include housing affordable to and reserved for low- and very low-income households, consistent with the requirements of AB 1505 (Chapter 376, Statutes of 2017, Gov. Code, § 65850.01).	1
1L	Other zoning and land use actions not described in Categories (A)-(K) of this section that measurably support the Acceleration of Housing Production.	1

Scoring Criteria

Category 2: Acceleration of Housing Production Timeframes

Category	Prohousing Policy Description	Points
2A	Establishment of ministerial approval processes for multiple housing types, including, for example, single-family, multifamily and mixed-use housing.	3
2B	Acceleration of Housing Production through the establishment of streamlined, program-level CEQA analysis and certification of general plans, community plans, specific plans with accompanying Environmental Impact Reports (EIR), and related documents.	2
2C	Documented practice of streamlining housing development at the project level, such as by enabling a by-right approval process or by utilizing statutory and categorical exemptions as authorized by applicable law, (e.g., Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21155.1, 21155.4, 21159.24, 21159.25; Gov. Code, § 65457; Cal Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15303, 15332; Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21094.5, 21099, 21155.2, 21159.28).	2
2D	Establishment of permitting processes that take less than four months to complete. Policies under this category must address all approvals necessary to issue building permits.	2
2E	Absence or elimination of public hearings for projects consistent with zoning and the general plan.	2
2F	Priority permit processing or reduced plan check times for homes affordable to Lower-Income Households.	2
2G	Establishment of consolidated or streamlined permit processes that minimize the levels of review and approval required for projects, and that are consistent with zoning regulations and the general plan.	1
2H	Absence, elimination, or replacement of subjective development and design standards with objective development and design standards that simplify zoning clearance and improve approval certainty and timing.	1
2I	Establishment of one-stop-shop permitting processes or a single point of contact where entitlements are coordinated across city approval functions (e.g., planning, public works, building) from entitlement application to certificate of occupancy.	1
2J	Priority permit processing or reduced plan check times for ADUs/JADUs or multifamily housing.	1
2K	Establishment of a standardized application form for all entitlement applications.	1
2L	Documented practice of publicly posting status updates on project permit approvals on the internet.	1

2M	Limitation on the total number of hearings for any project to three or fewer. Applicants that accrue points pursuant to category (2)(E) are not eligible for points under this category.	1
2N	Other policies not described in Categories (2)(A)-(M) of this section that quantifiably decrease production timeframes or promote the streamlining of approval processes.	1

Scoring Criteria

Category 3: Reduction of Construction and Development Costs

Category	Prohousing Policy Description	Points
3A	Waiver or significant reduction of development impact fees for residential development with units affordable to Lower-Income Households. This provision does not include fees associated with the provision of housing affordable to Lower-Income Households (e.g., inclusionary in lieu fees, affordable housing impact fees, and commercial linkage fees).	3
3B	Adoption of policies that result in less restrictive requirements than Government Code sections 65852.2 and 65852.22 to reduce barriers for property owners to create ADUs/JADUs. Examples of qualifying policies include, but are not limited to, development standards improvements, permit processing improvements, dedicated ADU/JADU staff, technical assistance programs, and pre-approved ADU/JADU design packages.	2
3C	Adoption of other fee reduction strategies separate from Category (3)(A), including fee deferrals and reduced fees for housing for persons with special needs. This provision does not include fees associated with the provision of housing affordable to Lower-Income Households (e.g., inclusionary in lieu fees, affordable impact fees and commercial linkage fees).	1
3D	Accelerating innovative housing production through innovative housing types (e.g., manufactured homes, recreational vehicles, park models, community ownership, and other forms of social housing) that reduce development costs.	1
3E	Measures that reduce costs for transportation-related infrastructure or programs that encourage active modes of transportation or other alternatives to automobiles. Qualifying policies include, but are not limited to, publicly funded programs to expand sidewalks or protect bike/micro-mobility lanes, creation of on-street parking for bikes, transit-related improvements, or establishment of carshare programs.	1

3F	Adoption of universal design ordinances pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 17959.	1
3G	Establishment of pre-approved or prototype plans for missing middle housing types (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) in low-density, single-family residential areas.	1
3H	Adoption of ordinances that reduce barriers, beyond existing law, for the development of housing affordable to Lower-Income Households.	1
3I	Other policies not described in Categories (3)(A)-(H) of this section that quantifiably reduce construction or development costs.	1

Scoring Criteria

Category 4: Providing Financial Subsidies

Category	Prohousing Policy Description	Points
4A	Establishment of a housing fund or contribution of funds towards affordable housing through proceeds from approved ballot measures.	2
4B	Establishment of local housing trust funds or collaboration on a regional housing trust fund, which include the Jurisdiction's own funding contributions. The Jurisdiction must contribute to the local or regional housing trust fund regularly and significantly. For the purposes of this Category, "regularly" shall be defined as at least annually, and "significant" contributions shall be determined based on the impact the contributions have in accelerating the production of affordable housing.	2
4C	Demonstration of regular use or planned regular use of funding (e.g., federal, state, or local) for preserving assisted units at-risk of conversion to market rate uses and conversion of market rate uses to units with affordability restrictions (e.g., acquisition/rehabilitation). For the purposes of this category, "regular use" can be demonstrated through the number of units preserved annually by utilizing this funding source.	2
4D	Provide grants or low-interest loans for ADU/JADU construction affordable to Lower- and Moderate-Income Households.	2
4E	A comprehensive program that complies with the Surplus Land Act (Gov. Code, § 54220 et seq.) and that makes publicly owned land available for affordable housing, or for multifamily housing projects with the highest feasible percentage of units affordable to Lower Income Households. A qualifying program may utilize mechanisms such as land donations, land sales with significant write-downs, or below-market land leases.	2
4F	Establishment of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District or similar local financing tool that, to the extent feasible, directly supports housing developments in an area where at least 20 percent of the residences will be affordable to Lower-Income Households.	2
4G	Prioritization of local general funds to accelerate the production of housing affordable to Lower-Income Households.	2
4H	Directed residual redevelopment funds to accelerate the production of affordable housing.	1

4I	Development and regular (at least biennial) use of a housing subsidy pool, local or regional trust fund, or other similar funding source sufficient to facilitate and support the development of housing affordable to Lower-Income Households.	1
4J	Prioritization of local general funds for affordable housing. This point shall not be awarded if the applicant earns two points pursuant to Category (4)(G).	1
4K	Providing operating subsidies for permanent Supportive Housing.	1
4L	Providing subsidies for housing affordable to Extremely Low-Income Households.	1
4M	Other policies not described in Categories (4)(A)-(L) of this section that quantifiably promote, develop, or leverage financial resources for housing affordable to Lower-Income Households.	1

Scoring Criteria: Enhancement Factors

The Department shall utilize enhancement factors to increase the point scores of Prohousing Policies. An individual Prohousing Policy may not use more than one enhancement factor. Each Prohousing Policy will receive extra points for enhancement factors in accordance with the chart below.

Category	Prohousing Policy Description	Points
1	The policy represents one element of a unified, multi-faceted strategy to promote multiple planning objectives, such as efficient land use, access to public transportation, housing affordable to Lower-Income Households, climate change solutions, and/or hazard mitigation.	2
2	Policies that promote development consistent with the state planning priorities pursuant to Government Code section 65041.1.	1
3	Policies that diversify planning and target community and economic development investments (housing and non-housing) toward place-based strategies for community revitalization and equitable quality of life in lower opportunity areas. Such areas include, but are not limited to, Low Resource and High Segregation & Poverty areas designated in the most recently updated TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps, and disadvantaged communities pursuant to Health and Safety Code sections 39711 and 39715 (California Senate Bill 535 (2012)).	1
4	Policies that go beyond state law requirements in reducing displacement of Lower-Income Households and conserving existing housing stock that is affordable to Lower-Income Households.	1
5	Rezoning and other policies that support intensification of residential development in Location Efficient Communities.	1
6	Rezoning and other policies that result in a net gain of housing capacity while concurrently mitigating development impacts on or from Environmentally Sensitive or Hazardous Areas.	1
7	Zoning policies, including inclusionary housing policies, that increase housing choices and affordability, particularly for Lower-Income Households, in High Resource and Highest Resource areas, as designated in the most recently updated TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps.	1
8	Other policies that involve meaningful actions towards Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing outside of those required pursuant to Government Code sections 65583, subdivision (c)(10), and 8899.50, including, but not limited to, outreach campaigns, updated zoning codes, and expanded access to financing support.	1

Appendix 2: Proposed Policy Completion Schedule

City of Palo Alto Proposed Policy Completion Schedule

<u>Category Number</u>	<u>Concise Written Description of Proposed Policy</u>	<u>Key Milestones and Milestone Dates</u>	<u>Anticipated Completion Date</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1B	The City proposes increasing FAR from 0.45 to 1.75, reducing setbacks, and relaxing daylight plane requirements for several R-1 neighborhoods near transit starting July 1, 2026. These standards are most likely to yield smaller housing projects of 4-6 units to serve as missing middle housing.	City Council will discuss this item on June 1, 2026 and is likely to move forward with an ordinance to upzone these low-density residential areas at that time.	July 2026	N/A
1G	In order to implement Housing Element Program 6.5 B related to innovative housing solutions, staff, based on the direction from the Planning and Transportation Commission, has begun evaluation of micro-housing and senior housing. These housing types differ in physical form, operational characteristics, and target populations, but share common policy goals related to affordability, efficient land use, and housing diversity.	Staff intends to bring a draft ordinance to Council for consideration by the end of 2026.	December 2026	N/A
1L	The City is undertaking a major area plan effort for the 275.3-acre San Antonio Road Corridor that measurably supports the acceleration of housing in Palo Alto.	This project was approved by City Council on March 10, 2025 and is anticipated to be completed by June 2028.	June 2028	N/A
2H	City Council has adopted a 2026 priority to develop and adopt objective development standards for the South of Forest Area Coordinated Area Plan (SOFA CAP), an approximately 50-acre area near the downtown. The Council priority also includes presenting plan amendment options to replace existing subjective standards with these new objective standards. This priority is consistent with Housing Element Program 3.7 which seeks to develop objective standards for the SOFA.	The City is targeting City Council consideration of SOFA CAP and/or municipal code amendments by the end of 2026.	December 2026	N/A

Appendix 3: Self-Scoring Sheet

City of Palo Alto Self-Scoring Sheet

<u>Category Number & Policy Description</u>	<u>Concise Written Description of Prohousing Policy</u>	<u>Enacted or Proposed</u>	<u>Documentation Type (e.g., resolution, zoning code)</u>	<u>Insert Web Links to Documents</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Enhancement Category Number & Description</u>	<u>Enhancement Points</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
<p>1B</p> <p><i>Permitting missing middle housing uses (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes) by right in existing low-density, single-family residential zones in a manner that exceeds the requirements of SB 9 (Chapter 162, Statutes of 2021, Gov. Code, §§ 65852.21, 66411.7).</i></p>	<p>The City proposes increasing FAR from 0.45 to 1.75, reducing setbacks, and relaxing daylight plane requirements for several R-1 neighborhoods near transit starting July 1, 2026. These standards are most likely to yield smaller housing projects of 4-6 units to serve as missing middle housing. City Council will discuss this item on June 1, 2026 and is likely to move forward with an ordinance to upzone these low-density residential areas at that time.</p> <p>This policy focuses on upzoning in neighborhoods with existing transit, parks, office spaces, neighborhood services, retail and dining options, promoting residential development in Location Efficient Communities. This policy therefore meets Enhancement Factor 5.</p>	Proposed	Staff Report	May 4, 2026 Staff Report	3	5 <i>Rezoning and other policies that support intensification of residential development in Location Efficient Communities.</i>	1	4
<p>1D</p> <p><i>Density bonus programs that allow additional density for additional affordability beyond minimum statutory requirements (Gov. Code, § 65915 et seq.).</i></p>	<p>Palo Alto has local alternatives to the State Density Bonus program that offer increases in density far exceeding what is achievable with State Density Bonus. Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 18.14.020 establishes an El Camino Real Housing Focus Area with enhanced development standards. Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 18.14.040 establishes the City’s Affordable Housing Incentive Program, or AHIP.</p> <p>The El Camino Real Housing Focus Area designates a stretch of El Camino Real for particularly high density. A residential FAR of 4.0 is permitted, representing a more than 500% density bonus over the base commercial service (CS) zoning for many sites. In exchange for this generous allowance, developers must provide 20% of total units at rates affordable to lower income households.</p> <p>The AHIP extends similar benefits to numerous zoning districts and locations citywide, including the Downtown</p>	Enacted	Zoning Code	18.14.040 Affordable Housing Incentive Program 18.14.020 Housing Element Opportunity Sites and Focus Areas	2	7 <i>Zoning policies, including inclusionary housing policies, that increase housing choices and affordability, particularly for Lower-Income Households, in High Resource and Highest Resource areas, as</i>	1	3

<u>Category Number & Policy Description</u>	<u>Concise Written Description of Prohousing Policy</u>	<u>Enacted or Proposed</u>	<u>Documentation Type (e.g., resolution, zoning code)</u>	<u>Insert Web Links to Documents</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Enhancement Category Number & Description</u>	<u>Enhancement Points</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
	<p>CD(C) zone, the North Ventura NV zones, the California Avenue CC(2) zone, the CN and CS zones along El Camino Real, various residential RM zones, the CS zone along San Antonio Road and in the GM/ROLM Focus Area in West Bayshore. AHIP also applies to all Housing Element Opportunity Sites and to properties (other than shopping centers) zoned CD, CN, CS and CC within a ½ mile of a ¼ mile of a high-quality transit corridor. The AHIP increases the maximum FAR for 100% affordable projects to 2.4 FAR. This represents 140% increase for higher density zones like the RM-40 and Downtown Commercial (CD-C) districts and a 380% increase for lower density RM-20 and Neighborhood Commercial (CN) districts.</p> <p>These incentives are already being utilized by housing developers. For example, the City approved a housing project with 368 units at 3150 El Camino Real in July 2025. This project utilized the Focus Area zoning incentives and benefits to achieve a 4.0 FAR. The base zoning for this site would have allowed a 0.6 FAR. The City anticipates receiving another application utilizing Focus Area zoning for 3400 El Camino Real in Summer 2026.</p> <p>The above policies qualify under Enhancement Factor 7 because they increase housing choices and affordability in high and highest resource areas. Palo Alto consists almost entirely of high or highest resource areas with only one census tract that is considered a moderate-resource area—Census Tract 5046.01. See attached opportunity map for details.</p>					<i>designated in the most recently updated TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps.</i>		
<p>1G <i>Zoning or incentives that are designed to increase affordable housing development in a range of types, including, but not limited to, large family units, Supportive Housing, housing for</i></p>	<p>Palo Alto has developed several policies enacted or proposed to increase affordable housing development in a range of types, including large family units, micro-housing and senior housing solutions.</p> <p>Housing Element Program 6.2A provided direction to staff to research and implement incentives to encourage larger units, such as FAR exemptions for three or more bedroom units, and creation of family-friendly design standards. Specifically, in March 2025, following staff</p>	Enacted and Proposed	Zoning Code; City Council Staff Report on PHZ Affordability Requirements; Staff reports for 44 Encina Avenue and 800	See Footnote 1 in Table 6 of Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.030 : See Table 2 in PHZ staff report ; 800	2	7 <i>Zoning policies, including inclusionary housing policies, that increase housing choices and</i>	1	3

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<p><i>transition age foster youth, and deep affordability targeted for Extremely Low-Income Households in all parts of the Jurisdiction, with at least some of the zoning, other land use designation methods, or incentives being designed to increase affordable housing development in higher resource areas shown in the TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, and with the Jurisdiction having confirmed that it considered and addressed potential environmental justice issues in adopting and implementing this policy, especially in areas with existing industrial and polluting uses.</i></p>	<p>analysis and Planning and Transportation Commission public hearing and feedback, the City Council approved modifications to the Housing Incentive Program (HIP) ordinance, including a provision incentivizing larger units that can accommodate families by allowing density/floor area ratio increases for "family-friendly units" consisting of three or more bedrooms. As a result, the Housing Incentive Program as codified in Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.030 offers a 0.5 FAR increase for projects which include at least 10% of units with three or more bedrooms. The HIP program is available in numerous zoning districts and locations citywide, including: Downtown – CD(C) zone, North Ventura - NV zones, California Avenue – CC(2) zone, El Camino Real – CN or CS zones, various residential areas – RM zones, San Antonio Road (Middlefield to East Charleston) – CS zone and the GM/ROLM Focus Area in West Bayshore. Many of the areas eligible for the HIP are high or highest resource areas.</p> <p>Additionally, the City's Planned Home Zone (PHZ) generally requires 20% of units to be affordable but offers weighted value calculations for units with deeper levels of affordability to incentivize the provision of very-low and low income units. PHZ projects may be proposed citywide, including in the City's many high and highest resource areas. Recent projects have utilized these incentives, such as 800 San Antonio Road which provided fewer overall affordable units but at more deeply affordable levels. 44 Encina Avenue has also proposed a 158 unit project, including 20% affordable units, through the PHZ process.</p> <p>In order to implement Housing Element Program 6.5 B related to innovative housing solutions, staff, based on the direction from the Planning and Transportation Commission has begun evaluation of micro-housing and senior housing. These housing types differ in physical form, operational characteristics, and target populations, but share common policy goals related to affordability, efficient land use, and housing diversity. Staff intends to</p>		San Antonio Road	San Antonio Road staff report; 44 Encina Avenue staff report; Alternate Housing Solutions Staff Report; Ordinance 5650; Opportunity Map attached		<i>affordability, particularly for Lower-Income Households, in High Resource and Highest Resource areas, as designated in the most recently updated TCAC/HCD Opportunity Maps.</i>		

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	<p>bring a draft ordinance to Council for consideration by the end of 2026. The City is committed to considering and addressing potential environmental justice issues in adopting and implementing this policy.</p> <p>The above enacted and proposed citywide programs and policies qualify under Enhancement Factor 7 because they increase housing choices and affordability in high and highest resource areas. Palo Alto consists almost entirely of high or highest resource areas with only one census tract that is considered a moderate-resource area—Census Tract 5046.01. See attached opportunity map for details.</p>							
<p>1H <i>Zoning or other land use designation methods to allow for residential or mixed uses in one or more non-residential zones (e.g., commercial, light industrial). Qualifying non-residential zones do not include open space or substantially similar zones.</i></p>	<p>Housing Element Program 3.4A-D committed the City to extending the Housing Incentive Program to additional zoning districts to facilitate housing production. In March 2025, City Council adopted Ordinance 5650 to meet this specific objective.</p> <p>Today, all of the City’s commercial zones allow mixed-use housing at minimum and allow exclusively residential in many cases, such as on housing inventory sites or in housing focus areas. The GM/ROLM zone districts in areas of planned growth have also been rezoned to encourage housing by providing additional residential density and improved development standards.</p> <p>There are numerous examples of the City working with housing developers to deliver housing in non-residential zones. In 2026, the City approved a fully residential development with 145 units in the ROLM district at 2100 Geng Road. In 2025, the City approved a 368 unit multi-family apartment at 3150El Camino Real in the Commercial Service (CS) zoning district. In April 2026 City approved a 335-unit project at 3606 El Camino that would be delivered across 7 parcels with spanning multiple zoning areas, including CS (Service Commercial), CN (Neighborhood Commercial), RM-30 & RM-40 (Multifamily Residential) zoning. In 2025, the City approved a 55-unit, 100% deed-restricted housing</p>	Enacted	Zoning Code	Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.030; Ordinance 5650	1			1

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	project at 3265 El Camino Real as a PHZ on a site that had been zoned CS.							
<p>1I <i>Modification of development standards and other applicable zoning provisions or land use designation methods to promote greater development intensity. Potential areas of focus include floor area ratio, height limits, minimum lot or unit sizes, setbacks, and allowable dwelling units per acre. These policies must be separate from any qualifying policies under Category (1)(B) above.</i></p>	<p>Palo Alto has modified development standards and other applicable zoning provisions to promote greater development intensity through several different housing policies.</p> <p>The Housing Incentive Program upzones numerous residential and mixed use/commercial areas throughout the city, with significant increases in FAR up to 3.5, far in excess of what is available under State Density Bonus. These standards are found in PAMC section 18.14.030. The El Camino Real Focus Area and GM/ROLM Focus Area provide additional upzoning options for housing along key growth corridors for the City.</p> <p>The planned community rezoning process also allows for increased density and relaxed development standards in exchange for public benefits, such as more BMR and/or reduced income levels (deeper affordability). Specifically, On February 3, 2020, Council unanimously endorsed using Planned Housing Zoning (PHZ) for housing and mixed-use housing projects to help spur housing production. In exchange for deviation from certain standards as allowed under the rezoning, if approved by Council, the project must include at least 20% of the housing units as deed restricted for lower income households.</p> <p>Additionally, Palo Alto's SB 9 implementation, enacted through Ordinance 5645, exceeds state law by eliminating the per-unit floor area maximum that would otherwise constrain SB 9 projects. Housing Element Program 6.3 committed the City to raising the per-unit floor area cap from 800 to 1,200 square feet for SB 9 projects yielding three or more detached units on a single-family lot. Council exceeded that commitment by deleting the per unit square footage maximum altogether (former PAMC 18.42.180(e)(6)). Unit size limitations are one of the most significant practical barriers to SB 9 feasibility because they make it difficult</p>	Enacted	Zoning Code; Action Minutes; ordinances	Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.030 ; Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.020 ; Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.38.060 ; February 3 2020 Action Minutes ; Ordinance 5645	1			1

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	to develop family-sized homes or units that pencil financially. Removing the cap entirely directly promotes increased development intensity and makes SB 9 projects more financially feasible and attractive to homeowners. Program 6.3 further commits the City to refining objective design and development standards based on real-world application experience.							
<p>1L <i>Other zoning and land use actions not described in Categories (A)-(K) of this section that measurably support the Acceleration of Housing Production.</i></p>	<p>The City is undertaking a major area plan effort for the 275.3-acre San Antonio Road Corridor that measurably supports the acceleration of housing in Palo Alto. Initiated by City Council on March 10, 2025 and anticipated to be completed by June 2028, the San Antonio Road Area Plan will establish an integrated land use and transportation strategy to guide development in the corridor.</p> <p>Key objectives include expanding housing, improving mobility, providing open space, strengthening commercial nodes, upgrading infrastructure, and advancing sustainability. The plan will set policies, standards, and guidelines implementing the City's Comprehensive Plan and Housing Element, building on related efforts including the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, Safe Streets for All Action Plan, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.</p> <p>The plan area includes 53 Housing Element Opportunity Sites with capacity for 1,559 units, including 614 designated for lower-income households. Staff is also studying broader land use scenarios that could significantly exceed this baseline — as of March 2026, the area plan policies and associated zoning changes are estimated to support between 3,800 and 7,400 units at full buildout.</p> <p>This category meets the Enhancement Factor 5 requirements by supporting residential land use intensification through rezoning in a location efficient community with a diverse mix of land uses and in close</p>	Proposed	Project Website, Staff Reports and Memos	October 2025 Project Update Staff Report; March 2026 Plan Alternative s Memo; Project Webpage	1	5 <i>Rezoning and other policies that support intensification of residential development in Location Efficient Communities.</i>	1	2

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	proximity to public transit, parks, employment centers and more.							
2B <i>Acceleration of Housing Production through the establishment of streamlined, program-level CEQA analysis and certification of general plans, community plans, specific plans with accompanying Environmental Impact Reports (EIR), and related documents.</i>	<p>Palo Alto supports accelerated housing production through stream-lined, program-level CEQA analyses and comprehensive (general) plan and specific plan certifications.</p> <p>In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan, supplementing the 2030 Comprehensive Plan EIR. When new projects in the plan area undergo discretionary review by the City, the Supplemental EIR may be used for their environmental analysis.</p> <p>The San Antonio Area Plan is currently under development and is expected to have a similar programmatic EIR that future projects may tier off of. The Draft Environmental Impact Report is expected to be developed during Phase 4, which is expected to run from November 2026 to June of 2027. The final environmental impact report is expected to be adopted in January of 2028.</p> <p>The City also currently has a programmatic EIR for the San Antonio Housing Incentive Program area that covers 18 parcels. A mixed-use project with 167 housing units that spans two of these parcels (788 and 796 San Antonio Road) is currently under review and may tier off this programmatic EIR. A 197-unit project proposed at 762 San Antonio also falls within the programmatic EIR area. The City is preparing an addendum to the 788 San Antonio Mixed Use Project and Housing Incentive Program EIR to evaluate this proposed project's potential impacts. The City is also reviewing a third housing project (175 units) within this programmatic EIR area at 800-808 San Antonio Road. The CEQA status for this project is pending but it may utilize the programmatic EIR.</p> <p>The City also regularly utilizes the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan and associated Housing Element Addendum to support streamlining under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183. A recent example of this is the 368-unit project proposed at 3150 El Camino Real. Prior</p>	Enacted	Housing Element	North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan; Housing Incentive Program Expansion EIR	2			2

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	to the enactment of AB 130, the City was relying on its Housing Element addendum to streamline many other housing projects including 3606 and 3781 El Camino Real.							
<p>2C <i>Documented practice of streamlining housing development at the project level, such as by enabling a by-right approval process or by utilizing statutory and categorical exemptions as authorized by applicable law, (e.g., Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21155.1, 21155.4, 21159.24, 21159.25; Gov. Code, § 65457; Cal Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15303, 15332; Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21094.5, 21099, 21155.2, 21159.28).</i></p>	<p>The City utilizes categorical and statutory exemptions to streamline housing development. Recent examples include the following: 4345 El Camino Real (Class 32 Categorical Exemption); 2850 West Bayshore (Class 32 Categorical Exemption); 420 Acacia (Class 32 Categorical Exemption); 3150 El Camino Real (Section 15183 Exemption); 3980 El Camino Real (Class 32 Categorical Exemption), 3781 El Camino Real (AB 130 Exemption); 3606 El Camino Real (AB 130 Exemption).</p>	Enacted	Categorical Exemption Reports; Zoning Code	4335-4345 El Camino Real Categorical Exemption Report ; 2850 W. Bayshore Road Residential Project Class 32 Categorical Exemption Report; 420 Acacia Avenue Residential Project Class 32 Categorical Exemption Report ; 3150 El Camino Real CEQA Checklist; 3980 El Camino Real Categorical Exemption Qualification Memorandum	2			2

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<p>2H</p> <p><i>Absence, elimination, or replacement of subjective development and design standards with objective development and design standards that simplify zoning clearance and improve approval certainty and timing.</i></p>	<p>On June 1, 2022, the City Council adopted a new Chapter 18.24 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code establishing Contextual Design Criteria and Objective Design Standards, replacing prior subjective design standards. This was a locally-initiated policy choice — not required by state law — rooted in years of analysis dating back to the 2018 Housing Work Plan, with the goal of reducing application processing times and development costs. The new standards work in tandem with the City's streamlined housing review processes under Chapter 18.77: projects that meet them benefit from more efficient and focused reviews, and those that cannot meet a given standard may utilize available waivers. Additionally, City Council has adopted a 2026 priority to develop and adopt objective development standards for the South of Forest Area Coordinated Area Plan (SOFA CAP), an approximately 50 acre area near the downtown. The Council priority also includes presenting plan amendment options to replace existing subjective standards with these new objective standards. This priority is consistent with Housing Element Program 3.7 which seeks to develop objective standards for the SOFA. The City is targeting City Council consideration of SOFA CAP and/or municipal code amendments by the end of 2026.</p>	Enacted / Proposed	Zoning Code	Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.24 ; Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.77.073 ; See line 10 in 2026 Council Priorities for details	1			1
<p>2I</p> <p><i>Establishment of one-stop-shop permitting processes or a single point of contact where entitlements are coordinated across city approval functions (e.g., planning, public works, building) from entitlement application to certificate of occupancy.</i></p>	<p>The City coordinates entitlements across all approval functions through a single point of contact and a unified permitting system from application through certificate of occupancy.</p> <p>The Development Center serves as the City's one-stop-shop, staffed by representatives from Planning, Building, Fire, Urban Forestry, and Utilities (Monday through Thursday in person, with virtual appointments available daily, typically within two business days).</p> <p>Single points of contact span the full project lifecycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entitlements: The Current Planning team coordinates cross-department review and convenes Development Review Committee 	Enacted		Development Center Homepage and Hours ; Appointment Booking System ; Accela Citizen Portal	1			1

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	<p>meetings so applicants can address questions with all departments in one setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building permit through certificate of occupancy: A Building project coordinator manages cross-department coordination. <p>All permits are processed in Accela, a single central permitting system integrated with Digeplan for electronic plan review. Reviewers from every department comment directly in the system, and the public portal lets applicants track status, view plans, pay fees, and schedule inspections.</p>							
<p>2J <i>Priority permit processing or reduced plan check times for ADUs/JADUs or multifamily housing.</i></p>	<p>Palo Alto prioritizes standalone J/ADU applications with a shortened initial review period of 14 days for standalone projects instead of the standard 30 day review period. Additionally, any resubmittals have a one week review until they are approved. When an ADU/JADU is combined with a project for a new home, the initial review is 30 days for both, then 14 days for resubmittals until they are approved.</p> <p>Palo Alto also offers a Master ADU permit program which serves to expedite future project reviews for homeowners that select a pre-approved ADU plan. The City approved its first master permit for a 434 square foot ADU with loft in April 2026 and is actively soliciting additional master permit applications from local architecture and design firms.</p>	Enacted	Master Permit Checklist and Online Dashboard	Master ADU Permit Checklist; Housing Dashboard	1			1
<p>2K <i>Establishment of a standardized application form for all entitlement applications.</i></p>	<p>All entitlement applications use the same form completed and submitted via an online portal.</p>	Enacted	Online Application Instructions and Link	Application Instructions	1			1
<p>2L <i>Documented practice of publicly posting status updates on project permit approvals on the internet.</i></p>	<p>Palo Alto has a documented practice of publicly posting status updates on project permit approvals online. Palo Alto Permit View is a web application that makes looking up and researching permit activity within the City of Palo Alto simple. All public users can search building,</p>	Enacted	Online Portal	Permit View	1			1

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	planning, and code enforcement activity by property address, date, or application type.							
<p>3A <i>Waiver or significant reduction of development impact fees for residential development with units affordable to Lower-Income Households. This provision does not include fees associated with the provision of housing affordable to Lower-Income Households (e.g., inclusionary in lieu fees, affordable housing impact fees, and commercial linkage fees).</i></p>	<p>While not required by state law, Palo Alto has proactively codified development impact fee exemptions for 100% affordable housing projects in Palo Alto Municipal Code Section 16.58.030. Several recent 100% affordable housing projects have benefited from this exemption, including: 3001 El Camino Real (130 units), 3265 El Camino Real (55 units) and 525 East Charleston (50 units).</p> <p>Ordinance 5645 was passed in January 2025 to realign development impact fees for ADUs larger than 750 sq. ft. to utilize a per-square-foot methodology with the goal of reducing the fee applied to larger ADUs. ADUs and JADUs represent a critical form of naturally occurring affordable housing in our community due to their compact size (570 square feet on average as of 2025). ADU fee adjustments and waivers incentivize their continued production (currently over 100 units per year).</p> <p>The Palo Alto Municipal Fee Schedule also enables a Planning Application Fee Waiver for 100% Affordable Housing Projects. While the current language in the fee schedule suggests some level of discretion, this waiver is granted to all 100% affordable housing projects in practice. The City is updating the language in the fee schedule that will be published in August 2026 to make this clearer.</p> <p>This policy is consistent with Housing Element Program 3.1A: “Amend the City’s municipal fee schedule to waive City staff costs associated with the processing of an affordable housing planning application, except for directly related consultant supported costs.” As noted in the certified Housing Element, this policy reduces application processing costs by approximately \$20,000 per affordable housing application.</p> <p>This is a relatively new policy but it has been used. Most recently, the City Manager approved a planning fee</p>	Enacted	Zoning code and municipal fee schedule, ordinances	Palo Alto Municipal Code 16.58.030 ; 2025 ADU Report ; Ordinance 5645 ; 2026 Municipal Fee Schedule (see page 77); Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.020 ; Certified Housing Element	3			3

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	<p>waiver of \$27,250 for Alta Housing’s proposed 72-unit project on Lot T in April 2026.</p> <p>Additionally, for projects that utilize the El Camino Housing Focus Area standards, the City offers waiver of development impact fees for all Below Market Rate (BMR) units. 3150 El Camino Real (368 units total) recently benefited from this waiver for its BMR units, resulting in an approximately 20% reduction in overall development impact fees.</p>							
<p>3B</p> <p><i>Adoption of policies that result in less restrictive requirements than Government Code sections 65852.2 and 65852.22 to reduce barriers for property owners to create ADUs/JADUs. Examples of qualifying policies include, but are not limited to, development standards improvements, permit processing improvements, dedicated ADU/JADU staff, technical assistance programs, and pre-approved ADU/JADU design packages.</i></p>	<p>Palo Alto has been on the leading edge of ADU reform since 2018 and has consistently authorized greater floor area incentives. Currently, the City provides a bonus square footage allowance for ADU/JADUs that provides greater flexibility than the state in how these structure can be built in conjunction with additions to homes. The City allows for the bonus square footage to be shared between the two ADUs and JADU that is built on site, incentivizing multiple units without limiting the primary home’s development potential. The City also provides reduced front and street-side setbacks for the primary home when building an ADU at greater setbacks than what state law provides. The City allows non-conforming structures converted into an ADU/JADU to expand further into the setback than is permitted by state law. The City allows new homes to not provide covered parking to satisfy the primary home parking requirements if they build an ADU/JADU at the same time. The City provides bonus square footage to the primary home when building a JADU.</p> <p>The City also works hard to reduce barriers for property owners to creating ADUs by providing planning resources and priority permit reviews. Specifically, the City published an ADU handbook to assist homeowners in the design and planning process for ADUs in 2024 and updated it in 2025. Staff have prioritized standalone ADU permit reviews by reducing the review time on the initial review to 14 days and cutting that subsequent review time in half (at best reviewing a resubmittal the same/next day) until the project is approved.</p>	Enacted	Zoning Code; ADU handbook	ADU Handbook Palo Alto ; Palo Alto Municipal Code Chapter 18.09	2			2

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<p>3D <i>Accelerating innovative housing production through innovative housing types (e.g., manufactured homes, recreational vehicles, park models, community ownership, and other forms of social housing) that reduce development costs.</i></p>	<p>The City of Palo Alto has proactively invested in alternative housing types that reduce development costs and broaden access to shelter and stable housing for all residents. Here are three examples:</p> <p>1. Homekey Palo Alto (Modular Interim Housing Shelter): Homekey Palo Alto is a first-of-its-kind modular interim housing shelter co-developed by the City of Palo Alto and LifeMoves, located at 1237 San Antonio Road. Entirely self-initiated by the City and not required by state law, the project demonstrates Palo Alto's commitment to deploying innovative construction methods to deliver shelter capacity quickly and cost-effectively. The facility features 88 modular rooms with ensuite bathrooms, on-site services, and spaces for counseling and vocational training. With a total project cost of approximately \$37.2 million leveraged from state, county, local and philanthropic sources, Homekey Palo Alto is expected to serve 200 to 300 individuals annually, with LifeMoves providing intensive case management and housing search services on-site.</p> <p>2. Safe Parking Program (Vehicle-Based Interim Housing): Palo Alto operates one of the most robust safe parking programs in the region. This initiative - also self-initiated and not required by state law - recognizes recreational vehicles and passenger vehicles as a legitimate form of interim housing. The program provides unhoused individuals with safe, legal places to park while connecting them with services and a pathway to permanent housing. The City supports a County-operated RV site at City-owned property at 2000 Geng Road and four congregation-based overnight sites for passenger vehicles. In January 2024, City Council adopted a Permanent Safe Parking Ordinance (ORD 5609), making the program a lasting part of the City's housing infrastructure with non-expiring permits and the ability to scale site capacity over time. On March 10, 2025, the Council approve a revenue agreement with Santa Clara County through September 2026 for expanded operations from 12 to 22 spaces at the 2000</p>	Enacted	Project documents, zoning code	HomeKey Project Overview;; Safe Parking Program Information ; March 2025 City Council Staff Report ; Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.14.060	1	4	1	2

<u>Category Number & Policy Description</u>	<u>Concise Written Description of Prohousing Policy</u>	<u>Enacted or Proposed</u>	<u>Documentation Type (e.g., resolution, zoning code)</u>	<u>Insert Web Links to Documents</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Enhancement Category Number & Description</u>	<u>Enhancement Points</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
	<p>Geng Road site; the City funds the additional spaces at approximately \$266,162 annually. The Geng Road site serves an estimated 25 to 30 households each year.</p> <p>3. Group Homes in All Residential Zones (Social Housing and Community Infrastructure): Palo Alto has amended its zoning code to allow group homes in all residential zones citywide. Group homes represent an important form of social housing. Group homes offer a cost-effective housing model where shared common areas, communal kitchens, and reduced per occupant space requirements meaningfully lower per-bed construction and development costs relative to conventional housing units. Eliminating parking minimums and reducing the land area required per occupant further compresses costs. By permitting group homes throughout all residential zones, the City ensures this lower-cost model is available across all neighborhoods, expanding access to affordable housing for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those in recovery without relying on conventional development economics.</p> <p>The City's Safe Parking Program qualifies for Enhancement Factor 4 by providing a direct, community-driven solution that helps low-income households bridge the gap between housing instability and permanent housing. The City's Safe Parking Program is locally initiated and was not developed in response to a particular State mandate.</p>							
<p>3E <i>Measures that reduce costs for transportation-related infrastructure or programs that encourage active modes of transportation or other alternatives to automobiles. Qualifying</i></p>	<p>The City of Palo Alto's 2026 Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan (BPTP), currently in its final adoption phase, is a comprehensive active transportation policy that directly supports the City's housing goals by reducing transportation infrastructure costs and providing viable non-automobile alternatives for residents of new and existing housing.</p> <p>The 2026 BPTP explicitly incorporates land use changes from Palo Alto's 2023–2031 Housing Element into its demand analysis, planning bicycle and pedestrian improvements around anticipated housing growth</p>	<p>Enacted and Proposed</p>	<p>Zoning Code; Transportation Program Details; Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan; Sustainability and Climate Action Plan; 2024 Annual</p>	<p>Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.52.045 Palo Alto Municipal Code 18.52.40; Final Draft of Bicycle and</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>1 <i>The policy represents one element of a unified, multi-faceted strategy to promote multiple planning objectives,</i></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>

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<p><i>policies include, but are not limited to, publicly funded programs to expand sidewalks or protect bike/micro-mobility lanes, creation of on-street parking for bikes, transit-related improvements, or establishment of carshare programs.</i></p>	<p>corridors. For example, the Plan identifies the San Antonio Road corridor—where the City is planning thousands of new housing units—as a priority area, calling for separated bikeways and sidewalk widening to serve future residents. Similarly, near-term projects include improvements to the University Avenue/Palo Alto Transit Center intersection specifically to enhance bicycle and pedestrian access to transit for new and existing downtown residents.</p> <p>A total of 25 bicycle projects (covering approximately 19 miles of the recommend bicycle network) and 24 intersection and crossing projects have been identified to initiate in the near-term (within 10 years). This includes separated bike lanes, bicycle boulevards, expanded on-street bike parking, enhanced crossings, and sidewalk & crossing improvements. These investments reduce future residents' dependence on automobiles, lowering household transportation costs and reducing the need for costly automobile infrastructure such as parking structures. By making walking, cycling, and transit connections safe and comfortable, the 2026 BPTP enables the City to support higher-density housing without proportional increases in automobile traffic or parking demand.</p> <p>The City also engages community members in the expansion of bicycle infrastructure through a public facing request system. Residents and businesses submit bicycle parking requests via the City's 311 program, directing installations to areas of demonstrated need. This approach increases on-street bicycle parking in commercial and residential areas citywide, improving active transportation infrastructure while supporting the City's sustainability and climate action goals</p> <p>Additionally, Palo Alto requires a 1:1 ratio of bike parking spaces to unit for residential developments of two or more units and allows existing parking facilities to replace up to 10% of automobile parking spaces with bike parking under certain circumstances. The City also partners with transit providers and others in the Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) to encourage active modes of transportation, especially</p>		<p>Report for PATMA (see attached electronic document)</p>	<p>Pedestrian Transportation Plan; 2022 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan</p>		<p><i>such as efficient land use, access to public transportation, housing affordable to Lower-Income Households, climate change solutions, and/or hazard mitigation.</i></p>		

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	<p>among those with financial need. PATMA offers free transit passes, pays solo car commuters to switch to more sustainable forms of transit and is currently piloting a program that gives free bikes/scooters to commuters who switch from solo car commutes to more sustainable forms of transportation. As of December 2024, the transit pass program served 300 commuters.</p> <p>These policies achieve Enhancement Factor 1 as key components of larger City efforts to promote compact, walkable, sustainable and transit-oriented communities. Together with the policies and programs in the City's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, these policies aim to make smart, sustainable transportation choices easy, accessible and affordable for all residents.</p>							
<p>4E <i>A comprehensive program that complies with the Surplus Land Act (Gov. Code, § 54220 et seq.) and that makes publicly owned land available for affordable housing, or for multifamily housing projects with the highest feasible percentage of units affordable to Lower Income Households. A qualifying program may utilize mechanisms such as land donations, land sales with significant write-downs, or below-market land leases.</i></p>	<p>The City has a comprehensive program that complies with the Surplus Land Act (SLA) and makes publicly owned land available for affordable housing development. The City owns several surface parking lots (mostly in the downtown area) that can be redeveloped to replace and add parking while creating new housing opportunities, including affordable housing. Housing Element Program 1.4 commits the City to redeveloping these parking lots to provide approximately 290 units of affordable or workforce housing, using a phased approach.</p> <p>The first phase of this work began with a Request for Interest in 2023 and result in the City entering into an exclusive negotiating agreement with Alta Housing to develop affordable housing on City owned parking Lot T in the downtown area in June 2025. The Council also passed a resolution declaring Lot T Exempt Surplus Land in June 2025. Under Government Code Section 54221(f)(1), an Exempt Surplus designation is itself a Surplus Land Act compliance pathway when, as here, the use of the land is restricted to affordable housing development. By designating Lot T as Exempt Surplus for the express purpose of developing deed-restricted affordable units with Alta Housing, the City satisfied its SLA obligations while ensuring the land remains committed to affordable housing. City Council provided</p>	Enacted		See page 5-9 in Certified Housing Element for Program details; Resolution No. 10238; June 2025 Staff Report ; October 2025 staff report	2	5 <i>Rezoning and other policies that support intensification of residential development in Location Efficient Communities.</i>	1	3

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	<p>feedback to Alta on project design options in October 2025 during a public Study Session and Alta submitted a planning application for the project in January 2026. The design is scheduled for review by the Architectural Review Board in May 2026. The City expects to entitle approximately 72 affordable units on this site by August 2026.</p> <p>Lot T is intended to serve as a “proof of concept” project for similar future projects. The City plans to issue a Request For Proposals for additional affordable housing (up to 218 units) on one or more City-owned sites before the end of 2026 to advance the next phase of this comprehensive Housing Element program.</p> <p>This program qualifies under Enhancement Factor 5 by supporting high-density residential development in a Location Efficient Community. Lot T, like several of the other parking lots being considered for redevelopment, is situated within one-half mile of the Palo Alto Caltrain station, placing future residents within walking distance of one of the Peninsula's most active commuter rail stops and at the heart of a vibrant downtown that integrates housing, employment, retail, and neighborhood services. The surrounding area also offers convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, schools, and cultural destinations. Palo Alto has invested significantly in active transportation infrastructure — including an extensive network of bike lanes, off-street paths, and pedestrian improvements — making it one of the most walkable and bikeable cities in the Bay Area.</p>							
<p>4I <i>Development and regular (at least biennial) use of a housing subsidy pool, local or regional trust fund, or other similar funding source sufficient to facilitate and support the development of housing</i></p>	<p>The City periodically issues Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs) to deploy the funds in the Affordable Housing Fund. The most recent NOFA was issued in fall 2024 and resulted in a \$5M award to the Charities Housing Project (approx. 130 affordable units) in January 2025. Budgets and fund balances were updated to reflect this award in November 2025. As of December 2025, the project was entitled and as of April 2026 the project had broken ground and was under construction.</p>	<p>Enacted</p>	<p>Notice of Funding Availability, Action Minutes</p>	<p>Sept. 2024 Notice of Funding Availability, January 21, 2025 Action Minutes, November 3, 2025 Action Minutes</p>	<p>1</p>			<p>1</p>

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<i>affordable to Lower-Income Households.</i>								
4J <i>Prioritization of local general funds for affordable housing. This point shall not be awarded if the applicant earns two points pursuant to Category (4)(G).</i>	<p>Palo Alto prioritizes general funds and similar funds to advance affordable housing solutions. In FY 2025, the City committed \$4,944,710 in General Funds and Capital Improvement Funds to support the Homekey Project, an innovative interim housing project that is expected to open in 2026. The Capital Improvement Fund is equivalent to the General Fund Operating Budget, however, it is focused on capital investments, in particular general capital investments in Palo Alto that are not funded through enterprise or internal service fund activities.</p> <p>Homekey Palo Alto will be operated by LifeMoves who will provide intensive, customized case management for clients including counseling, employment and housing search services with the goal of paving a dignified path to self-sufficiency. The shelter is expected to serve over 200 individuals annually. Such interim housing solutions often provide critical support and stability to unhoused individuals and households as they search for permanent affordable housing solutions.</p> <p>Palo Alto and LifeMoves are proud to have received a \$26.6M award from the State to support the delivery of this meaningful housing project.</p>	Enacted	FY Budget Book	See pages 132-133 in the FY 2025 Budget Book for details	1			1
4K <i>Providing operating subsidies for permanent Supportive Housing.</i>	<p>Palo Alto consistently provides operating subsidies for permanent affordable housing and related support services through its local Community Development and Block Grant (CDBG) Program. This commitment is reflected in the CDBG Program's Annual Action Plans.</p> <p>Due to CDBG program requirements, the City is restricted to allocating no more than 15% of its total annual allocation to these types of services. In FY 25, the City allocated \$11,575 to Alta Housing for SRO resident support services for 131 residents, \$28,247 to LifeMoves for case management at the Opportunity Center for 32 homeless or very low-income individuals, and \$14,075 to the Silicon Valley Independent Living Center for case management for 21 very low income residents with disabilities. In FY 24, the City allocated \$14,000 to Alta</p>	Enacted		See pages 34-36 in FY 25 Annual Action Plan for project summaries; See pages 24-26 in FY 24 Annual Action Plan for project summaries See pages 132-133 in the FY 2025	1			1

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	<p>Housing for SRO Resident Supportive Services for 131 residents, \$23,636 to LifeMoves for case management for 350 homeless or very low-income individuals at the Opportunity Center and \$16,500 to Silicon Valley Independent Living Center for case management services for 115 individuals with disabilities. Palo Alto made similar allocation commitments to these organization in FY 23 and FY 22.</p> <p>The City has also committed to provide \$7,000,000 over 7 years in operating cost to support the Homekey project, an innovative interim housing project that is expected to serve over 200 individuals annually. This funding commitment will begin once the shelter opens, likely later this year. Operational funding is expected to support the provision of on-site case management, physical and behavioral healthcare, employment support, educational development, legal services, pet care and connections to permanent housing opportunities. This operational funding support is in addition to the \$4,944,710 in General Funds and Capital Improvement Funds the City has also committed to the Homekey Project.</p>			Budget Book for operating cost details				
<p>4M <i>Other policies not described in Categories (4)(A)-(L) of this section that quantifiably promote, develop, or leverage financial resources for housing affordable to Lower-Income Households.</i></p>	<p>The City has regularly allocated local Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to rehabilitate affordable housing over the years; therefore leveraging financial resources for housing affordable to lower-income households. In FY 22, FY 23 and FY 24, the City allocated \$65,340, \$73,135 and \$73,585 respectively to Rebuilding Together Peninsula to preserve affordable housing by transforming homes through critical repairs and accessibility modifications, at no cost to the service recipient. This funding provides support to approximately 5 households each year. The majority of the low-income homeowners served are elderly/seniors and/or people with disabilities, who are physically and financially unable to maintain safe living conditions for themselves and their families.</p> <p>In 2025, the City allocated \$404,800 in CDBG funds to rehabilitate 10 rental housing units at Alma Gardens, an affordable multi-family housing complex for very low and</p>	Enacted		See page 29 in FY 24 Annual Action Plan ; See page 31 in FY 23 Annual Action Plan ; See page 33 in FY 22 Annual Action Plan	1	4 <i>Policies that go beyond state law requirements in reducing displacement of Lower-Income Households and conserving existing housing stock that is affordable to Lower-Income Households.</i>	1	2

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	<p>low-income households. The rehabilitation efforts funded focused on addressing existing health and safety concerns.</p> <p>This category qualifies for Enhancement Factor 4 in two ways. First, by allowing lower-income households to repair and remain in their homes within the City, therefore reducing the risk of displacement. Second, by rehabilitating affordable units to ensure they remain available housing resources for low-income households that might otherwise be displaced. The decision to allocate CDBG funds to these types of projects are city-driven. The City is not required by state law to spend CDBG funds on these types of projects.</p>							
Totals					32		9	41

Appendix 5: City of Palo Alto Homeless Encampment Response

Staff Note: HCD has advised staff that the 350 character limit does not apply.

The Program requires applicants to confirm that its treatment of encampments on public property complies with and will continue to comply with the constitutional rights of persons experiencing homelessness. An application must include a one-page summary demonstrating how the applicant has enacted best practices in their jurisdiction related to the treatment of unhoused individuals camping on public property, consistent with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness' "7 Principles for Addressing Encampments (June 17, 2022). The following template and certification are included to help jurisdictions meet this threshold.

- **Principle 1: Establish a Cross-Agency, Multi-Sector Response to Encampments** – Describe how system partners (name partners) work together to prioritize health and safety both for residents and unsheltered individuals. (350 characters max)

Palo Alto and its partners, including Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing (Continuum of Care, contractual for safe parking and interim shelter operations), LifeMoves (contractual, outreach/case management), and other service providers, are committed to prioritizing the health and safety of both residents and unsheltered individuals. Palo Alto's homeless population is largely unsheltered, living in vehicles. Encampments are unusual. Per the 2025 Point in Time (PIT) Count, there were 399 unsheltered and 19 sheltered in Palo Alto, with 73 percent of the unsheltered living in vehicles. As a result, the City's homelessness support efforts focus on prevention and the creation of pathways to permanent housing. The City of Palo Alto's homelessness support staff work in partnership with the County's Office of Supportive Housing to try to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring, as described in Palo Alto's recent [gap analysis of housing and services for the unhoused](#).

The City's commitment to this issue is longstanding. On August 9, 2021, the City Council adopted a resolution endorsing the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness. The [2020-2025 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness](#), was jointly developed by representatives of community-based service organizations, local government, philanthropy, business, healthcare, and people with lived experience.

The 2020–2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness serves as the roadmap for ending homelessness across Santa Clara County, including in Palo Alto, and is organized around three core strategies:

- *Strategy 1: Address the root causes of homelessness through system and policy change*
- *Strategy 2: Expand homelessness prevention and housing programs to meet the need*
- *Strategy 3: Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all.*

The City works continuously with its partners to address homelessness through these strategies. City staff meets monthly with the County Office of Supportive Housing, bimonthly with an Inter-City Unhoused Response Collaborative, and convenes a bimonthly homeless service providers group including Continuum of Care (CoC) representation. The City also funds safe parking through a revenue agreement with the County, and holds grant agreements with Move Mountain View, Karat

School Project, Peninsula Healthcare Connection, and other providers serving unhoused Palo Altans. Additionally, the City funds a partnership for a County mental health clinician through the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) to respond with City police officers to acute mental health calls to divert people to services instead of involuntary holds, when appropriate.

When the City has encountered people sleeping on public property, it has almost always been limited to a single individual or household and the City has worked quickly with its established non-profit service partners to provide the necessary support and services to these unsheltered households or individuals. In such cases, the City of Palo Alto coordinates its encampment response across multiple departments and regional partners. Outreach through contracted provider LifeMoves is activated prior to any abatement action. The City's Assistant to the City Manager for Housing and Services for the Unhoused leads any additional coordination needed, working with Police, Public Works, and Human Services staff. This structure ensures that health, safety, and service needs of unsheltered individuals are addressed through coordinated, multi-sector response rather than enforcement alone.

- **Principle 2: Engage Encampment Residents to Develop Solutions** – Describe street outreach efforts to engage with encampment residents to find alternative shelter, housing, and service options using the housing first approach before an existing encampment is closed. (350 characters max)

The County, City of Palo Alto, and the local CoC coordinate efforts with other public agencies, nonprofits, grassroots community organizations, and community stakeholders to connect unsheltered households, including those living in encampments, to interim and permanent housing. However, the vast majority of unsheltered Palo Altans (73% in the 2025 PIT count) are living in vehicles on public streets around the City, not in situations that meet the Department of Housing and Community Development's (HCD) definition of encampment. According to HCD, an encampment is any location where multiple individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness have established a place of residence, and where the ongoing presence and conditions of the site result in sustained or significant impacts to health, safety, public access, or infrastructure.

On occasion, a small number of people are sheltering in tents, but these are often solo tents and very infrequently grouped in pairs. In practice, outreach is led by LifeMoves staff under contract with the City, using a trauma-informed, Housing First approach to proactively and regularly engage unsheltered individuals, assess their needs, and connect them to shelter, services, and housing pathways. Any future encampment closure would be preceded by sustained outreach engagement to ensure residents have been offered meaningful alternatives before abatement occurs. This effort and partnership are directly aligned with the Community Plan to End Homelessness to decrease the number of individuals living unsheltered in the region, through a coordinated effort to assess unsheltered individuals to determine their housing intervention, provide the offering of interim housing, and connecting people to pathways to permanent housing.

Upon notification of a tent or encampment on public property, the police department dispatches sworn staff to locate and assess the conditions. In all cases, one or more Palo Alto "Warning Notice(s)" are left at the tent, encampment, or on property. Side one of the notice warns of 48 hours to remove personal belongings, or they may be removed or discarded. Property may be held for up to 90 days by the city prior to destruction, and biohazard and perishable items will be discarded. Side two of the notice lists the three municipal code sections that grant staff authority to take these actions. The three municipal code sections are 2.31.030 Holding and storage of unclaimed property, 2.31.040 Disposition of lost, stolen, or

abandoned property other than vehicles, and 5.20.030 Discarding of solid waste and recyclable materials.

The City of Palo Alto Human Services Manager and LifeMoves Homeless Outreach staff are notified of the presence of the tent or encampment and the date of scheduled cleanup. Outreach staff are encouraged and welcome to be on site during clean-up.

Tent and encampment occupants present are offered local resources that include, temporary shelter information, food closet information, contact information for Life Moves Homeless Outreach staff, and if animals are present, the offer to temporarily house animals at the city's non-profit shelter, if needed. Sworn staff notify public works of the location of the tent or encampment and schedule a clean-up no fewer than 48 hours later and generally on the first Thursday following the minimum 48-hour waiting period.

On the day of clean-up, sworn police officers escort public works staff during the tent or encampment clean-up. Any occupant present is encouraged to and given time to remove any personal property. Items that can't be removed by the owner, or when no owner is present, any items of value are retained by the police department for safekeeping. Larger items or a large quantity of items may be stored at a secured city facility, other than the police department's property and evidence room. Police department staff inventory and complete a property form for all items held for safekeeping. When items are retained for safekeeping, instructions on how to retrieve the stored items are provided verbally to property owners.

In all clean-up events, sworn staff utilize department body-worn cameras to record the conditions of the tent, encampment, or property before and during clean-up. Any occupant present at the time of the clean-up is contacted by an officer to discuss the disposition of all property so as to determine if the property will be carried away, stored for safekeeping, or disposed of by public works. This is recorded on the officer's body worn camera. When no occupant is present, sworn staff retain all items of value for safekeeping and public works staff will dispose of solid waste, biohazard, or recyclable materials.

The Palo Alto Police Department Warning Notice, PAPD training memo 2023-09 Abandoned Property Procedures, and Policy 804 Property and Evidence Section are attached and incorporated for reference.

Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing has protocols in place to ensure providers meaningfully incorporate people with lived experience into the work. This approach means that even with the development of the new Community Plan to End Homelessness, the County has worked with cities, including Palo Alto, to ensure people with lived experience are on the Steering Committee and part of focus groups shaping the Plan, as well as employed by service providers operating within the CoC. In terms of outcomes associated with outreach and other related efforts, please see the attached April 20, 2026 City Council report which includes relevant data, or follow the below link:

<https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/meetings/ItemWithTemplateType?id=11044&meetingTemplateType=2&compiledMeetingDocumentId=19053>

- **Principle 3: Conduct Comprehensive and Coordinated Outreach – Describe multidisciplinary connection strategies and linkages to resources and permanent housing solutions that is customized to individual**

needs. If applicable, describe how the jurisdiction uses the coordinated entry system to connect individuals to resources and permanent housing. (350 characters max)

The City, our CoC, and other partners use a multidisciplinary approach to outreach to and connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to resources and housing solutions. They use the Coordinated Entry system for referrals as well as data entry and reporting, focusing on housing problem solving to help connect people to resources and stable housing.

Palo Alto uses a multidisciplinary, trauma-informed approach to connect unsheltered individuals and families to resources and permanent housing solutions tailored to individual needs. Key access points include outreach efforts by LifeMoves, Peninsula Healthcare Clinic, Karat School Project, and Move Mountain View, with both mobile/street outreach and at known locations where individuals can engage with services and begin the referral process. Outreach and engagement are grounded in trauma-informed care and motivational interviewing, with an emphasis on treating each person with dignity and respect, building trust over time, and supporting client choice and self-determination.

Through this approach, providers assess each household's needs and connect individuals to a range of services, including shelter, health care, food, hygiene services, benefits enrollment, case management, and housing problem-solving. The City and its partners also coordinate across multiple systems to address barriers to stability, including connections to Stanford University Medical Center for health-related needs, Social Security for income and benefits, and Second Harvest for food assistance, as needed.

Palo Alto and its partners use Santa Clara County's Coordinated Entry System as the primary pathway for assessment, referral, prioritization, and connection to interim and permanent housing opportunities. Through coordinated outreach, referrals, and case conferencing, providers help individuals and families access the services and housing resources most appropriate to their circumstances, with the goal of achieving stable, long-term housing outcomes.

- **Principle 4: Address Basic Needs and Provide Storage** – Describe efforts to meet basic needs, health, safety, and access to storage (timeframes) for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness while creating clear pathways to permanent housing. (350 characters max)

Through its contracted providers, Palo Alto uses a low-barrier, person-centered, and housing-focused approach to meet the basic needs, health, safety, and property access needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness while creating clear pathways to permanent housing. The City of Palo Alto supports the County and the local Continuum of Care (CoC) in helping to meet the basic needs of people experiencing homelessness, ensuring they meet the [Santa Clara Countywide Quality Assurance Standards for Homeless Housing & Service Programs \(QAS\)](#)

The City funds a [competitive grant program](#) of over \$900,000 per year for organizations that provide human services, and current grantees provide basic needs services including counseling, shelter, food assistance, case management, and community-based health services. The City also helps fund services at the Opportunity Services Center, located in Palo Alto, which serves as a key access point for showers, laundry, mail, case management, health services, and storage for personal belongings. These investments reduce immediate health and safety risks, support stabilization, and create regular opportunities for engagement and housing navigation.

The Opportunity Services Center and partner providers deliver coordinated, trauma-informed services that connect individuals to shelter, benefits, medical care, food assistance, case management, housing problem-solving, and permanent housing resources. This multidisciplinary approach supports individualized service planning and creates clear linkages to Santa Clara County’s Coordinated Entry System for assessment, prioritization, referral, and connection to interim and permanent housing opportunities.

To support health, safety, and accessibility, unhoused individuals may store personal belongings in lockers at the Opportunity Services Center. Lockers are available to clients on a low-barrier basis, and clients are encouraged to participate in case management services as part of ongoing engagement and stabilization. Recent locker improvements were supported through the City’s Emerging Needs Grant. Clients are assisted in obtaining a lock, locker access may be renewed every six months, and belongings may be retrieved during operating hours. Property is retained for 6 months to a year, and lower-level lockers are available for clients with ADA-related needs. Flyers and posted notices are used to communicate service access information and provide notice when cleanings occur.

Overall, Palo Alto’s approach aligns immediate basic needs support with dignified, trauma-informed engagement and coordinated pathways to permanent housing.

- **Principle 5: Ensure Access to Shelter or Housing Options – Describe how low barrier resources to housing and supportive services are communicated to encampment residents. Include how strategies involve alternative measures to criminalization, focusing on service engagement and harm reduction. (350 characters max)**

Unhoused residents in Palo Alto have access to a variety of resources, including an overnight warming location; safe parking program, Opportunity Center support services and Homekey Palo Alto at 1237 San Antonio Road, an interim shelter for single adults and families. These local options are complemented by the broader Santa Clara County shelter network, operated in partnership with the County Office of Supportive Housing and accessible through the Here4You Hotline at (408) 385-2400.

Please see attached City of Palo Alto OHS: Human Services Needs Assessment 2024 Table 5 (page 26). Frequency of Existing Service Programs by Service Area & Recommendations.

The below table shows positive placements for Palo Altans through the Continuum of Care.

CY2025 Santa Clara County Supportive Housing System (Active program enrollments during CY2025)		
Project Type	Enrolled	Housed (if applicable)
Permanent Supportive Housing (disability required)	219	214
Rapid Rehousing	74	57
Emergency Housing Voucher Program	26	26
Emergency Shelter	272	NA
Transitional Housing	16	NA
Safe Parking	72	NA

Street Outreach	187	NA
Housing Problem Solving	203	NA
Services Only (Includes UPLIFT)	563	NA
Homelessness Prevention	29	NA

Local shelters, interim housing, and/or permanent affordable and/or supportive housing options include those in the table below, as well as comprehensive lists available in the City's Housing Element at https://www.paloalto.gov/files/assets/public/v/1/planning-amp-development-services/housing-element/housing-element_2023_2031/palo-alto-housing-element.pdf. See Tables 2-21, 2-32, and 2-33 in the housing element, for lists of 12 affordable housing with senior units in Palo Alto and over 12 emergency shelters and 13 transitional housing facilities in Santa Clara County.

Name	Type of Housing	Address	Target Population	Funding Source
Hotel de Zink	Emergency Shelter <i>(recently sunset in coordination with 2026 Homekey opening)</i>	Various (rotates monthly at congregation-based sites throughout Palo Alto)	Single adults	Various (At different times funded by Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, and private funders)
Heart and Home Collaborative	Emergency/cold weather	Various (rotates throughout Palo Alto)	Single women	City of Palo Alto, private funders
Homekey Palo Alto (new in 2026)	Interim shelter	1237 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto	Single Adults and Families	State Homekey grant, Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, Private Funders
Opportunity Center	Affordable housing	33 Encina Ave, Palo Alto	Low and extremely low income residents	Various (Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, grants, loans, and private funders)
Alma Family Housing	Affordable housing	801 Alma St, Palo Alto	Very low income families	Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, Community Working Group, Enterprise Community Investment, JP Morgan Chase, Federal Home Loan Bank,

				Housing Trust Silicon Valley, Opportunity Fund, Sobrato Foundation
Alma Garden Apartments	Affordable housing	2507-2533 Alma St, Palo Alto	Very low income residents	Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, tax credits, Santa Clara County Housing Trust, Sobrato Foundation, private funders
El Camino Real Multifamily Project (pre-construction, coming soon)	Affordable housing and Rapid rehousing	3001 El Camino Real, Palo Alto	Very low income residents and families	Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, various other funders
Mitchell Park Place	Affordable housing	525 East Charleston Road, Palo Alto	Residents with intellectual or developmental disabilities	Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, tax credits
Educator Workforce Housing	Affordable housing	231 Grant Avenue, Palo Alto	Teachers & classified staff from Santa Clara County and southern San Mateo County schools	Santa Clara County, Meta, City of Palo Alto, San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund, Century Housing Corp, School Districts of Palo Alto, Los Altos, Mountain View and Foothill DeAnza Community College
Wilton Court	Affordable housing	3705 El Camino Real, Palo Alto	Adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities	Santa Clara County, City of Palo Alto, tax credits
Mayfield Place	Affordable housing	2500 El Camino Real, Palo Alto	Low & moderate income residents	Stanford, City of Palo Alto

Palo Alto communicates low-barrier housing and supportive service resources to unhoused neighbors through coordinated, field-based outreach, publicly available resource information, flyers, and direct referrals to community-based providers. The City maintains a public resource page at PaloAlto.gov/unhoused and connects individuals to hotline resources for mental health crisis

response, domestic violence services, shelter referral, and food assistance. In addition, the City's homeless outreach team maintains a consistent presence in public spaces and areas where unsheltered residents are present, allowing for repeated engagement, trust-building, and direct communication about available services and housing pathways.

The City's outreach and communication strategy is designed to support low-barrier access to shelter and supportive services. Staff and partner providers share information through in-person engagement, printed materials, and referrals to trusted service providers. Where available, referrals prioritize low-barrier options that may accommodate partners, pets, and personal belongings. Residents are also connected to hygiene services, food assistance, health care, case management, housing problem-solving, and Santa Clara County's Coordinated Entry System for assessment, referral, and connection to interim and permanent housing opportunities.

Palo Alto's approach emphasizes alternative measures to criminalization by prioritizing trauma-informed outreach, voluntary service engagement, harm reduction, and connection to care over punitive responses. Outreach efforts focus on reducing immediate risks to health and safety, preserving dignity and self-determination, and creating practical, accessible pathways to shelter, supportive services, and permanent housing. This strategy helps ensure that encampment residents receive clear and repeated information about available resources and are offered meaningful opportunities to engage in services without unnecessary barriers.

- **Principle 6: Develop Pathways to Permanent Housing and Supports – Describe Housing First strategies emphasizing low barriers, a harm-reduction model, and services to support people obtaining permanent housing more efficiently. Identify efforts to align federal, state, and local funding/programs to provide clear pathways to permanent housing. (350 characters max)**

Palo Alto's homelessness response is grounded in a Housing First, low-barrier, and harm-reduction framework that prioritizes rapid connection to permanent housing with the fewest possible preconditions. Consistent with countywide standards, programs work to reduce barriers related to sobriety, income, credit, rental history, prior justice involvement, behavioral health conditions, and participation in services. Participation in supportive services is encouraged but is not generally required as a condition of housing, and providers use ongoing engagement strategies to help people move from crisis to housing as quickly and safely as possible.

The City aligns local, county, state, and nonprofit resources to create clearer pathways to permanent housing. At the local level, Palo Alto supports outreach, supportive services, and interim housing resources that connect people to Santa Clara County's coordinated system of care. At the county level, coordinated entry, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, homelessness prevention, and other housing interventions help ensure that individuals can move from outreach and crisis response into longer-term housing opportunities. At the state and regional level, capital and operating investments expand the housing inventory and service capacity needed to make Housing First pathways functional.

A strong example of this alignment is Homekey Palo Alto at 1237 San Antonio Road. This project is built on City land and funded by public, nonprofit and private partners. The City has also committed to providing \$1 million in operating cost support for seven years, starting this year. The project

demonstrates how multiple funding streams can be braided to expand low-barrier housing options and improve access to services, stabilization, and housing navigation.

Measure A further strengthens these pathways by financing the development and preservation of affordable and supportive housing across Santa Clara County. This countywide housing production is a critical complement to local outreach, interim housing, safe parking, and service programs because it expands the permanent housing inventory needed for successful exits from homelessness. In this way, local engagement strategies and interim interventions are linked to a broader pipeline of permanent housing opportunities supported by county and state investments.

There are demonstrable outcomes associated with this approach. Countywide data show substantial housing placements under the Community Plan to End Homelessness, including strong rates of exit from rapid rehousing and emergency shelter to permanent housing destinations. These outcomes indicate that Housing First-aligned programs, when paired with coordinated funding and systemwide performance management, can produce measurable progress toward permanent housing. At the same time, ongoing demand for services and limited affordable housing supply underscore the need for continued investment to reduce time-to-housing and expand permanent housing opportunities.

- **Principle 7: Create a Plan for What Will Happen to Encampment Sites After Closure – Describe plans for former encampment spaces (long-term solutions to prevent encampments from reoccurring). Include efforts to emphasize safety, accessibility, and inclusivity that improve infrastructure. Example: Communities can include curb cuts to increase mobility access and enhanced lighting to encourage safety. (350 characters max)**

Although the City of Palo Alto does not currently have encampments as defined by HCD, the City is prepared to respond to any encampment situation in a manner that prioritizes health, safety, and dignified transition.

Police department staff present during an abatement report the conditions of the site, the disposition of items of value, the presence of occupants, and the services offered. At the conclusion of the cleanup, police and public works staff discuss follow-up services needed at the site to include additional cleanup, landscape maintenance, infrastructure maintenance or other action items to prevent future tent or encampments. The Human Services Manager and Assistant to the City Manager are debriefed on the presence or absence of occupants and on the services offered by police staff or outreach workers.

In the event of an encampment closure, the City would conduct a post-abatement site assessment to identify appropriate improvements and prevent re-establishment. Depending on the location, this may include coordinated conversations between departments regarding recommended site safety improvements, restored landscaping and regular maintenance, and ensuring proactive outreach directing community members to available public services and resources. The City would coordinate across Public Works, Parks, and community service providers to monitor former sites and ensure continued public access and usability.

In general, the City strives to engage with neighbors to activate, share, and enjoy public spaces in a safe and inclusive manner that serves all community members.

The City's investment in permanent affordable housing, interim shelter, and preventive services — including the Homekey Palo Alto facility — reflects a long-term strategy to reduce unsheltered homelessness and minimize the conditions that give rise to encampments in the first place.

Certification and Authorization:

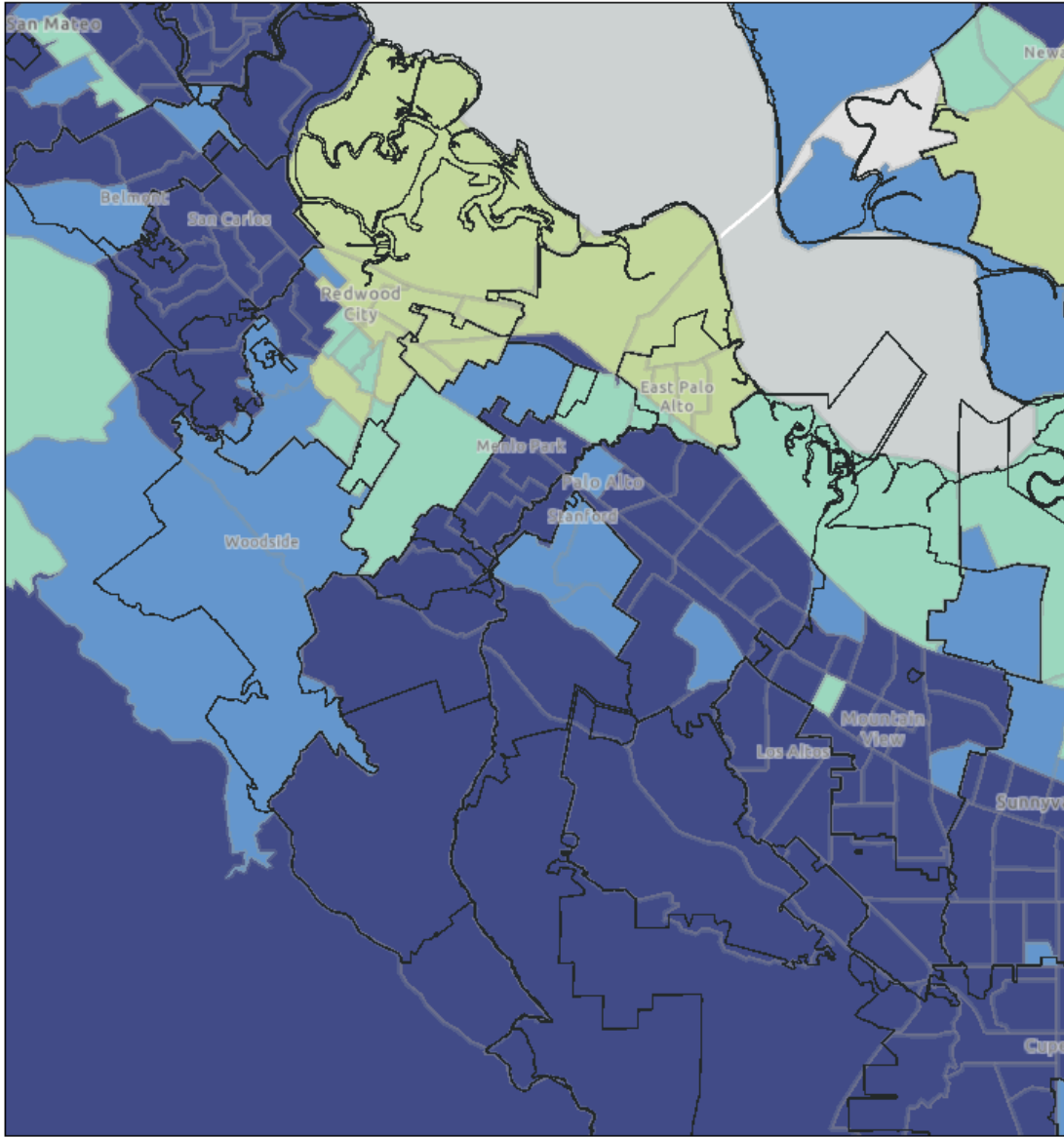
Signature of Authorized Representative Date

City manager to sign prior to application submittal.

Appendix 7: Additional Information and Supporting Documentation







Please see following pages for supporting documentation.

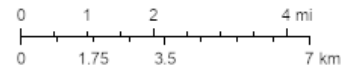
ArcGIS Web Map



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-  City/Town Boundaries
- COG Geography TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map - Composite Score (2025) - Final cog 2025
-  Highest Resource
-  High Resource
-  Moderate Resource
-  Low Resource
-  Insufficient data



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



2024 Annual Report

Three-Year Strategic Plan (FY 2026 - FY 2028)

2024 Commute Survey

Submitted to the Palo Alto City Council and Finance Committee

March 4, 2025

Prepared by:

Palo Alto Transportation Management Association
855 El Camino Real #13A-200, Palo Alto, CA 94301
www.paloaltotma.org



2024 Annual Report

January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Submitted to the Palo Alto City Council

Prepared by:

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March 2025

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Palo Alto Transportation Management Association

2024 Annual Report

Executive Summary

With leadership and financial support from the City of Palo Alto, as well as collaborative partnerships with regional transit agencies, local community-based organizations, and grantmaking organizations, in 2024, the Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) delivered mode shift results efficiently and cost-effectively.

PATMA's sustainable transportation programs for workers – free train and bus passes, \$5/day Bike Love bicycle commute incentive rewards, free refurbished bicycles, after-hour Lyft rides, and a new e-bike e-scooter pilot – in 2024, resulted in a **reduction in demand for 312 parking spaces** around town, **1,542,441 fewer vehicle miles** traveled, and **603 fewer tons of greenhouse gas emissions**. With these accomplishments, PATMA supported three of the 2024 Palo Alto City Council's four priorities: economic development, climate change, and community health.

Highlights of PATMA's work in 2024 included:

- Increased funding
 - Stability - City of Palo Alto restored PATMA's budget which allowed expansion beyond University Ave Downtown and California Ave
 - Grant awards – PATMA won funding from VTA's Transit Oriented Communities program, City of Palo Alto Utilities, Palo Alto Community Foundation, and the Starbucks Neighborhood Grant program
 - Fair market value of transit passes – Securing free Caltrain GoPasses (worth \$4,200/year each) and reduced cost \$169/year VTA passes (worth \$1,080/year each) allowed PATMA to help more workers at a lower cost/user
- Expanded geographic reach
 - Performed outreach at the Stanford Mall, along El Camino Real, at Midtown, and in South Palo Alto
 - In these areas, PATMA offered sustainable transportation programs, conducted the annual commute survey, and presented an e-bike and e-scooter pilot program
- Small business support
 - Ahead of Caltrans' El Camino Real repaving project where bike lanes will be replacing 220 on-street parking spaces, PATMA offered train and bus passes and refurbished bikes to workers who park on El Camino
- Leveraged partnerships
- A dramatic reduction in cost/user/month from \$77 in Dec 2023 to \$51 in Dec 2024

These developments lay a strong foundation for PATMA's future mode shift work.

Introduction

The Palo Alto TMA is a non-profit working to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, traffic congestion, demand for parking and greenhouse gas emissions by delivering targeted transportation solutions that serve Palo Alto's diverse range of employers, employees, visitors, and residents. Financial support for this work comes primarily from the City of Palo Alto's University Avenue and California Avenue parking fund, and, starting in 2024, from the City's General Fund. This funding allows PATMA to provide free transit passes, \$5/day Bike Love rewards, refurbished bicycles, and late-night Lyft rides chiefly to low wage service sector workers in the commercial districts of Palo Alto.

About PATMA

Staff

PATMA is a non-profit, staffed by ALTRANS TMA Inc., a firm specializing in transportation demand management (TDM). Staff providing on-going support for PATMA include:

- Justine Burt, Executive Director
- Sana Ahmed, Program Coordinator
- Stephen Blaylock, President, ALTRANS TMA Inc.
- Andrew Ridley, Chief Operating Officer, ALTRANS TMA Inc.

Board of Directors

In 2024, two long-serving board members (Philip Kamhi, the City's Chief Transportation Official, and Brad Ehikian) stepped down and one new member (Steven Lee) joined. The City's seat on the board will be filled by Interim Chief Transportation Official Lily Lim-Tsao until a permanent replacement is identified. A representative from the tech sector helped diversify our board whose members at the end of the year included:

- Cedric de la Beaujardiere, resident (Board Chair)
- Rob George, Philz Coffee (Treasurer and a founding board member)
- Shannon Rose McEntee, resident (Secretary)
- Lily Lim-Tsao, City of Palo Alto
- Sebastian Mafla, Sheraton
- Nathaniel Duncan, Patagonia
- Alejandra Mier, Coupa Café
- Steven Lee, Meta

The PATMA board meets monthly on the third Thursday at 9:00am and efficiently works through one hour of agenda items. Nearly all board members regularly attend. The public is encouraged to join these virtual meetings. Meeting details and zoom links can be found on our Meetings page at <https://www.paloaltotma.org/meetings-reports>.

New Mission and Core Values

In 2024, PATMA staff and Board members updated PATMA’s mission and core values to be more aspirational and memorable. The new mission statement reads “Better commutes for everyone.” PATMA’s core values describe how our non-profit improves life for the workers and residents of Palo Alto:

- Traffic and parking – reduce traffic congestion and demand for parking
- Climate change – transition to a zero-emission transportation system
- Equity – fair outcomes, treatment and opportunities for all
- Local businesses – help local businesses attract and retain employees
- Health – encourage community health

Incorporating City of Palo Alto Priorities

While the original motivation for the Palo Alto City Council to create PATMA was to alleviate traffic congestion and reduce demand for parking downtown, each year, PATMA overlays the City Council’s stated priorities to guide its work. In January 2024, the City Council announced its priorities for the year:

1. Climate Change & Natural Environment - Protection & Adaptation
2. Community Health, Safety, Wellness & Belonging
3. Economic Development & Transition
4. Housing for Social & Economic Balance

PATMA’s work supports three of these priorities: climate change, community health, and economic development. Regarding City Council’s priority of addressing climate change, PATMA helps reduce greenhouse gases from on-road transportation sources which are 51.7% of Palo Alto’s emissions, according to the City’s 2022 Greenhouse Gas Emissions inventory.

Supporting City of Palo Alto’s Sustainability/Climate Action Plan (S/CAP)

The City of Palo Alto set a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to become carbon neutral by 2030. One S/CAP mobility goal relevant to PATMA regarding reducing greenhouse gas emissions is “increasing the mode share for active transportation (walking, biking) and transit from 19% to 40% of local work trips by 2030.”

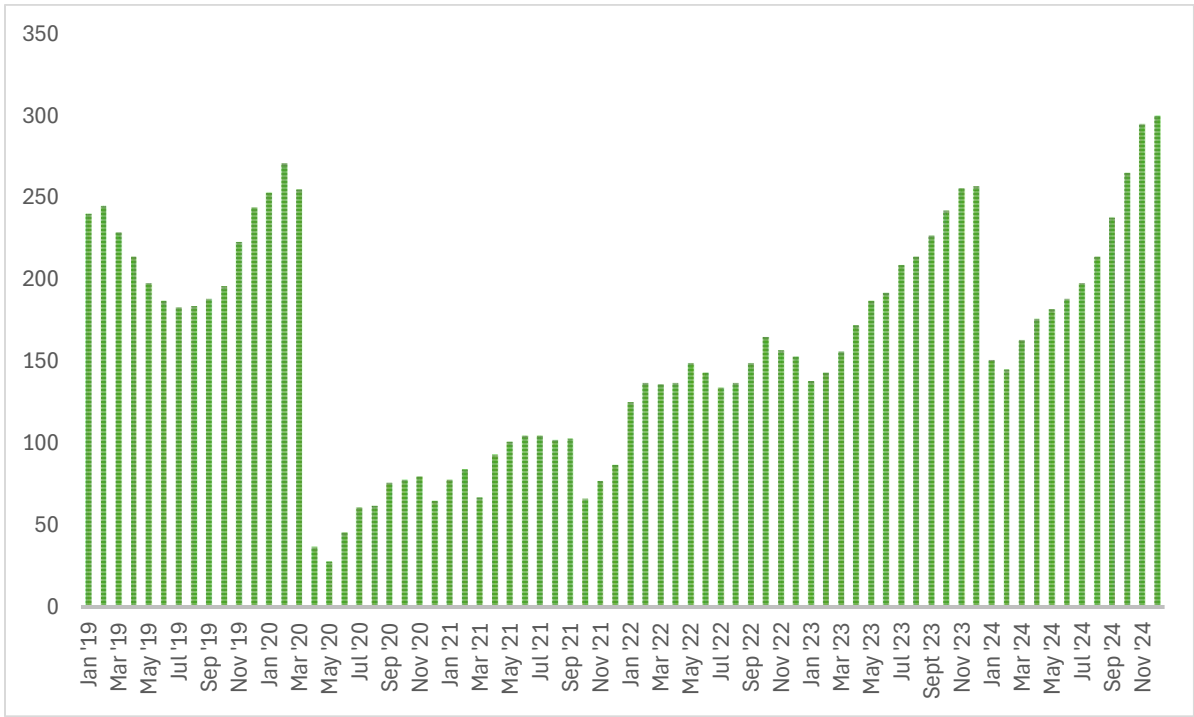
The S/CAP focuses on launching effective programs for emissions reductions with the highest impact and lowest cost. PATMA’s programs help accomplish this goal as noted in the following section.

PATMA’s Top Five Accomplishments

The following were highlights of PATMA’s work in 2024.

1. Rebuilt the transit pass program from a Covid-induced low of 28 people served in May 2020 to a high of 300 in December 2024, exceeding pre-pandemic numbers. Figure 1 shows the number of PATMA-granted transit passes in circulation among Palo Alto workers over the past six years.

Figure 1: Transit passes activated 2019 – 2024¹



2. Activated and distributed 197 Caltrain GoPasses from the Caltrain GoPass Donation Program. Likewise, 67 VTA Smartpasses were distributed to low wage service sector workers in 2024.
3. Received approval from transit agencies to continue distributing Caltrain GoPasses and VTA Smartpasses in 2025 to low wage service sector workers to help grow transit ridership.
4. Reduced 605 tons of greenhouse gas emissions
5. Started an e-bike and e-scooter pilot program with City of Palo Alto Utilities funding to develop case studies that will inspire other low wage service sector workers to consider active commutes.

These activities demonstrate the power of partnerships with local and regional organizations as well as the trust PATMA has established with local business managers.

¹ Note the drop of transit passes between Dec 2023 and Jan 2024. This is due to the fact that in 2023, PATMA started distributing free annual Caltrain GoPasses instead of renewing and paying for Caltrain passes each month. In December 2023, about 100 workers had moved to different jobs outside of Palo Alto and did not renew their GoPasses for January 2024.

Programs

With funding from the City's University Avenue Parking Fund, California Avenue Parking Fund, and General Fund, PATMA provides free Clipper Cards loaded with monthly or annual passes for Caltrain, VTA buses, SamTrans buses, and Dumbarton Transbay buses. PATMA also offers \$10 credits for after-hours Lyft rides of less than five miles, refurbished bicycles at no cost to the recipient, and \$5/day Bike Love rewards. During 2024, PATMA expanded outreach efforts to the Stanford Mall, throughout the length of El Camino Real, at Midtown, and in South Palo Alto.

Service sector workers who receive transit passes work primarily in food service establishments, retail, and accommodation. Light office workers who receive transit passes or accrue Bike Love rewards include staff at Palo Alto's banks, dental and medical offices, and professional firms such as accounting and law offices.

Programs with income thresholds

Train and bus passes

Transit pass benefits are provided to employees earning less than \$70,000 per year who work in the commercial areas of Palo Alto and who do not already receive employer-supported TDM benefits. Workers at the Stanford Research Park and Stanford University are ineligible for PATMA's programs as these organizations have their own TDM programs.

Pilot: E-bicycles and e-scooters

With funding from the City of Palo Alto Utilities Department, in 2024 PATMA ran a pilot program to study e-bikes and e-scooters for active mobility commutes. Four pilot participants making less than \$70,000/year received either an e-bike and safety equipment, or a 12-month e-scooter lease. The intent was to study how many times a week they used the e-bike or e-scooter, how many device miles they traveled, and understand supports and barriers to device use. The four participants in the 12-month pilot have realized the following benefits.

Figure 2: E-scooter and e-bike pilot case studies



Katrina uses an Unagi e-scooter to travel the first mile to the Santa Clara Caltrain station, folds it up and brings it onboard, then rides the last mile to work. During the week she often scooters to restaurants Downtown to grab lunch. But the big time savings comes when she leaves work. The e-scooter allows her to catch the train and get home in time to pick up her kids from school.

Rickaya’s kids have scooters. Now that she also has an e-scooter she can keep up with them. After dropping them off at school, she rides off to meet either the Caltrain or a VTA bus. She folds up the Unagi e-scooter and brings it on, then scooters the last half-mile to work. Rickaya finds this a faster way to commute from Santa Clara given rush hour traffic or accidents on Highway 101 or 280.



Antonio works at Patagonia and lives in Mountain View. Each morning, once he’s ready to leave for work, he looks at the time of the next Caltrain and the weather to figure out if he wants to bike to Caltrain or bike five miles to work. One handy feature of his Lectric folding e-bike is that it does not take up much space when folded, which makes it easier to store safely inside at home and at work. The benefits of the e-bike to Antonio are getting exercise and fresh air, relaxing on Caltrain, saving money on gas, and helping the environment.

Dorothee teaches cooking classes at Taste Buds Kitchen in Midtown. She loves commuting to work from Menlo Park on her electric e-bike among the beautiful, tree-lined streets of Palo Alto. The fresh air and exercise energize her on the way to work.



Refurbished bicycles

In 2024, PATMA continued working with local non-profit Bike Exchange for a pilot program to provide seven refurbished bicycles and safety gear to essential workers. This pilot is open to workers making less than \$70,000/year. Figure 3 shows several Palo Alto-based essential workers receiving their refurbished bicycles.

Figure 3: Essential workers taking delivery of their “new” refurbished bikes





Lyft after-hours rides

The Lyft after-hours program provides rides home to workers commuting less than five miles after transit stops running.

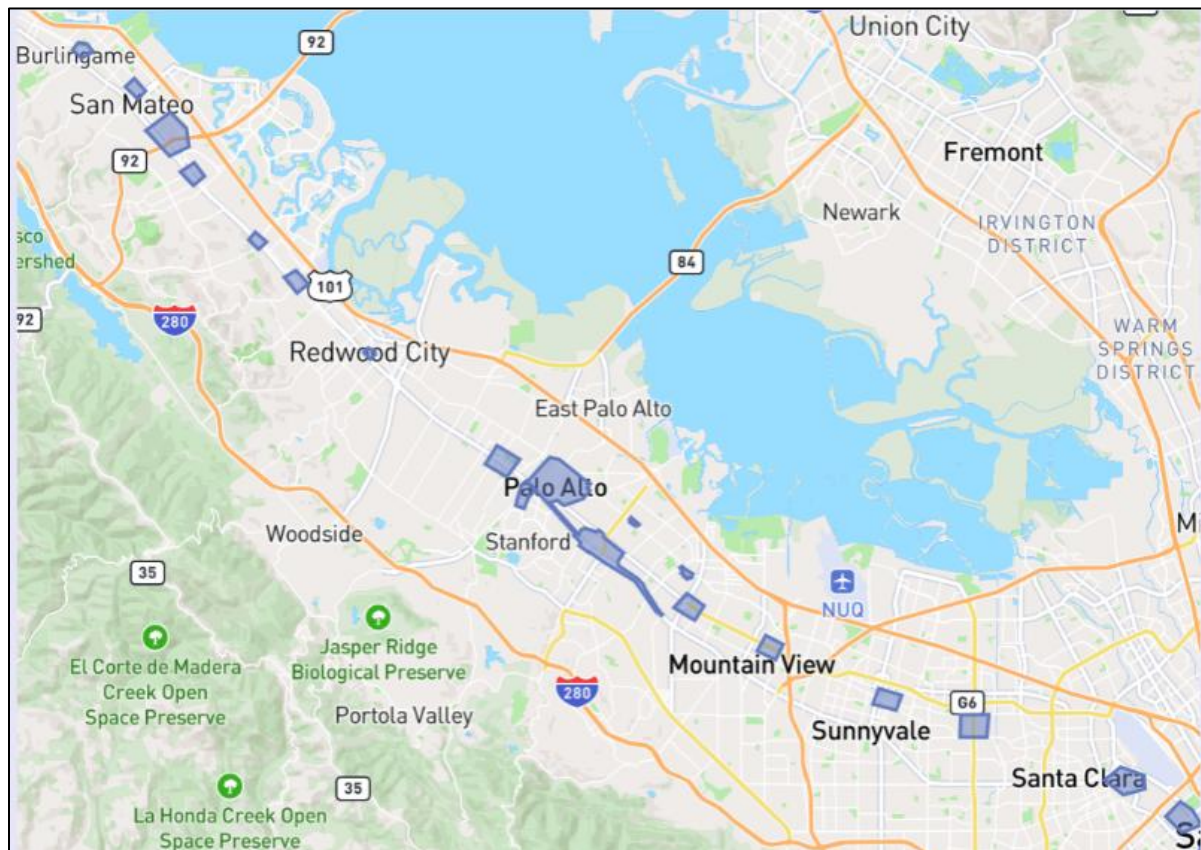
PATMA programs without an income threshold

Bike Love rewards

The Bike Love smartphone app provides daily incentives for active mode first-mile commute trips to transit and active mode commutes between home and work, of \$5/day up to \$599 per year per commuter. Automated travel mode detection identifies eligible bike, e-bike, e-scooter, and e-skateboard trips. Eligibility is determined by trips that stop or start within geofences around 30 Caltrain stations and five commercial areas (Downtown, California Ave., Stanford Mall, El Camino Real, and Midtown). Incentive dollars are instantly redeemable at local merchants via reloadable Apple/Google Wallet Virtual Visa cards.

Figure 4 shows the current geofences that mark commute destinations that earn workers rewards. This map includes all Caltrain stations, for workers who use a bike or e-scooter for first/last mile, as well as expanded commercial areas.

Figure 4: Bike Love Geofence Boundaries



In 2024, 35% of the transaction values of redeemed rewards happened in Palo Alto, in support of the City Council’s 2024 priority for economic development. The ability of Bike Love users to



redeem incentives at Palo Alto businesses helps keep dollars in the local economy. Figure 5 provides detail about where Bike Love users spend their reward funds.

Figure 5: Where Bike Love Rewards Were Spent in 2024

	All	Palo Alto	Mountain View	Redwood City	San Francisco	San Carlos	Sunnyvale	Menlo Park	Amazon or online	Other cities
Transactions value (\$)	17,503	4,944	596	195	1344	110	231	2,570	3,586	3,927
Number of transactions	877	308	20	12	55	22	8	114	172	166

Source: Motion

This information is gathered from merchant identification numbers where rewards are redeemed.

For a quick overview video explaining the app, please visit [Bike Love in 80 seconds \(video\)](#).

Benefits of PATMA Programs

While PATMA programs save service workers money on their commutes, many other benefits of these programs accrue to local businesses, workers, City government, and Palo Alto residents.

Businesses

For business owners and managers, PATMA participation gives them a competitive advantage over similar businesses in nearby cities. Being able to provide transit passes to their employees helps shops, restaurants, and hotels attract and retain workers in competitive industries with high rates of staff turnover.

Workers

Workers who stop driving not only save money on variable vehicle costs such as gasoline, maintenance, and repairs, they also escape the stress of having to drive in traffic congestion. The workers who commute by active modes enjoy the benefits of exercise that allow them to arrive at work energized and refreshed.

City of Palo Alto

Municipal governments impact the wellbeing of residents and workers within the city's boundaries, and PATMA's programs on the City's behalf reduce traffic congestion, free up parking spaces in commercial areas, and enhance the quality of life for residents by reducing the number of cars parked in neighborhoods.

Program Results

Results of the TMA’s program management, outreach, and program operation labor in Figures 6 – 12 depict the number of transit passes distributed, the cost per freed up parking space (cost/user), vehicle miles traveled avoided, and greenhouse gases reduced.

Among all businesses served, Figure 6 gives a breakdown by business with the number of their employees in descending order who had an active train or bus pass from PATMA in December 2024.

Figure 6: Number of Transit Passes Distributed by Employer in December 2024

Employer	Transit Pass Count	Employer	Transit Pass Count	Employer	Transit Pass Count
Sheraton/Westin	33	San Agus	3	Creamery	2
Nobu Hotel	16	Oren's Hummus	3	Coach	2
Ettan	12	Lima Ruby Peruvian Restaurant	3	City of Palo Alto (interns)	2
Whole Foods	10	Hobee's	3	Cardinal Hotel	2
Patagonia	9	Glass Slipper Inn	3	Bright Horizons	2
Neiman Marcus	8	Buca di Beppo	3	Blue Bottle	2
Walgreens	7	Avenidas	3	Bloomingdales	2
Coupa Cafe	7	Yayoi	2	Arya Steakhouse	2
Apple	7	Wells Fargo	2	Zola + Zola Bar	1
Watercourse Way	6	Webster House	2	Zareen's	1
Rangoon Ruby	6	Vizavoo Salon	2	Xfinity	1
Philz Coffee	6	Starbucks	2	Wu Orthodontics	1
Macy's	6	Spring Spa	2	Williams Sonoma	1
Crepevine	6	School of Rock	2	Wetzel Pretzel	1
West Elm	5	Restoration Hardware (RH)	2	Victoria	1
The Palo Alto Inn	5	Palo Alto Orthodontics	2	Trader Joes	1
SkinSpirit	5	Palo Alto Oral and Maxillofacial surgery	2	The Real Real	1
The Melt	4	Palo Alto Bicycles	2	TAVERNA	1
Sephora	4	Mollie Stone's Market	2	Tamarine	1
Peloton	4	McDonald's	2	Tacolicious	1
Lytton Gardens (Front Porch)	4	L&P Aesthetics	2	Summit Bicycles	1
Christine Hansen DDS	4	Kowa Ramen	2	Sprinkles	1
VIP Vein Treatment Clinic	3	Kindercare Day Care Center	2	Somi Somi	1
True Foods Kitchen	3	Equinox	2	Smiles By Pai	1
		Curry Up Now	2	Security Industry Specialists	1
				Rooh	1
				PIP Printing	1



Employer	Transit Pass Count
Palo Alto Bilingual Montessori Academy	1
Pacific catch	1
Nola Restaurant & Bar	1
Matroid	1
Lush Cosmetics	1
La Bodeguita del Medio	1
Kris Hamamoto DDS, Inc.	1
Khazana Palo Alto	1
Keen Garage	1
K. Minamoto	1

Employer	Transit Pass Count
Immersion Spa	1
Imaginemos Oruguitas	1
Guckenheimer: Palo Alto Club	1
Gott's Roadside	1
Gong Cha	1
Gardening	1
Fast Repair	1
Everything but Water	1
Everlane	1
Embarcadero Media Foundation	1
Dr. William Tseng	1

Employer	Transit Pass Count
Downtown Streets Team	1
Da Sichuan	1
Comfort Inn	1
Clement Hotel	1
City National Bank	1
Channing House	1
Caretaker (home in Palo Alto)	1
Cafe 220	1
Block Advisors	1
Bike Connection	1
Beyond Explorations	1
Grand Total	304

Figure 7 provides the number of transit passes PATMA distributed to businesses along El Camino Real (between Park Blvd and San Antonio Rd) by month. PATMA’s proactive transit pass outreach efforts were conducted along with Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition volunteers to help reduce demand for parking ahead of the Caltrans repaving and bike lane project in fall 2024.

Figure 7: Transit Passes Distributed Along El Camino Real by Month in 2024

Month	Caltrain	VTA	SamTrans	Dumbarton Express
Jan				
Feb				
Mar		12		
Apr		1	1	
May				1
Jun				
Jul				
Aug	2			
Sep	3	1	1	1
Oct	3	10	1	
Nov	6	2	1	
Dec				
Total	14	26	4	2

PATMA’s marketing and outreach efforts throughout Palo Alto in 2024 resulted in the following impacts.

Figure 8: Number of Commuters Diverted from Single-Occupancy Vehicles (average of three months)

Program	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
Transit passes	153	182	216.67	286.67
Bike Love (>12 rides/month)	13.33	15.33	14.67	10
Lyft	3.33	2.67	3.33	4
Total	169.67	200.0	234.67	300.67

Figures 9 and 10 show the average cost per month that PATMA paid to mode shift workers out of single-occupancy vehicles and into a sustainable transportation commute. The drop in monthly cost between December 2023 and December 2024 is partially attributable to the increased number of GoPasses Caltrain donated to PATMA and the highly discounted Smartpasses VTA sold to PATMA.

Figure 9: Cost per User in 2023

Cost per user	Jan '23	Feb '23	Mar '23	Q1 '23	Apr '23	May '23	Jun '23	Q2 '23	Jul '23	Aug '23	Sep '23	Q3 '23	Oct '23	Nov '23	Dec '23	Q4 '23	ANNUAL TOTALS
Transit Pass Program	\$39.45	\$50.29	\$44.49	\$44.74	\$45.98	\$39.87	\$38.30	\$41.38	\$36.29	\$39.10	\$36.97	\$37.45	\$45.54	\$49.40	\$31.92	\$42.29	\$493.97
Bike Love	\$54.93	\$69.97	\$46.02	\$56.98	\$49.15	\$53.16	\$61.95	\$54.75	\$49.78	\$72.12	\$62.43	\$61.44	\$65.90	\$74.84	\$85.02	\$75.25	\$741.64
Lyft Program	\$106.99	\$63.31	\$86.42	\$85.57	\$86.89	\$100.09	\$116.25	\$101.08	\$107.95	\$93.98	\$79.12	\$93.68	\$63.62	\$78.78	\$112.74	\$85.05	\$1,099.67
Average cost/user	\$67.12	\$61.19	\$58.98	\$62.43	\$60.67	\$64.37	\$72.17	\$65.74	\$64.67	\$68.40	\$59.51	\$64.19	\$58.35	\$67.67	\$76.56	\$67.53	\$778.43

Figure 10: Cost per User in 2024

Cost per user	Jan '24	Feb '24	Mar '24	Q1 '24	Apr '24	May '24	June '24	Q2 '24	July '24	Aug '24	Sept '24	Q3 '24	Oct '24	Nov '24	Dec '24	Q4 '24	ANNUAL TOTALS
Transit pass subsidy	\$58.63	\$56.07	\$56.76	\$57.15	\$46.33	\$50.77	\$46.79	\$47.97	\$40.75	\$38.86	\$40.27	\$39.96	\$49.54	\$19.69	\$15.47	\$28.23	\$486.55
Bike Love	\$52.47	\$0.00	\$99.46	\$50.64	\$47.49	\$0.00	\$69.60	\$39.03	\$80.36	\$65.73	\$54.30	\$66.80	\$54.20	\$67.84	\$83.84	\$68.63	\$659.46
Lyft Program	\$86.54	\$86.65	\$69.47	\$80.89	\$85.35	\$124.37	\$78.04	\$95.92	\$94.98	\$70.91	\$70.00	\$78.63	\$42.17	\$49.94	\$54.67	\$48.93	\$870.62
Average cost/user	\$65.88	\$47.57	\$75.23	\$62.89	\$59.72	\$58.38	\$64.81	\$60.97	\$72.03	\$58.50	\$54.86	\$61.80	\$48.63	\$45.82	\$51.33	\$48.60	\$672.21

Figure 11 shows the number of avoided vehicle miles traveled as a result of PATMA’s programs.

Figure 11: Avoided Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Program	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
Transit pass subsidy	247,473.7	320,103.0	403,728.4	561,593.4
Lyft	250.4	211.9	239.1	195.8
Bike Love	2,179.4	2,408.2	2,205.9	1,852.1
Total	249,903.5	322,723.1	406,173.4	563,641.3

Adding up the four quarters, PATMA programs reduced vehicle miles traveled by 1,542,441. And finally, Figure 12 shows greenhouse gas emissions reduced as a result of programs.

Figure 12: Greenhouse Gases Reduced (tons)

Program	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
Transit passes, Lyft and Bike Love	98.5	126.0	158.7	220.2

In 2024, PATMA’s work resulted in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of 603.4 tons.

Testimonials

Beyond the quantitative effect, PATMA also has a qualitative impact on workers in Palo Alto. The following feedback from employees of local businesses shows how much PATMA’s programs mean to the community. Here are some testimonials we received from retail, accommodations, and personal services establishments.

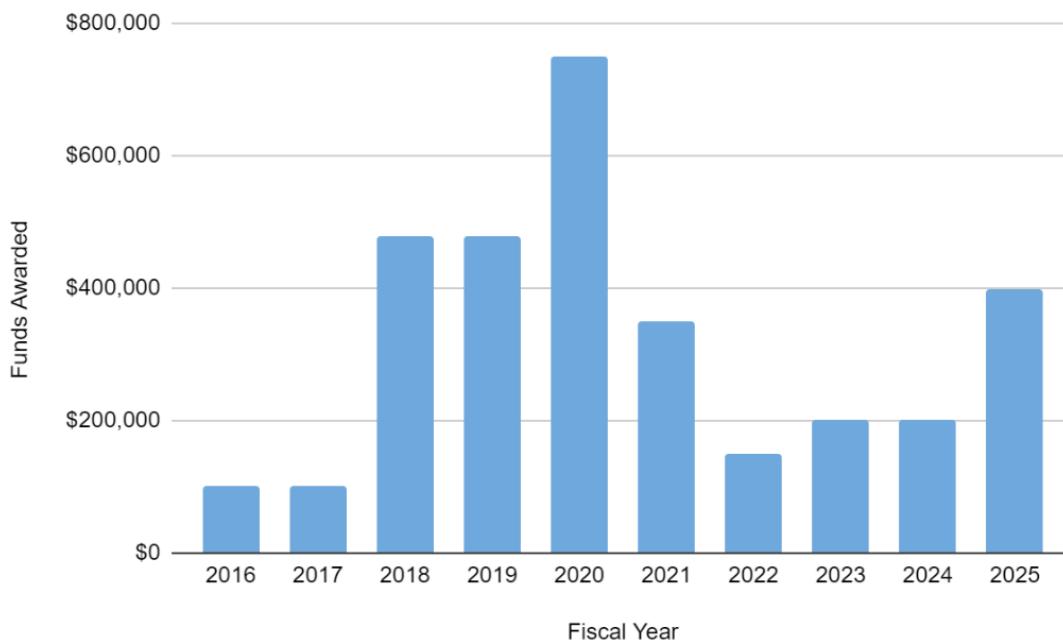
- “I was able to ride the bus to work this morning and it was a lot of fun! Very efficient and saving me lots of gas money! I appreciate your efforts and this awesome program!” - DéBorah S.
- “I love the ability to combine bicycling and Caltrain and not rely at all on an automobile. And I am impressed by how the City of Palo Alto encourages and supports that.” - Dennis W.
- “Estoy muy contenta con el servicio de PATMA. Gracias .” (I am very happy with PATMA’s service.) - Yuliana A.
- “Being a part of the program really reduces my stress of commuting to work. I don’t drive because it will cost me too much money to drive back and forth versus taking the train. It really saves me stress and money.” – Ernestine T.

- “Me gusta viajar en el Caltrain porque es comodo, llego a tiempo a mi trabajo, etc.” (I like to travel on Caltrain because it’s comfortable, I arrive to work on time, etc.) – Juana A.
- “Es seguro y siempre llego temprano a mi trabajo.” (It’s safe and I always arrive on time for work.) - Nancy R.
- “No issues! Happy with Caltrain.” – Spencer S.

Budget

The non-profit demonstrated program results which helped to grow its City funding allocation until 2020 when the pandemic altered commuting habits and parking fund revenues fell dramatically. Figure 13 shows the history of PATMA’s funding allotments since FY 2016.

Figure 13: PATMA Funding Since Inception



Since 2020, PATMA has worked hard to do more with less and build back the number of workers it supports with mode shift.

Grant funding

In 2024, PATMA applied for and received grants from four organizations to use for various purposes.

- VTA Transit Oriented Communities - \$24,550 for outreach and marketing along El Camino Real to encourage mode shift to VTA buses

- City of Palo Alto Utilities - \$10,000 grant for e-bike and e-scooter pilot
- Palo Alto Community Foundation - \$5,000 unrestricted grant
- Starbucks Neighborhood Grant - \$1,000 used to purchase Starbucks gift cards to incentivize filling out PATMA’s commute survey

These grants complemented City of Palo Alto funding.

Figure 14 provides specific information about income sources and expenses by month.

Figure 14: PATMA Income and Expenses in 2024

Category	Jan '24	Feb '24	Mar '24	Apr '24	May '24	Jun '24	Jul '24	Aug '24	Sept '24	Oct '24	Nov '24	Dec '24
Beginning balance on 1/1/24: \$36,536.74												
INCOME												
City of Palo Alto			\$50,000	\$42,000		\$50,000		\$50,000			\$110,000	
Grants				\$5,000			\$1,000					
Memberships	\$800						\$2,500			\$1,000		
Value Caltrain GoPasses												
Value VTA SmartPasses												
TOTAL INCOME	\$800	\$0	\$50,000	\$47,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$3,500	\$50,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$110,000	\$0
EXPENSES												
Executive Director ALTRANS	\$4,233	\$0	\$17,120	\$8,560	\$8,560	\$8,560	\$8,560	\$4,280	\$0	\$0	\$12,840	\$8,560
Biz (rent, office, ins, etc)	\$114	\$625	\$68	\$102	\$293	\$1,472	\$642	\$1,488	\$1,895	\$576	\$399	\$733
Lyft	\$338		\$520	\$278	\$256		\$234	\$285		\$284	\$379	\$200
Program Coordinator ALTRANS	\$4,489	\$0	\$10,743	\$4,763	\$5,037	\$4,125	\$5,256	\$5,986	\$5,165	\$0	\$10,330	\$6,424
Adjusted Transit - clipper	\$15,594	\$9,387	\$2,581	\$19,508	\$3,473	\$9,060	\$16,241	\$708	\$18,577	\$9,363	\$205	\$18,355
Transit - refunds	-\$472	\$0	-\$1,318	-\$467	-\$824	\$0	-\$1,114	\$0	-\$671	\$0	-\$1,462	\$0
Commute Survey - additional labor					\$990	\$80		\$4,280	\$8,560		\$11,896	\$296
E-bike e-scooter pilot											\$4,004	\$947
Refurbished bikes											\$2,000	
Bike Love	\$1,784		\$3,183	\$1,805		\$2,227	\$2,652	\$2,498	\$2,063	\$2,005	\$2,103	\$2,431
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$26,080	\$10,012	\$32,897	\$34,548	\$17,785	\$25,525	\$32,471	\$19,525	\$35,589	\$12,228	\$42,694	\$37,946
INCOME - EXPENSES	-\$25,280	-\$10,012	\$17,103	\$12,452	-\$17,785	\$24,475	-\$28,971	\$30,475	-\$35,589	-\$11,228	\$67,306	-\$37,946
Ending balance on 12/31/24: \$26,118.89												

In Figure 14, the Executive Director’s tasks include program oversight, communications with stakeholders, finance and accounting activities, managing board meetings, maintaining 501c3 non-profit status, tax filing, and pursuing grant opportunities to diversify funding sources.

The Program Coordinator’s labor involves updating the website, processing new transit pass requests, communicating about pass renewals, purchasing new passes, replacing lost passes, troubleshooting, and monitoring accounts.

Figures 15 and 16 show relative income sources and expenditures. Note that the fair market value of Caltrain GoPasses (\$827,400) and VTA Smartpasses (\$50,105) in 2024 that PATMA received for free or at a fully discounted price respectively are not included in the income chart.

Figure 15: Overview of 2024 Income

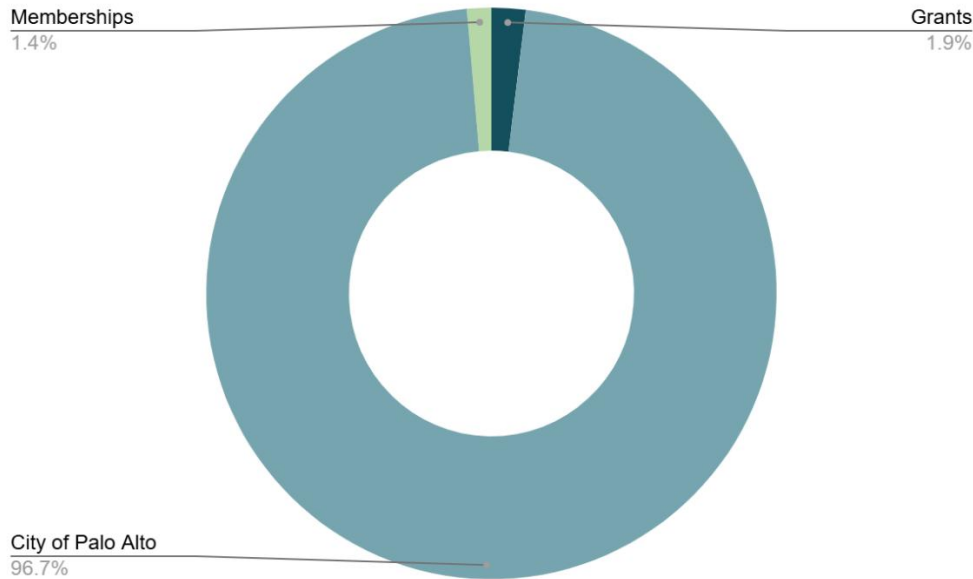
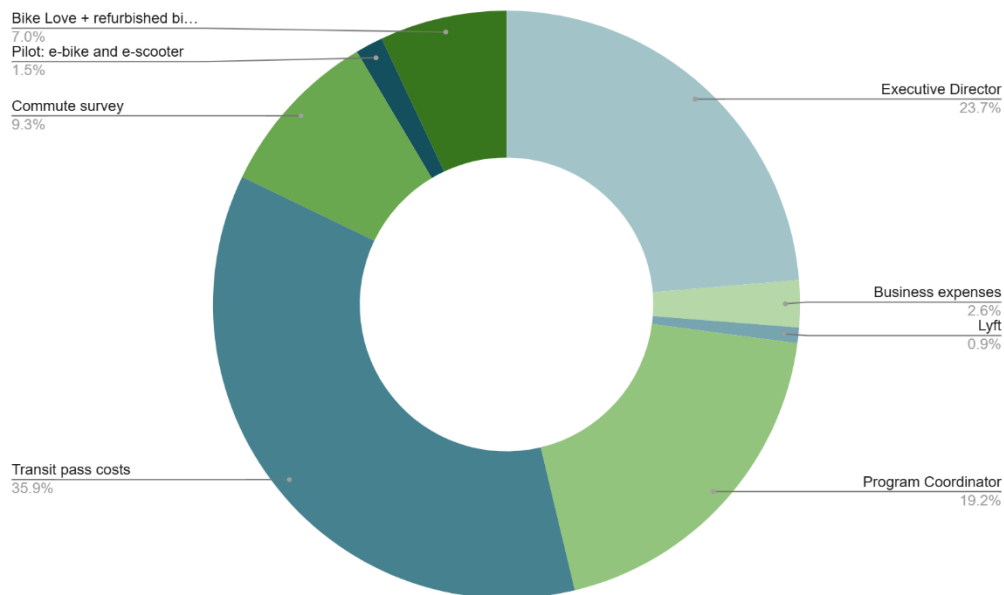


Figure 16: Overview of 2024 Expenses





Conclusion

In 2024, PATMA made great strides in mode shift and program cost effectiveness by working in close collaboration with a number of partners. Thanks to our colleagues at Caltrain and VTA, additional free Caltrain GoPasses and highly discounted VTA Smartpasses helped bring down PATMA's cost/user. Grant providers supported PATMA with specific aspects of our mode shift work along El Camino Real and during the annual commute survey.

Local and regional non-profits such as Bike Exchange, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, Seamless Bay Area, and Palo Alto Forward either provided services, volunteers, or introduced PATMA to potential funders to grow our work. In addition, PATMA's Board members provided valuable advice and conducted advocacy on PATMA's behalf.

All together, these collaborations have helped position PATMA to have an even larger impact reducing traffic, demand for parking, and greenhouse gas emissions in 2025.



Three-Year Strategic Plan

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028

Submitted to the Palo Alto City Council

Prepared by:

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March 2025



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PATMA's Three Year Strategic Plan

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028

Executive Summary

Each year, the Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) conducts a Three-Year Strategic Plan with input from its Board of Directors. This plan provides a roadmap of goals, strategies, tactics, and objectives that ensure the non-profit will be able to help an increasing number of workers shift from driving single-occupancy vehicles to sustainable transportation modes.

PATMA's work supports local businesses with transportation demand management programs that help companies attract and retain workers: free transit passes, refurbished bicycles, rewards for active mobility commutes, and after-hours Lyft rides less than five miles. For the past five years, PATMA has been rebuilding from a pandemic-induced 90% drop in transit pass requests in early 2020 and in 2024 exceeded pre-pandemic numbers.

In December 2024, PATMA's programs resulted in a reduction of demand for 312 parking spaces which yields benefits every day, all year. Building on this success, this Strategic Plan details the following goals for the next three years.

- Year 1: Scale up the number of transit passes; scale up the number of active mobility commuters traveling <3 miles
- Year 2: Make it easier for commuters to access multiple sustainable commute modes; support active commutes <5 miles
- Year 3: Leverage new technologies and programs to enable workers to commute without a personal vehicle

In the next year, PATMA expects dramatic growth in the number of workers served by our mode shift work for several reasons. Contractually, PATMA is now able to offer programs beyond just Downtown and California Ave to most businesses throughout the commercial areas of Palo Alto. New findings from the 2024 Commute Survey provide insights about which sectors offer mode shift opportunities. PATMA has the ability to provide programs to workers at a higher income threshold. Caltrain and VTA have made a large number of free or highly discounted transit passes available. Starting in FY2025, the City restored PATMA's baseline \$400,000 budget which provided more resources to accomplish mode shift.

These conditions enable growth in the number of workers served in the next year.

Introduction

The Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) is a non-profit leading efforts to reshape commute behaviors around town. Abundant mass transit, active mobility (bicycle, electric scooter, walking), on-demand ride hailing options, as well as trip planning and real time arrival apps are available to enable workers who live and work near major transit pipelines (Caltrain, VTA 22/522, SamTrans ECR, and the Dumbarton Express) to commute quickly and efficiently without



needing to own a personal vehicle. In this spirit, PATMA provides information and incentives that encourage workers to shift out of their single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs) and into low-carbon transportation options.

For the 12-month period ending December 31, 2024, PATMA programs resulted in a **reduction in demand for 312 parking spaces** around town, **1,542,441 fewer vehicle miles** traveled, and **603 fewer tons of greenhouse gas emissions** by providing free transit passes, \$5/day Bike Love rewards, refurbished bicycles, and after-hour Lyft rides.

There is potential for PATMA to free up more parking spaces and reduce more greenhouse gas emissions. The following Three-Year Strategic Plan, which is compiled each year for the next three years, lays out goals, strategies, tactics, and objectives for PATMA’s work supporting Palo Alto businesses and workers over the next three years.

Context

Several contextual elements inform this strategic plan, including the City of Palo Alto’s ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, the fact that on-road transportation contributes more than half of Palo Alto’s greenhouse gases emissions, the priorities the Palo Alto City Council sets each January, PATMA’s contract with the City of Palo Alto, and PATMA’s bylaws, among other considerations.

Sustainability Climate Action Plan (S/CAP)

The City of Palo Alto set a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to become carbon neutral by 2030. One S/CAP mobility goal relevant to PATMA regarding reducing greenhouse gas emissions is “increasing the mode share for active transportation (walking, biking) and transit from 19% to 40% of local work trips by 2030.” Two sectors in Palo Alto already exceed the 40% metric.

Data from PATMA’s 2024 commute survey found the following percentages of workers in four different work sectors in Palo Alto who were commuting by a mode other than driving a single-occupancy vehicle:

- Service – 45%
- Light office – 23%
- Tech – 45%
- Government – 28%

To help realize the City’s S/CAP goal that 40% of work trips by 2030 be by transit or active mobility, PATMA plans to support each sector in different ways. The service sector - in retail, food service, and accommodation - has a high sustainable commute rate already but also high turnover. This is a sector whose employees served as frontline workers during the pandemic, that are price sensitive and have elastic demand for driving to work, and as a result is most open to PATMA’s sustainable commute mode shift programs. PATMA will continue offering programs to new service sector employees.



With PATMA’s new higher income threshold, PATMA will be able to serve more members of front office staff in the light office sector who have been just above PATMA’s old income threshold of \$70,000/year. Finally, PATMA will support mode shift efforts at large tech companies and the City of Palo Alto by sharing annual commute survey findings, and in the case of tech companies, table at commuter fairs when requested. All of these efforts will help realize the City’s S/CAP goals.

City Council Priorities

Each year, the Palo Alto City Council sets their strategic priorities for the year. In January 2025, the new set of goals included:

1. Climate Change & Natural Environment – Protection & Adaptation
2. Community Health, Safety, Wellness & Belonging
3. Economic Development & Transition
4. Housing for Social & Economic Balance

PATMA’s programs help address three of these four priorities: economic recovery, climate change, and community health by providing low wage workers with commute counseling, access to free transit passes, rewards for bicycling to work, and late night ride hailing services.

PATMA’s Contract with the City of Palo Alto

The contract between the City of Palo Alto and PATMA provides guidance about how public funds should be used to ensure the public good as well as planning, reporting, and surveying requirements.

- Use of City funds – “PATMA shall use the City Funds for “pilot projects” intended to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips by Downtown and California Avenue Business District workers, as mutually agreed upon by the City Manager and PATMA. For FY24 and FY25, \$200,000 of City Funds may be used to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips anywhere in Palo Alto. Pilot projects may include purchase and distribution of transit passes, active commute rewards, support for carpooling, and other measures to address first mile and last mile connections. If PATMA uses City Funds to purchase transit passes to give away free-of-charge, the free transit passes shall be provided solely to low income workers.”
- Planning – “PATMA shall: (a) conduct an annual strategic planning session producing 3-year goals and objectives and funding requirements, and prepare an annual budget with projected metrics (cost per mode shift, ROI, etc.), and (b) annually provide to the City a detailed, updated strategic plan and budget. The strategic plan may utilize scenarios to illustrate the return on investment associated with different funding levels. The strategic plan shall identify the projects proposed to be funded with the City Funds for the City Manager’s review and approval.”
- Reporting – “PATMA shall provide the City with quarterly written reports on the implementation and effectiveness of pilot programs funded by the City, including quantitative measures of SOV trip reduction and mode shift achieved, metrics used, cost



per employee mode shift, and how the City Funds were expended. PATMA shall submit the reports at the same time that PATMA submits the quarterly invoice to the City.”

- Surveying – “PATMA shall conduct a robust survey of Downtown and California Avenue Business District employee commute patterns on an annual basis. Additional areas of Palo Alto where the TMA has been active may be included in the survey.”

PATMA’s Bylaws

PATMA’s bylaws provide operating instructions for the non-profit. One way it does this is by ensuring PATMA’s board members represent a range of interests among the Palo Alto community as well as the number of board members PATMA should have.

- Qualifications of Directors. “The Board shall in good faith strive to include as Directors, representatives from major stakeholder groups serving PATMA’s current or planned/proposed service areas, including representatives of the following industries: technology, real estate development, retail and/or hospitality, philanthropy, and traditional office (e.g., finance, accounting, legal) and including representatives representing residential interests.”
- Number of Directors. “The authorized number of Directors shall consist of at least five but no more than thirteen Directors.”

New Mission and Core Values

In 2024, PATMA staff and their board rewrote PATMA’s mission statement to make it more memorable and rewrote its core values to provide clarity on what the non-profit seeks to accomplish.

Mission

Better commutes for everyone

Core values

- Traffic – lighten traffic congestion
- Parking – reduce demand for parking in commercial areas
- Climate change – transition to a zero-emission transportation system
- Equity – fair outcomes, treatment and opportunities for all
- Local businesses – help local businesses attract and retain employees
- Health – encourage community health

Higher Income Threshold

In 2018, PATMA raised its income threshold for program participation from \$50,000 to \$70,000/year. Since then, the cost of living in the Bay Area has increased substantially. In January 2025, PATMA’s board decided to raise the threshold to 80% of Area Median Income in Santa Clara County which in 2024 was \$103,200/year for a household of one.

All together, this context provides guidance to PATMA about how to structure our programs to best serve the public’s interest.



PATMA Programs

Programs with a \$100,000/year income threshold

Transit Passes

Currently, PATMA focuses on supporting essential workers in the commercial districts of Downtown and California Ave, at the Stanford Mall, along El Camino Real, at Midtown, and along San Antonio Rd. If these workers are driving to work and make less than \$100,000/year¹, they can receive free Caltrain, SamTrans, or Dumbarton Transbay bus passes.²

Refurbished Bicycles

In 2022, PATMA piloted a refurbished bicycle program with the local non-profit [Bike Exchange](#). This refurbished bicycle program is for essential workers in Palo Alto making less than PATMA's income threshold who would like to bike to work but do not own a bicycle. If they also need any safety equipment – helmet, lock, lights – Bike Exchange provides these to each essential worker receiving a refurbished bike.

E-bike e-scooter pilot

This pilot studied two mode shift scenarios: active commutes via e-bike and first/last mile solutions via e-scooter. Four pilot participants making less than \$70,000/year received either an e-bike and safety equipment, or a 12-month e-scooter lease. The intent was to study how many times a week they used the e-bike or e-scooter, how many device miles they traveled, and understand supports and barriers to device use. In addition, based on what is learned in the pilot, PATMA will create case studies with photos to inspire other workers in similar situations who drive alone to work.

After hours Lyft rides

Workers who live less than five miles from work and who need to travel home from work late at night when mass transit is not running can receive a \$10 Lyft credit per ride.

Program without an income threshold

Bike Love

PATMA's [Bike Love](#) app provides \$5/day up to \$599/year to workers in Palo Alto's commercial districts to encourage commuters to leave their cars at home and bike or e-scooter to work. Unlike the transit pass program, there are no income restrictions for the Bike Love program. The app was designed to provide attractive financial rewards to build active mobility habits. See Figure 1 for a map of Bike Love program boundaries within which workers earn rewards. The Bike Love app also

¹ PATMA's new income threshold is currently 80% of Santa Clara County's Area Median Income, which in 2024 was \$103,200 for a household of one person. For the sake of memorability to PATMA's target audience, marketing materials will say \$100,000/year.

² VTA is currently working on a contract amendment to allow PATMA to raise the income limit for access to Smartpasses to workers making less than 80% of Area Median Income.

rewards travel to all 30 Caltrain stations for commuters who would be incentivized to bike or scooter to Caltrain and take the train to work.

In 2024, 35% of Bike Love reward transactions were redeemed at Palo Alto-based businesses which is another way that PATMA supports local businesses and multiplies program impact to benefit the local economy.

Accomplishments

PATMA’s sustainable transportation programs in 2024, resulted in a **reduction in demand for 312 parking spaces** around town, **1,542,441 fewer vehicle miles traveled**, and **603 fewer tons of greenhouse gas emissions**. The majority of these results were due to the transit pass program. See Figure 2 for the number of transit passes activated over the past five years.

Figure 1: Geofenced areas for Bike Love rewards

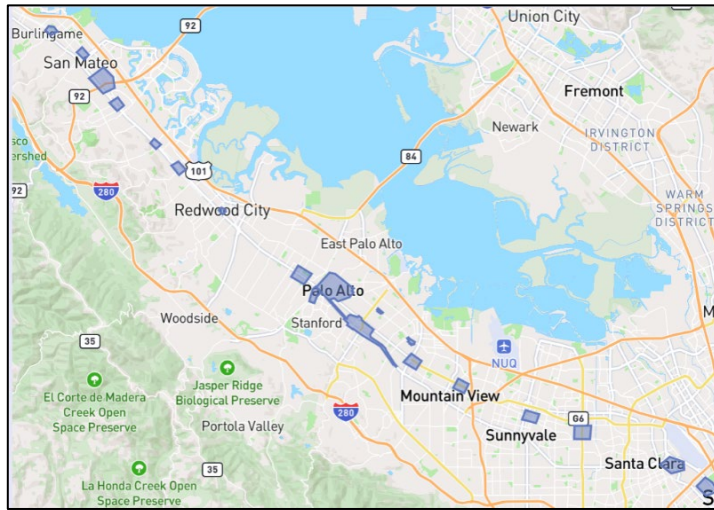
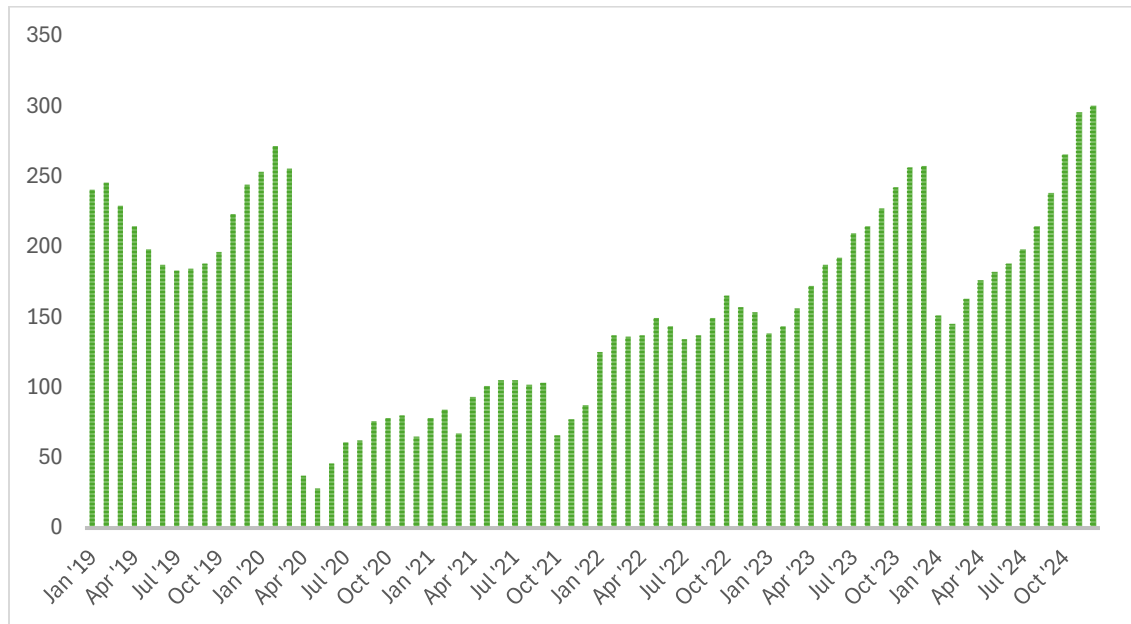


Figure 2: Transit passes activated 2019-2024³



³ Note the drop in the number of transit passes activated in January 2024. This was due to a switch from monthly pass purchases to annual free passes. High turnover in the service sector means about 100 workers no longer needed transit passes for 2025 which PATMA found out about after asking if they wanted to re-register in December 2024 for 2025.



Three-Year Strategic Planning

With this context in mind, PATMA staff and board members met in person in December 2024 to discuss strategic planning for the next three years. Input gathered informs PATMA's path forward with goals (targets to achieve), strategies (plan of action), tactics (specific actions), and objectives (measurable outcomes) for FY2026-FY2028.

Year 1 (Jul 2025-Jun 2026)

Assumptions: Free Caltrain GoPasses and highly discounted VTA Smartpasses will continue to be available for PATMA to distribute to low wage workers

Goals

- Scale up number of transit passes activated
- Scale up number of workers commuting <3 miles by active mobility
- Support S/CAP goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Support local businesses to attract and retain workers

Strategies

- Develop or deepen relationships with managers at light office and service sector businesses
- Develop or deepen relationships with community-based organizations that work on transportation, housing and/or climate issues
- Raise awareness about PATMA's programs
- Develop new pilot programs

Tactics

- Update and expand marketing collateral for transit passes and active mobility
 - Update one page flyer with \$100,000 income threshold for English, Spanish, and Mandarin. Translate into Vietnamese.
 - Develop window clings (non-adhesive decal) for windows of businesses that receive PATMA incentives
- Deploy 8 minute 1:1 manager training on mode shift programs and tools beneficial to workers (transit passes, refurbished bikes, \$5/day Bike Love, after-hours Lyft, Transit app)
 - 40% transit or active mobility commutes by 2030 S/CAP goal
 - One page flyer
 - Real time arrival information: Transit app and Caltrain live system map
 - Window clings – membership and ask them to post
- Refer a co-worker outreach wherein workers receive a free coffeehouse gift card if the coworker they refer receives a transit pass
- Refine application process for refurbished bicycle program (apply, download Bike Love app, and pass bike safety quiz) before workers can receive a refurbished bicycle
- Conduct annual commute survey



- Develop pilot programs that encourage active mobility – e-bike financing, bike safety quiz and classes
- Hold a promotional event around active mobility
- Organize interactive information sharing event with other Bay Area TMA and TDM professionals
- Deepen relationships with non-profit organizations that have similar missions and goals (Friends of Caltrain, Seamless Bay Area, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, Bike Exchange, Alta Housing)
- Develop and share short, relevant content regularly with local CBOs and the Chamber of Commerce to distribute to their membership
- Develop and offer short content regularly to local online news outlets

Objectives

- # freed up parking spaces
- # workers using transit passes
- # workers commuting by active mobility
- # vehicle miles traveled reduced
- # tons greenhouse gas emissions reduced
- # survey respondents

Year 2 (Jul 2026-Jun 2027)

Assumptions: Availability of Tap to Pay, expanded Bay Pass program, and/or Mobility Wallet pilot

Goals

- Scale up number of transit passes
- Enable workers who live outside Santa Clara County to access multiple sustainable commute modes and make transit connections seamlessly
- Scale up number of active mobility commutes <5 miles
- Find creative solutions to challenges of workers interested in active mobility commutes <5 miles

Strategies

- Raise awareness about PATMA's programs by strengthening relationships with local business managers and community-based organizations
- Update printed and digital promotional materials
- Leverage new technologies for trip planning and payment
- Develop new pilot programs

Tactics

- Develop e-bike financing pilot program



- Update printed and digital materials to address gaps in knowledge and mode shift friction points
- Train managers on new apps that help workers plan and pay for sustainable commute modes
- Update branding materials – PATMA as a fun, trusted, and valued brand
- Further streamline application process
- Conduct commute survey
- Hold a promotional event
- Develop and share content with inspiring new case studies about local workers commuting by transit or active mobility

Objectives

- # freed up parking spaces
- # workers using transit passes
- # workers commuting by active mobility
- # vehicle miles traveled reduced
- # tons greenhouse gas emissions reduced
- # survey respondents

Year 3 (Jul 2027-Jun 2028)

Assumptions: 2026 Bay Area ballot initiative passed providing more funding for transit agencies which allows them to increase service frequency, Mobility Hubs are available around town

Goals

- Workers can easily commute without a personal vehicle
- Study and leverage new technologies (ex., Mobility as a Service to plan and pay for commute trips, commute management platform)
- Support the evolution of our region’s commuting systems
- Determine what is missing to help workers get where they need to go without owning a personal vehicle

Strategies

- Expand PATMA’s toolkit of information and incentives to encourage mode shift
- Help expand clean transportation options available to workers in Palo Alto

Tactics

- Develop new case studies of workers who commute by transit or active mobility
- Test new technology Mobility-as-a-Service planning and payment options as they become available
- Promote Mobility Hubs that are available

Objectives

- # parking spaces freed up
- # vehicle miles traveled reduced
- # tons greenhouse gas emissions reduced
- # survey respondents

Workplan

Year 1

The flow of work over the course of FY2026 is shown in Figure 3.

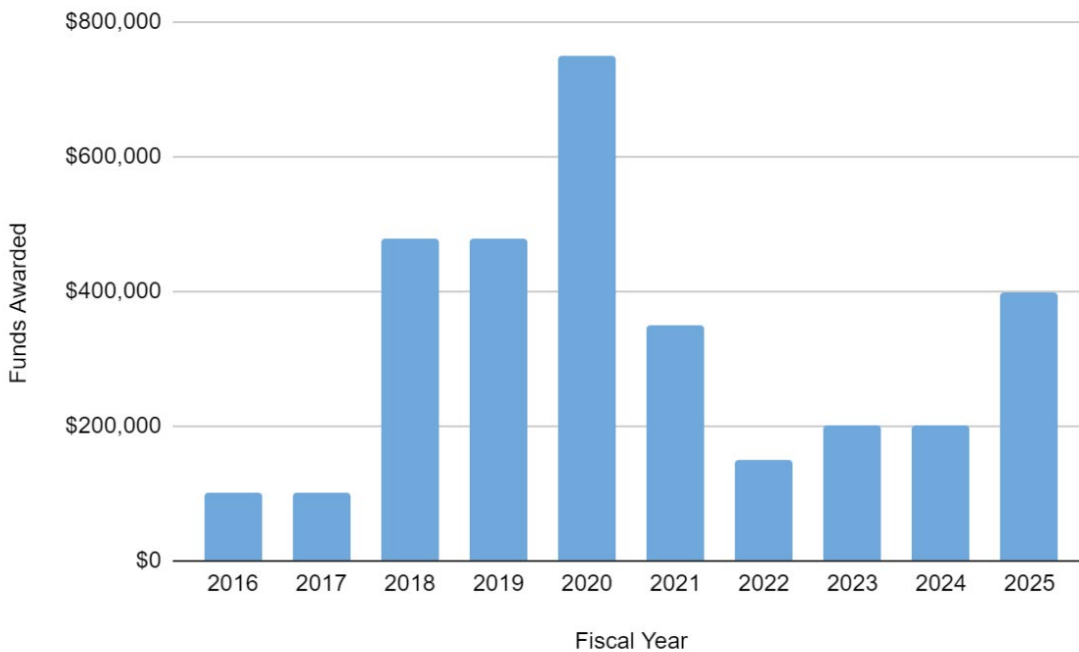
Figure 3: Year 1 workplan

	Jul '25	Aug '25	Sep '25	Oct '25	Nov '25	Dec '25	Jan '26	Feb '26	Mar '26	Apr '26	May '26	Jun '26
Events	X								X			X
Market transit passes	X	X							X	X		
Develop pilot	X	X										
Translate materials into additional language		X										
Commute survey			X	X	X							
Apply for grant funding					X					X		
Deliver Commute Survey, Annual Report, and Strategic Plan reports									X			
Market active mobility	X								X	X		

Budget

Looking back at funding levels since PATMA’s inception in 2016, PATMA grew over several years and demonstrated cost-effective successes freeing up parking spaces, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing vehicle miles traveled until the pandemic. Figure 4 shows historic budget trends.

Figure 4: PATMA funding since inception



The PATMA baseline budget is \$400,000. This level allows PATMA to continue with 2 part-time staff and pull in additional contractors on an *ad hoc* basis to support seasonal activities such as active mobility marketing in the spring and Commute Survey distribution in the fall. A status quo budget for FY2026 will allow PATMA to:

- Perform marketing and outreach to target sectors
- Develop or deepen relationships with business managers who are the gatekeepers to workers who could use PATMA’s programs and services
- Conduct the annual commute survey
- Free up additional parking spaces, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ease traffic congestion

In 2024, the cost/user/year or cost to free up a parking space was \$672 while in 2023 the cost/user/year was \$780. This includes the cost to purchase transit passes, Lyft rides, refurbished bicycles, and \$5/day Bike Love rewards. Figure 5 provides three budget scenarios for PATMA’s projected expenses in FY2026. The \$400,000 scenario represents a continuation of the restored budget PATMA realized in FY2025, closer to a pre-pandemic level which would allow PATMA to grow the program’s impact to 500 parking spaces freed up. The \$350,000 budget would allow us to grow the program to 400 parking spaces freed up. A smaller \$300,000 budget would maintain our impact at 312 parking spaces freed up.



Figure 5: Three budget scenarios for FY2026

Expenses	Expenses \$400,000 budget	Expenses \$350,000 budget	Expenses \$300,000 budget
ALTRANS management	\$105,000	\$95,000	\$85,000
Business (office supplies, insurance, software)	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Lyft	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0
ALTRANS operations & admin	\$105,000	\$84,000	\$75,000
Transit passes - Clipper card expenses	\$115,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Commute survey	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
E-bike e-scooter pilot	\$4,000	\$0	\$0
Refurbished bikes	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Bike Love	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$0
Total	\$400,000	\$350,000	\$300,000

In the \$350,000 budget scenario, PATMA would cut staff hours and expenditures on transit passes. In the \$300,000 budget scenario, PATMA would cut back further on staff hours, cut the Lyft afterhours program, and cut the BikeLove \$5/day rewards program.

As circumstances change, PATMA has the ability to adjust income and expenses through various financial levers.

- Reducing labor costs
- Reducing program expenses
- Requesting additional GoPasses from Caltrain and large employers in the area
- Increasing grant writing and philanthropic fundraising

PATMA will continue to operate leanly and use our budget effectively to maximize impact.

Conclusion

Many public and private organizations in the Bay Area are working hard to facilitate a future seamless, integrated low-carbon transportation system that will lower personal transportation costs and reduce GHG emissions. PATMA will continue to monitor developments in these areas and adjust our programs accordingly to best serve Palo Alto businesses.

In support of the local economy, over the next three years PATMA will look for opportunities to help more workers shift to a sustainable commute as we raise awareness about the benefits of transit and active mobility commutes, offer information about sustainable transportation options, and provide programs and incentives for mode shift.



2024 COMMUTE SURVEY REPORT

for



and

PATMA Board Members

Cedric de la Beaujardiere, resident (Chair)
Rob George, Philz Coffee (Treasurer)
Shannon McEntee, resident (Secretary)
Philip Kamhi, City of Palo Alto

Sebastian Mafla, Sheraton
Alejandra Mier, Coupa Cafe
Nathan Duncan, Patagonia
Steven Lee, Meta

December 2024

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Executive Summary

In August and September 2024, the Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) team surveyed workers in commercial areas of Palo Alto to learn about their commute habits and preferences. The team conducted online and in-person surveys in English, Spanish, and Mandarin beginning with emailing and texting then following up with door-to-door canvassing. This document provides highlights from the survey findings.

The two main objectives of the commute survey were to 1) determine which workers were open to shifting their commute from single-occupancy vehicles to mass transit or active mobility options and 2) raise awareness of PATMA’s programs.

Based on the 885 completed surveys, Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents from the four main sectors into which PATMA classifies workers: service, government, technology, and light office.

Figure 1: Survey Respondents by Sector

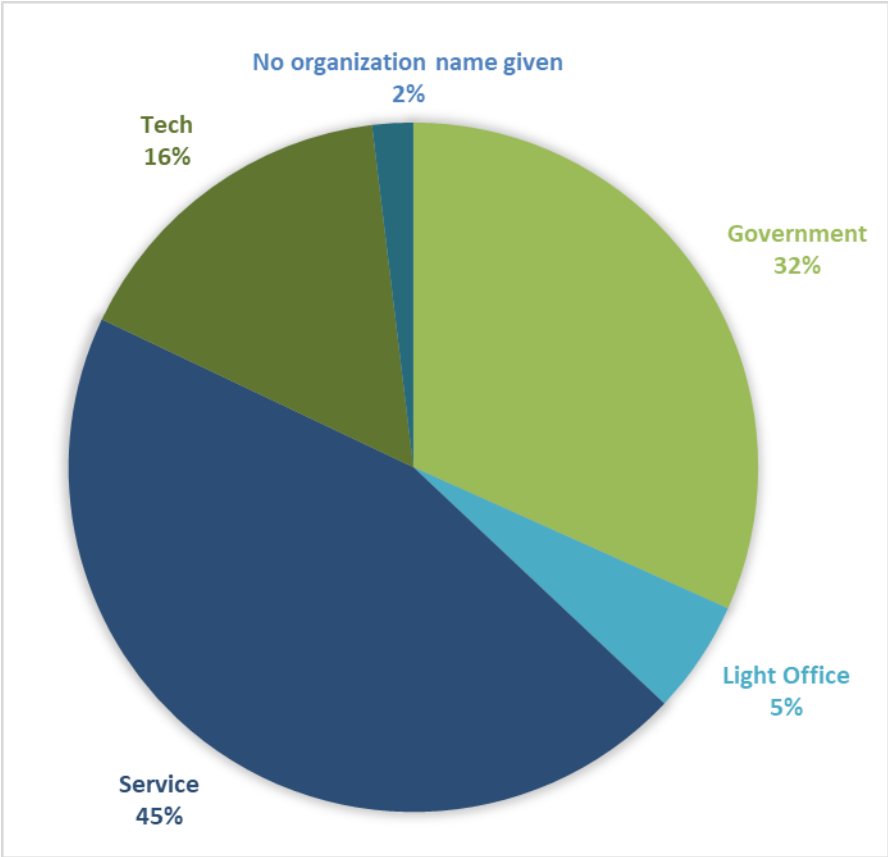
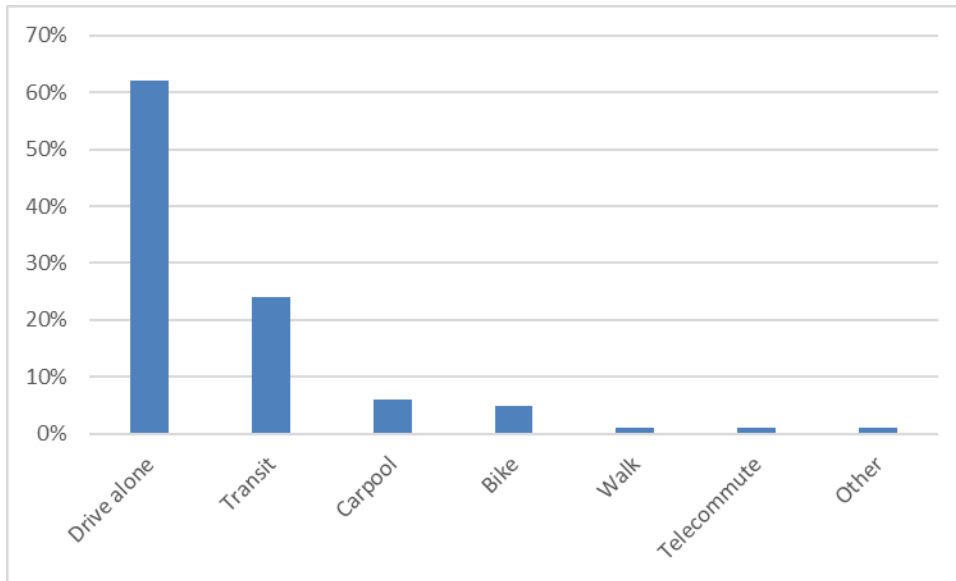


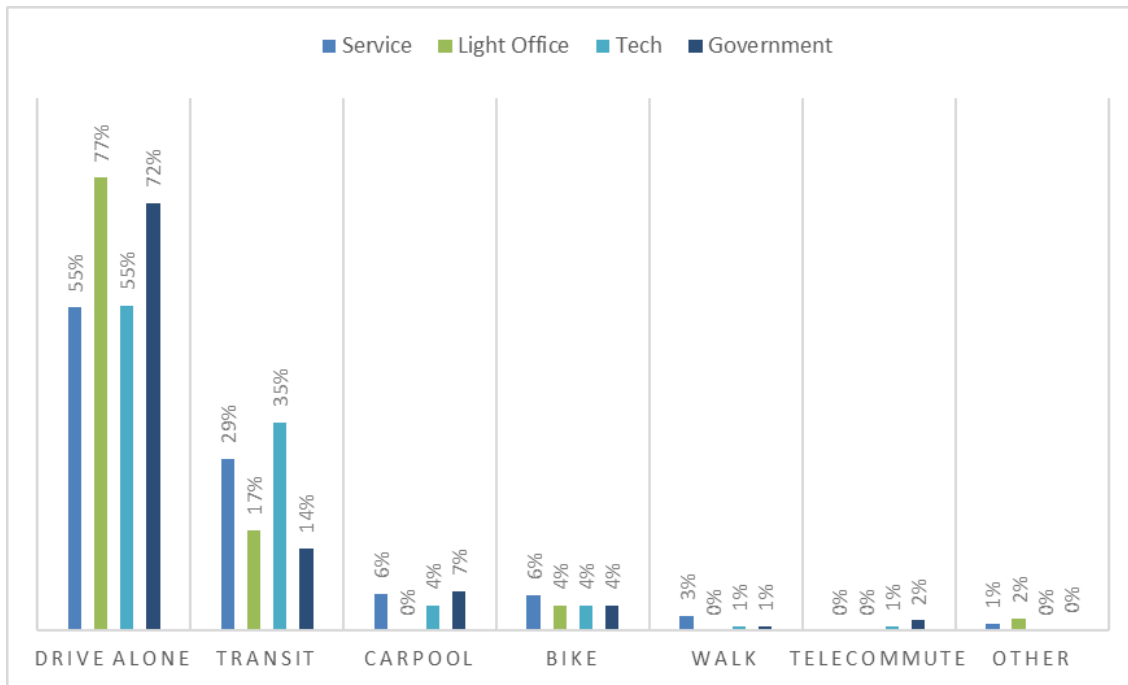
Figure 2 below provides the primary mode workers use to commute each week. The survey found that overall 62% of workers surveyed used a single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) as their primary commute mode in 2024.

Figure 2: Primary Commute Mode of Survey Respondents



By separating out commute mode by work sector, Figure 3 illustrates the sectors with the highest drive alone rates: light office and government.

Figure 3: Commute Mode by Work Sector



With respect to PATMA’s mission, data collected in the 2024 commute survey provides opportunities to reach more workers and expand PATMA’s program offerings that will help realize PATMA’s goals to reduce traffic congestion, reduce demand for parking, support small businesses, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and address social equity issues.

Introduction

In 2024, the Palo Alto Transportation Management Association (PATMA) conducted its ninth annual employee commute survey as required by the funding agreement between PATMA and the City of Palo Alto (COPA). PATMA contracted with ALTRANS TMA Inc. to conduct the survey and performed outreach in August and September 2024.

The survey was designed to identify how Palo Alto employees working in the commercial areas of Palo Alto - University Avenue (Downtown), California Avenue (Cal Ave), El Camino Real, the Stanford Mall, the Charleston Middlefield shopping center, and along San Antonio Rd - commute to work, identify individuals currently driving alone who are open to shifting to a sustainable commute mode, and raise awareness of PATMA's program offerings.

Survey Population

According to U.S. Census data, the total worker population in Palo Alto was 109,011 in 2022. The darker shaded areas of Figure 4 show where work centers are clustered Downtown, along El Camino Real, and along San Antonio close to Highway 101.

Figure 4: Density of Workers in Palo Alto



Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap, 2022

The U.S. Census organizes sectors using the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) categories. Figure 5 shows the number of workers by NAICS codes.

Figure 5: Palo Alto Workers by Sector

NAICS Sector	Number of Employees	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	5	0.0%
Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0.0%
Utilities	282	0.3%
Construction	881	0.8%
Manufacturing	5,152	4.7%
Wholesale Trade	971	0.9%
Retail Trade	3,991	3.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	2,217	2.0%
Information	18,860	17.3%
Finance and Insurance	4,283	3.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,389	1.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Information	23,575	21.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,049	2.8%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	1,915	1.8%
Educational Services	3,420	3.1%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	30,187	27.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	831	0.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	4,931	4.5%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	2,315	2.1%
Public Administration	756	0.7%

PATMA organizes NAICS sectors into four employer categories – service, light office, technology, and government – and offers programs to workers in the first two categories. Figure 6 shows which NAICS code sectors PATMA includes in service, light office, technology, and government categories.

Figure 6: NAICS Codes and PATMA Classification

NAICS Code	NAICS Sector Name	PATMA Classification
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	Service
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	Service
22	Utilities	Government
23	Construction	Service
31-33	Manufacturing	Service
42	Wholesale Trade	Service
44-45	Retail Trade	Service
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	Service
51	Information	Technology

NAICS Code	NAICS Sector Name	PATMA Classification
52	Finance and Insurance	Light Office
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	Light Office
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Technology
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	Light Office
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	Light Office
61	Educational Services	Light Office
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	Service
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Light Office
72	Accommodation and Food Services	Service
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	Service
92	Public Administration	Government

Source: NAICS Association

After sorting Census data for the number of workers in the four categories for statistical purposes, Figure 7 shows the number of workers in each category and the total worker population in Palo Alto.

Figure 7: Number of Workers in Four Sectors

PATMA Organization Category	Number of Employees	% Share
Service	50,651	46%
Light Office	14,887	14%
Technology	42,435	39%
Government	1,038	1%
Total	109,011	

Subtracting the 29,000 worker population at the Stanford Research Park, which has its own Transportation Management Association, leaves us with a worker population of 80,011.

After cleaning the survey data of duplicate responses and incomplete surveys, there were a total of 885 complete surveys of which:

- 399 respondents were service sector workers
- 280 were government staff
- 47 were light office workers
- 142 were tech workers
- 17 chose not to share their employer's name

This year's response rate was higher than the three previous years the survey was conducted. The response rate for each of the nine survey years is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Number of PATMA Commute Survey Responses by Year

Year	Number of Respondents
2024	885
2023	738
2022	511
2021	551
2019	1,471
2018	496
2017	892
2016	829
2015	1,173

Compared to 2023, stronger working relationships with managers in the technology and government sectors in 2024 helped boost response numbers.

Survey Methodology

In August and September 2024, the PATMA team reached out to businesses and organizations to administer the survey. The survey asked questions about the primary travel mode workers used to commute, their home city, employer, income level, and openness to sustainable commute options.

The survey was administered through the SurveyMonkey platform which respondents accessed via personal smartphones through a QR code or PATMA’s electronic tablets. The electronic survey tool offers skip logic and survey branching to optimize question relevance to different respondents. Paper copies of the surveys in English and Spanish were distributed to managers at downtown hotels who collected responses from their staff. Electronic surveys in Mandarin were administered at restaurants and spas. Block-by-block, door-to-door canvassing resulted in a dataset representing businesses and organizations in commercial areas. Door-to-door outreach was bolstered by mass texting and email follow-up to business contacts.

As noted above, the PATMA team secured 885 responses from a citywide worker population of 80,011. With a 95% confidence level and a sample size representing 1.1% of the population, the margin of error for this data is $\pm 3\%$.

Results

Data collected in this survey shed light on several topics:

- how people commute to work
- where they are coming from
- which workers could commute using one main transit or active mobility option

- which workers are open to a different commute mode, and
- what information, equipment, or incentives could encourage them to make the shift from driving alone.

The following figures show results for each question.

Q1. *In which city and zip code do you live?*

Among survey respondents this year, the top 10 home cities are shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Top 10 Cities of Survey Respondents

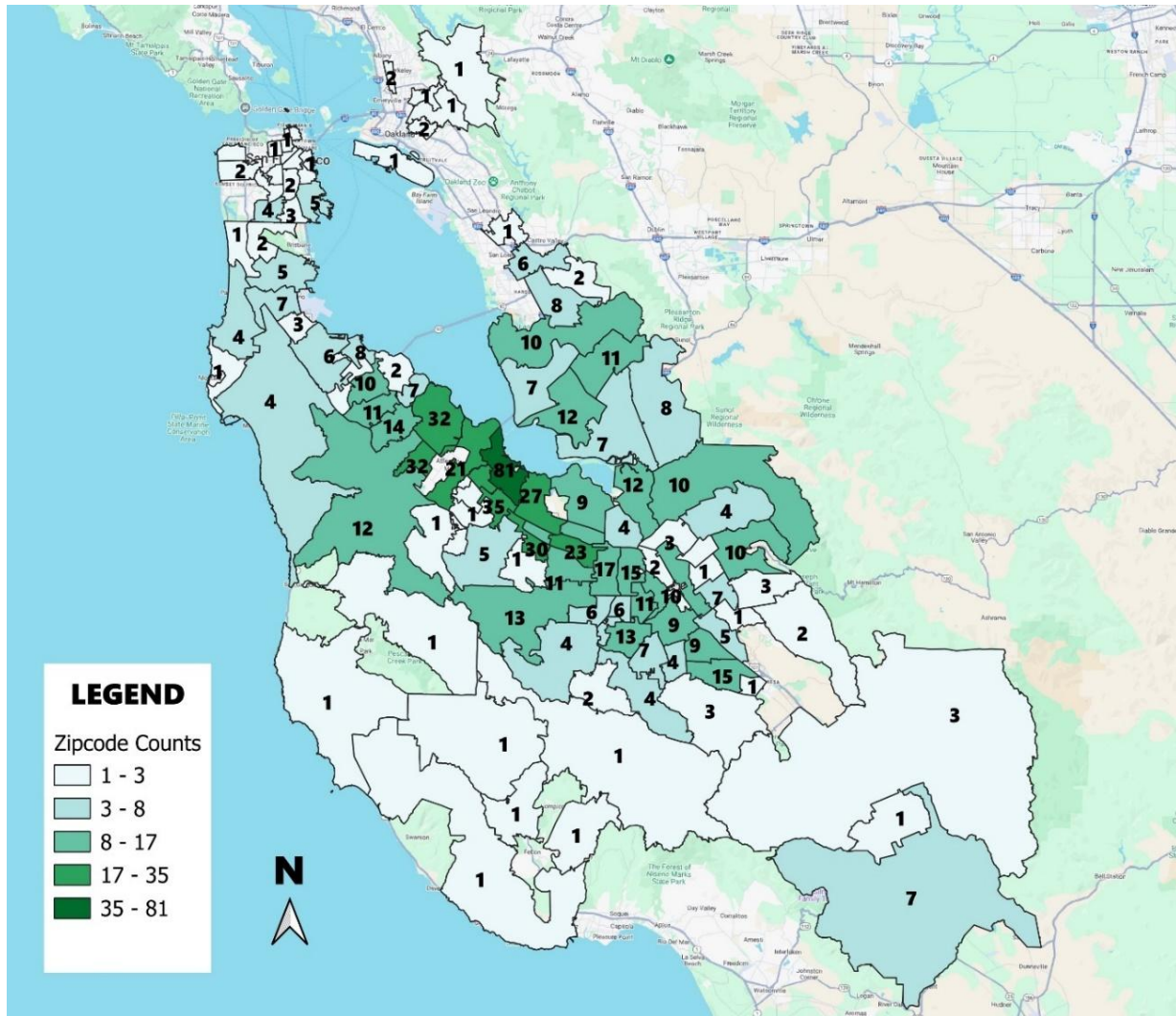
	Home City	Number Survey Respondents
1	San Jose	152
2	Redwood City	83
3	Palo Alto	80
4	Mountain View	74
5	Sunnyvale	57
6	East Palo Alto	56
7	Santa Clara	36
8	Fremont	33
9	San Francisco	32
10	San Mateo	23

Note that 70% of respondents live in cities served by a train or bus that runs to Palo Alto.

Figure 10 maps the home zip codes of survey respondents in San Francisco Bay Area¹ counties.

¹ The Bay Area refers to the nine counties that touch the San Francisco Bay plus Santa Cruz County.

Figure 10: Number of Respondents by Zip Code

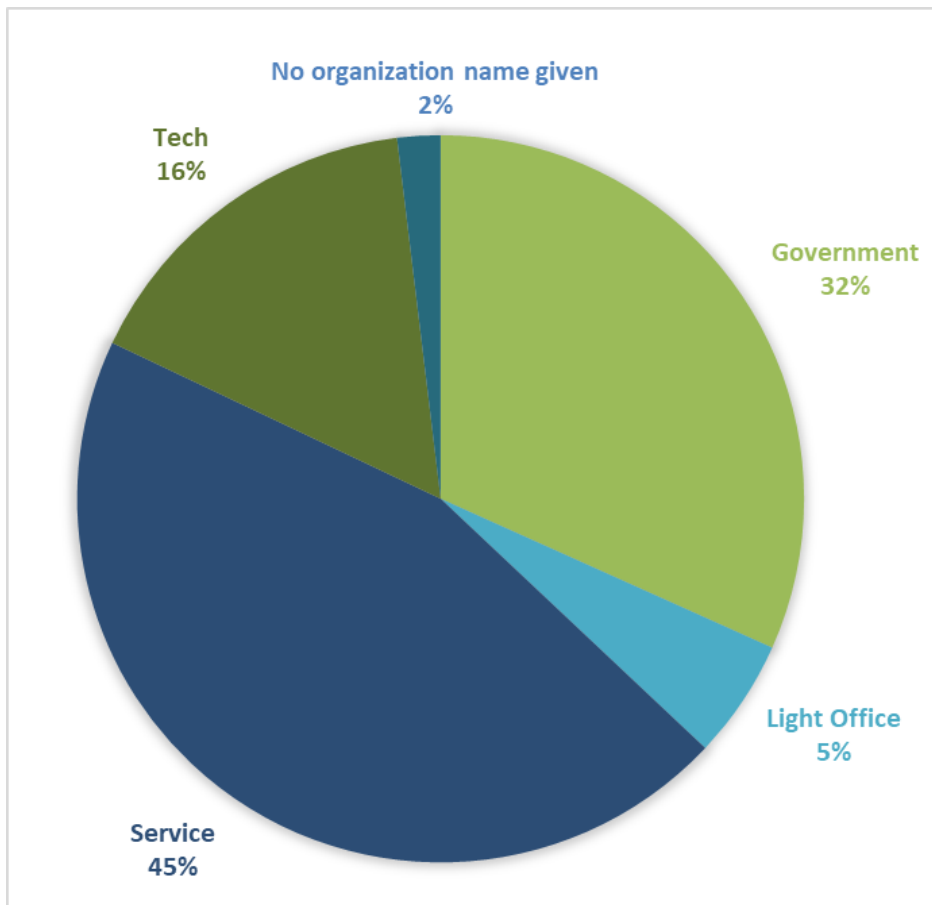


Some survey respondents live beyond the nine county Bay Area near Sacramento, in the Central Valley, and even one in Southern California.

Q2. *What is the name of your employer? (This information will help us analyze commuting patterns for the four main types of employers [service, technology, light office, and government] in Palo Alto.)*

Employer names were organized into four main sectors of employers in Palo Alto, as seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Survey Respondents by Sector



Note that the number of survey respondents from technology companies located in Downtown, Amazon and Salesforce, is higher this year than last. With Return to Office encouragement from management and corporate concern about greenhouse gas emission reductions, employees at both companies were encouraged to fill out PATMA’s commute survey.

Q3. *How do you usually travel to work? If you use more than one type of transportation, choose the one used for the longest distance of your trip.*

Many commuters use more than one type of transportation for commuting. To be able to compare this year’s data with previous years’, we asked people about the main commute mode they used for the longest segment of their trip. Figure 12 provides information about the primary commute mode.

Figure 12: Primary Commute Mode

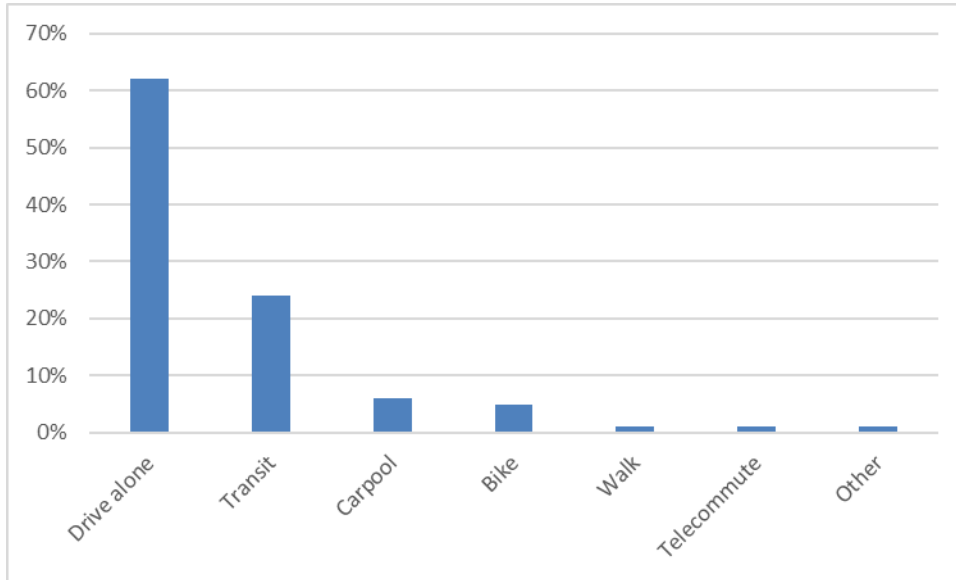
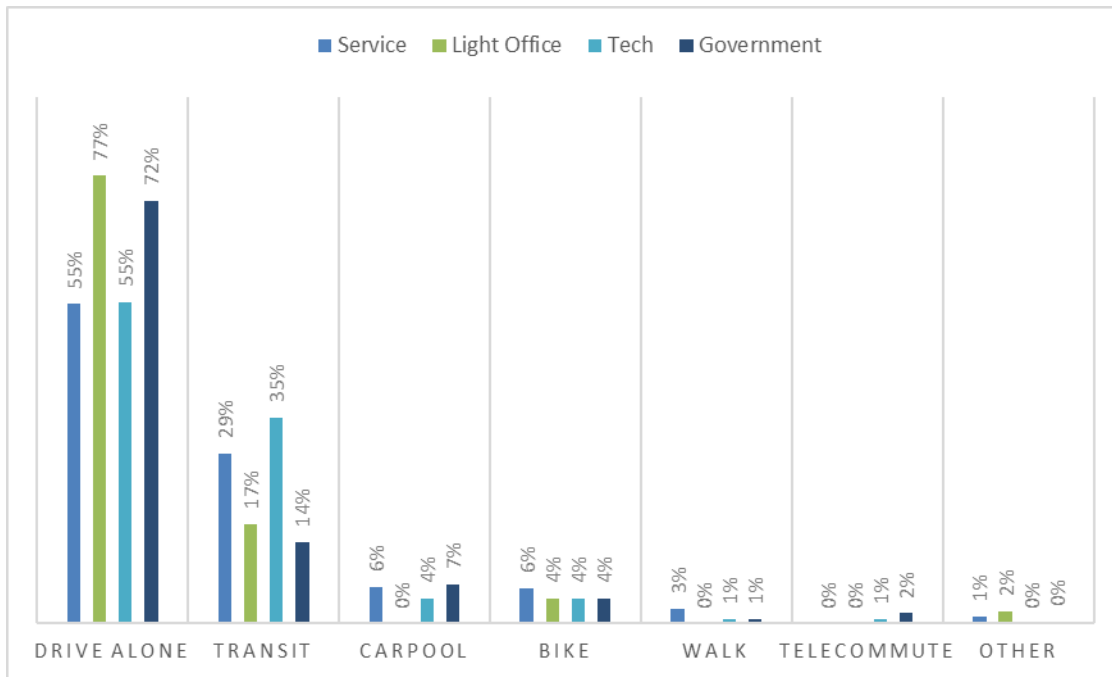


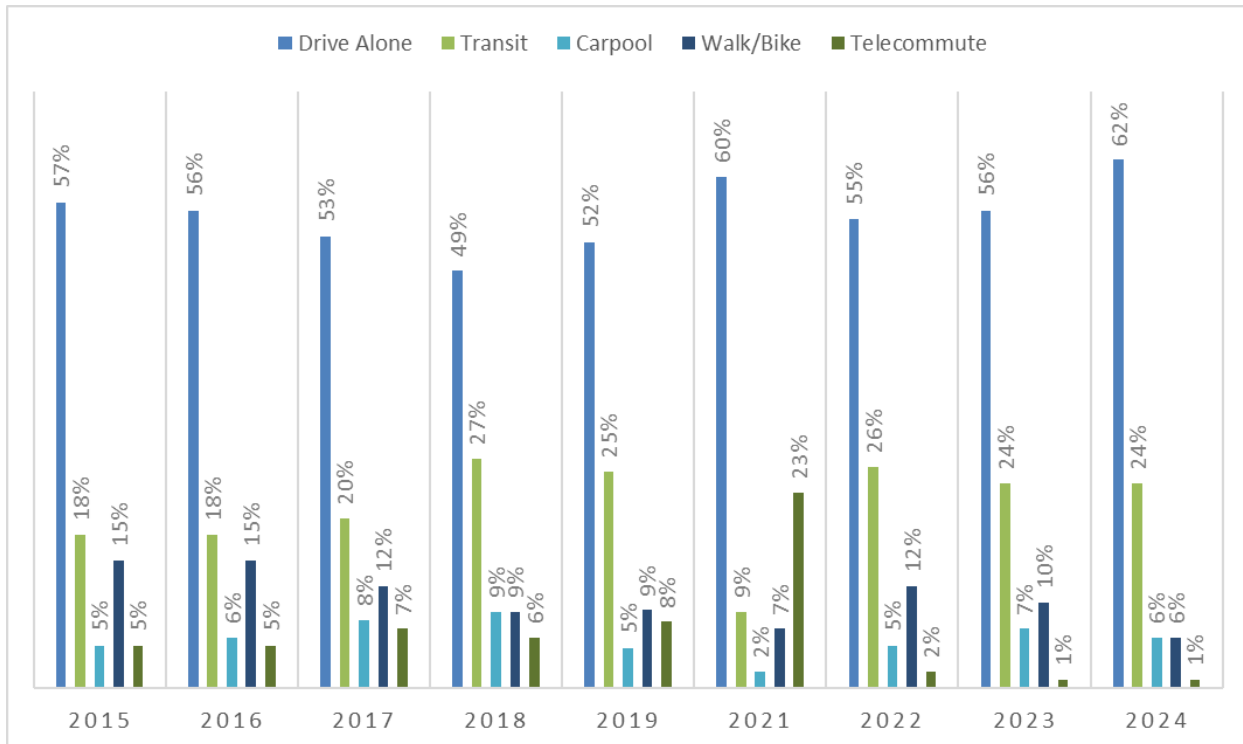
Figure 13 divides this data by sector for 2024 to allow comparisons between government, light office, service, and tech sectors.

Figure 13: Commute Mode by Sector, 2024



A comparison of commute modes over the past several years is shown in Figure 14.

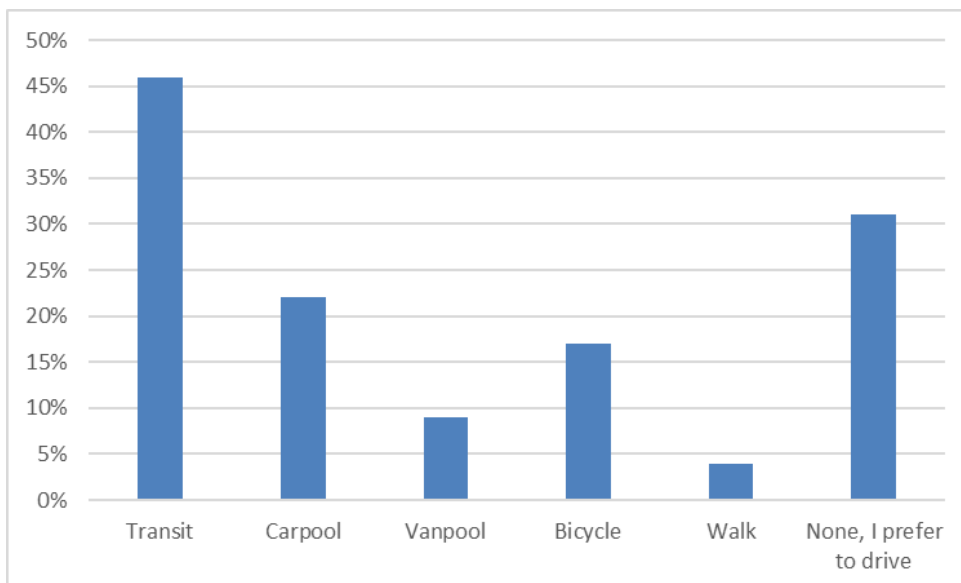
Figure 14: Changes in Commute Mode, 2015-2024



Q4 If you drive alone to work, which of the following sustainable commute modes are you open to taking?

Note that respondents could choose more than one option, and only respondents who said their main commute mode was by single-occupancy vehicle were given this question.

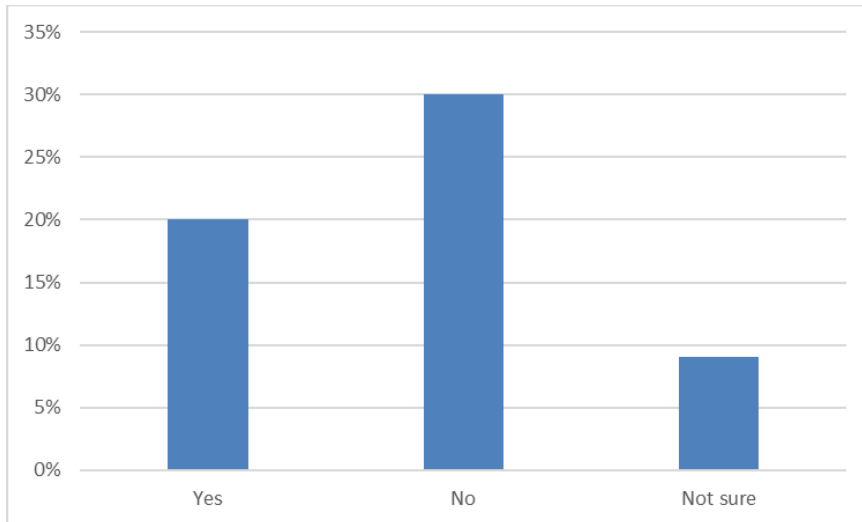
Figure 15: Sustainable Commute Options Drivers Considering



Many respondents were open to transit (46%), carpooling (22%), bicycling (17%), vanpooling (9%), and walking (4%).

Q5. If you drive alone to work, is your home located less than one mile from a Caltrain station, VTA 22/522 bus stop, SamTrans ECR bus stop, or Dumbarton Express bus stop?

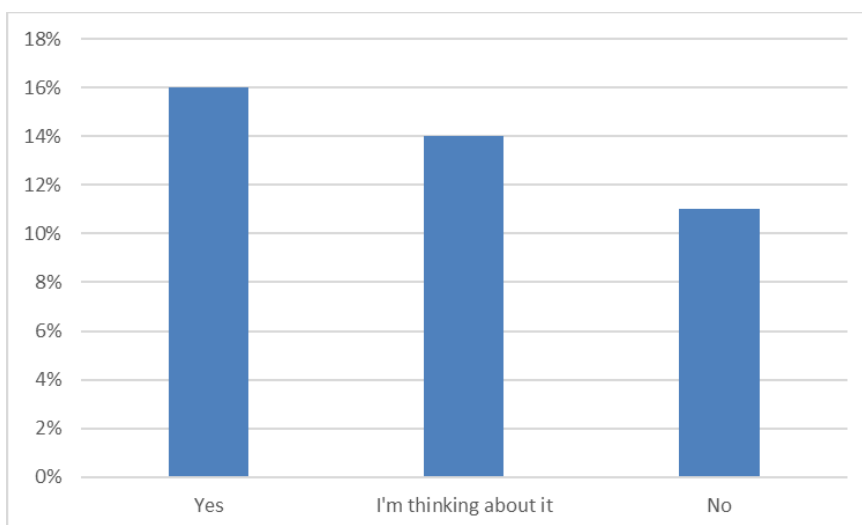
Figure 16: Live <1 Mile from Sustainable Transit Option



This question was included to determine the proximity of a transit option that runs directly to Palo Alto.

Q6. If you live less than 5 miles from work, are you open to switching to an active mobility mode (bicycle, electric bicycle, scooter, electric scooter, or other personal mobility device) for commuting?

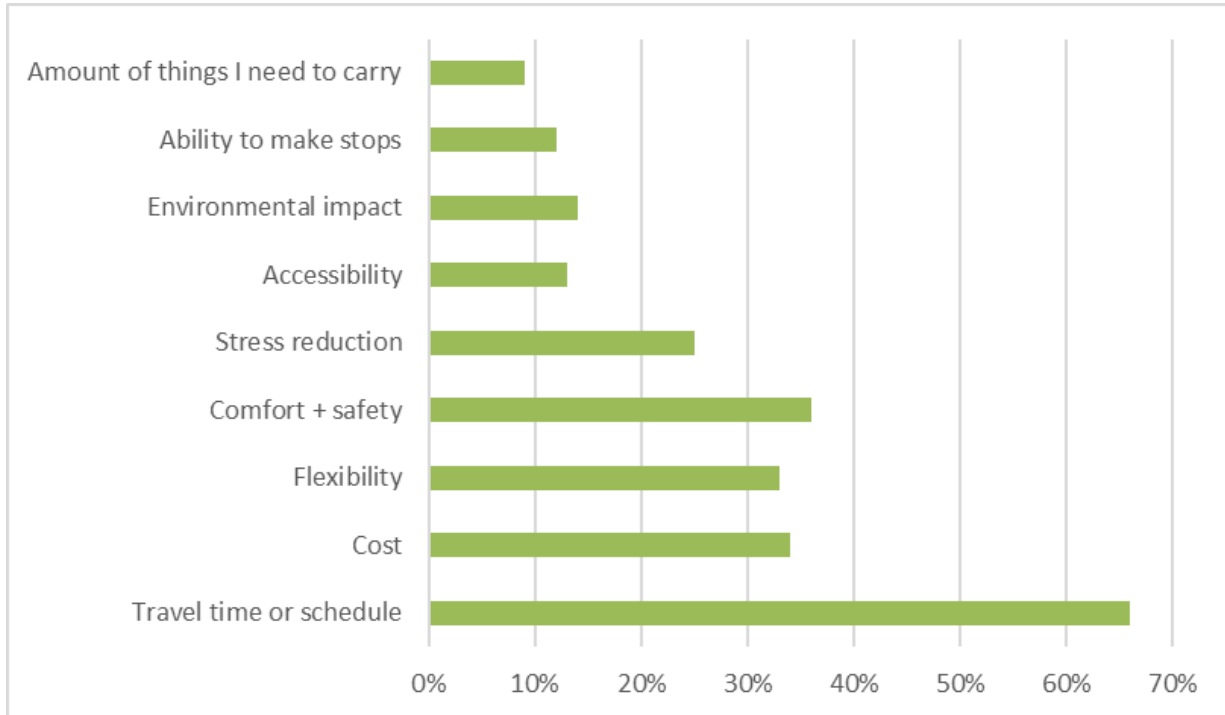
Figure 17: Live <5 Miles from Work and Open to Active Commute



Thirty percent of respondents are open to an active commute.

Q7. What is most important to you when choosing how to commute to work? (select up to 3)

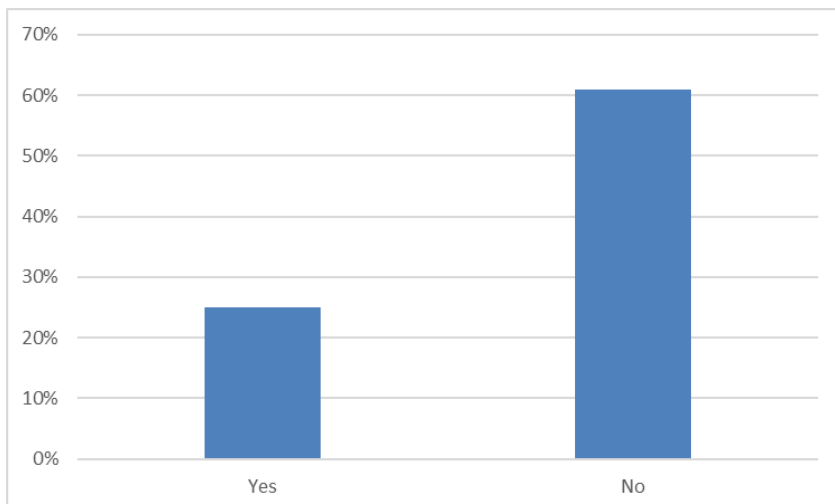
Figure 18: Most Important Considerations When Choosing How to Commute



Travel time and schedule predominates the list of factors workers consider when deciding how to commute.

Q8. Does your workplace need additional bike racks outside?

Figure 19: Need Additional Bike Racks



This information provides an opportunity for follow-up with organizations surveyed.

Q9. What is your annual salary?

Figure 20: Is Your Annual Salary Less Than \$70,000 or More?

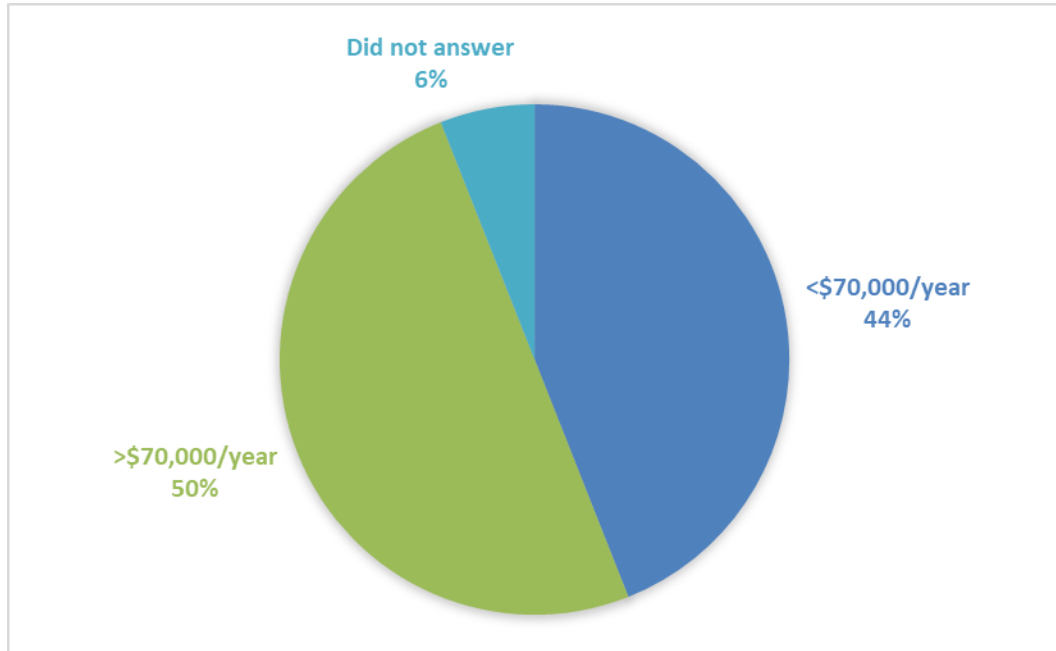


Figure 20 shows the percentage of respondents making less than \$70,000/year who are eligible for PATMA’s free transit passes, refurbished bicycles, and after hour Lyft credits.

Q10. Are there any issues or concerns you would like to share about your commute?

The answers to this open-ended question provide PATMA with insights to improve our programs, accomplish more mode shift, or share questions and concerns with our contacts at tech companies and City government.

Compliments and positive statements included:

- I am excited about new Caltrain trains.
- Very hard to get my bike on old trains. Like the new schedule too!!
- I love the ability to combine bicycling and Caltrain and not rely at all on an automobile. And I am impressed by how the City of Palo Alto encourages and supports that.
- Being a part of the program really reduces my stress of commuting to work. I don’t drive because it will cost me too much money to drive back and forth versus taking the train.
- This has saved me money and time in traffic.
- It has saved my job and life. I’m so thankful for this service. I would love more stops at my Caltrain station.

- No issues! Happy with Caltrain.
- Estoy muy contenta con el servicio de PATMA. Gracias. (I'm very happy with PATMA's service. Thank you.)
- Es seguro y siempre llego temprano a mi trabajo. (It's safe and I always arrive early to work.)
- Me gusta viajar en el Caltrain porque es comodo, llego a tiempo a mi trabajo, etc. (I like to travel on Caltrain because it's comfortable, I arrive on time to work, etc.)
- I like the VTA and Caltrain options.
- Bike lanes have improved throughout the Peninsula. Thank you!!!
- Biking to Downtown is the best!
- I love the train and really appreciate the Caltrain GoPass.

Concerns raised multiple times by respondents were grouped by topic in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Respondent Concerns About Their Commute

Topic	# of Workers Mentioning Topic	Example Comment
Difficulties while driving: traffic, parking, cost of gas and tolls, road surface quality	73	"The afternoon commute has doubled in time in the last 1-2 years from 1 hour 10 min to 2 hours 15-20 mins."
Timeliness of trains and buses: late, infrequent service, not reliable	31	"Just buses being on time, especially in the morning hours."
Limited or no transit options near home (East Bay, Tri-Valley, Los Gatos, Gilroy) or work	20	"I wish there were a reliable, quick public transit option from the East Bay" and "Caltrain stops infrequently in South Counties."
Caltrain passes for City workers who don't work Downtown	12	"I would take the train if it was offered since I can bike easily to and from the train."
Connectivity too difficult: to and from transit, making connections between transit options	11	"The first 5 miles and the last 5 miles are the biggest barrier for public transportation."
Safety and cleanliness of transit and stations	9	"The station needs to be only for people that use it to commute to take the bus or train."
Want more transit service: earlier, later, weekends	8	"Wish Caltrain stopped at the Blossom Hill station in San Jose more frequently in general, but on weekends specifically."

Topic	# of Workers Mentioning Topic	Example Comment
Feel can do their job from home most of the time	7	"I can do my job well from home and would use the extra 2 hours a day to do more work if could work from home every day."
Would like electric vehicle charging for City workers - MSC and Elwell	6	"There are no charging stations at our yard (MSC) and I believe I have the only all electric vanpool running for the City."
Wish could afford a home closer to work	4	"My commute is very long but my husband is a disabled veteran. The city we live in is the only place we can live for accessibility reasons and afford."
Would like showers to wash up after biking	3	"There are no showers for staff at my workplace so biking isn't an option."

Other concerns mentioned:

- I can't be late for work: "I work as a dental hygienist and have patients" or "my manager expects a timely arrival for my shift."
- Public transit is difficult to navigate, so I drive. Nobody is at the train stations to help when you are new to it. I worry about problems at the last minute. Like funds not applied to Clipper card etc.
- Clipper cards should cover Caltrain and buses in case one is running late I can take the other.
- As a single parent working an hour away from home, I have to be able to get to my kiddo fast in case of an emergency.
- Better lights for nighttime commuters.
- Neighborhoods should be zoned for multi-use so there would be less sprawl and more housing.

Comments about bicycling:

- Would like more visible and separated bike lanes. (3)
- Unsafe drivers
 - Palo Alto really needs to ban Right Turn on Red in Downtown Palo Alto. Drivers accelerate to red lights - it's terrible for pedestrians. At least do this for a 2 block radius around the Caltrain Station.
 - Cars that run the red lights at the intersection of Lytton and High Street in Palo Alto in particular but all along University and Lytton is an issue.
 - Cars run red lights which is dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians.
 - I almost get right hooked every day I ride my bike in to work. It's terrifying sometimes.

- The nearest train station is very far away and there is no secondary transit to close the gap. No buses, no bike or scooter rental etc. (Midtown)
- There is one bike rack, but it is blocking a convenient access point for handicapped people getting out of their cars.
- Bike theft (4)
 - There are people who will steal bikes in downtown Palo Alto.
 - Lots of bike theft in Palo Alto, so outdoor bike rack not optimal. (Downtown)
 - Need bike boxes. We have racks but I won't use. Had locked bike stolen from racks. I bring my bike inside. (retail on University Ave)
 - Bikes are still getting stolen and I would like greater protection for bike racks.

Key Insights

The following insights gleaned from data and comments lead PATMA to believe that additional mode shift opportunities exist among workers in Palo Alto.

- PATMA conducted the 2024 commute survey in an expanded geographic area this year with a larger worker population compared to previous years.
- The survey had more participation from workers in the government and technology sectors this year than last.
- This year, the average drive alone commute rate is higher (62%) than last year (56%).
- Light office (77%) and government sector (72%) sectors have higher drive alone rates than service (55%) and tech (55%) sectors.
- Gathering responses from service sector workers in restaurants, retail and accommodations was more time-consuming than government and tech sectors where managers took a more active role encouraging staff to participate. Service sector businesses required multiple visits to realize results.
- Seventy percent (70%) of survey respondents live in a city served by Caltrain or a bus that runs directly to Palo Alto.
- Two percent (2%) of respondents are super commuters coming from outside of the Bay Area (17 out of 885 responses).
- Among people who drive alone to work:
 - 46% are open to taking transit
 - 22% are open to carpool
 - 17% are open to active mobility (bicycle or e-scooter)
 - 9% are open to vanpool
 - 4% are open to walking
- Sixteen percent (16%) live less than 5 miles from work and are open to an active commute (bike or e-scooter).
- When deciding how to travel to work, 72% of respondents cite travel time or schedule as the most important consideration.

These insights point to potential for workers to switch from driving alone to transit, carpooling, active mobility, vanpool, or walking, particularly among light office and government workers.

Conclusions

Given the openness of respondents to sustainable commute modes and the proximity of their home or workplace to transit options, survey results point to opportunities to mode shift more workers who commute to Palo Alto by providing information, equipment, and rewards. Some people would benefit from more availability of refurbished bikes, electric bikes, and electric scooters to connect to transit or for commutes of less than five miles. Others just need information about real time train and bus arrivals, Guaranteed Ride Home availability, rapid bus schedules and routes, and safer bicycle routes between home and work. And finally, any incentives, such as Bike Love rewards, would provide an additional nudge toward a more sustainable commute.

Unclaimed Property Municipal Codes

2.31.030 Holding and storage of unclaimed property.

When lost, stolen, abandoned or otherwise unclaimed property or money, except vehicles subject to registration under the Vehicle Code of the State of California, comes into possession of the police department, the department shall hold and store such property in a safe place or with some responsible person until it is claimed and all just and reasonable charges, if any, for saving and storage thereof have been paid. The city manager shall establish rules and regulations for the storage of such unclaimed property and shall establish charges and fees for saving and storage of the same.

(Ord. 3927 § 3 (part), 1989)

2.31.040 Disposition of lost, stolen, or abandoned property other than vehicles.

(a) If the owner or person entitled to the possession of lost, stolen, or abandoned property or money fails to claim the property or money, within three months, and fails to pay the charges and fees established for saving and storage of the same, the police department may sell such property to the highest bidder at public auction. Notice of such sale shall be given at least five days before the time fixed therefor by publication once in a newspaper of general circulation published in the city. The notice shall give the time and place of such sale and generally describe the property to be sold. The city manager may authorize the use of unclaimed property for city purposes.

(b) Each fiscal year, the city manager may withhold from sale at public auction a number of the unclaimed bicycles with a cumulative value of not more than \$5,000.00, and turn over such unclaimed bicycles to any number of charitable or nonprofit organizations, which are authorized under their articles of incorporation to participate in programs or activities designed to prevent juvenile delinquency and which are exempt from federal and state income taxation, for use in any program or activity designed to prevent juvenile delinquency. A written report of the number of unclaimed bicycles that are withheld from sale at public auction and donated to charitable or nonprofit organizations shall be made annually by the city manager to the city council.

(Ord. 4453 § 6, 1997; Ord. 4310 § 1, 1995; Ord. 3927 § 3 (part), 1989)

5.20.030 Discarding of refuse.

(a) No person shall throw, drop, leave, place, keep, accumulate, or otherwise dispose of any refuse upon private property either with or without the intent to later remove the same from that place or premises, or upon any street, public right-of-way, sidewalk, gutter, stream, or creek, or the banks thereof, or any public place or public property.

(b) All persons shall separate their refuse according to its characterization as solid waste, compostable materials, or recyclable materials, and place each type of refuse in a separate container designated for disposal of that type of refuse. No person may mix any type of refuse, or deposit refuse of one type in a collection container designated for refuse of another type, except as otherwise provided in this chapter. This does not prohibit the placement of refuse in public solid waste or recycling receptacles, or in containers for collection in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. This section does not prohibit any person from engaging in home composting.

(c) Any person occupying a commercial premises, not including multifamily property, who uses bags to collect and discard refuse, whether placed for collection inside or outside a container, shall ensure that the refuse contents of the bags are clearly visible. When bags are used, garbage shall be collected in clear plastic bags and recyclable materials shall be collected in blue-tinted plastic bags.

(d) All persons who use bags to collect compostable materials, whether placed for collection inside or outside a container, shall use green-tinted compostable bags such that the contents are clearly visible.

(Ord. 5536 § 2 (part), 2021; Ord. 5475 § 3, 2019; Ord. 5377 § 1 (part), 2016; Ord. 4451 § 1 (part), 1997)



**PALO ALTO POLICE DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM**

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2023
TO: ALL STAFF
FROM: PERSONNEL & TRAINING DIVISION
SUBJECT: Training Memorandum 2023-09 Abandoned Property Procedures

When marking items that appears to have been abandoned on public property, consistent with case law and PAMC Chapter 2.31, please follow the below procedures:

- Utilize the existing Warning Notices, which provide 48 hours for the property to be removed by the owner;
- Notify Public Works for a scheduled pick-up;
- At the scheduled pick-up date and time, accompany/support Public Works as appropriate to ensure their safety during the pickup;
- Abandoned property that is obvious trash, perishable (i.e., food) or otherwise hazardous (e.g., soiled items, chemicals) should be collected by Public Works and disposed of (PAMC 2.31.110);
- Abandoned personal property that is *not* obvious trash, perishable or otherwise hazardous (e.g., *non-soiled* clothing, electronics, paperwork), should be collected by PD and booked for safekeeping as found property (PAMC 2.31.030);

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804.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides for the proper collection, storage, and security of evidence and other property. Additionally, this policy provides for the protection of the chain of evidence and identifies those persons authorized to remove and/or destroy property.

804.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Palo Alto Police Department to process and store all property in a manner that will protect it from loss, damage, or contamination, while maintaining documentation that tracks the chain of custody, the location of property, and its disposition.

804.3 DEFINITIONS

Property - Includes all items of evidence, items taken for safekeeping and found property.

Evidence - Includes items taken or recovered in the course of an investigation that may be used in the prosecution of a case. This includes photographs and latent fingerprints.

Safekeeping - Includes the following types of property:

- Property obtained by the Department for safekeeping such as a firearm
- Personal property of an arrestee not taken as evidence
- Property taken for safekeeping under authority of a law (e.g., Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150 (mentally ill persons))

Found property - Includes property found by an employee or citizen that has no apparent evidentiary value and where the owner cannot be readily identified or contacted.

804.4 PROPERTY HANDLING

- (a) **Taking Property** - Employees who take property into custody shall, in every instance, place all property obtained in the course of his or her employment in the Department's property system prior to going off duty. In no instance shall property be stored in a personal locker, desk, or other unauthorized locations.
- (b) **Documentation** - The employee will prepare a case report or follow-up report and an item submission form describing how, what, when, and where he/she came into possession of the property. The employee shall affix the evidence barcode label on the property item or property item container.
- (c) **Inquires** - The employee will make appropriate inquires into the State Department of Justice computer regarding serialized or identifiable items of property to determine if the property is reported stolen

804.4.1 PROPERTY BOOKING PROCEDURE

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All property must be booked prior to the employee going off-duty unless otherwise approved by a supervisor. Employees booking property shall observe the following guidelines:

- (a) Complete the property form in the evidence management system describing each item of property separately, listing all serial numbers, owner's name, finder's name, and other identifying information or markings.
- (b) Affix the barcode label to the property item or container as to not deface or damage the value of the property.
- (c) The property shall be stored in a temporary storage locker outside the evidence area until it is received by the Property Technician.
- (d) For large items that do not fit in the evidence lockers, store the item in the temporary storage locker and email/notify the Property Technicians of the items.
- (e) A copy of the item submission for shall be included with the police report.

804.4.2 NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS

All narcotics and dangerous drugs will be packaged in plastic heat seal bags and heat sealed by the person processing the property/evidence. The gross weight (narcotic substance, packaging and the weight of the sealed bag) will be indicated on the evidence sticker on the sealed bag.

If a large amount or type of narcotic or dangerous drug prohibits the use of plastic heat seal bags, other types of containers may be used. However, all containers will be sealed sufficiently to prevent tampering.

Marijuana plants will be packaged in a manner which will allow them to dry out. Each plant will be tagged with the case number written on the tag. When the plants are dry, they will be packaged for long term storage by the property and evidence technician. Marijuana plants will not be weighed, but will be photographed and counted and described by height and any further detail on the property sheeting RIMS. Associated Paraphernalia as defined by Health and Safety Code § 11364 shall also be booked separately.

The officer seizing the narcotics and dangerous drugs shall submit the associated information into RIMS under the correct case number before placing them in the designated locker.

804.4.3 EXPLOSIVES

Explosives that are known or suspected to be armed or live, other than fixed ammunition, should not be brought to the police facility. All fireworks, railroad flares, or fuses that are considered safe will be transported to the Municipal Service Center to be stored in the locked Hazardous Materials Evidence Shed. Any person placing evidence in the shed shall notify the Property/Evidence Technicians of the items placed there for proper labeling and processing.

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Officers who encounter an explosive device shall immediately notify their immediate supervisor and/or Watch Commander. The Bomb Squad will be called to handle situations involving explosive devices and all such devices will be released to them for disposal.

The District Attorney's office should be contacted to determine the necessity for retaining the explosive material for evidence.

804.4.4 EXCEPTIONAL HANDLING

Certain property items require a separate process. The following items shall be processed in the described manner:

- (a) Bodily fluids such as blood or semen stains shall be air dried prior to booking. Wet items shall be air dried in the temporary storage room. The officer who submitted these items shall be responsible for returning to the temporary storage room and submitting the items into the property room.
- (b) License plates found not to be stolen or connected with a known crime, should be released directly to the property and evidence technician, or placed in the designated container for return to the Department of Motor Vehicles. No formal property booking process is required.
- (c) All bicycles and bicycle frames require a property record. Property tags will be securely attached to each bicycle or bicycle frame. The property may be released directly to the property and evidence technician, or placed in the bicycle storage area until a property and evidence technician can log the property.
- (d) All cash shall be packaged in heat sealed plastic bags and stored in the safe located inside of the property room. The money shall be counted by two police department employees prior to booking and a barcode label shall be placed on the heat sealed bag. Both employees should initial the heat seal. The property sheet should indicate the numbered denominations of each type of bill booked and the names of the two persons who counted the money.
- (e) When property room personnel release money, they shall seek out an ISD supervisor or another employee of equal or superior rank and open the sealed bag in their presence. The money shall be counted at that time.
- (f) When money is deposited in the city's Revenue Collections Facility, the property room personnel shall fill out a Transit Tag indicating the case number and the amount being deposited. The staff of Revenue Collections will verify the amount and sign the Transit Tag, acknowledging receipt of the cash. One copy of that receipt shall be affixed to the original property report, the other maintained in the property room file or a copy may be scanned into the evidence management system. A hard copy of the transactions shall be maintained by the Property/Evidence Technician.
- (g) City property, unless connected to a known criminal case, should be released directly to the appropriate City department. No formal booking is required. In cases where no responsible person can be located, the property should be booked for safekeeping in the normal manner.

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804.4.5 RELINQUISHED FIREARMS

Individuals who relinquish firearms who are subject to the relinquishment provisions of Penal Code § 29810(a)(1) shall be issued a receipt that describes the firearm, the serial number, or other identification of the firearm at the time of relinquishment (Penal Code § 29810).

Relinquished firearms shall be retained for 30 days, after which time they may be destroyed, retained, sold, or otherwise transferred, unless (Penal Code § 29810):

- (a) A certificate is issued by a judge of a court of record or the [District/CountyAttorney] stating the firearms shall be retained; or
- (b) The convicted person provides written notice of an intent to appeal the conviction that necessitated the relinquishment; or
- (c) The Automated Firearms System indicates that the firearm was reported lost or stolen.
 - 1. In such event, the firearm shall be restored to the lawful owner as soon as it is no longer needed as evidence, the lawful owner has identified the weapon and provided proof of ownership, and the Department has complied with the requirements of Penal Code § 33850 et seq.

The property and evidence technician shall ensure the Records Manager is notified of the relinquished firearm for purposes of updating the Automated Firearms System and the disposition of the firearm for purposes of notifying the California Department of Justice (DOJ) (see the Technical Services Division Policy).

804.5 PACKAGING OF PROPERTY

Certain items require special consideration and shall be booked separately as follows:

- (a) Narcotics and dangerous drugs.
- (b) Syringes shall be placed in the puncture proof tubes provided in the evidence packaging area. An exception to this would be new, unused syringes that are still in the original factory package.
- (c) Firearms - an employee accepting custody of a firearm shall insure that the firearm is unloaded prior to accepting it. When the firearm is taken into custody in a loaded status (i.e., taken from a suspect), the officer taking the firearm into custody shall unload it as soon as possible and always before transferring custody to another person. All firearms will be handled and transferred from one person to another with cylinders open, magazines removed, bolts opened and locked and chambers cleared, safety on.
- (d) If for some reason such as damage, malfunction, or maintaining the firearms condition for evidentiary purposes, the firearm cannot be unloaded, the person having custody of it shall insure that the status is given to the person to whom the firearm is transferred. If the loaded firearm is deposited into a temporary storage locker, it will be clearly marked and a explanation of its loaded status attached for the property and evidence technician to read. The property and evidence technician shall make arrangements for unloading any firearms that were not unloaded prior to securing them into the property/ evidence room.

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- (e) The Property/Evidence Technician will maintain a log of all older case firearms that are retained for destruction. The log will contain the case number, make, model, serial number and disposition. All newer case firearm dispositions will be maintained in the evidence management system.
- (f) Flammables - Per Palo Alto Fire Code §79.201(E), flammable liquids shall not be stored at the Police Department. If it is necessary to retain flammable liquids that are considered safe in their present form, the liquids shall be transported to the Municipal Service Center to be stored in the locked Hazardous Materials Evidence Shed. Any person placing evidence in the shed shall notify the Property/Evidence Technicians of the items placed there for proper labelling and processing. The District Attorney's office advises that in misdemeanor cases such as siphoning gas, the gasoline does not need to be retained as evidence. Photos of suspect and evidence should be taken and placed into evidence, identified with case number. In felony cases, the District Attorney's office should be contacted and asked whether the flammable material should be retained as evidence or whether it may be disposed of. Paraphernalia as described in Health & Safety Code § 11364 and Business and Profession Code § 4140.
- (g) Perishables - Perishable items such as shoplifted food shall not be brought to the police station as evidence. They should be photographed and returned to the storekeeper. The case number and date should be shown in the photograph. When possible, price tags shall be retained to show the value of the items taken. No perishable items will be retained for safekeeping since we have no sanitary means to store them. Perishable items shall be disposed of by the officer and not be booked into the property room.
- (h) Items submitted for processing for Latent Fingerprints - These items shall be packaged in such a manner that the property and evidence technician will be able to remove them from the temporary storage lockers without contaminating the items(s) with their own fingerprints. The employee should indicate within the evidence management system that a specific item has a need for lab processing.
- (i) Trace Evidence - Items that are suspected to contain trace evidence shall be packaged and sealed in such a manner to protect them from any cross contamination with any other items, and to ensure that the suspected trace evidence is not lost during transportation and storage.
- (j) Bio-hazards - Any item that is suspected to contain any bodily fluid, or is in any way suspected of representing a threat to personnel, who may handle the item, must be clearly marked as such. The item submission form shall also have a notation that a bio-hazard is suspected. This designation can be accomplished with the provided "Bio-Hazard" labels, or clear and prominent labeling by the submitting officer. The property room should not be considered a conduit for the disposal of bio-hazard materials. Officers who come into possession of such items that are not of any evidentiary value shall dispose of the item(s) at the Stanford Hospital Emergency room.

804.5.1 PACKAGING NARCOTICS

Narcotics and dangerous drugs shall be packaged in heat sealed bags.

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If the substance requires laboratory analysis, the employee should package the substance in the clear bag with the label affixed. The employee should fill out the label on the bag, place the substance in the bag, heat seal the bag and write their initials over the heat seal. The gross weight of the bag and the substance (without the barcode label) should be documented in the evidence management system. The chain of evidence shall be recorded on the label.

Narcotics and dangerous drugs shall not be packaged with other property.

804.6 RECORDING OF PROPERTY

The Property and Evidence Technician receiving custody of the evidence or property shall scan in each item and assign the item to a location within the evidence room using the evidence management system. Any changes in the location of property held by the Palo Alto Police Department shall be noted within the evidence management system.

804.7 PROPERTY CONTROL

Each time the property and evidence technician receives property or releases property to another person, he/she shall enter this information on the property control card. Officers desiring property for court shall contact the property and evidence technician at least one day prior to the court day.

804.7.1 RESPONSIBILITY OF OTHER PERSONNEL

Request for analysis for items other than narcotics or drugs shall be completed on the appropriate forms and submitted to the Property Technician. This request may be filled out any time after booking of the property or evidence.

804.7.2 TRANSFER OF EVIDENCE TO CRIME LABORATORY

It shall be the responsibility of the Evidence Technician to submit and transport items requiring further analysis to and from the Santa Clara County Crime Laboratory. All transport of items shall be documented in the proper evidence management system.

804.7.3 STATUS OF PROPERTY

Each person receiving property will make the appropriate entry to document the chain of evidence. Temporary release of property to officers for investigative purposes, or for court, shall be noted on the property control card, stating the date, time, and to whom released.

The property and evidence technician shall obtain the signature of the person to whom property is released and the reason for release. Any member receiving property shall be responsible for such property until it is properly returned to property or properly released to another authorized person or entity.

The return of the property should be recorded on the property control card, indicating date, time, and the person who returned the property.

804.7.4 AUTHORITY TO RELEASE PROPERTY

The Investigative Services Captain shall authorize the disposition or release of all evidence and property coming into the care and custody of the Department.

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804.7.5 RELEASE OF PROPERTY

All reasonable attempts shall be made to identify the rightful owner of found property or evidence not needed for an investigation.

Release of property shall be made upon receipt of an authorized release form, listing the name and address of the person to whom the property is to be released. The release authorization shall be signed by the authorizing supervisor or detective and must conform to the items listed on the property form or must specify the specific item(s) to be released. Release of all property shall be documented on the property form.

With the exception of firearms and other property specifically regulated by statute, found property and property held for safekeeping shall be held for a minimum of 90 days. During such period, property personnel shall attempt to contact the rightful owner by telephone and/or mail when sufficient identifying information is available. Property not held for any other purpose and not claimed within 90 days after notification (or receipt, if notification is not feasible) may be auctioned to the highest bidder at a properly published public auction. If such property is not sold at auction or otherwise lawfully claimed, it may thereafter be destroyed (Civil Code § 2080.6). The final disposition of all such property shall be fully documented in related reports.

A property and evidence technician shall release the property upon proper identification being presented by the owner for which an authorized release has been received. A signature of the person receiving the property shall be recorded on the original property form. After release of all property entered on the property control card, the card shall be forwarded to the Technical Services Division for filing with the case. If some items of property have not been released, the property card will remain with the Property and Evidence Section. Upon release, the proper entry shall be documented in the Property Log.

Under no circumstances shall any firearm, magazine, or ammunition be returned to any individual unless and until such person presents valid identification and written notification from the California Department of Justice that conforms to the provisions of Penal Code § 33865.

The Property and Evidence Section Supervisor should also make reasonable efforts to determine whether the person is the subject of any court order preventing the person from possessing a firearm and, if so, the firearm should not be released to the person while the order is in effect.

The Department is not required to retain any firearm, magazine, or ammunition longer than 180 days after notice has been provided to the owner that such items are available for return. At the expiration of such period, the firearm, magazine, or ammunition may be processed for disposal in accordance with applicable law (Penal Code § 33875).

804.7.6 DISPUTED CLAIMS TO PROPERTY

Occasionally more than one party may claim an interest in property being held by the Department, and the legal rights of the parties cannot be clearly established. Such property shall not be released until one party has obtained a valid court order or other undisputed right to the involved property.

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All parties should be advised that their claims are civil and in extreme situations, legal counsel for the Department may wish to file an interpleader to resolve the disputed claim (Code of Civil Procedure § 386(b)).

804.7.7 RELEASE OF FIREARMS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MATTERS

Within five days of the expiration of a restraining order issued in a domestic violence matter that required the relinquishment of a firearm or ammunition, the property and evidence technician shall return the weapon or ammunition to the owner if the requirements of Penal Code § 33850 and Penal Code § 33855 are met, unless the firearm or ammunition is determined to be stolen, evidence in a criminal investigation, another successive order has been issued against the individual, or the individual is otherwise prohibited from possessing a firearm (Family Code § 6389(g); Penal Code § 29825.5; Penal Code § 33855).

804.7.8 RELEASE OF FIREARMS AND WEAPONS IN MENTAL ILLNESS MATTERS

Firearms, other deadly weapons, or ammunition confiscated or relinquished from an individual detained for an evaluation by a mental health professional or subject to the provisions of Welfare and Institutions Code § 8100 or Welfare and Institutions Code § 8103 shall be released or disposed of as follows:

- (a) If a petition for a hearing regarding the return of a firearm or a weapon has been initiated pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code § 8102(c), the firearm or weapon shall be released or disposed of as provided by an order of the court. If the court orders a firearm returned, the firearm shall not be returned unless and until the person presents valid identification and written notification from the California Department of Justice (DOJ) that conforms to the provisions of Penal Code § 33865.
- (b) If no petition has been initiated pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code § 8102(c) and the firearm or weapon is not retained as evidence, the Department shall make the firearm or weapon available for return. No firearm will be returned unless and until the person presents valid identification and written notification from the California DOJ that conforms to the provisions of Penal Code § 33865.
- (c) Unless the person contacts the Department to facilitate the sale or transfer of the firearm to a licensed dealer pursuant to Penal Code § 33870, firearms not returned should be sold, transferred, destroyed, or retained as provided in Welfare and Institutions Code § 8102.

804.7.9 WITHDRAWAL AND RETURN OF EVIDENCE

An integral part of effective management of a property/evidence function is adequate control and recording of withdrawal and return of evidence. Transferring possession of evidence from one person to another is known as the chain of possession. Accurate records of each change of possession are paramount for prevention of tainted evidence, loss of evidence and for effective prosecution of a case. Properly controlled chain of possession of evidence and also prevent embarrassment to the Department and discipline of employees. Adherence to the procedures set forth in this policy will result in the complete recording of each change of possession and

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location of all evidence. The last person in the chain shall be the person who has custody of and is responsible for the proper care and preservation of the evidence.

DEFINITIONS:

INTRA-AGENCY: The property/evidence does not leave the Palo Alto Police Department (i.e., viewing for identification).

INTER-AGENCY: The property/evidence does leave the Palo Alto Police Department (i.e., laboratory examination or court).

RETURN OF PROPERTY: Return of property as used in this order, means return to the custody of the Property Technician.

804.7.10 PROCEDURE

- (a) Withdrawal for intra-agency reasons:
 - 1. **Who Can Request Withdrawal** - only the employee assigned to investigate a case or an employee authorized by that person will be permitted to withdraw evidence;
 - 2. **Advance Notice** - the employee desiring to withdraw evidence will give the Property Technician advance notice of which evidence is needed and when it is needed;
 - 3. **Property Technician Responsibility** - the Property Technician will retrieve the evidence from storage and assemble it for release at the pre-arranged time. The Property/Evidence Technician shall record the transaction in the evidence management system. The employee receiving the evidence will sign the record acknowledging receipt.
- (b) Withdrawal for inter-agency reasons: In addition to 1-3 above, the following will also occur whenever the property is withdrawn for inter-agency purposes:
 - 1. **Transfer Documentation** -The Property/Evidence Technician will record the transfer of the property in the evidence management system indicating the name of the person withdrawing the property, the destination of the property and the barcode number.
- (c) **Return of evidence:** The employee returning property to the evidence room shall place the evidence in a locker and secure the lock.
- (d) **Discrepancies:** The Investigative Services Division supervisor will be notified as soon as possible of any discrepancies between the evidence withdrawn and the evidence returned.
- (e) **Evidence Room Safe Access:** Only the two full time Property/Evidence Technicians and the hourly Property/Evidence Technician shall have the combination to the evidence room safe.

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All money and jewelry made of precious metal and stones shall be stored in the evidence room safe. All items stored in the safe shall be assigned a case number and item number and logged into the evidence management system.

804.7.11 RELEASE OF FIREARMS IN GUN VIOLENCE RESTRAINING ORDER MATTERS

Firearms and ammunition that were taken into temporary custody or surrendered pursuant to a gun violence restraining order shall be returned to the restrained person upon the expiration of the order, verification that the person is not otherwise legally prohibited from possessing a firearm, and in accordance with the requirements of Penal Code § 33850 et seq. (Penal Code § 18108; Penal Code § 18120).

If the restrained person who owns the firearms or ammunition does not wish to have the firearm or ammunition returned, they are entitled to sell or transfer title to a licensed dealer, provided that the firearms or ammunition are legal to own or possess and the restrained person has right to title of the firearms or ammunition (Penal Code § 18120).

If a person other than the restrained person claims title to the firearms or ammunition surrendered pursuant to Penal Code § 18120 and the Palo Alto Police Department determines the person to be the lawful owner, the firearms or ammunition shall be returned in accordance with the requirements of Penal Code § 33850 et seq. (Penal Code § 18120).

Firearms and ammunition that are not claimed are subject to the requirements of Penal Code § 34000.

804.7.12 RELEASE OF FIREARMS, MAGAZINES, AND AMMUNITION

The Department shall not return any firearm, magazine, or ammunition taken into custody to any individual unless all requirements of Penal Code § 33855 are met.

804.8 DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY

All property not held for evidence in a pending criminal investigation or proceeding, and held for six months or longer where the owner has not been located or fails to claim the property, may be disposed of in compliance with existing laws upon receipt of proper authorization for disposal. The property and evidence technician shall request a disposition or status on all property which has been held in excess of 120 days, and for which no disposition has been received from a supervisor or detective.

804.8.1 EXCEPTIONAL DISPOSITIONS

The following types of property shall be destroyed or disposed of in the manner, and at the time prescribed by law, unless a different disposition is ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction:

- Weapons declared by law to be nuisances (Penal Code § 25700; Penal Code § 26110; Penal Code § 26395; Penal Code § 29300; Penal Code § 18010; Penal Code § 32750)
- Animals, birds, and related equipment that have been ordered forfeited by the court (Penal Code § 599a)
- Counterfeiting equipment (Penal Code § 480)

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- Gaming devices (Penal Code § 335a)
- Obscene matter ordered to be destroyed by the court (Penal Code § 312)
- Altered vehicles or component parts (Vehicle Code § 10751)
- Narcotics (Health and Safety Code § 11474 et seq.)
- Unclaimed, stolen, or embezzled property (Penal Code § 1411)
- Destructive devices (Penal Code § 19000)
- Sexual assault evidence (Penal Code § 680)

804.8.2 DESTRUCTION OF FIREARMS AND OTHER PROPERTY

The Property and Evidence Section supervisor or the authorized designee shall develop and maintain guidelines and procedures relating to the destruction of firearms and other weapons that includes but is not limited to the following (Penal Code § 18005);

- (a) Identification of firearms and other weapons that need to be destroyed.
- (b) Maintenance of records of firearms and other weapons that need to be destroyed, including entry into the Automated Firearms System, as applicable, and records of the destruction and disposal of those firearms and other weapons.
- (c) Identification of any law enforcement agency that the Department contracts with or has an agreement with related to the storage or destruction of firearms or other weapons that outlines the responsibilities of this department and the other agency.
 1. If the Department contracts with a third-party for destruction of firearms or other weapons, the contract must explicitly prohibit the sale of any firearm or weapon or any part of attachment to the firearm or weapon.

The Property and Evidence Section supervisor or the authorized designee should ensure guidelines and procedures relating to the destruction of firearms and other weapons are posted on the Palo Alto Department website (Penal Code § 18005).

804.8.3 UNCLAIMED MONEY

If found or seized money is no longer required as evidence and remains unclaimed after three years, the Department shall cause a notice to be published each week for a period of two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper of general circulation (Government Code § 50050). Such notice shall state the amount of money, the fund in which it is held and that the money will become the property of the agency on a designated date not less than 45 days and not more than 60 days after the first publication (Government Code § 50051).

Any individual item with a value of less than \$15.00, or any amount if the depositor/owner's name is unknown, which remains unclaimed for a year or by order of the court, may be transferred to the general fund without the necessity of public notice (Government Code § 50055).

If the money remains unclaimed as of the date designated in the published notice, the money will become the property of this Department to fund official law enforcement operations. Money

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representing restitution collected on behalf of victims shall either be deposited into the Restitution Fund or used for purposes of victim services.

804.8.4 RETENTION OF BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The Property and Evidence Section Supervisor shall ensure that no biological evidence held by the Department is destroyed without adequate notification to the following persons, when applicable:

- (a) The defendant
- (b) The defendant's attorney
- (c) The appropriate prosecutor and Attorney General
- (d) Any sexual assault victim
- (e) The Investigative Services Division supervisor

Biological evidence shall be retained for either a minimum period that has been established by law (Penal Code § 1417.9) or that has been established by the Property and Evidence Section Supervisor, or until the expiration of any imposed sentence that is related to the evidence, whichever time period is greater. Following the retention period, notifications should be made to inform the recipient that the evidence will be destroyed after a date specified in the notice unless a motion seeking an order to retain the sample is filed and served on the Department within 180 days of the date of the notification. Any objection to, or motion regarding, the destruction of the biological evidence should be retained in the appropriate file and a copy forwarded to the Investigative Services Division supervisor.

Biological evidence related to a homicide shall be retained indefinitely and may only be destroyed with the written approval of the Chief of Police and the head of the applicable prosecutor's office.

Biological evidence or other crime scene evidence from an unsolved sexual assault should not be disposed of prior to expiration of the statute of limitations and shall be retained as required in Penal Code § 680. Even after expiration of an applicable statute of limitations, the Investigative Services Division supervisor should be consulted and the sexual assault victim shall be notified at least 60 days prior to the disposal (Penal Code § 680). Reasons for not analyzing biological evidence shall be documented in writing (Penal Code § 680.3).

804.8.5 AUTHORITY FOR DISPOSAL PROCEDURE

Upon a confirmed determination of a case's final adjudication, the Property Technician will review the original police report to ascertain the appropriate disposition of property/evidence as described in this order. In the instances where it is not clear, based on the police report, whom the property should be released to, or if it should be considered contraband, the Property/Evidence Technician will speak to the investigating officer seeking written direction as to how to proceed with the disposition of the property/evidence.

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804.8.6 RETURN OF PROPERTY TO OWNER OR CLAIMANT

Upon a determination that property/evidence should be returned to an owner or claimant, the Property Technician will prepare a property release notice letter and mail it to the owner of the property.

- (a) **Owner Responds** - if the owner of the property responds, the property will be released only after proof of ownership and satisfactory identification have been presented to the Property Technician. Proof of ownership may be determined by possession of receipt, bill of sale, court decision, or undisputed claim to right of the property. Driver's licenses, passports, military identification or other identification with a photograph is considered satisfactory identification. If the property owner has no identification bearing a photograph, the Property Technician will determine whether or not identification is satisfactory.
 - 1. The Property/Evidence Technician will require the owner of the property to place their signature into the evidence management system upon taking possession of the property.
- (b) **Owner Does Not Respond** - if the owner does not claim the property within 30 days after notification is mailed, the property will be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of this order.

804.8.7 DISPOSAL BY SALE/AUCTION

- (a) **Unclaimed Property** - property which is not claimed by the owner may be sold at auction in accordance with Palo Alto Municipal Code § 2.30.170
- (b) **Auctions** - will be arranged by the Purchasing Department. The Property Technician will complete a "Surplus Supplies & Equipment" form listing the property to be sold and deliver the form and property to the Stores facility at the Municipal Service Center. He/she will obtain the signature of the Stores facility staff acknowledging receipt of the property and retain a copy of the surplus supplies form. Municipal Code 2.31.040

804.8.8 DISPOSAL BY AGENCY USE

Civil Code § 2080.4 and Penal Code § 1411 provide that if a city or county has enacted an enabling ordinance, certain unclaimed property held in the custody of the agency may be retained for the agency or other public use, rather than being sold or destroyed (Penal Code §§ 12028 and 12030 provide the authority for acquisition of firearms for agency use). Requests for retention of property for Department use will be recorded on a "Surplus Property Form" with the statement "Request retention of listed property for Department use pursuant to Civil Code § 2080.4, and Penal Code § 1411. The request will be signed by the Chief of Police and the Director of Purchasing. A copy of the Surplus Supplies Form shall be retained in the property room.

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- (a) **Firearms** - if the property to be retained by the Department is a firearm, the Property Technician will also cause an entry to be made into the Department of Justice automated firearms system institution file.
- (b) **Personal Use** - under no circumstances will property acquired as evidence or found property be used for personal or non-Departmental purposes.

804.8.9 DISPOSAL BY DESTRUCTION

Controlled Substances and Associated Paraphernalia

Destruction Pursuant to a Court Order - drugs to be destroyed will be recorded on a drug destruction log and placed in a box for destruction. The Investigative Services Division Property Crimes Supervisor or their designee and Property Technician will inventory the drugs when the box is full. When all drugs listed on the destruction log are accounted for, the box will be sealed with tamper-proof tape. The supervisor and Property Technician will date and sign the seal.

The Property Technician will make application for a court order to destroy all controlled substances and associated paraphernalia except as provided in paragraph D-2 of this general order. The application will list descriptions, quantities, weights, docket number and the defendant's name for each item to be destroyed. Upon receipt of the court order, the Property Technician will arrange for the material to be destroyed as follows:

- (a) By burning or another method approved by the Department head or designee. The destruction of the material will be witnessed by at least the Property Technician and two armed detectives from ISD.

Destruction will be accomplished on an as needed basis.

Destruction Not Pursuant to a Court Order - in instances when the weight of a suspected controlled substance is substantial and it is not reasonably possible to preserve the material in place or move it to another location. Controlled substance in excess of ten pounds, or the hazardous chemical, which was used or intended for use in the unlawful manufacture of controlled substances, and are in excess of two ounces and its container may be destroyed without a court order when all of the following conditions have been met:

- (a) At least five random and representative samples of the suspected controlled substance (ten or more pounds) have been taken for evidence, and;
- (b) At least one 2-ounce sample has been taken from each suspected hazardous chemical, and;
- (c) Photographs have been taken which reasonably demonstrate the total amount of the suspected controlled substance or suspected hazardous chemical container, and;
- (d) The gross weight of the suspected controlled substance or suspected hazardous chemical has been determined by either weighing or estimating after dimensional measurement, and;

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- (e) The Police Chief or designee has determined that it is not reasonably possible to preserve all of the suspected controlled substance or suspected hazardous chemical in place or suspected hazardous chemical in place or to move it to another location.
- (f) An affidavit, stating that the above conditions have been met, will be filed in court within thirty days following the destruction of the suspected controlled substance or suspected hazardous chemical by the person causing the destruction.
- (g) Records concerning the details of the compliance with Health and Safety Code § 11479 will be filed with the case report.

804.8.10 FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

Firearms defined as "Nuisances" by Penal Code § 12028 be destroyed by the Department. Destruction of firearms and weapons will be accomplished by melting, chopping, or some other means as equally destructive, in the presence of the Property Technician and will be witnessed by at least two armed police officers.

The Property Technician will prepare and retain a list of all firearms and weapons which have been destroyed. The list will contain the make, model, type, caliber and serial number of each weapon destroyed and will be dated and signed by the Property Technician and witness. A copy of the list will be given to the Records Manager, who will be responsible for updating the automated firearms system.

The Property/Evidence Technician will record the destruction date of each firearm/weapon on the original property sheet with their signature or in the evidence management system.

Weapons defined as "Destructive Devices" by Penal Code § 12301 and machine guns described in Penal Code § 12251, which were unlawfully possessed, must be surrendered to the California Department of Justice unless a certificate, signed by a judge or district attorney, is filed with the California Department of Justice stating that the preservation of such destructive devices or machine guns is necessary to serve the ends of justice.

804.9 INSPECTIONS OF THE EVIDENCE ROOM

- (a) On a monthly basis, the supervisor of the evidence custodian shall make an inspection of the evidence storage facilities and practices to ensure adherence to appropriate policies and procedures.
- (b) Unannounced inspections of evidence storage areas shall be conducted annually as directed by the Chief of Police.
- (c) An annual audit of evidence held by the Department shall be conducted by a Division Captain (as appointed by the Chief of Police) not routinely or directly connected with evidence control.
- (d) Whenever a change is made in personnel who have access to the evidence room, an inventory of all evidence/property shall be made by an individual not associated to the property room or function to ensure that records are correct and all evidence property is accounted for.

Property and Evidence Section

804.10 SECURITY OF STORAGE AREAS

Property storage areas will be secured during all non-business hours and during business hours whenever the Property Technician is absent. The Property Technician and/or other authorized persons will be responsible for securing all areas upon leaving. When the Property Technician is absent the property storage areas may only be entered when:

- (a) Emergency - a circumstance of emergency exists or access is necessary to store or retrieve property which cannot wait for the availability of the Property Technician.
- (b) Authorization - the person entering the storage area must be authorized by the Investigative Services Division (ISD) Captain.
 - 1. Exception - an exception to the above two provisions is that the Watch Commander has access to the small storage cage for the purpose of storing large items in the absence of the Property Technician.
- (c) Property Storage area keys: Only the following keys to the property storage areas are authorized:
 - 1. One complete set of keys (to the main property room, supplementary storage areas, all temporary storage lockers and the alarm system) will be assigned to the Property Technicians;
 - 2. One complete duplicate set of keys will be assigned to the ISD Captain and kept in a secured designated place;
 - 3. One key to the temporary storage room will be assigned to the Watch Commander;
 - 4. Duplications or possession of keys to the property storage areas' alarms is prohibited without the express permission of the ISD Captain and the Chief of Police;
 - 5. Locks to the property storage areas and the property storage areas' alarm system will be re-keyed and the safe combination changed whenever a Property Technician is reassigned.

804.10.1 REPORTING OF SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

The Property Technician will notify the Investigative Services Division (ISD) Captain immediately upon discovery of any signs of tampering, unauthorized entry, or other suspicious circumstances and will initiate a case report with complete details.

The ISD Captain will review the report and cause a formal investigation to be initiated if warranted.



Human Services Needs Assessment

City of Palo Alto Office of Human Services



CITY OF
PALO ALTO

Human Services Needs Assessment 2024

City of Palo Alto Office of Human Services

This report was developed by RDA Consulting under contract with the City of Palo Alto Office of Human Services.



RDA Consulting, 2024



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Executive Summary

Introduction & Methodology

In early 2024, the City of Palo Alto Office of Human Services (OHS) engaged RDA Consulting to conduct a Human Services Needs Assessment (HSNA) to identify and prioritize human service needs, gaps, barriers, challenges, and resources to guide future funding priorities and service grant allocations, with specific emphasis on the Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP), through which the City has been allocating human services funds since 1983.¹

The FY24 HSRAP budget is just over \$850,000 and distributed amongst twenty-two service programs run by twenty-one community-based organizations (CBOs).

To guide the 2024 HSNA, RDA—in partnership with OHS—developed a community engagement and assessment plan to assess human service needs, existing services, and gaps. To this end, RDA and OHS identified **three overarching questions: (1) What human services needs are Palo Alto residents experiencing? (2) What are the strengths and gaps in existing services available to Palo Alto residents? (3) What are the opportunities for HSRAP to better fill gaps in services?** Primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data gathering activities conducted between May and July 2024 included focus groups, surveys, and interviews as well as secondary data gathering and review.

Profile of HSNA Participants

HSNA community survey participants reflected diverse demographic characteristics that align with those of the City of Palo Alto with respect to age and to some degree race/ethnicity.

Community Needs & Existing Services

Overall, the areas of greatest need resulting from this mixed methods assessment include (A) essential services for high needs groups—including, primarily,

- (1) individuals experiencing housing insecurity and/or homelessness,
- (2) individuals with disabilities, and/or
- (3) older adults; as well as

(B) community connection, isolation, and inclusion.

Barriers to Service Participation

The most common barriers to service participation included the inaccessibility of services, waitlists or lack of capacity, long or confusing application processes, and service costs. Additional barriers identified include location and transportation to services as well as not knowing what services/resources are available.

HSRAP Alignment & Recommendations for Funding Priorities

Overall, based on the findings from this needs assessment and human services best practices, **we recommend that OHS sustain and narrow HSRAP funding priorities to primarily include**

1. Homelessness services & housing
2. Services for individuals who are disabled
3. Services for older adults
4. Food & nutrition services
5. Mental health services

¹ <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Community-Services/Human-Services>



Introduction

The City of Palo Alto Office of Human Services (OHS) assists with providing a safety net of services, and works toward enhancing the quality of life in Palo Alto in a variety of ways.² The OHS team oversees the Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP), a Human Services grant program open to organizations who deliver direct safety net services to Palo Alto residents, through which the City has been allocating human services funds since 1983.³ The 2024 HSRAP fiscal year budget is just over \$850,000 distributed amongst twenty-two service programs run by twenty-one community-based organizations (CBOs).

In early 2024, OHS engaged RDA Consulting to conduct a Human Services Needs Assessment (HSNA) to identify and prioritize human service needs, gaps, barriers, challenges, and resources to guide future funding priorities and service grant allocations, with specific emphasis on the HSRAP program. RDA collaborated with OHS to carry out a variety of robust community engagement, research, and analysis activities. Data gathered via these activities, which took place throughout the spring and summer of 2024, directly inform this report's findings and recommendations.



Methodology Overview

To guide the 2024 HSNA, RDA—in partnership with OHS—developed a community engagement and assessment plan to assess human services needs, existing services, and gaps. To this end, RDA and OHS identified **three overarching questions**:

- 1 **What human services needs are Palo Alto residents experiencing?**
 - a. What are the most pressing human services needs in Palo Alto?
 - b. Which needs are being met? Which needs are not being met?
 - c. Whose needs are being met? Whose needs are not being met?
- 2 **What are the strengths and gaps in existing services available to Palo Alto residents?**
 - a. In what ways do services meet community needs?
 - b. In what ways are services not meeting needs?
 - c. To what extent does HSRAP funding align with community needs?
- 3 **What are the opportunities for HSRAP to better fill gaps in services?**
 - a. What potential service improvements may be needed (e.g., refinements, additions)?
 - b. Which population subgroups would benefit from more investment (e.g., more or expanded services)? In which specific areas of need?
 - c. Where can HSRAP funds have the most impact?

² <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Community-Services/Human-Services>

³ <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Community-Services/Human-Services>

The community engagement and assessment plan identified and informed the development and implementation of multiple primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data gathering activities:

- **Qualitative Research (Focus Groups & Interviews):** A total of four focus groups with 21 participants, interviews with four community stakeholders, and 26 intercept interviews were conducted virtually and in person between June and July 2024, with a combined total of **51 community participants**.⁴ Topics covered by the in-depth one-on-one and small group interviews and focus groups included consumer needs and service strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement to better meet needs of community members. These qualitative data gathering activities allowed for deeper dive discussions and exploration of questions relating to the objectives of the HSNA. **Note:** *All 453 community members and service providers who completed a survey (see below) were invited to participate in a focus group with RDA. Only 21 of these individuals both (a) volunteered to participate and (b) ultimately showed up to participate in one of the virtual focus groups held by RDA staff.*
- **Survey Research (Community & Provider Survey):** To learn about community needs and experiences in services, a survey was administered electronically via Alchemer (an online survey platform) and via paper form between May 28, 2024, and July 9, 2024. Altogether we received **419 unique survey responses from 385 community members and 34 service providers**. Overall, the number of community member respondents provides a statistically representative sample of the broader population of Palo Alto residents.⁵ Furthermore, the sample population of community members is largely representative of the broader population of Palo Alto residents with respect to age and to some degree race (see 'Profile' sections below).
- **Secondary Data:** In addition to the primary data gathered for the 2024 HSNA, RDA partnered with the Office of Human Services to gather data on HSRAP grantees and on service providers in the City of Palo Alto and the County of Santa Clara more broadly. This data included agency names, service areas and descriptions, and HSRAP award allocations (if applicable). RDA also utilized data from the 2020 Palo Alto Census to assess the representativeness of the HSNA community survey sample.

To ensure equitable access to the community member survey, RDA partnered with JR Language Translation Services to translate the survey into **a total of five languages:** English, Spanish, Russian, Traditional Chinese, and Simplified Chinese.

⁴ Includes duplicate participants (e.g., community members and providers who participated in a focus group and completed a community survey).

⁵ The community member survey sample of n=385 is considered statistically representative of the overall population of Palo Alto, 68,572, given a 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error.



Limitations

RDA leveraged varied data sources to prepare this report in alignment with best practices for rigorous community research and analytical methodologies. Key limitations include (1) overrepresentation of perspectives from more service-aware and engaged consumers; (2) overrepresentation of viewpoints from HSRAP participants who shared feedback via more than one method (e.g., community survey and focus group) as well as those who received the survey via a specific service provider who **directly administered the survey to clients**; (3) limitations in number of HSRAP grantees that participated in this research (only six of 21 FY24 HSRAP grantees completed a survey); and (4) limitations with respect to community member demographic data—(a) nearly one-in-five (19%) community member respondents did *not* report their race/ethnicity and a similar proportion did not report their household income and other important demographic variables; (b) certain demographic groups were overrepresented (e.g., individuals 75 and over, females) while others were underrepresented (e.g., Asian only residents), (c) the community survey included the new Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) category introduced by the U.S. Census in April of 2024⁶, but failed to provide specific subcategories that would allow participants to self-identify with one or more of the diverse and more nuanced racial categories included within the broader MENA category (e.g., Egyptian, Iranian, Iraqi, Israeli/Jewish, Lebanese, Syrian), which is particularly important given the current socio-political climate.

Nonresponse Bias & Steps Taken to Minimize Bias

Multiple forms of nonresponse bias may be present with a voluntary community survey, including community members who are unwilling or unable to respond to the survey as a whole or unwilling or unable to respond to specific survey questions.* Individuals may choose not to answer a specific question because it feels too personal (e.g., income, race/ethnicity), because they are unsure how to answer, or because of some other reason.

In developing and administering the community and provider survey, **RDA took multiple steps to minimize nonresponse bias including but not limited to:**

- *Avoiding simple 'yes' / 'no' questions and including a wider range of response options*
- *Including 'not listed – please specify:', 'unknown', 'prefer not to state' and 'N/A' options*
- *Leaving demographic questions to the end of the survey to minimize stereotype threat***
- *Ensuring all open-ended questions were optional (vs. required)*
- *Providing assurance that all information shared will remain confidential*
- *Multiple communications and reminders to complete the survey*
- *Providing an incentive to complete the survey*

Sources:

*<https://www.qualtrics.com/experience-management/research/response-bias/#:~:text=Voluntary%20response%20biases%20in%20surveys,have%20a%20highly%20opinionated%20sample.>

** https://isotl.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2019/03/eio-general_guidelines.pdf

⁶<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2024/04/updates-race-ethnicity-standards.html>



Definitions

- **Accessible:** Resources, facilities, or services that consider and are responsive to the needs of people with disabilities (e.g., facilities or services that are built or modified so that they can be used by people of all abilities).⁷
- **Endorsed Needs:** For the purposes of this report, “endorsed” needs including any needs identified by community members or service providers as an area of need (including “top” area of need as well as additional areas of need).
- **Essential Services:** Programs or facilities intended to meet the basic health, welfare, and other needs of community members with the goal of promoting self-sufficiency and well-being.⁸
- **High Needs:** For the purposes of this report, “high needs” refers to individuals who fall into demographic categories that have higher rates of *unmet* need (e.g., unhoused individuals, older adults, individuals with disabilities) relative to other demographic subgroups.
- **Human Services Recipient:** For the purposes of this report, “human services recipient” includes any individual who identified as a human services recipient or a behavioral health recipient per the HSNA Community Survey.

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/disability-strategies.html>

⁸ https://www.dictionary.com/browse/human-services#google_vignette;

<https://www.humanservicesedu.org/definition-human-services/>



Profile of HSNA Participants

HSNA community survey participants reflected diverse demographic characteristics that largely align with those of the City of Palo Alto with respect to age and race, however Asian only residents are slightly underrepresented and female residents are overrepresented within the survey (see Table 1). With respect to age, survey respondents generally mirror the population of Palo Alto, apart from individuals 75 and older who are overrepresented (see Table 1). Additionally, as with the overall population of Palo Alto, approximately half of all survey respondents identified as White (48%). Hispanic / Latino/a/x residents are also proportionally represented (6% vs. 7%). In contrast, Asian residents are slightly underrepresented (28% vs. 35%) while other minority subgroups including Black / African American residents (6% vs. 2%) are overrepresented (see Table 1).

Dissimilar to the overall population of Palo Alto, which is nearly evenly split by sex (male, female), approximately two-thirds of survey respondents (63%, 128 of 203) identified as female.

Respondent household income varied; over half of respondents reported a household income of \$120,000 or less per year (54%; 209 out of 385) and approximately two-in-five reported a household income of \$60,000 or less per year (21%, 81 out of 385).

NOTE: For the purposes of this report, we examined trends for those reporting a household income of \$120,000 and below, given that the American Community Survey indicates about 25% of households in Palo Alto have an annual income of \$100,000 or less. Additionally, we examined trends for those reporting a household income of \$60,000 and below, particularly with respect to rates of unmet need.¹

Beyond these demographic characteristics, most community survey respondents resided in the following three Palo Alto zip codes: 94306 (25%; 96 out of 385), 94303 (20%; 78 out of 385), and 94301 (17%; 67 out of 385).

Approximately one-third of community survey respondents identified as a human services recipient (36%; 139 out of 385) and a similar proportion identified as a parent (37%; 142 out of 385). A minority of survey respondents identified themselves as an individual with a disability (9%; 34 out of 385), and a small proportion identified as an individual experiencing homelessness (4%; 17 out of 385) (see Appendix A for a more detailed demographic breakdown).

¹ https://data.census.gov/profile/Palo_Alto_city_California

Table 1. Palo Alto HSNA Community Survey & Census Demographics¹⁰

Highlighted rows indicate demographic groups that are proportionally representative of (i.e., not statistically different from) the overall Palo Alto population.

Category	Community Survey Count	Community Survey Percentage	Palo Alto 2020 Census Percentage ⁹
Age (n=331)			
44 and younger	165	50%	53%
45-59	55	17%	21%
60-74	50	15%	14%
75 and older	61	18%	11%
Sex / Gender (n=320)			
Female	203	63%	51%
Male	105	33%	49%
Another Gender Identity ¹²	12	4%	N/a
Race/Ethnicity¹³ (n=312)			
White only	149	48%	49%
Asian only	88	28%	35%
Hispanic or Latinx (of any race)	20	6%	7%
Native American or Alaska Native only	19	6%	0.1%
Black or African American only	18	6%	2%
Another Race ¹⁴	18	6%	N/a

¹⁰ In accordance with data de-identification guidelines, demographic categories that represent fewer than 11 individuals have been rolled up into a larger combined category (e.g., 44 and younger).

¹¹ Palo Alto 2020 Census: https://data.census.gov/profile/Palo_Alto_city,_California?q=160XX00US0655282. These data are inclusive of American Community Survey (ACS) updates.

¹² Community survey respondents selected gender identity categories that were unavailable in the 2020 census.

¹³ In the Community Survey, respondents were able to select all categories that applied. For the purposes of comparison to the census data, RDA recoded data to determine who identified as 'White only,' 'Asian only,' etc.

¹⁴ This category includes race/ethnic groups representing fewer than 11 respondents in each of the following groups: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Multiracial (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Jewish only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Middle Eastern or North African only (Not Hispanic or Latinx). Census data could not be retrieved for comparison because Community Survey respondents selected racial categories that were not available in the 2020 census data (i.e., Jewish, Middle Eastern or North African)

Table 2. Community Survey: Frequency of Respondent Race/Ethnicity by Household Income

Race/Ethnicity	Unknown Income	\$0-\$30k	\$31-\$60k	\$61-\$90k	\$91k+	TOTAL
White only (Not Hispanic or Latinx)	20	11	21	25	72	149
Non-White* (Including Hispanic or Latinx)	40	27	14	45	37	163
TOTAL**	60	38	35	70	109	312

*Non-White Race/Ethnicity categories include Asian, Native American or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, or another unspecified race.

** Race/Ethnicity: Unknown/Not Reported not included given n <11 for multiple income categories.

Table 3. Community Survey: Frequency of Respondent Primary Language by Household Income

Primary Language	Unknown Income	\$0-120k	\$121k+	TOTAL
English	29	172	43	244
Non-English*	28	35	12	75
TOTAL**	57	207	55	319

*Non-English language categories include Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, American Sign Language, Hebrew, Korean, Russian, Vietnamese, and another unspecified language.

** Primary Language: Unknown/Not Reported not included given n <11 for multiple income categories.

Table 4. Community Survey: Frequency of Respondent Age by Household Income

Age Group	Unknown Income	\$0-\$30k	\$31-\$60k	\$61-\$90k	\$91-\$120k	\$121k+	TOTAL
44 and younger	14	9	16	57	47	22	165
45 and older	53	35	21	13	11	33	166
TOTAL**	67	44	37	70	58	55	331

** Age Group: Unknown/Not Reported not included given n <11 for multiple income categories.



Provider Snapshot

A total of 34 providers, completed the Provider Survey. Additionally, nine providers participated in one of two focus groups with RDA staff. Overall, providers perspectives' on pressing community needs aligned largely with community members, with slightly greater emphasis on mental health needs.

Areas of greatest need (i.e., top needs):

- Mental health supports for adults (15 of 29)
- Housing assistance (13 of 25)
- Food and nutrition services (11 of 24)
- Homelessness outreach and services (11 of 25)
- Older adult services (11 of 19)
- Community engagement/connection (13 of 22)
 - However, most providers indicated this need was mostly or completely met.

Areas of greatest unmet* need:

*"not meeting or only "somewhat" meeting

- Housing assistance (20 of 27)
- Homelessness outreach & services (18 of 27)
- Mental health supports for adults (18 of 27)
- Transportation assistance (18 of 26)
- Emergency financial assistance (16 of 26)
- Supports for individuals with disabilities (15 of 26)
- In-home care (assistance with daily living) (15 of 26)
- Older adult services (14 of 26)
- Medical/physical health care (14 of 26)



In their own words:

Reflection on **housing assistance** needs & services

"There is currently a lack of shelter and affordable housing for Palo Alto residents."

"Temporary housing for those working towards permanent placement is not available."

Reflection on **mental health** needs & services

"In the context of mental health of youth, 50% are receiving support. Stress and academic progress are impacting the mental health of students. There are not enough resources. Families who are receiving basic needs support are unable to advocate for their children."

Reflections on needs & services for **adults & individuals with disabilities**

"Senior services are not adequate for seniors with developmental disabilities."

"Individuals with developmental disabilities are not fully included in services and activities."

"Many disabled people need direct support from trained professionals, like support workers who are trained specifically on how to support the medical diagnosis and disabilities."



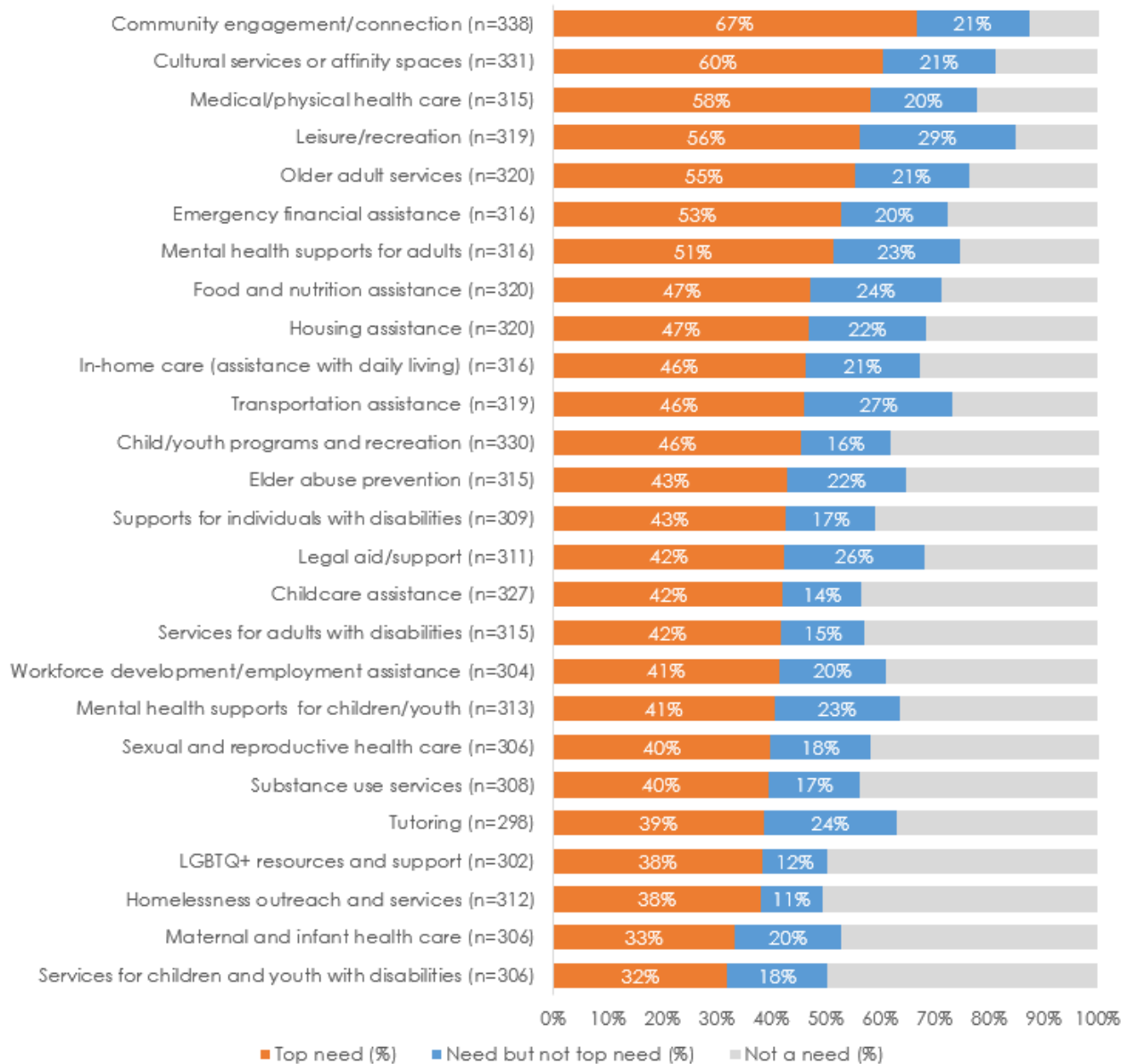
Community Needs & Existing Services

Overall, the areas of greatest need identified from the triangulated results of this mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) needs assessment include

- (A) essential services for high needs groups—primarily,
 - (1) services for individuals experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness,
 - (2) services for individuals with disabilities, and
 - (3) service for older adults; as well as
- (B) community connection, isolation, and inclusion.

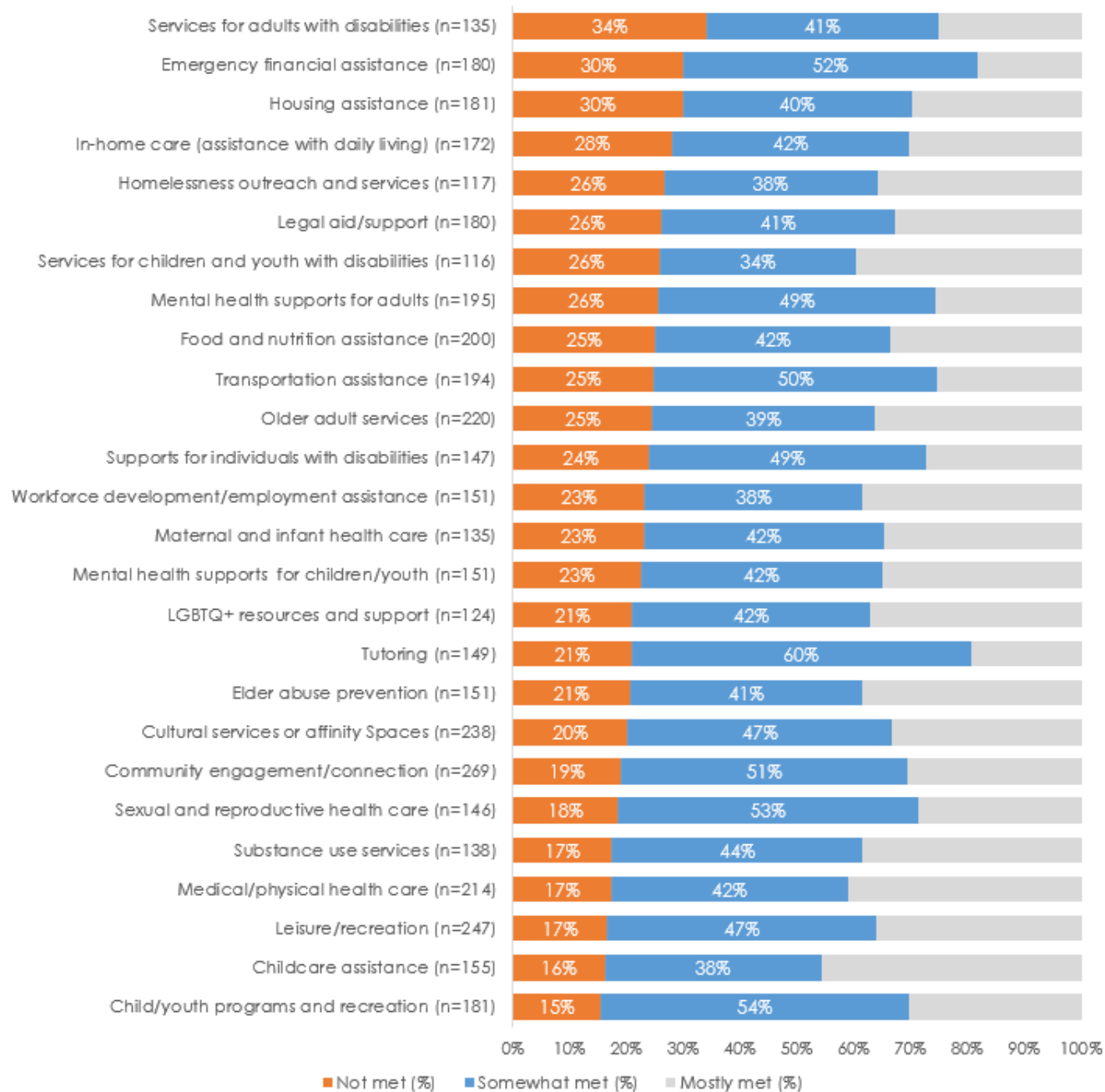
The most common barriers to service participation identified by community survey respondents include **limitations to or inaccessibility of services themselves** (e.g., eligibility, capacity, cost) as well as location, transportation, and awareness of services.

Figure 1. Community Member Survey: Most Important Areas of Need (N=298-338)



While needs for community connection, isolation, and inclusion are largely met, essential services for high needs groups are largely unmet. This is especially true for: (a) individuals experiencing homelessness, (b), adults with disabilities, and (c) those who identified as Hispanic or Latino/a/x, another race (including multiracial), and those who did not share their race/ethnicity.

Figure 2. Community Member Survey: Unmet Need (N=116-269)



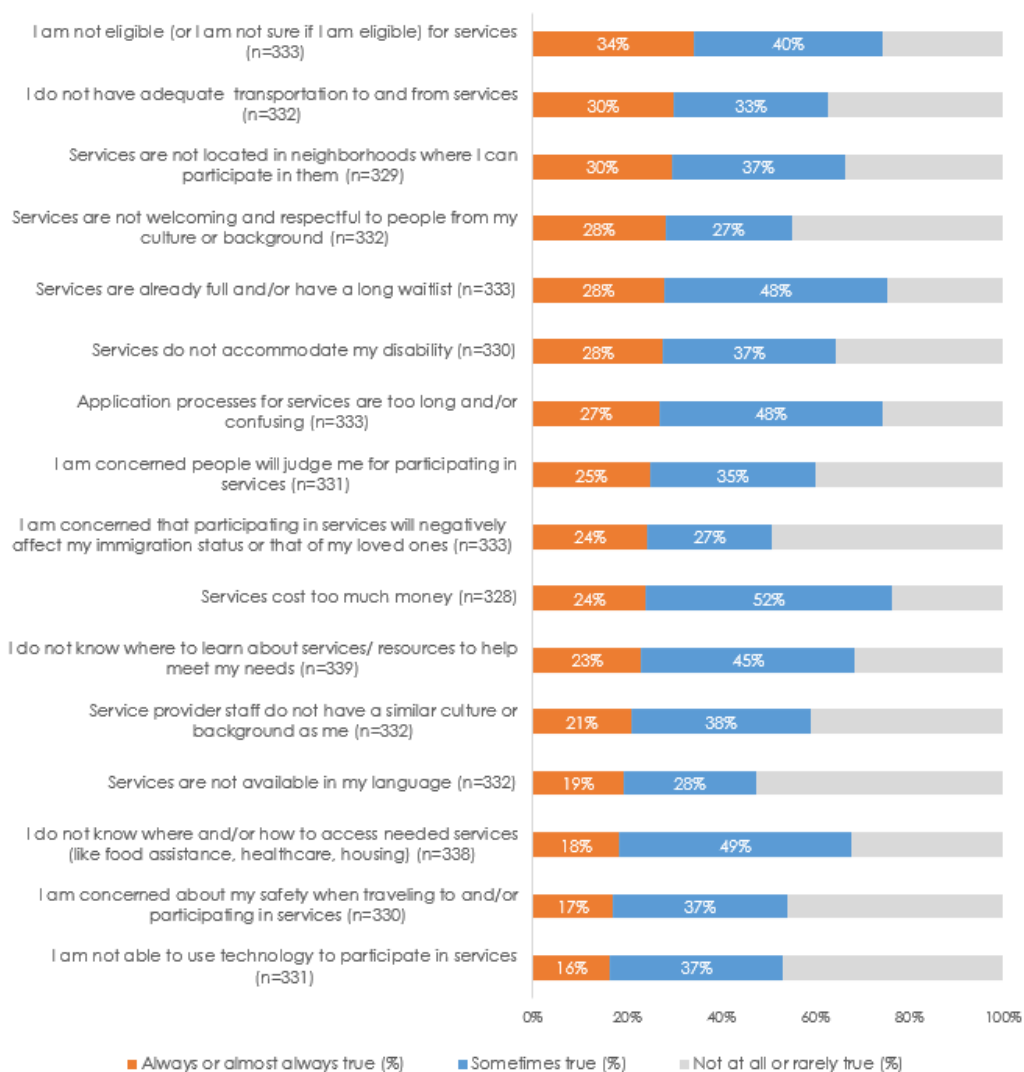


Barriers to Service Participation

Community survey respondents who need services experience a variety of barriers to service participation. The most common barriers to service participation included ineligibility (or uncertainty regarding eligibility), waitlists or lack of capacity, long or confusing application processes, service costs, as well as location and transportation to services.

Additionally, most community members indicated that they **“do not know where to learn about services/resources to help meet their needs”** at least some of the time. Throughout qualitative activities, providers and community members alike noted a need for greater awareness and knowledge of existing services in Palo Alto and surrounding areas. Multiple stakeholders note that greater marketing of available services and resources would be a valuable resource to the community.

Figure 3. Community Survey: Barriers to Service Participation (N=328-339)



“Spreading the word about available services needs some work. It’s definitely a priority for us to get more exposure so that the community knows we are here and what services we are providing or need to provide.”
 – Service Provider



Essential Services for High Needs Groups

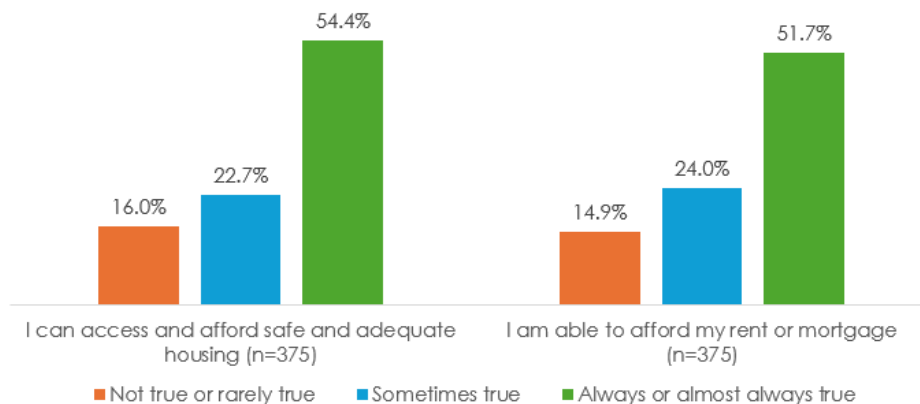
While high needs groups, such as unhoused individuals, adults with disabilities, and older adults, benefit in part from existing services within Palo Alto and neighboring cities within the County, they still lack comprehensive safety net services. Additionally, long waitlists for critical services and resources including shelter, along with the high demand for mental health services, remain pressing issues. Individuals who are currently unhoused, have a disability, or both, had the highest rates of unmet need overall.

Housing Assistance & Homelessness Services

The most pressing need identified by participants across community engagement activities for this assessment was **accessible housing and shelter**. Individuals experiencing homelessness, low-income individuals, and more affluent community members alike consistently named affordable housing and safe and accessible shelter as one of the most pressing needs facing Palo Altans. The complex housing challenges in the Bay Area, driven by various economic and social factors, have a significant impact on the Palo Alto community members—particularly unhoused individuals, adults with disabilities, and individuals identifying as human service recipients.

Most respondents endorsed housing assistance as an important area of need (68%; 219 out of 320 who responded), and nearly half endorsed homelessness outreach and services as an important area of need (49%; 154 out of 312 who responded). Overall, however, most community survey respondents indicated that they personally *could* access and/or afford housing or rent, while more than one third of respondents indicated that they can only sometimes or rarely if ever are able to (see Figure 4). In contrast, only a small proportion of survey respondents (4%) identified as experiencing homelessness.

Figure 4. Community Survey Wellness Indicators: Housing



While housing and homelessness related services were common needs among survey respondents overall, specific subgroups endorsed these needs more frequently than others.

Most notably, **all respondents who were currently experiencing homelessness** endorsed housing assistance and homelessness outreach and services as needs (16 out of 16 each). Additionally, **most respondents identifying as human service recipients** endorsed housing assistance (81%; 107 out of 132 who responded) and homelessness outreach and services (71%; 88 out of 124 who responded) as needs. Additionally, most individuals experiencing homelessness indicated their needs for housing assistance (9 out of 13 surveyed) as well as “homelessness outreach and services” (7 out of 12 surveyed) were **unmet**. Qualitative data illuminated that these individuals have experienced long wait times and short stays at shelters. Additionally, some individuals interviewed indicated that they feel unsafe at local shelters, including those who identify as LGBTQ+.

“I was on the (shelter) waitlist for two months. Usually, you can only stay 90 days.”

“The overnight shelter doesn't work for me because I am perceived as gay — (the other guests) will start harassing me.”

- *Community Members Experiencing Homelessness*

Other specific subgroups, including individuals who identified as having a disability or being an older adult also reported higher rates of *unmet* needs with respect to housing assistance (disabled: 60%, older adult: 47%) compared to full sample of community members surveyed (30%). Individuals who did not report their race/ethnicity, those who identified as “another race” (including multiracial), and those who identified as Hispanic or Latinx also reported higher rates of *unmet* needs with respect to housing assistance (unknown race: 71%; another race: 50%; Hispanic or Latinx: 50%).

Additionally, most provider survey respondents endorsed housing assistance (80%; 20 out of 25 who responded) and homelessness outreach and services (80%; 20 out of 25 who responded) as needs among their client populations. Additionally, most respondents who were disabled indicated services *did not* meet their needs for housing assistance (60%; 9 out of 15 who responded). Additionally, disabled community members encounter difficulties accessing in-person services from providers who could support them within the community.

“The unhoused can't do anything. Waitlists are long. Everything is difficult to navigate including the city website.”

- *Service Provider*

The limited availability of below-market multifamily units and diverse housing options exacerbates needs for not only unhoused individuals but also low-income Palo Altans, making it increasingly difficult for young families, working professionals, and essential workers to secure housing within the community. The lack of affordable housing forces essential workers into long commutes, complicating employer efforts to retain talent, while families struggle to find suitable living arrangements.

Families and other community members who can't afford traditional housing increasingly turn to alternative living arrangements, such as RV homes or residing in neighboring cities. These realities further highlight the urgent need for more comprehensive and accessible housing solutions within the community.

While projects like Mitchell Park Place, an affordable housing complex with plans for inclusive community spaces, offer a promising step toward addressing housing needs, these are not enough to meet the full scope of the need. Moreover, the affordable housing shortage poses a critical barrier to individuals living and participating in their community.

Services for Individuals with Disabilities

More than half of participants (57%, 180 of 315) identified services for adults with disabilities as a personal need. Overall, this is fewer endorsements relative to other areas of need. **However, adults with disabilities reported higher rates of unmet need in several categories relative to most other community members.** Notably, approximately two-thirds (65%) of individuals with a disability indicated that their emergency financial assistance needs are *unmet* and a similar proportion reported that their needs with respect to elder abuse prevention (60%) and housing assistance (60%) are unmet—highlighted the intersectionality of needs among adults with disabilities, older adults, and individuals who are low-income. This subset of the population also identified unmet needs around sexual and reproductive healthcare (57%), mental supports for children/youth (57%), maternal and infant health care (50%), services for adults with disabilities, and legal aid support (47%) at higher rates than their counterparts who did not identify as having a disability (apart from unhoused adults). Additionally, **among human services recipients, a greater proportion identified services for adults with disabilities as an unmet need (30%) compared to all other areas of unmet need (14-27%), indicating that of those who do access relevant services, there may be a greater gap in services in this area.**

"Many disabled people need support from trained professionals, but it's really hard to find the personnel to support those disabled members, including children and adults."

- Service Provider

For many disabled individuals in the community, accessing consistent, affordable support from trained professionals is difficult in Palo Alto and the Bay Area overall. Both children and adults, require professional support workers trained to address specific medical diagnoses and disabilities. However, finding such specialized disability support staff locally is often challenging. The high cost of living in Palo Alto has led to a shortage of healthcare providers, therapists, and direct support workers within the city. As a result, individuals with disabilities find that they must travel long distances to receive services. Relatedly, multiple HSNA participants noted that there are limited transportation options for individuals with disabilities (as well as older adults).

Older Adult Services

A considerable proportion of service providers and community members named the sustainability of older adult services as an area in critical need of additional funding, resources, and attention countywide. Older adults feel increasingly isolated and find it harder to access essential services.

A majority of those who responded to the community member survey endorsed older adult services as a key area of need (76%; 244 out of 320 who responded). Further, most service provider survey respondents (79%; 15 out of 19 who responded) endorsed older adult services as a need among their client populations. Despite the pervasiveness of the need for older adult services, there were no respondent subgroups for which the *majority* of respondents indicated that this need was completely/mostly *met* or *unmet* by existing services¹⁵ with one exception: the majority of respondents whose racial identity was not reported (or unknown) indicated their older adult service needs were **unmet** (54%; 8 out of 15 who responded).

However, many respondents who participate in activities at the Avenidas Chinese Community Center reported that it has played an essential role in meeting their needs. Other older adults surveyed appreciate recreational opportunities including Pickleball Club and YMCA.

“Avenidas provides classes and activities which are part of ancestral heritage. These experiences are important support for my emotional and mental health.”

- Community Member

Some older adults who do not have family nearby and are not aware of where to access support, turn to their local library for support with relatively minor needs, including support with various tasks or challenges related to technology. This phenomenon may be due to libraries being more accessible and familiar, the helpfulness of individual staff at local libraries, a lack of awareness or familiarity with the senior center, or some combination of these factors (and possibly others).

“A lot of seniors need five minutes of help from someone. Usually with tech stuff but a large range of tech stuff. Like the only way to pay for a ticket was online or calling from a phone....”

- Service Provider

Service providers expressed concerns about the growing population of older adults outpacing allocated resources, leading to longer wait times and other barriers to participation. Providers note that there are significant limits to what local agencies can provide with respect to transportation, social activities, medical services, and counseling for older adults.

¹⁵ For all Community Survey respondent subgroups, responses for this specific need was distributed evenly across “not met”, “somewhat met”, and “mostly or completely met”, such that no single category constituted the majority of responses.

"Adequate funding for senior services countywide is the biggest challenge for us. We cannot charge fees for services under the Older Americans Act. Our level of staffing and availability of services is directly related to grant support we receive."

- Service Provider

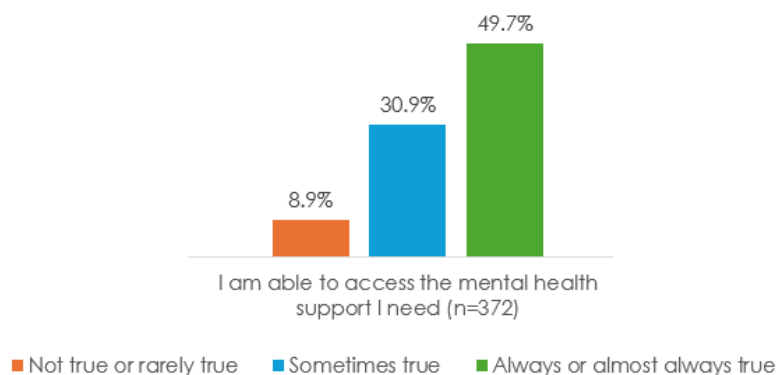
Adding to these concerns, a community member highlighted the precarious situation many older adults face in Palo Alto, emphasizing the critical role of safety net services such as affordable housing, income programs like Social Security and SSI, healthcare, and case management. This perspective underscores the broader challenge of aging in Palo Alto, where a sudden change in circumstances can lead to a crisis, further straining the already limited support systems available.

Mental Health Supports for Adults & Youth

Both adult and youth mental health emerged as areas with moderate levels of unmet need from the needs assessment.

Nearly all provider survey respondents endorsed adult mental health support as a need among their client populations (86%; 25 out of 29) and a majority of those who responded to the community member survey endorsed adult mental health support as an important area of need (75%; 236 out of 316). Additionally, one-in-ten community members (9%) indicated that they are rarely if ever able to access the mental health supports they need while nearly one third reported that can personally access the mental health support they need only "sometimes" (31%) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Community Survey Wellness Indicators: Mental Health Service Access



Some community survey respondent subgroups indicated that adult mental health support was unmet by existing services more often than other subgroups. Namely, most respondents who were experiencing **homelessness** indicated their needs for adult mental health support were unmet (8 out of 12 who responded). Additionally, more than half of respondents who

identified as “**another race**” (including multiracial¹⁶) indicated their needs for adult mental health support were unmet (53%; 9 out of 17 who responded).

Approximately two-thirds of community members (65%) and some service providers also named youth mental health as a specific area of unmet need. The extent of the unmet need among youth may be underrepresented in the quantitative survey findings given the community survey was *not* administered to school age youth (under the age of 18). However, several participants who engaged with the qualitative research indicated that the stress associated with academic performance and other pressures is impacting many students from an early age. Simultaneously, they noted that resources are often insufficient to meet this growing demand particularly for lower income families who are impacted by the disparity in access to resources. These accounts underscore the need for a more comprehensive and accessible (geographically, financially) mental health support system that spans all stages of youth development in Palo Alto, from early childhood through adolescence.

"Youth and teen mental health [services and supports] will definitely be needed in this community. It connects directly with some of the tragic suicides and the high pressure in the education system."

- Community Member

"When we think of mental health, we think of adults and teens. We need to think about elementary students. And then we also need to think about 0 through 5."

- Community Member

Food & Nutrition Services

A majority of those who responded to the community member survey endorsed food and nutrition services as an area of need (71%; 228 out of 320). Although this need was common among survey respondents overall, specific subgroups endorsed it more frequently than others. Most notably, all respondents who identified as **Native American or Alaska Native** only (Not Hispanic or Latinx) (19 out of 19) and nearly all who identified as **Black or African American** only (Not Hispanic or Latinx) (18 out of 19 who responded) endorsed food and nutrition services as a need. Further, most provider survey respondents (17 out of 24 who responded) endorsed food and nutrition services as a need among their client populations.

Despite the pervasiveness of the need for food and nutrition assistance, there were no respondent subgroups for which the *majority* of respondents indicated that this need was

¹⁶ For this analysis, “another race” included: Middle Eastern or North African only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Jewish only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), and Multiracial (Not Hispanic or Latinx).

completely/mostly *met* or completely/mostly *unmet* by existing services.¹⁷ However, a statistically significant larger proportion of **individuals with a household income of \$60,000 or less** indicate their food and nutrition needs are either not met or only somewhat met relative to those with a higher income (74% vs. 60%). Additionally, among human services recipients, a greater proportion identified food and nutrition services as an unmet need relative to other areas of need (apart from services for adults with disabilities), indicating that of *those who do* access relevant services, there may be a greater gap in services that meet the need in this area.

“The [food bank] is only open Monday to Friday.”

- Community Member

Some unhoused community members reported traveling outside of the City of Palo Alto for higher quality and quantity of food, as well as the ability to access free food on Saturdays and Sundays when local Palo Alto based food and nutrition services are closed. Other community members noted a lack of transportation to food pantries.

¹⁷ For all Community Survey respondent subgroups, responses for this specific need was distributed evenly across “not met”, “somewhat met”, and “mostly or completely met”, such that no single category constituted the majority of responses.



Additional Areas of Unmet Need for Specific Demographic Subgroups

Medical and Physical Health Care

A majority of Palo Alto residents who responded to the community member survey endorsed medical/physical health care as an important area of need (78%; 245 out of 315 who responded), however medical/physical health care needs are somewhat or mostly met for nearly all respondents (88%), with one exception: the majority of **respondents who were experiencing homelessness indicated their needs for medical/physical health care were unmet (58%; 7 out of 12 who responded).**

"Palo Alto citizens cannot get the appropriate medical therapeutic services, or they have to commute too far away."

- Community Member

Immigrant populations reported facing further challenges in accessing medical care, particularly when language barriers are involved. One participant highlighted, "If you speak a language outside of just Spanish, Cantonese, or Mandarin, it can be really hard to navigate the healthcare system." This adds another layer of difficulty for non-English speaking residents in obtaining the care they need.

Emergency Financial Assistance

A majority of those who responded to the community member survey endorsed emergency financial assistance as an important area of need (73%; 229 out of 316 who responded), however specific subgroups endorsed this need more frequently than others. Most notably, the majority of respondents who identified as **Black or African American** only (Not Hispanic or Latinx) (100%; 19 out of 19 who responded) or **Native American or Alaska Native** only (Not Hispanic or Latinx) (100%; 19 out of 19 who responded) endorsed emergency financial assistance as a need. Most respondents with a **household income of \$120,000 or less** (72%; 200 out of 279 who responded) also endorsed this need. Additionally, most service provider survey respondents (70%; 16 out of 23 who responded) endorsed emergency financial assistance as a need among their client populations.

Some community survey respondent subgroups indicated that emergency financial assistance was **unmet** by existing services more often than other subgroups. Namely, the majority of respondents who were experiencing **homelessness** indicated their needs for emergency financial assistance were unmet (64%; 9 out of 14 who responded). Additionally, approximately two-thirds of respondents who were **disabled** indicated their needs for emergency financial assistance were unmet (65%; 11 out of 17 who responded).

Emergency financial assistance was not identified explicitly as a need by qualitative research participants, however the need for (non-emergency) financial support was implied in community members' reflections on the wealth gap and affordable housing issues plaguing the community.



Intersectionality of Identity & Needs: Unhoused Individuals, Individuals with Disabilities, & Older Adults

Additional findings specific to needs and services for Individuals with Disabilities and Older Adults can be found in the sections that follow; in contrast, additional findings for individuals experiencing homelessness can be found in the section above.

Elder abuse prevention

Most respondents experiencing homelessness and the majority of respondents who identified as disabled indicated that elder abuse prevention is an area of unmet need (63% and 60% respectively). This area of need was not mentioned in qualitative research activities nor open-ended responses in the community survey and would benefit from further exploration in subsequent assessments.

In-home care assistance

Overall, individuals who identified a need for in-home care assistance had greater rates of *unmet* need relevant to all other categories of need. Individuals experiencing homelessness had the highest rates of unmet need in this area (63%) followed by older adults (40%).



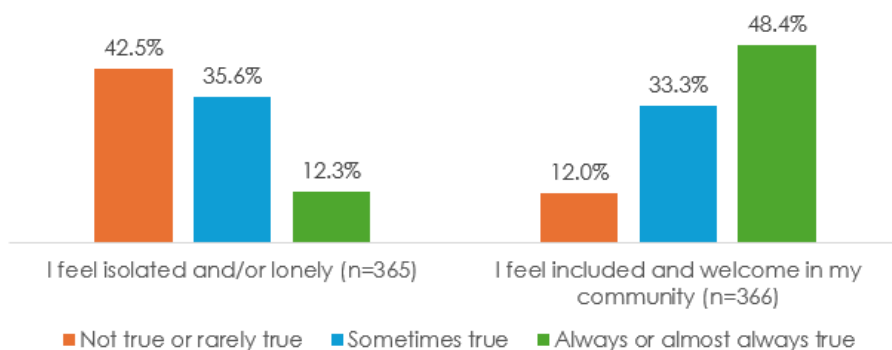
Community Connection, Isolation, and Inclusion

Community connection and engagement, along with leisure/recreation, and cultural services or affinity spaces were the most widely shared needs identified by needs assessment participants, crosscutting all demographic subgroups. However overall levels of *unmet* need with respect to these service areas were relatively low.

Nearly half of survey respondents indicated that they sometimes or almost always feel isolated and/or lonely (48%; 175 out of 365 who responded). Nearly half also indicated that they sometimes or rarely/never feel included and welcome in their community (45%; 166 out of 366 who responded) (see Figure 6). However, overall, this need is relatively well met across most subpopulations, apart **from individuals experiencing homelessness and individuals with a**

disability who experience the greatest rates of unmet need around community connection and belonging (30% and 24% respectively).

Figure 6. Community Survey Wellness Indicators: Connection & Belonging



A vast majority of community member survey respondents endorsed community engagement and connection as an area of need (87%; 295 out of 338 who responded). Similar proportions of respondents endorsed other engagement-related needs, including leisure and recreation (85%; 271 out of 319 who responded) as well as cultural services or affinity spaces (81%; 269 out of 331 who responded). These respondents reflected varying background characteristics (e.g., income, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, zip code), suggesting that community engagement and connection may be a broad and common need. This finding is further substantiated by the fact that an overwhelming majority of provider survey respondents also endorsed community engagement and connection as a need among their client populations (20 out of 22 providers who answered this question).

“It feels like the community is not engaged with each other. Very individualistic and it can be very lonely. We are closed in our little, small groups- religious, cultural, or other affiliation, rather than having neighborhood connection.”

– Community Member

Many qualitative research participants expressed appreciation for Palo Alto's local amenities, finding it a good place to raise a family, with high quality libraries and parks, however, many others also felt that opportunities for community connection and engagement were limited. High needs groups such as unhoused individuals, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers as well as immigrants and those who work but do not live in Palo Alto (because they cannot afford to)—stated that they have limited opportunities to engage with other community members. The significant disparity between community members impacts not only the well-being of those whose needs are not met but also plays a role in undermining the community's overall sense of belonging and connection.

Despite the pervasiveness of the need for community connection and engagement, more than half of respondents (51%) indicated that these needs were “*somewhat met*” by existing

services¹⁸. This was largely true for most subpopulations, with one exception: nearly all respondents identifying as Native American or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latinx) indicated that their cultural service or affinity space needs were “mostly or completely met” by existing services (95%; 18 out of 19 who responded).

Qualitative research activities provided some insight into specific ways in which specific subgroups with the community experience needs pertaining to community engagement. Some **adults with disabilities**, for example, stated that they struggle with isolation and limited community engagement due to a lack of recreational programs, trained support staff, and reliable transportation. Caregivers for disabled adults in the community often face significant challenges due to the lack of support services. This absence of adequate support can quietly contribute to feelings of isolation, which might make it more difficult for these families to feel fully connected to the broader community.

This sense of isolation also affects **immigrants** and working adults who encounter barriers in accessing essential services. For many immigrants, limited language support and a lack of resources tailored to their needs present significant challenges. One participant shared, “In the communities that I have served, there are no resources to help immigrants if they're not in the school district.” This issue is particularly pronounced for immigrant groups who face additional difficulties due to limited English proficiency and the need for affordable housing.

“Outside of the school districts there are no services catering towards immigrants. There are many Latino/a/x centric services, but the community is divided along lines of disparities in race.”

– Service Provider

Working adults, especially those in lower-paying jobs, experience similar challenges due to the high cost of living and lack of affordable housing. Multiple services providers noted that they themselves and their employees cannot afford to live in Palo Alto.

“We do not live in Palo Alto. We cannot afford to live in Palo Alto. We're spending an hour to two hours driving to work and home. Some of us are up to four hours a day in cars. The amount of commute required for low-paying jobs is ridiculous, and without housing solutions, we are just going to continue to struggle to have employees come to Palo Alto.”

– Service Provider

These accounts illustrate the interconnected challenges faced by different groups within the community, highlighting the compounded impact of limited services and resources, and affordable housing on the feasibility of low-income and high-needs community members and service providers alike to remain connected and supported.

¹⁸ For all Community Survey respondent subgroups, responses for these specific needs were distributed evenly across “not met”, “somewhat met”, and “mostly or completely met”, such that no single category constituted the majority of responses.

HSRAP Funding Alignment with Needs & Recommendations for Future Funding Priorities

Approximately three-quarters of all current HSRAP funding (FY24) goes toward services for individuals experiencing homelessness, children and youth services, and services for disabilities and special needs. There is significant alignment between FY24 HSRAP funding and some areas of greatest need identified by this assessment, including homelessness/housing and services for individuals with disabilities, and to a slightly lesser extent the need for services for older adults as well as food and nutrition services. However, some areas of need identified by this assessment including food and nutrition services would benefit from greater prioritization.

Some areas of need identified by community members as part of this assessment are available in Palo Alto, in other North County cities (Mountain View, or Los Altos), or both. This is especially seen for those who have housing and emergency financial aid needs as well as food and nutrition needs. However, those who need to access physical health or mental health services often must travel to outside of the City Palo Alto to find the nearest provider. Additionally, there are very few providers offering services to older adults and individuals with disabilities in the Palo Alto Area. For this reason, greater emphasis on funding for these three areas—older adults, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with mental health—is strongly suggested in the coming year.

Human Services Best Practices Recommendations

- **Limit priority areas of funding to four or five.**
- **Develop guiding values*^{*}, **.** *Specifically,*
 - Improving Accessibility
 - Focus on Equity
 - Cultural responsiveness & centering those most impacted
 - Strength in partnership & communication
 - Sustainability
- **Lean into—and align funding—with key frameworks.** *Specifically,*
 - Social Determinants of Health***:
 - *Economic Stability* (e.g., housing instability, food insecurity, poverty),
 - *Neighborhood & Built Environment* (e.g., access to food, quality of housing),
 - *Health Care Access & Quality*
 - *Social & Community Context* (e.g., social cohesion)
 - *Education Access & Quality*
 - Consider also: Community Engagement, Power Sharing, & Capacity Building****
- **Identify overarching strategic priorities.** *Specifically,*
 - Health & wellbeing of the most vulnerable **individuals** (e.g., ensuring food, shelter, healthcare, supportive services & community connection; especially services for older adults and/or people with disabilities *^{*}, **^{**}, ***^{***};
 - Equitable, inclusive, & accessible **services** (e.g., services encouraging diversity, equity, and inclusion in marginalized communities, including access to language services) *^{*}, ***^{***};
 - Sustainability of grantee **organizations******;
 - **System** Collaboration, Communication & Integration: promote effective practice, advance collaboration & reduce the number of silos*^{*}, **^{**}.

“Fully sustaining systems [require] significant collaboration.... Ongoing trust and communication...are key to successful human service contracts and implementation.^{43,44}”***

Sources: *<https://www.sfhsa.org/partnering-sfhsa>
**<https://www.chhs.ca.gov/guiding-principles-strategic-priorities/>
***<https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>
**** <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6816239/>
*****<https://kresge.org/sites/default/files/Strengthening-the-Human-Services-Sector.pdf>

Overall, based on the findings from this mixed method analysis as well as human services best practices (including tailored recommendations pertaining to guiding values, frameworks of relevance, and strategic priorities), **we recommend that OHS emphasizing the following five service areas in the coming year:**

1. **Homelessness services & housing**
2. **Services for individuals who are disabled**
3. **Services for older adults¹⁹**
4. **Food & nutrition services**
5. **Mental health services**

A brief rationale for these recommendations can be found in the 'Recommended Areas for Sustained or Additional HSRAP Funding' below (far right column in Table 5), along with a snapshot of the total number of HSRAP grantees and total dollar amount awarded to each service area. For additional insight regarding these recommendations, please reference the findings corresponding to each service area in the 'Community Needs & Existing Services' section of this report (e.g., Figure 2 and narrative discussion of unmet needs). Additionally, areas for further consideration with respect to each of the priority service areas identified can be found in the following section of this report.

Table 5. Frequency of Existing Service Programs by Service Area & Recommendations

Service Area	Total # of Local, City, and/or County Programs	Total # of HSRAP Grantees (FY24)	Total \$ HSRAP Funding (FY24)	Level of Unmet Need Overall (2024 HSNA)	Recommended Area for Sustained or Additional HSRAP Funding (2024 HSNA)
Homeless-ness/ Housing	12	7	\$392,306	High	High: Overall homelessness services (including shelter) and access to affordable housing is the most significant area of need for Palo Altans – and individuals experiencing homelessness have the greatest rates of unmet need in all other service areas. As such, this service area could very much benefit from sustained if not increased funding from HSRAP.
Children, Youth,	12	6	\$175,975	Medium	Low: This is an area of proportionally lower rates of

¹⁹ It is important to note that while services for older adults appear to be less resourced based on HSRAP funding alone, older adults receive the more funding from the City of Palo Alto than any other demographic subgroup. The City of Palo Alto has long been funding Avenidas at approximately \$550,000 per year as a professional services contract for a variety of programs that is decided upon by the City and Avenidas.

Family, & Community Services					<i>unmet</i> need relative to other areas—across all population subgroups
Older Adults	5	5	\$159,309	High	High: Given concerns about the growing population of older adults outpacing allocated resources and higher rates of <i>unmet</i> need (e.g., housing assistance), services and supports for older adults could be a service area where HSRAP could have a more significant impact in the future
Disability	13	4 ²⁰	\$187,654	High	High: The rate of <i>unmet</i> need with respect to services for individuals with disabilities is higher than any other service area; this is an area where HSRAP could play a greater role in supporting high needs community members
Food & Nutrition	9	3 ²¹	\$174,493	High	High: Individuals who access services identified this as their second greatest <i>unmet</i> need, only surpassed by services with adults with disabilities; there is opportunity for HSRAP funding to make a greater impact in this service area
Mental Health	13	3 ²²	\$43,216	Medium	Medium: Additional targeted, investment in this area would be appropriate to ensure that community members can readily access services locally
Medical/Physical	15	2 ²³	\$113,759	Medium	Low to Medium: Although there is substantial <i>unmet</i> need in this

²⁰ Vista Center for the Blind is a program for the visionally impaired and is also counted under services for Older Adults.

²¹ La Comida is a senior nutrition program, and the Health Trust runs the Meals on Wheels program; both programs are also counted under services for Older Adults.

²² Adolescent Counseling Services ASAT is a program for youth addiction counseling and the Children's Health Council is a mental health program for youth; both programs are also counted under services for Children, Youth, Family, & Community Services.

²³ Peninsula Healthcare Connection and Ravenswood help low-income/homeless individuals with Medical/Physical healthcare needs.

Health					area, this is an area that is seemingly largely beyond HSRAP's sphere of influence and one in which there are numerous providers (including large institutions like Stanford) where service improvements would make the greatest difference—including improvements to wait times and affordability of care
Emergency Financial Assistance	14	0	N/a	Medium	Low to Medium: While there is certainly need in this area, there are numerous service providers in the area and there many other areas where HSRAP would have a greater impact by providing sustained funding; if nothing else, OHS' could help raise awareness of existing services (vs. direct investment in this area)
Community Engagement	Unclear (depends on how this category is conceptualized)	0	N/a	Low	Low to Medium: Although this is the most <i>common</i> area of need, overall needs are largely met and intensity of need is lower than in other areas. However, it may be worth considering tailored resources and funding for low-income families and older adults
Legal Services	11	1 ²⁴	\$20,500	Low	Low: This need is mostly met and was not identified as a need in qualitative data gathering activities
Employment	6	1 ²⁵	\$38,473	Low	Low: This need is mostly met and was not identified as a need in qualitative data gathering activities

²⁴ Senior Adults Legal Assistance (SALA), also counted under services for Older Adults.

²⁵ Downtown Streets Team (also included under Homelessness Services)

Areas for Further Consideration

This section highlights service improvements needed pertaining to the main findings of this report and is paired with **considerations for OHS, HRC, the City of Palo Alto, service providers, nonprofit partners, community members, and other stakeholders**. These considerations are informed by evidence gathered and presented in this report as well as values of improving accessibility, cultural responsiveness, and strength in partnership and communication.

Barriers to Service Participation

Service improvements needed: Overall, there is a need for a greater number of free services with minimal eligibility requirements and barriers to participation. In addition to greater capacity, greater visibility and awareness of local services—including types of services offered, eligibility requirements, application processes, location, and hours—is broadly needed. Additionally, there is a need for more culturally responsive and inclusive services that meet the needs of subgroups living and/or working within the City of Palo Alto, particularly unhoused and low-income individuals and families in need of human services, individuals with disabilities, older adults, immigrants, individuals who identify as Hispanic or Latino/a/x and multiracial, LGBTQ+ and those who identify as more than one of the previously mentioned.

For consideration: Identify opportunities to **strengthen partnerships, connectivity, and messaging regarding available services**. Specifically, leverage and strengthen partnerships amongst service providers within the City of Palo Alto and across the County to expand the online resource directory²⁶ with additional information about service offerings and program eligibility for each service. Additionally, **consider opportunities to strengthen or more creatively leverage partnerships with private or philanthropic entities** to extend the network of resources and support within the community. Furthermore, **diversify modes of communication** regarding available services to meet various populations and consider ways to strengthen partnerships that can provide a foundation for stronger messaging, awareness-building, and in turn service connection (e.g., a formalized partnership with local libraries).

Additionally, strengthen service provider capacity to deliver **culturally responsive, intersectional, and inclusive services that better meet the needs of diverse consumers with intersectional identities and needs**—especially unhoused and low-income individuals who are also older adults, individuals with disabilities, or both, as well as those who identify as an immigrant, Hispanic/Latino/a/x, LGBTQ+, or some combination.

“We often work in silos but there are many challenges that are similar.”

“In larger cities there are point people to bridge resources/ideas and so on to create a more robust safety net. A convener or a system that makes convening more appetizing is a great opportunity for the city.”

²⁶ <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Community-Services/Human-Services/Information-and-Referral>

“It would be fabulous if the Office of Human Services was located at the Library. [The Downtown Library] is the end of line for two counties — San Mateo and Santa Clara County. It would be great if we advertised services and places where folks could access services. Advertising regionally would be easier than each city... all the services besides housing could be better coordinated.”

“Public private partnerships are critical, there is a lot of capital/influence in the tech community, and it would be important to align the siloes to move collectively to solve the problem.”

– City of Palo Alto Stakeholders & Service Providers

Housing Assistance & Homelessness Services

Service improvements needed: While some needs are addressed through local resources for the unhoused food pantries, and other community assets that support those at risk of homelessness, these efforts are unable to meet the broader demand for services and supports relating to housing assistance and homelessness. Improvements are specifically needed with respect to affordable housing and more consistent shelter to meet the basic needs of individuals experiencing homelessness.

Services for Individuals with Disabilities

Service improvements needed: Greater quantity and improved capacity of services is needed to better meet the needs of adults and youth with disabilities. Specifically, improvements are needed in housing, health care, transportation, and recreation and after-school care for youth with disabilities, among others.

For consideration: Increase resources and training (e.g., disability competency training) for providers working across these areas (e.g., health care, transportation, recreation, etc.) to strengthen the capacity and quality of services for individuals with disabilities.

Older Adult Services

Service improvements needed: Funding for essential services for low-income older adults and those that live alone or do not have family nearby is limited and does not meet current needs.

For consideration: Consider initiating peer support models (where older adults can provide support to one another) as well as intergenerational socialization activities. Expand access and capacity for service opportunities for older adults and improve service connections for consumers who live alone. This may include expanding access (physical space and financial accessibility) for older adults to connect. Additionally, provide resources to formal and informal community groups to facilitate creative ways to engage people (e.g., outdoor classes, group walks in a park), coordinate and implement wellness checks and outreach activities, and increase awareness of existing relevant services.

Mental Health Supports for Adults & Youth

Service improvements needed: An increase in the availability of **free or otherwise affordable** mental health support for all Palo Altans is the primary improvement needed in this area, along with increased supply (and accessibility) of services to meet the significant demand.

For consideration: Revisit resources and funding as well as communication strategies to ensure those with the greatest need and greatest barriers (financial, transportation, etc.) can more easily access and receive mental health services within the City Palo Alto.

Food & Nutrition Services

Service improvements needed: Greater and more consistent availability of food and nutrition services within Palo Alto.

For consideration: Extend hours to include at least one weekend day (e.g., Saturday) and increase funding to specifically improve accessibility and availability of food and nutrition services within the City of Palo Alto.

Areas of Unmet Need for Specific Subgroups

- **Emergency Financial Assistance for Unhoused & Low-Income Individuals**

Service improvements needed: Additional services and resources needed to support Palo Altans in need of emergency financial assistance.

- **Medical/Physical Health Care for Unhoused & Low-Income Individuals**

Service improvements needed: More timely (shorter or no waitlist), affordable, accessible (local) and comprehensive care.

For consideration: Increase the availability and capacity of programs that support people's ability to access and maintain safe and affordable housing. Consider expanding support to unhoused and low-income community members with shelter and housing search and application processes as well as search processes for identifying needed medical/physical health care.

Community Connection, Isolation, & Inclusion

While this assessment illuminated a variety of needs and gaps unique to specific subgroups of the community, it also highlighted that the most common need—although largely met—is a sense of community connection among community members from all backgrounds. Opportunities for inclusive and accessible community connection and engagement that attract and bring together a broad cross section of community members would lend itself to strengthening the social fabric and sense of community within Palo Alto.

For consideration:

- Identify new, localized, and culturally relevant opportunities for community members to connect and socialize. Given the lack of awareness of services, a well-publicized community fair hosted by the Office of Human Services in partnership with providers and the City Manager's office could be uniquely helpful in bringing a broad swath of community members together. Such opportunities could simultaneously encourage community volunteerism, raise awareness, and provide ways for community members in need to identify and seek needed services and resources available in Palo Alto and in Santa Clara County.
- Leverage and further expand opportunities and resources connected with the local library would maximize a local and *known* community hub. Qualitative research highlighted the local libraries and library staff as a strength and key resource for the community as well as older adults who seek community and support from libraries in the absence of other options.
- Expand affordable and accessible offerings for low-income families, caregivers, and youth with disabilities to fill specific community engagement needs of the community.

Appendix A: Community Member Snapshot

Table A1. Palo Alto HSNA Community Survey & Census Demographics

Category	Community Survey Count	Community Survey Percentage	Palo Alto 2020 Census Percentage ²⁷
Age (years)			
44 and younger	165	43%	32%
45-59	55	14%	21%
60-74	50	13%	14%
75 and older	61	16%	11%
Unknown/Not Reported	54	14%	N/a
Gender			
Female	203	53%	51%
Male	105	27%	49%
Another Gender Identity ²⁸	12	3%	N/a
Unknown/Not Reported	65	17%	N/a
Race/Ethnicity			
White only	149	39%	49%
Asian only	88	23%	35%
Hispanic or Latinx (of any race)	20	5%	7%
Native American or Alaska Native only	19	5%	0.1%
Black or African American only	18	5%	2%
Another Race ²⁹	18	5%	N/a

²⁷ Palo Alto 2020 Census: https://data.census.gov/profile/Palo_Alto_city,_California?q=160XX00US0655282

²⁸ Census data could not be retrieved for comparison because Community Survey respondents selected gender identity categories that were not available in the 2020 census data.

²⁹ This category includes race/ethnic groups representing fewer than 11 respondents in each of the following groups: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Multiracial (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Jewish only (Not Hispanic or Latinx), Middle Eastern or North African only (Not Hispanic or Latinx). Census data could not be retrieved for comparison because Community Survey respondents selected racial categories that were not available in the 2020 census data (i.e., Jewish, Middle Eastern or North African)

Unknown/Not Reported	73	19%	N/a
Primary Language			
English	244	63%	N/a
Unknown/Not Reported	66	17%	N/a
Mandarin	34	9%	N/a
Another Language	16	4%	N/a
Cantonese	14	4%	N/a
Spanish	11	3%	N/a
Sexual Orientation			
Straight/Heterosexual	270	70%	N/a
Unknown/Not Reported	97	25%	N/a
Another Sexual Orientation	18	5%	N/a
Zip Code			
94306	96	25%	N/a
94303	78	20%	N/a
94301	67	17%	N/a
Unknown/Not Reported	45	12%	N/a
94304	31	8%	N/a
Another Zip Code	29	8%	N/a
94302	18	5%	N/a
94305	21	6%	N/a
Household Income			
Unknown/Not Reported	121	31%	N/a
\$0-\$30k	44	11%	N/a
\$31-\$60k	37	10%	N/a
\$61-\$90k	70	18%	N/a
\$91-\$120k	58	15%	N/a

\$121-\$200k	22	6%	N/a
\$201k	33	9%	N/a
Other Roles/Identities (not mutually exclusive)			
Parent	142	37%	
Human Services Recipient	139	36%	N/a
Behavioral Health Services Recipient	106	28%	N/a
Caregiver	73	19%	N/a
Disabled	34	9%	N/a
Homeless	17	4%	N/a
TOTAL	385	100	

WARNING

PER CITY OF PALO ALTO MUNI CODE

2.31.030 Holding and storage of unclaimed property

You have 48 hours to remove your belongings or they may be removed or discarded. Property may be held for up to 90 days by the city prior to destruction.

All biohazard and perishable items will be properly discarded.

POSTED BY THE CITY OF PALO ALTO ON:

DATE / TIME / ID#

QUESTIONS CALL: (650)329-2406 M-TH 8am-4pm

Palo Alto Police Department or City staff upon complaint may mark any reported abandon property, to be removed no less than 48 hours later. Real property in a usable condition will be stored by the city for at least 90 days, after witch it may be destroyed or sold at auction. All perishable items, plants, items, soiled with biohazard, or trash will be immediately discarded. the following Palo Alto municipal codes apply:

2.31.030 Holding and storage of unclaimed property.

When lost, stolen, abandoned or otherwise unclaimed property or money, except vehicles subject to registration under the Vehicle Code of the State of California, comes into possession of the police department, the department shall hold and store such property in a safe place or with some responsible person until it is claimed and all just and reasonable charges, if any, for saving and storage thereof have been paid. The city manager shall establish rules and regulations for the storage of such unclaimed property and shall establish charges and fees for saving and storage of the same.

2.31.040 Disposition of lost, stolen, or abandoned property other than vehicles.

(a) If the owner or person entitled to the possession of lost, stolen, or abandoned property or money fails to claim the property or money, **WITHIN THREE MONTHS**, and fails to pay the charges and fees established for saving and storage of the same, the police department may sell such property to the highest bidder at public auction. Notice of such sale shall be given at least five days before the time fixed there for by publication once in a newspaper of general circulation published in the city. The notice shall give the time and place of such sale and generally describe the property to be sold. The city manager may authorize the use of unclaimed property for city purposes.

5.20.030 Discarding of solid waste and recyclable materials.

No person shall throw, drop, leave, place, keep, accumulate, or otherwise dispose of any solid waste or recyclable materials upon private property either with or without the intent to later remove the same from such place or premises, or upon any street, public right-of-way, sidewalk, gutter, stream, or creek, or the banks thereof, or any public place or public property. This section shall not prohibit the placement of solid waste or recyclable materials in public solid waste or recycling receptacles, or in containers, bins or boxes for collection in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, or at the city landfill or posted recycling centers in accordance with the procedures thereof.



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

**CITY OF PALO ALTO
CITY COUNCIL
Special Meeting
Monday, April 20, 2026
Council Chambers & Hybrid
5:30 PM**

Agenda Item

3. Discussion of the Draft 2026-2030 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness; CEQA Status—Not a project. *County Presentation*



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City Council Staff Report

From: City Manager

Report Type: STUDY SESSION

Lead Department: City Manager

Meeting Date: April 20, 2026

Report #:2601-5875

TITLE

Discussion of the Draft 2026-2030 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness; CEQA Status—Not a project.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that City Council discuss and provide feedback to County representatives on the Draft 2026-2030 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This transmits and provides a forum for Santa Clara County (County) staff to discuss and receive feedback from Council on the Draft 2026-2030 Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness. County staff will be at the April 20, 2026 Council meeting to present information and discuss the Draft Plan with the Council. Ultimately, once the County has completed outreach and finalized the Draft Plan, staff and the County anticipate the final plan to come back to the Council for review and endorsement. For the past five years, the City has aligned its work relating to homelessness and stability to the County's 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness goals addressing the root causes of homelessness, improving the quality of life for unsheltered individuals, and creating healthy neighborhoods for all, and expanding homelessness prevention and housing programs to meet demand. The 2020-2025 Plan achieved its goal of 20,830 people housed and made significant progress on a variety of fronts, including a 19 percent decrease in new households becoming homeless.¹ The new proposed draft 2026-2030 Plan contains focus areas to reduce inflow into homelessness, help people to get and stay housed, strengthen access to care and services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and center people with lived experience to lead and transform the homeless system. Similar to the 2020-2025 Plan, much of current City policy and work relating to homelessness and housing stability also aligns with the new draft Plan.

¹ 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness Final Progress Report, [communityplan-2025-final-progress-report](#).

This staff report summarizes County data related to homelessness among people affiliated with Palo Alto to help provide a shared fact base and support Council discussion and feedback on the new draft Plan.

BACKGROUND

In August 2021, Council endorsed the Santa Clara County Community Plan to End Homelessness 2020-2025.³ Over the Plan's five-year time period, the City of Palo Alto engaged in a variety of efforts supporting the Plan's strategies,⁴ including:

1. Addressing the root causes of homelessness through system and policy changes through renter protections and anti-displacement provisions;
2. Improving the quality of life for unsheltered individuals and creating healthy neighborhoods for all through piloting and then making permanent its safe parking ordinance and expanding safe parking capacity, constructing an interim housing shelter, piloting a homeless outreach team, and financially supporting a variety of services through the Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP); and
3. Expanding homelessness prevention and housing programs with \$57 million in contributions to affordable housing construction in Palo Alto.⁵

At the close of the 2020-2025 Plan, the County reported results countywide, with achievements including,

- 20,830 people housed (goal was 20,000), consisting of 47 percent chronically homeless and 26 percent families with children,
- 27,037 people placed in temporary housing and shelter,
- 38,060 people received homelessness prevention assistance, with 93 percent of families remaining stably housed while receiving services,
- 19 percent decrease in new households becoming homeless,
- 82 percent increase in temporary housing and shelter capacity, consisting of 1,533 shelter units, 1,190 interim housing units, 365 other transitional housing programs, and 332 safe parking spaces, and
- 56 deeply affordable and supportive housing developments equaling more than 6,500 homes open, under construction, or in the pipeline.

³ City Council Staff Report, August 8, 2021, <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/agendas-minutes-reports/reports/city-manager-reports-cmrs/year-archive/2021/id-13453.pdf>.

⁴ City Council Staff Report, February 10, 2025, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/meetings/ItemWithTemplateType?id=6751&meetingTemplateType=2&compiledMeetingDocumentId=13091>.

⁵ City Council Staff Presentation, August 25, 2025, <https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/api/compilemeetingattachmenthistory/historyattachment/?historyId=13976d90-1d8c-42c7-988f-e84d17a90ad0>.

Going forward, the new draft Plan⁹ was built over several months of stakeholder engagement and in consultation with community members, service providers, people with lived experience, and staff from different jurisdictions within the County. The draft Plan identifies the following four focus areas, each accompanied by three strategies, emphasizing capacity and access, service delivery, and system coordination:

- Focus Area 1 — Prevent people from becoming homeless
 - Strategy A – Expand programs and investments to prevent people from becoming homeless
 - Strategy B – Ensure services are effective to prevent people from becoming homeless
 - Strategy C – Enhance coordination across systems to prevent people from becoming homeless
- Focus Area 2 — Continue to house people and support them in retaining their housing
 - Strategy A – Increase and maintain a continuum of housing options that meets the need
 - Strategy B – Increase consistency, diversity, and quality of housing and services for people accessing the housing continuum
 - Strategy C – Improve system coordination throughout the housing continuum
- Focus Area 3 — Strengthen access to care and services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
 - Strategy A – Build capacity and expand access to trusted, culturally responsive, and coordinated services and resources throughout Santa Clara County
 - Strategy B – Increase consistency, variety, and quality of outreach, basic, and essential needs services
 - Strategy C – Invest in approaches that improve outcomes and reduce harm for people living unsheltered and the community at-large
- Focus Area 4 — Center and invest in people with lived experience to lead and transform the homeless system
 - Strategy A – Expand the representation of people with lived experience in leadership roles and decision-making bodies
 - Strategy B – Build leadership capacity and advancement pathways for people with lived experience
 - Strategy C – Equip homeless system partners to effectively partner with people with lived experience

⁹ See Attachment A: Santa Clara County Draft Plan to End Homelessness, <https://url.usb.m.mimecastprotect.com/s/KAYACoABY2cDNOnGH1fzSpUmsx?domain=osh.santaclaracounty.gov>

ANALYSIS

To best discuss the new draft Plan, it's helpful to understand the current flow of Palo Alto-affiliated people¹¹ into and out of homelessness, as well as how the City's current efforts align with the draft Plan's focus areas and strategies.

The following summarizes County data related to homelessness among people affiliated with Palo Alto, drawing on the January 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count¹² and the Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data for Calendar Year (CY) 2025¹³.

The data reflect two core realities:

Homelessness in Palo Alto, particularly unsheltered homelessness, remains a serious challenge.

The January 2025 PIT count identified 418 individuals experiencing homelessness in Palo Alto, including 399 individuals (95%) who were unsheltered. People who are sheltered and experiencing homelessness include those in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or safe havens. Those who are unsheltered are living in places not designed for habitation, such as outdoors, vehicles, streets, parks or abandoned buildings. Palo Alto's unsheltered proportion is higher than the countywide average, which makes sense given system constraints previously identified in the City's Housing and Unhoused Services Gap Analysis (e.g., limited interim shelter capacity and housing supply).

Palo Alto's response is active, coordinated, and service-provider driven.

In partnership with Santa Clara County and a network of nonprofit and healthcare providers, Palo Alto supports outreach, stabilization, interim pathways, housing problem-solving, housing navigation, and supportive services. OSH/HMIS data indicates substantial service activity across programs during CY2025, reflecting both ongoing need and significant partner work.

Key CY2025 HMIS data findings include:

- **Coordinated Entry Inflow:** 297 Palo Alto-affiliated households completed coordinated entry assessments, a consistent, community-wide intake process used to match people to appropriate resources¹⁴.

¹¹ For purposes of this staff report, "Palo Alto-affiliated" refers to households identified in OSH/HMIS jurisdiction-level reporting as having a connection to Palo Alto (commonly based on information collected during system engagement, such as self-reported connection and/or service location).

¹² County of Santa Clara, Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), "Point-in-Time Count," <https://osh.santaclaracounty.gov/data-and-reports/point-time-count>, accessed March 6, 2026.

¹³ Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), HMIS jurisdiction-level reporting for Palo Alto (Calendar Year 2025). Source file provided to the City, see Attachment B: Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing – Calendar Year 2025 Report (Palo Alto).

¹⁴ County of Santa Clara, Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), "Glossary of terms," <https://osh.santaclaracounty.gov/glossary-terms>, accessed March 6, 2026.

- **Housing Requests and Placements:** 154 Palo Alto–affiliated households requested housing assistance, and 71 households were placed into permanent housing. Placements occur through the countywide system and may be located outside Palo Alto.
- **Service Utilization:** Demand remains high across outreach, interim/shelter pathways, housing programs, and service-only supports.

Please note, PIT data are reported as individuals (persons), while coordinated entry and HMIS measures are often reported as households; these measures are not directly comparable. In HMIS reporting, households may also appear in multiple categories¹⁹ based on service needs and enrollment during the year²⁰.

System Inflow and Housing Outcomes (CY2025)

Santa Clara County’s Office of Supportive Housing administers the countywide homelessness response system, including coordinated entry, housing placement, and service tracking through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Households experiencing homelessness are assessed using the Vulnerability Index–Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), which helps prioritize households for available housing resources. HMIS data reflects participating providers and programs; some services may be underrepresented if they are not entered in HMIS. The following information is derived from HMIS and reflects system activity across CY2025²¹.

Coordinated Entry inflow provides an indicator of the scale of household need entering (or re-entering) the homelessness response system. In CY2025, 154 Palo Alto–affiliated households completed first time coordinated entry assessments, compared to 126 in CY2024. With a high unsheltered rate, it is important for Palo Alto to focus on prevention (e.g., helping people to stay housed) to reduce the overall inflow, problem-solving through interim pathways (e.g., identifying and connecting to appropriate shelter or resources) to decrease the percent who are unsheltered, and placement (i.e., into permanent housing) to improve outflow.

Housing requests and placements reflect movement through the County’s coordinated housing system. In CY2025, 154 Palo Alto–affiliated households requested housing assistance and 71 households were placed into permanent housing (countywide: 3,858 requests and 2,012 placements). Because placements occur through the countywide system, housing may be located outside Palo Alto; destination geography is not consistently available in the dataset

⁵The "breakdown of services" refers to the detailed, client-level tracking of specific assistance provided to individuals or households experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This data is categorized to track service use patterns, measure program effectiveness, and ensure that federal, state, and local funding is accurately reported. Uplift is a specific services related to bus passes.

²¹ County of Santa Clara, Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), “Glossary of terms,” accessed March 6, 2026.

used for this summary²⁵. For those experiencing homelessness, placement outcomes are one of the primary pathways to reducing unsheltered exposure and associated harms. Additionally, increasing the pace of stabilization and housing pathways supports improved conditions in public-facing areas over time.

Program Participation — Palo Alto–Affiliated Households (CY2025)

CY2025 service participation, as shown in HMIS, indicates continued demand and substantial provider activity. Households may appear in multiple categories based on needs and enrollment during the year²⁶.

- Permanent Supportive Housing²⁷: 219 households enrolled (214 housed)
- Rapid Rehousing²⁸: 74 enrolled (57 housed)
- Emergency Housing Voucher Program: 26 enrolled (26 housed)
- Emergency Shelter²⁹: 272 served
- Transitional Housing³⁰: 16 served
- Safe Parking: 72 served
- Street Outreach: 187 served
- Housing Problem Solving³¹: 203 served
- Services Only (incl. UPLIFT)³²: 563 served
- Homelessness Prevention: 29 served

²⁵ Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), HMIS jurisdiction-level reporting for Palo Alto (Calendar Year 2025). Source file provided to the City and attached to this staff report packet: [City_of_Palo_Alto_Report_OSH_CY2025.xlsx](#).

²⁶ Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), HMIS jurisdiction-level reporting for Palo Alto (Calendar Year 2025). Source file provided to the City and attached to this staff report packet: [City_of_Palo_Alto_Report_OSH_CY2025.xlsx](#).

²⁷ Housing target towards chronically homeless individuals and families, providing a rental subsidy, intensive case management, and health care. <https://osh.santaclaracounty.gov/glossary-terms>

²⁸ An intervention to help individuals or families quickly exit homelessness, consisting of identifying housing, providing a modest/declining/temporary rent subsidy, and time-limited case management.

²⁹ Temporary shelter provided for a specific time period only (e.g., 90 days).

³⁰ Temporary supportive housing, typically provided for a limited time (e.g., 2 weeks to 2 years).

³¹ A Santa Clara County program to help households identify choices and solutions to end their housing crisis (i.e., prevent homelessness or achieve housing stability).

<https://files.santaclaracounty.gov/exjcpb1571/migrated/SCC%20CoC%20-%20Housing%20Problem%20Solving%20Guidelines%20062821.pdf>

³²The Office of Supportive Housing defines support services as targeted, often individualized, assistance designed to help people experiencing homelessness or housing instability obtain permanent housing, retain their tenancy, and improve their stability. These services encompass housing navigation, case management, health services, and life skills training tailored to specific needs. UPLIFT refers to a service that provides bus passes to unhoused individuals.

These numbers, especially the high “services-only” and outreach counts, may suggest a sustained need for engagement and stabilization while households navigate limited interim and permanent housing supply. Another takeaway from this data, is that the breadth of outreach and supportive service participation reflects ongoing harm-reduction, health connection, and crisis-prevention work that supports safer outcomes for vulnerable residents. Additionally, consistent outreach and pathways to housing stability help address impacts in high-use public areas by connecting people to services and reducing the duration/intensity of unsheltered episodes.

Past and Current City Efforts and Alignment with Draft Plan

As demonstrated in the table below, the City’s current efforts and policies align with draft Plan focus areas connected to homelessness prevention, the housing continuum, and services.

Focus Area 1 – Prevent people from becoming homeless	
<i>Effort</i>	<i>Description</i>
Mediation services	Contracted with Project Sentinel to provide information, counseling, conciliation, and mediation support services for dispute resolution in rental housing, neighborhood, consumers, workplace, person to person, or community disputes for the Palo Alto Mediation Program (PAMP) and provides the same services for the City of Palo Alto Mandatory Response Program (PAMC Chapter 9.72) ⁴¹ .
Fair Housing	Awarded Project Sentinel \$22,000 (CDBG) to provide fair housing services, including complaint investigation, counseling, advocacy and community education.
Rental housing stabilization requirements	Established a variety of rental housing stabilization requirements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement to offer a 1-year lease at lease renewal for covered units (PAMC Section 9.68.030) • Just cause eviction protections that are applicable to more units than protections required by State law (PAMC Section 9.68.040) • Tenant Relocation Assistance for no-fault evictions for covered units at rates equal to or likely exceeding assistance levels required by State law (PAMC Section 9.68.050; PAMC Section 9.68.060) • Renter’s remedies if there is noncompliance with housing rental housing stabilization requirements (PAMC Section 9.68.080)

⁴¹ https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/paloalto/latest/paloalto_ca/0-0-0-66860

Focus Area 2 – Continue to house people and support them in retaining their housing	
Housing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarded Alta Housing \$87,756 (HSRAP) for enhanced housing services including youth enrichment, community-building, and economic stability services to low-income youth and families residing in Alta Housing communities. • Awarded Silicon Valley Independent Living Center \$20,067 (CDBG) to provide case management services to low-income individuals with disabilities to secure affordable and accessible housing. • Awarded LifeMoves \$39,154 (CDBG) to provide housing navigation, benefits counseling and broader case management services to clients at the Opportunity Center.
Food security	Awarded \$10,000 (Emerging Needs grant) to Alta Housing to expand its food security initiative.
Below Market Rate Housing Program	Contracted with Alta Housing to administer the City’s Below Market Rate (BMR) program designed to expand access to affordable ownership and rental housing by requiring or facilitating the creation of deed-restricted units for low- and moderate-income households.
Focus Area 3 – Strengthen access to care and services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness	
Overnight warming location (OWL)	Awarded \$113,166 (HSRAP) to Heart and Home Collaborative for Overnight Warming location for unhoused individuals, and \$10,000 (Emerging Needs grant) to lengthen the opening dates of the cold weather shelter season.
Outreach services to RV dwellers	Awarded \$70,360.00 to Karat School Project for outreach services to the RV Dweller community in Palo Alto.
Food security	Awarded \$94,174.00 to LifeMoves to reduce food insecurity for unhoused individuals by providing breakfast and lunch Monday-Friday.
Outreach & street medicine	Awarded \$241,422 (HSRAP) to Peninsula Healthcare Connections for outreach service, mental health support and street medicine for low income and unhoused individuals, along with operation of Palo Alto Food Closet.
Healthcare services	Awarded \$135,374 (HSRAP) to Ravenswood Family Health Network for healthcare services for low income and unhoused Palo Altans and \$10,000 (Emerging Needs grant) to update its Optometry care for higher quality of care to low-income and unhoused clients.
Miscellaneous services for the unhoused	Awarded \$735 (mini grant) for various services for the unhoused including (car repair, storage fees, and dental etc.)

Safe Parking Program	Funded \$447,849 to expand safe parking operations at 2000 Geng Road, adding 10 oversized vehicle spaces
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After receiving comments and feedback from Council at the study session, the County will continue to gather feedback from the community, including at an April 30th event at Mitchell Park, before bringing the final Plan to the County Board of Supervisors in late summer/early fall. Following Board approval, staff will work with the County to bring the final plan back to Council for review and endorsement. For a more detailed timeline, please see Attachment C: Santa Clara County Community Plan timeline.

FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT

This report is informational and has no direct fiscal impact. However, the data informs future resource allocation, program planning, and service capacity needs.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The City meets with the County monthly on topics relating to supportive housing, including the draft Plan. In addition to a variety of interviews, focus groups and steering committee meetings held since spring 2025 throughout Santa Clara County, there was also a north-county specific focus group held in Palo Alto focused on people with lived experience. As mentioned earlier in the report, there is an additional community engagement opportunity in Palo Alto on April 30, from 6-8 pm at Mitchell Park in the El Palo Alto room.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This item is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act because is a study session with no action required by the Council.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Santa Clara County Draft Community Plan to End Homelessness
- Attachment B: Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing Calendar Year 2025 Report (Palo Alto)
- Attachment C: Santa Clara County Community Plan Timeline

APPROVED BY:

Ed Shikada, City Manager



Santa Clara County Continuum of Care

Santa Clara County: Community Plan to End Homelessness

Focus Area 1

Prevent people from becoming homeless.

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

Sub-Strategies

A1: Increase public and private funding for homelessness prevention programs.

A2: Strengthen and sustain a high-impact homelessness prevention system.

A3: Align policy and affordable housing investment to improve housing stability for households at-risk of homelessness.

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

Sub-Strategies

B1. Prevent evictions through early identification, tenant protections, and system coordination.

B2: Enforce fair housing protections and increase access to legal services to combat housing discrimination.

B3: Leverage health care resources to prevent homelessness.

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

Sub-Strategies

C1: Prevent homelessness at discharge or system exit through coordination with health care or behavioral health institutions, foster care, or criminal legal systems.

C2: Establish partnerships to increase income and employment for those at-risk of homelessness.

C3: Strengthen partnerships with safety net services for a community-driven approach to preventing homelessness.

Focus Area 2

Continue to house people and support them in retaining their housing.

Strategy A – Increase and maintain a continuum of housing options that meets the need.

Sub-Strategies

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

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

A3: Prioritize development of housing for extremely low-income individuals and families making 30% of Area Median Income or less and set joint targets.

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

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

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

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

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

Sub-Strategies

B1: Standardize high-quality service delivery and individualized care across the housing continuum.

B2: All housing continuum programs are safe, healthy, and accessible to everyone.

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

B4: Invest in equitable workforce development programs for people with lived experience within the homeless system.

B5: Promote skill-building and career advancement opportunities for people with lived experience within the homeless system.

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

Strategy C – Improve system coordination throughout the housing continuum.

Sub-Strategies

C1: Reduce returns to homelessness and program exits.

C2: Increase coordination between property management and service providers to ensure housing stability.

C3: Reduce housing search time and expand landlord capacity for scattered site housing programs.

Focus Area 3

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

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

Sub-Strategies

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

A2: Prioritize peer-led and community-driven outreach and communications models to effectively serve underserved regions and populations who are historically underserved or overrepresented in the homeless system.

A3: Improve system-wide access to real-time, understandable, and comprehensive resource information and availability.

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

Sub-Strategies

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

B2: Ensure that service providers are equipped with the skills, capacity, and ability to effectively serve those in unsheltered situations.

B3: Create a consistent, person-centered approach to address vehicular homelessness.

B4: Connect impacted populations to culturally responsive services.

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

Sub-Strategies

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

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

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

Focus Area 4

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

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

Sub-Strategies

A1: Build capacity of local jurisdictions and organizations to increase lived experience in leadership roles and decision-making bodies

A2: Create accessible and flexible leadership opportunities that consider varying interests, availability, and backgrounds

A3: Reduce structural barriers to participation.

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

Sub-Strategies

B1: Provide opportunities such as mentorship and education for people with lived experience to establish pathways for leadership advancement.

B2: Support transitions from advisory roles to formal decision making and leadership positions.

B3: Advance equity in hiring, advancement, and retention of people with lived experience.

Strategy C – Equip homeless system partners to effectively partner with people with lived experience.

Sub-Strategies

C1: Establish standards and best practices to support authentic lived experience engagement

C2: Formalize processes to regularly evaluate the quality and depth of lived experience engagement and use findings to drive improvement.

C3: Develop clear accountability measures to transparently demonstrate how lived experience input informs decisions and system change.

City of Palo Alto Report, CY2025 (January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025)

Office of Supportive Housing, Santa Clara County

Santa Clara County Overview

Through a collective impact response implementing the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness, Santa Clara County housed over 3,300 people (about 2,012 households) in CY2025. This continued progress speaks to the efforts of partners working collaboratively on shared goals.

Since January 2020 (through December 2025):

- 20,830 people were connected to permanent housing (12,362 households)
- Prevention programs reached 38,060 at-risk people (20,341 households)
- 27,037 people (19,243 households) were served through temporary housing which consists of emergency shelter, transitional housing, and safe parking
- Supportive Housing (i.e., Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing) capacity increased by 29% with a total of 6,400 units/subsidies and 1,041 units in the pipeline
- Temporary housing (Emergency shelter, Transitional housing, and Safe Parking) capacity increased by 82% with a total of 3,420 units and over 280 shelter units in the pipeline

[Link to most recent progress report: 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness](#)

As we are implementing effective solutions and slowing the growth of the crisis, Santa Clara County saw a 5% decrease in CY2025 in homeless inflow (people seeking homelessness assistance for the first time) compared to CY2024 and a 19% decrease in homeless inflow since CY2019 (the baseline year for the Community Plan). We must summon the collective will and resources to not only respond to the current crisis and scale our successful housing strategies, but also address and eliminate the root causes of homelessness in our community. By pooling our resources and coordinating our efforts, each city's investment will be multiplied and will maximize our efforts to expand the supportive housing system and end homelessness in Santa Clara County. We hope this bi-annual report will support your City in meeting the need in your jurisdiction, as well as connect your strategies to county-wide efforts.

Homelessness in Santa Clara County and the City of Palo Alto

Measure of Homelessness	Santa Clara County	City of Palo Alto
Point-in-Time Count, January 2025	10,711 people were experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County (an increase of 8% from 9,903 in 2023) · 7,472 (70%) of them were unsheltered and 3,239 (30%) were sheltered	418 people were experiencing homelessness in the City of Palo Alto (an increase of 103% from 206 in 2023) · 399 (95%) of them were unsheltered
Measures of Homelessness (and Housing Placements)	Santa Clara County	City of Palo Alto Affiliated
Currently on the Community Housing Queue, as of January 30, 2026	5,311 households	187 households
Homeless in CY2025: Total VI-SPDAT assessments completed in CY2025	8,614 households	297 households
System Inflow (First time VI-SPDAT) & Outflow (Housing Placements), CY2025	o 3,858 households requested housing o 2,012 households were placed in permanent	o 154 households requested housing assistance o 71 households were placed in permanent

The CY2025 Santa Clara County Supportive Housing System (Active program enrollments during CY2025)

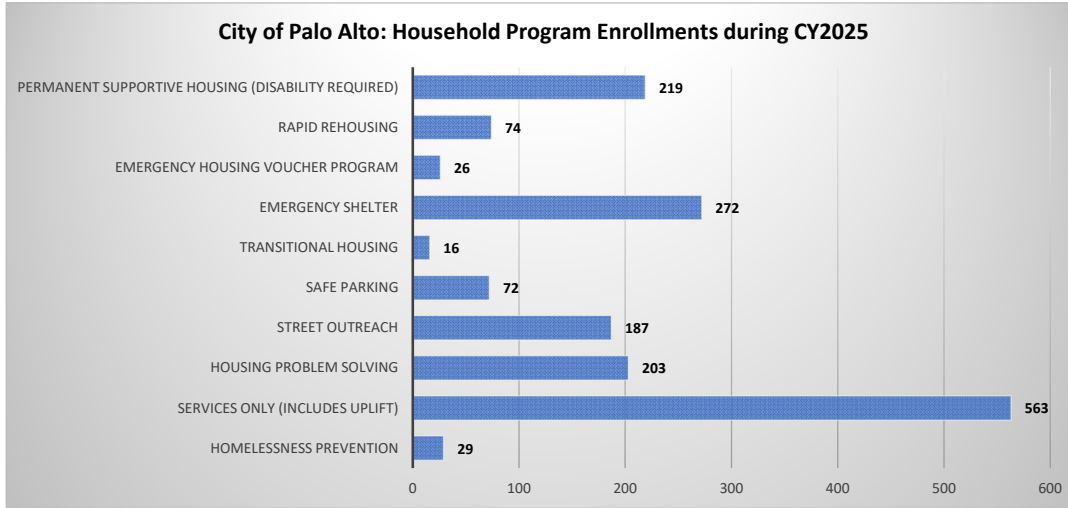
Households	Santa Clara County		City of Palo Alto Affiliated		Percent of Total SCC	
	Enrolled	Housed (if applicable)	Enrolled	Housed (if applicable)	Enrolled	Housed
Permanent Supportive Housing (disability required)	4,556	4,331	219	214	4.8%	4.9%
Rapid Rehousing	1,679	1,276	74	57	4.4%	4.5%
Emergency Housing Voucher Program	653	642	26	26	4.0%	4.0%
Emergency Shelter	5,102	NA	272	NA	5.3%	NA
Transitional Housing	529	NA	16	NA	3.0%	NA
Safe Parking	550	NA	72	NA	13.1%	NA
Street Outreach	5,194	NA	187	NA	3.6%	NA
Housing Problem Solving	4,530	NA	203	NA	4.5%	NA
Services Only (Includes UPLIFT)	8,944	NA	563	NA	6.3%	NA
Homelessness Prevention	3,121	NA	29	NA	0.9%	NA

Notes:

- Only Head of Household data are shown for these reports as planning for housing developments is done at the household level.
- Households may be enrolled in more than one program type within the reporting period.
- Homelessness Prevention city affiliation definition is based on the current zip code of the head of household at program enrollment.
- Emergency Shelter enrollments have increased as the capacity of shelter programs increased from 2,158 units in December 2024 to 2,968 units in December 2025.

Summary Chart of City of Palo Alto Affiliated Program Enrollments

Project Type	Enrolled
Homelessness Prevention	29
Services Only (Includes UPLIFT)	563
Housing Problem Solving	203
Street Outreach	187
Safe Parking	72
Transitional Housing	16
Emergency Shelter	272
Emergency Housing Voucher Program	26
Rapid Rehousing	74
Permanent Supportive Housing (disability required)	219



Homeless Inflow - First Time VI-SPDAT (Households)

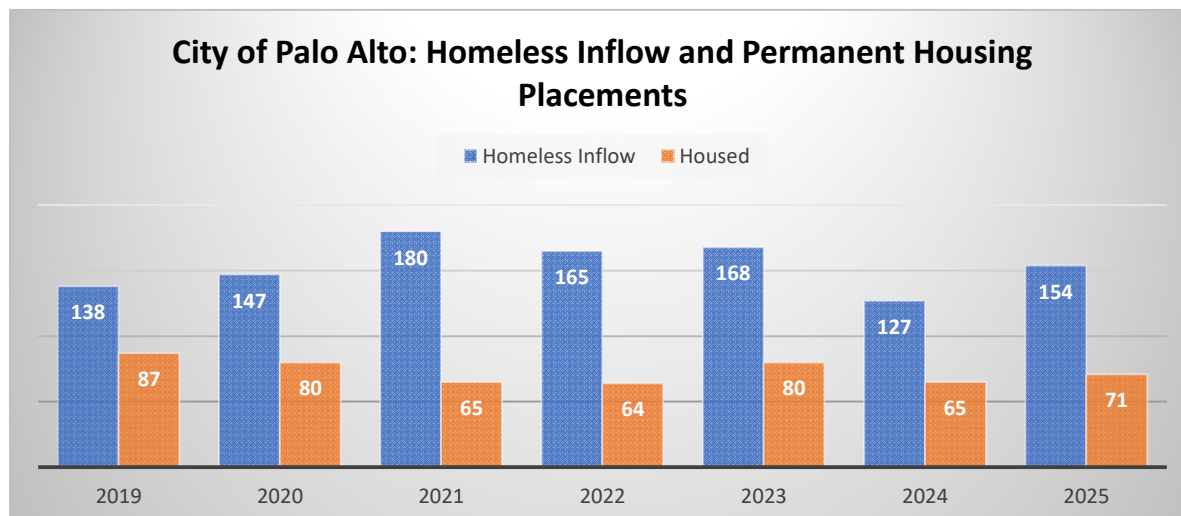
Calendar Year	Total Homeless Inflow (Santa Clara County)	City of Palo Alto Affiliated Inflow	Percent of Total
2019	4,744	138	2.9%
2020	3,419	139	4.1%
2021	3,156	173	5.5%
2022	3,440	153	4.4%
2023	4,267	162	3.8%
2024	4,071	126	3.1%
2025	3,858	154	4.0%

Households Placed in Permanent Housing

Calendar Year	Total Housed (Santa Clara County)	City of Palo Alto Affiliated Housed	Percent of Total
2019	1,947	87	4.5%
2020	2,099	80	3.8%
2021	1,943	65	3.3%
2022	2,060	64	3.1%
2023	2,509	80	3.2%
2024	2,234	65	2.9%
2025	2,012	71	3.5%

City of Palo Alto Affiliated Households

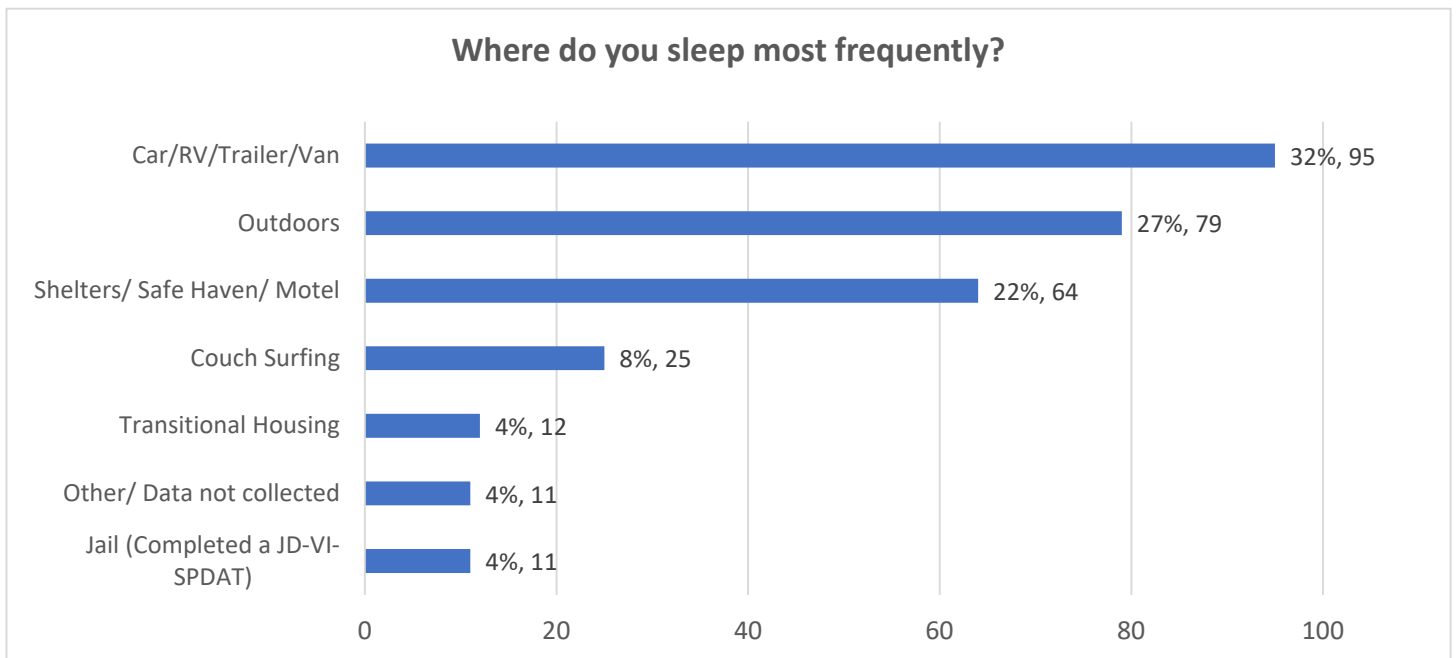
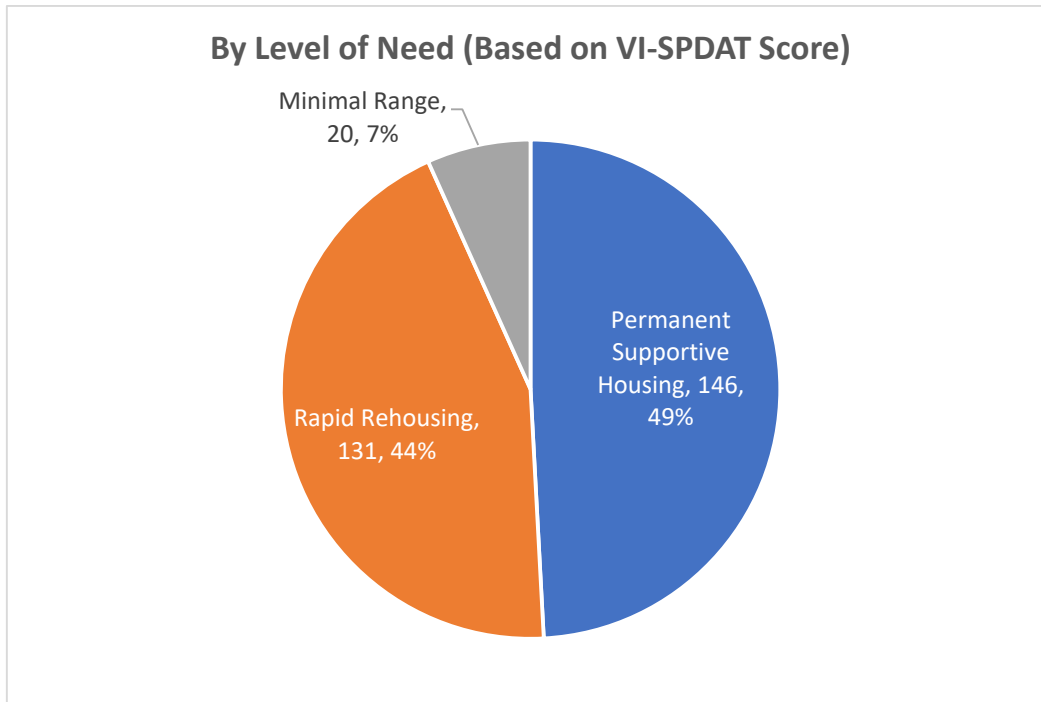
	Homeless Inflow	Housed
2019	138	87
2020	147	80
2021	180	65
2022	165	64
2023	168	80
2024	127	65
2025	154	71



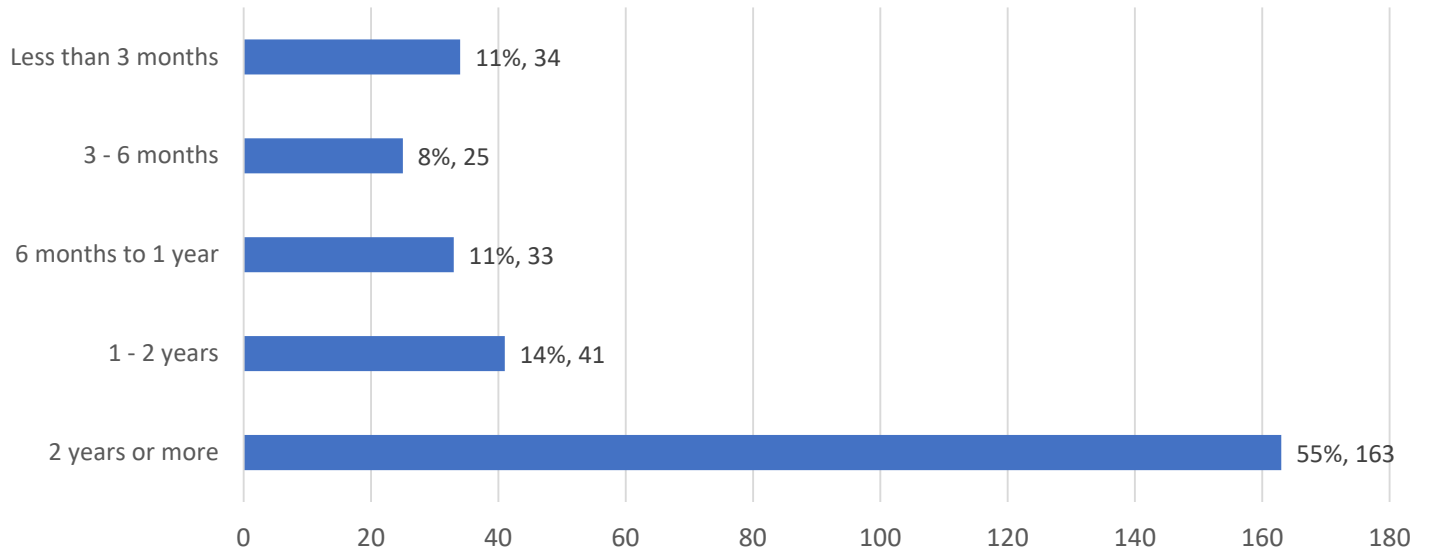
Demographics for 297 VI-SPDAT Assessments Completed in CY25, City of Palo Alto:

This represents an indicator of homelessness in CY25 for households affiliated with the City of Palo Alto

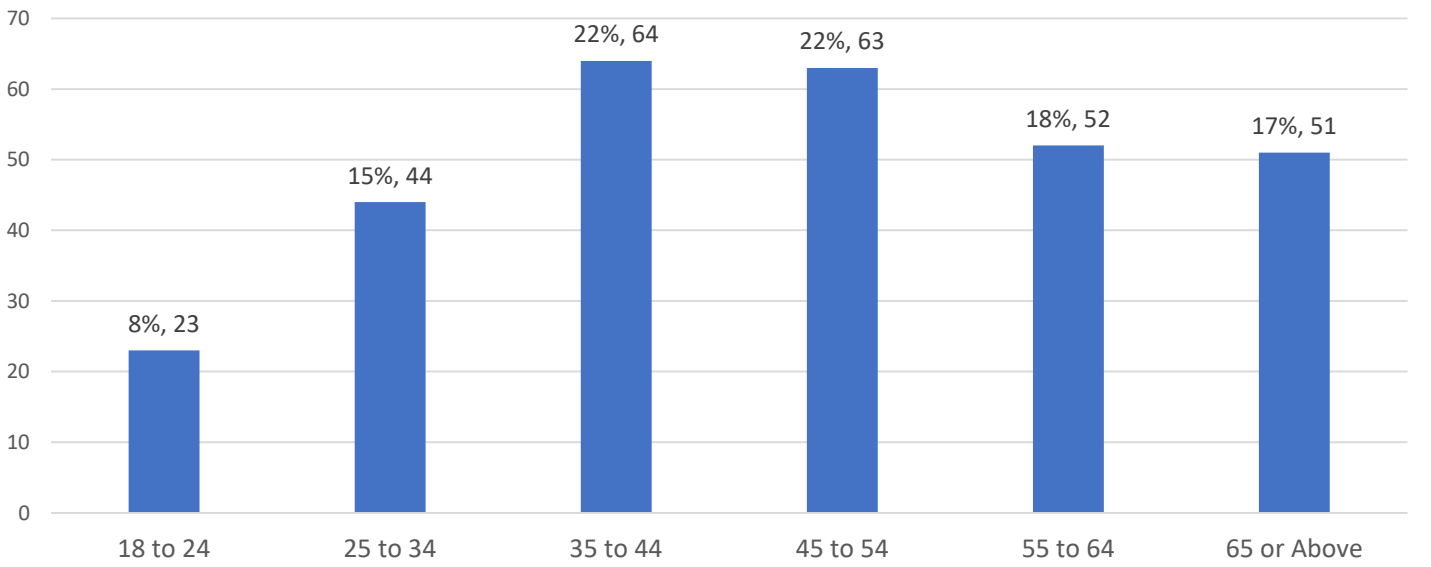
Note: Data not shown for groups with fewer than 11 respondents



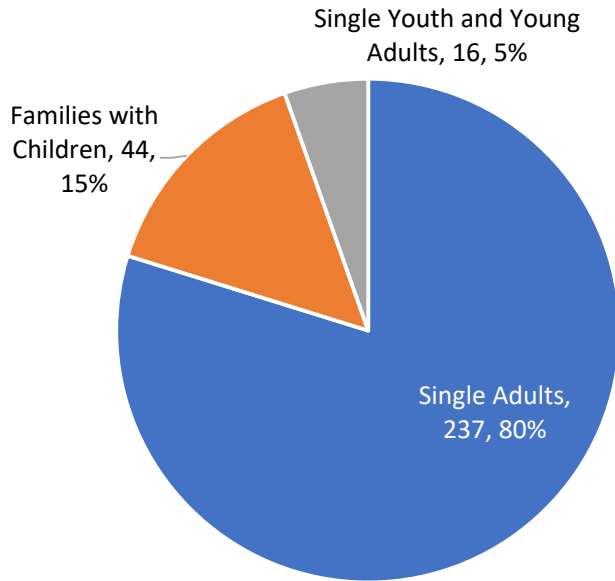
How long has it been since you lived in permanent stable housing?



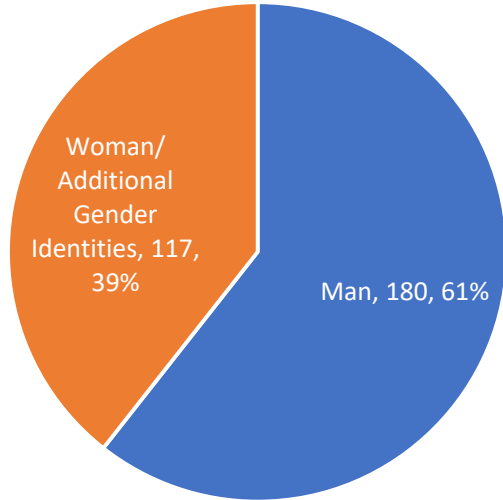
By Age Tier



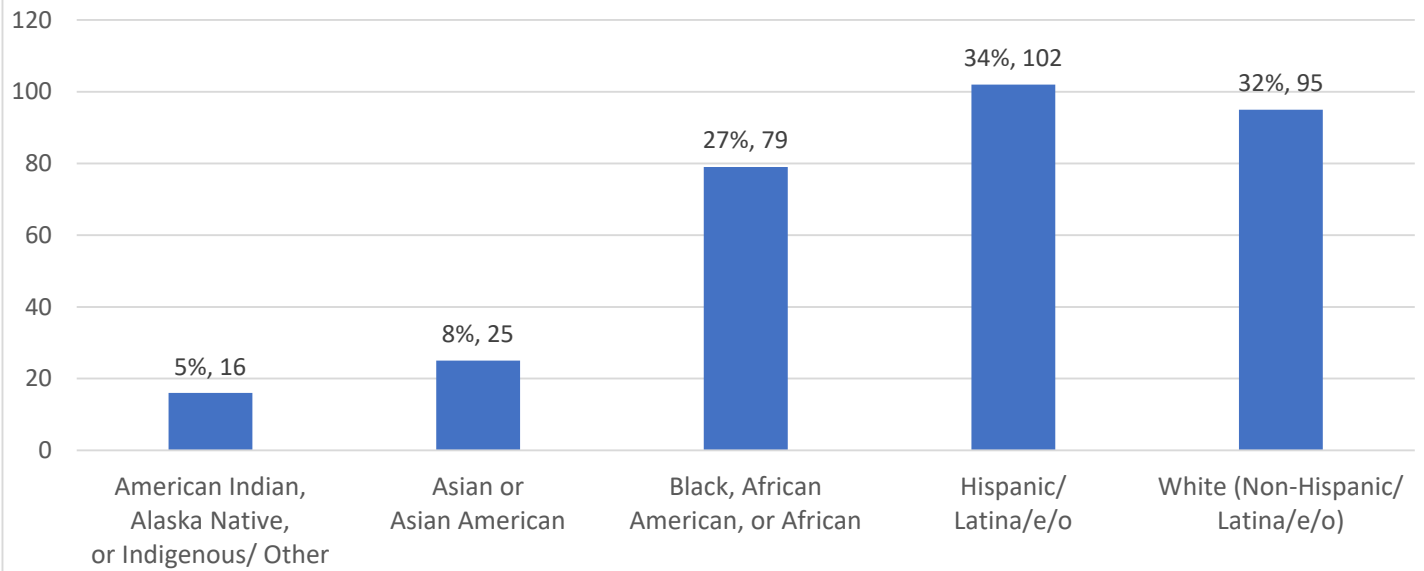
By Household Type



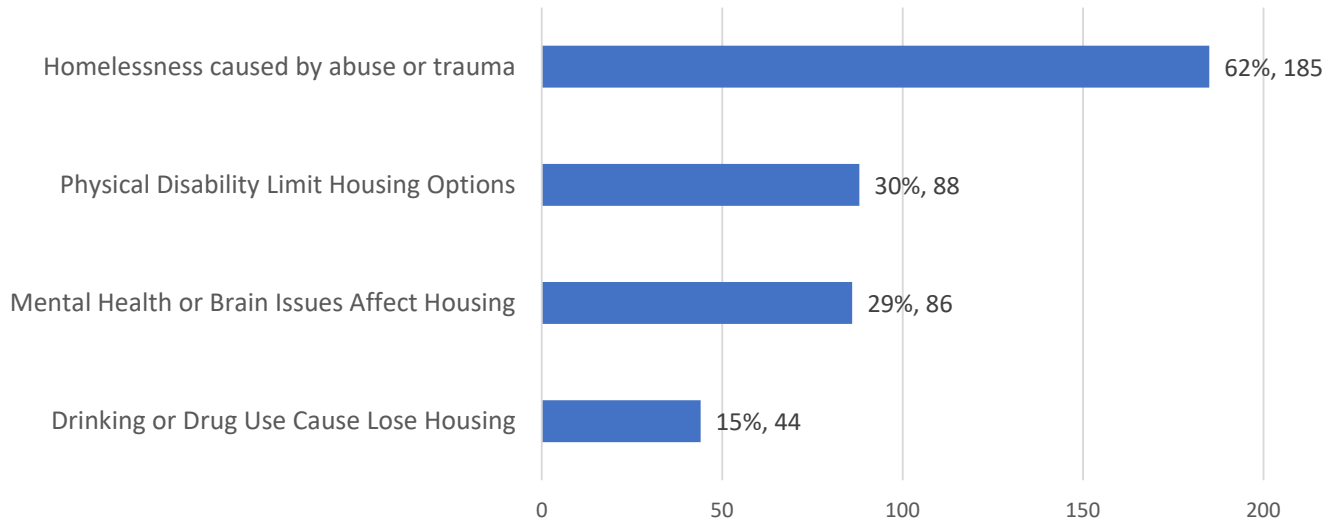
By Gender



By Race and Ethnicity (Multiple Responses Allowed)



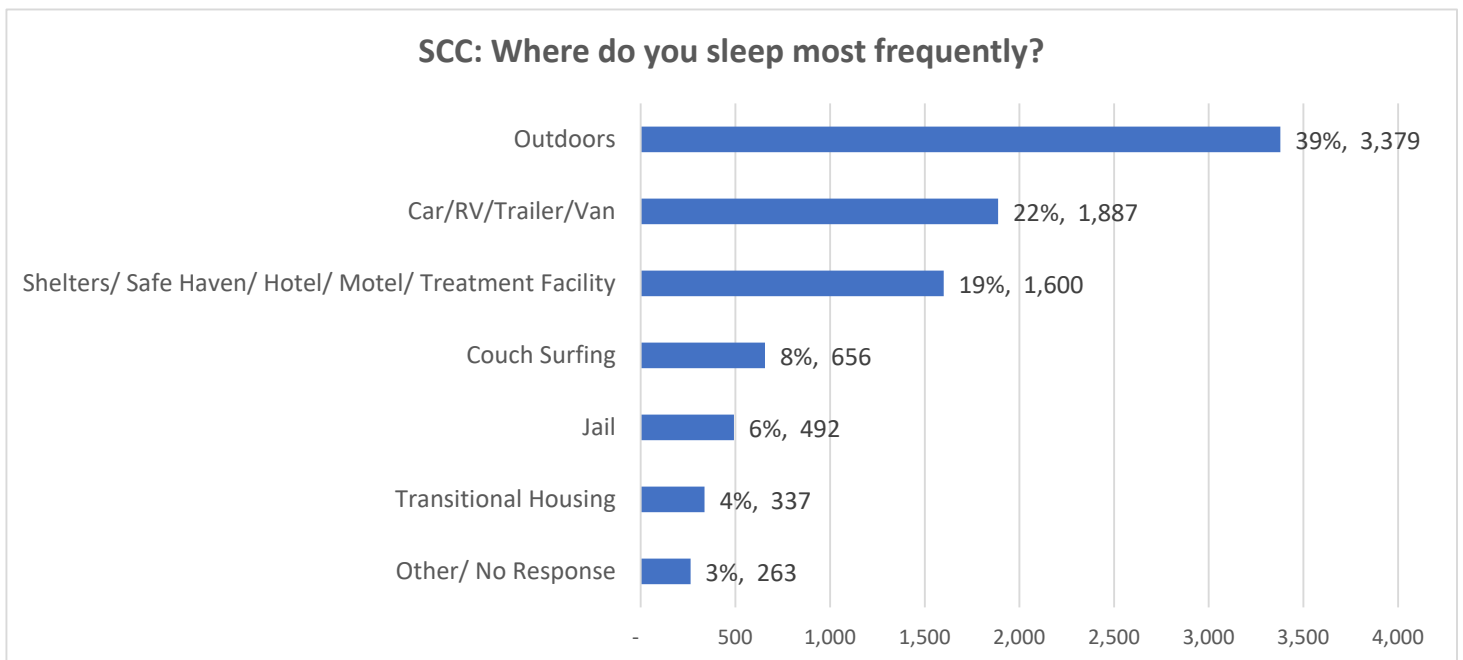
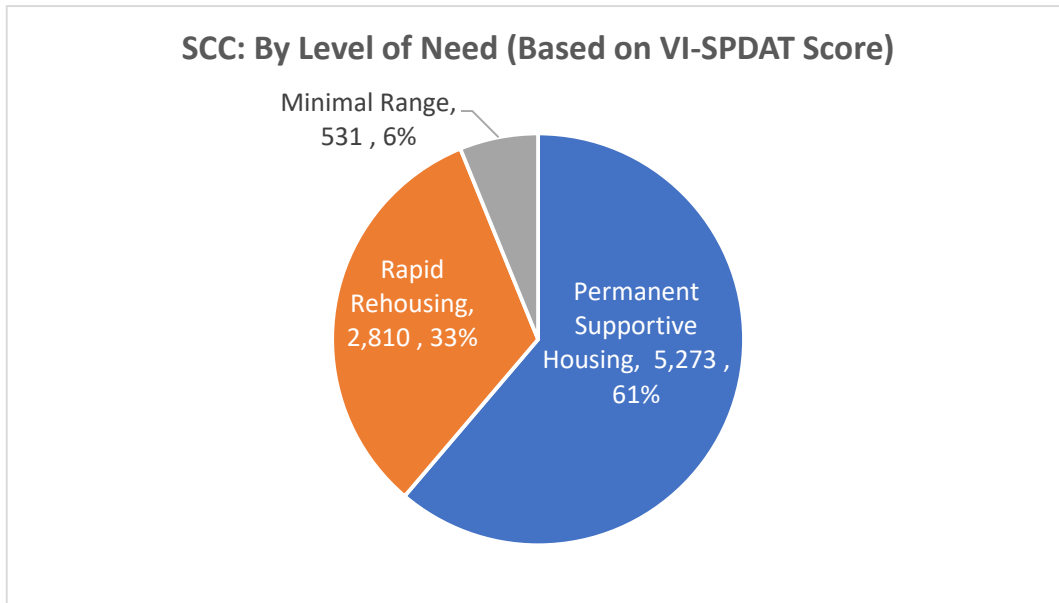
By Self-Reported Disability/Vulnerability (VI-SPDAT)



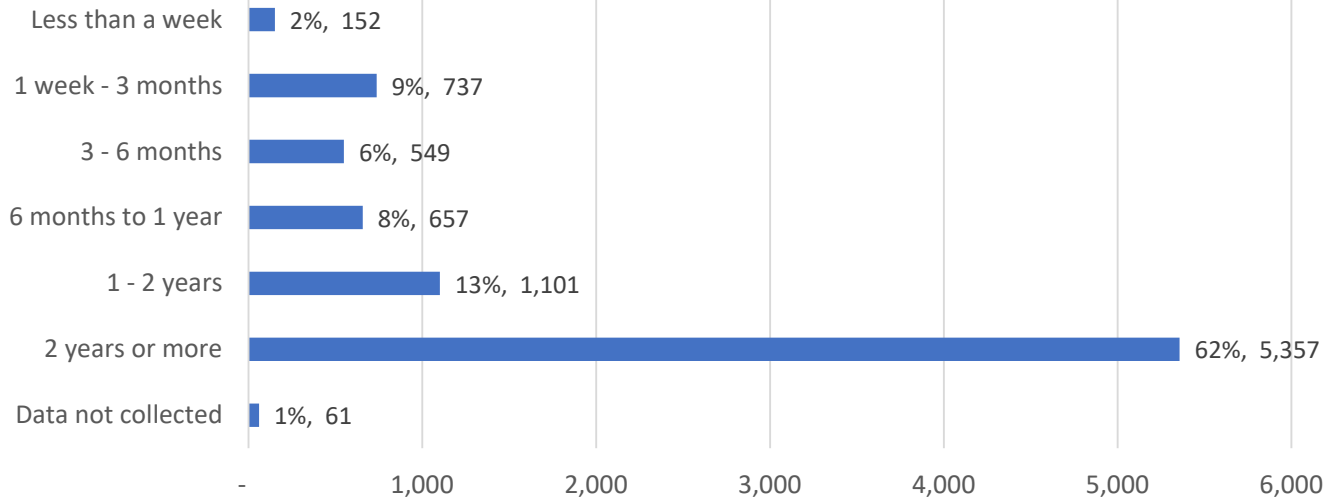
Demographics for 8,614 Total VI-SPDAT Assessments Completed in CY25 in Santa Clara County

These charts provide information if you would like to compare individual city results with results for the entire county.

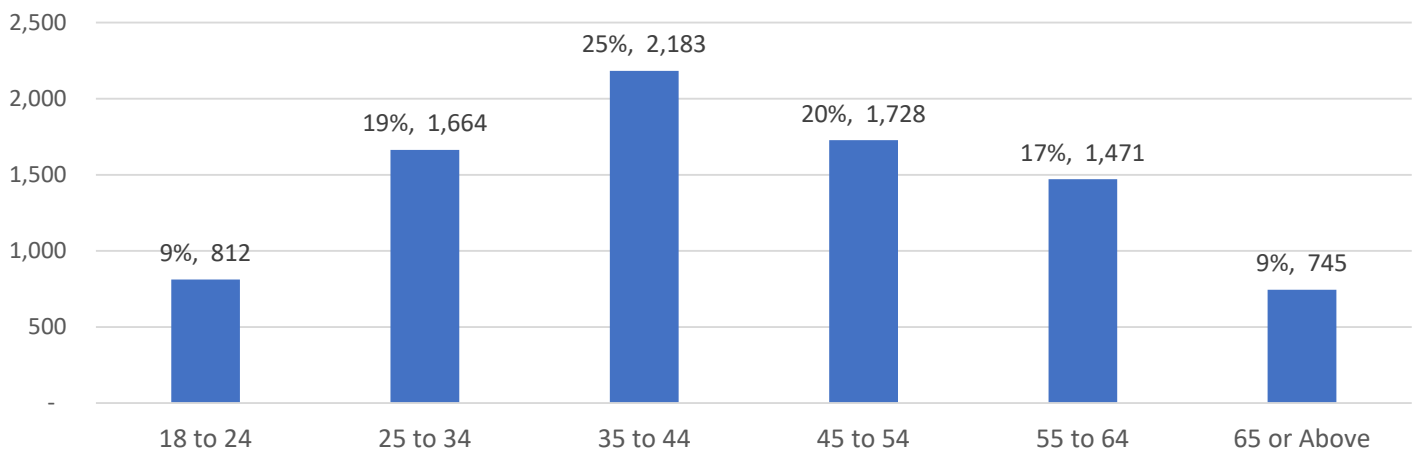
Note: Data not shown for groups with fewer than 11 respondents



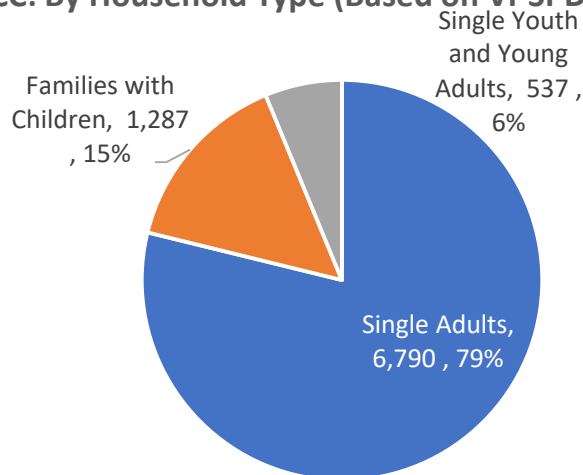
SCC: How long has it been since you lived in permanent stable housing?

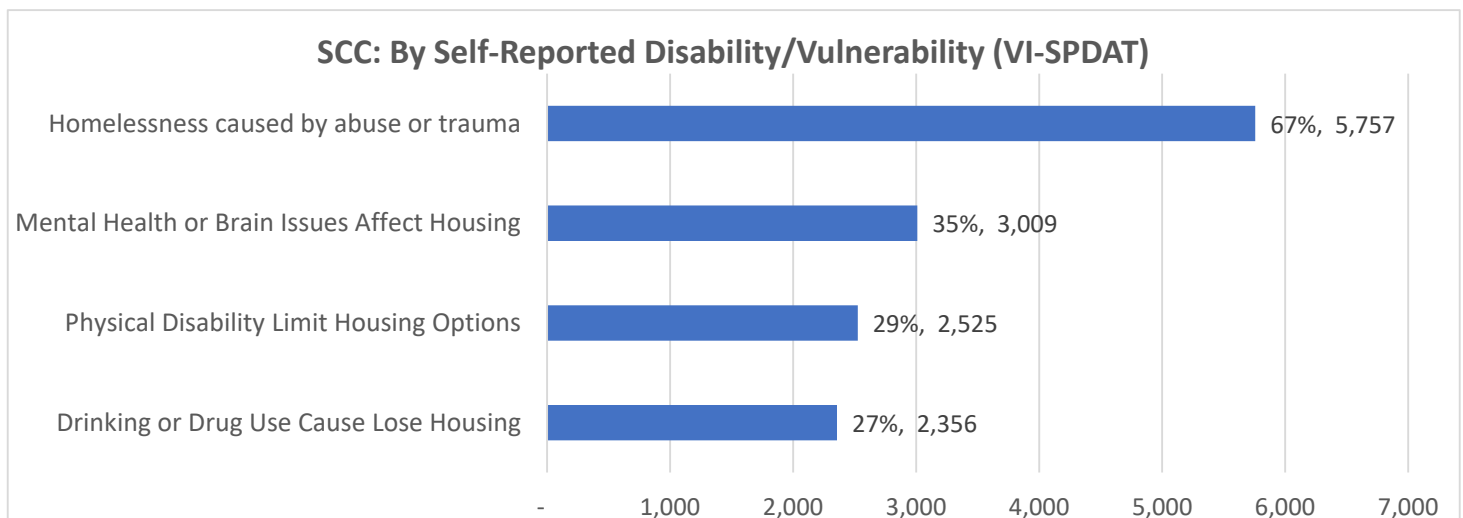
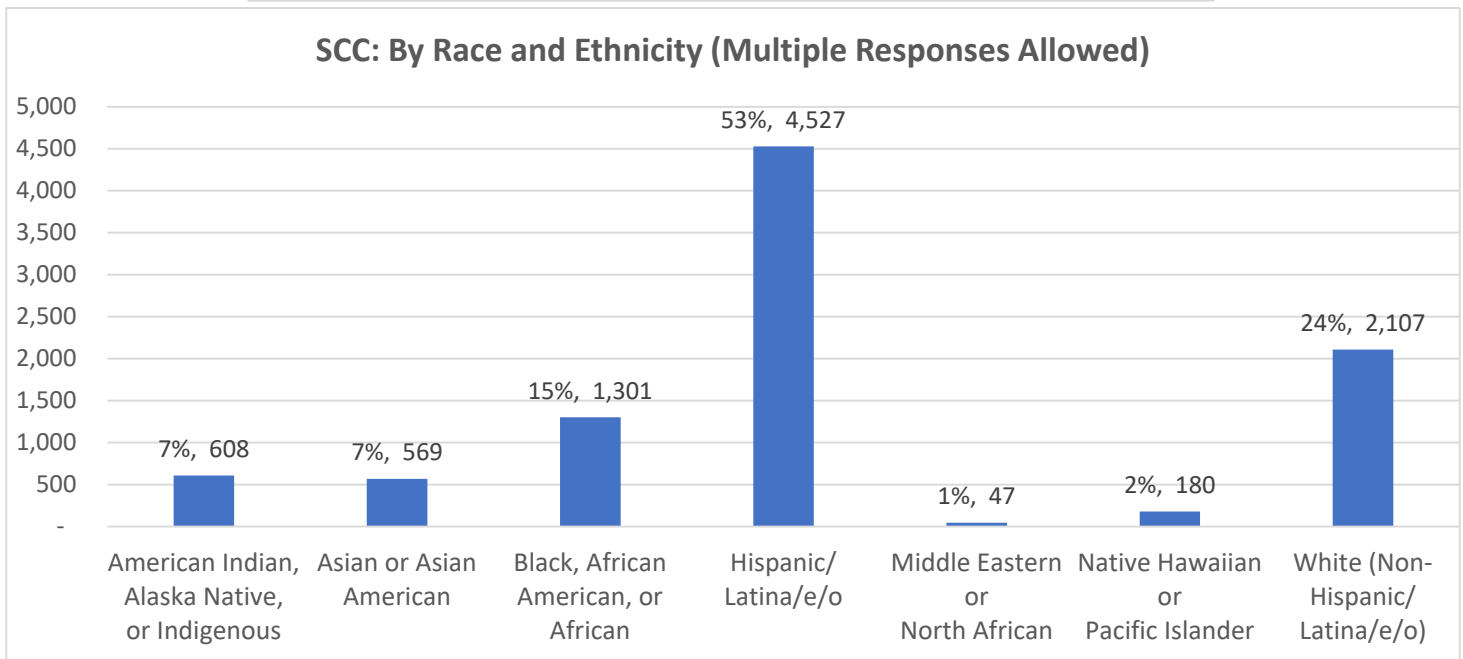
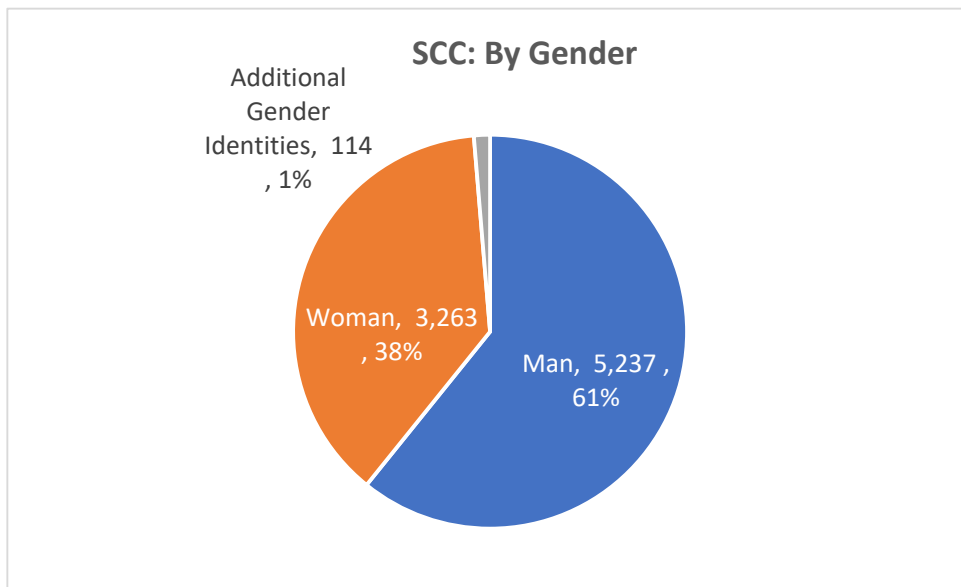


By Age Tier



SCC: By Household Type (Based on VI-SPDAT Type)





Notes and Definitions

- Enrollment and assessment data is from HMIS (Homeless Management Information System)
- Inflow: First time a person/household completes a VI-SPDAT assessment (Note that only the head of household of a household with children is instructed to take the Family VI-SPDAT assessment)
- Outflow: Households placed in permanent housing (a move-in date in a housing program or an exit to a permanent housing destination from a non-housing program). Total (Santa Clara County) numbers include HUD-VASH housing (PSH) placements but city-level data does not include most HUD-VASH clients (since city affiliation

Notes about City Affiliation:

- City affiliation is based on client self-reported data from 4 city affiliation questions (provided during an assessment) and one program enrollment field:
 - o In which city do you spend most of your time?
 - o Which city did you live in prior to becoming homeless?
 - o If you are employed, in which city is your work place?
 - o If you (or your children) go to school, in which city is your school?
 - o Zip Code of last permanent address (Program Enrollment)
- Zip Codes used in the analysis for the City of Palo Alto: 94301, 94302, 94303, 94304, 94306, 94309
- City affiliation for homeless inflow and Community Housing Queue data is based on VI-SPDAT questions only.
- City affiliation for housing placements is based on the most recent VI-SPDAT assessment and program enrollment (zip code of last permanent address).
- City affiliation for most program enrollments is based on the most recent of any assessments that have a city affiliation questions (VI-SPDAT, Community Hotline/Triage, Housing Problem Solving, Homelessness Prevention) and program enrollment (zip code of last permanent address).
- City affiliation for Housing Problem Solving is based on the Housing Problem Solving Assessment 4 city
- City affiliation for Homelessness Prevention is based on Zip code of current address at program enrollment.
- Street Outreach enrollments do not include Safe Parking enrollments as they are reported separately.
- Housing Problem Solving services include financial assistance, mediation, and attempts by case managers in person or by phone.
- Homelessness Prevention includes only HPS-DH and HPS-OSH (EAN) programs.

Note about Race and Ethnicity

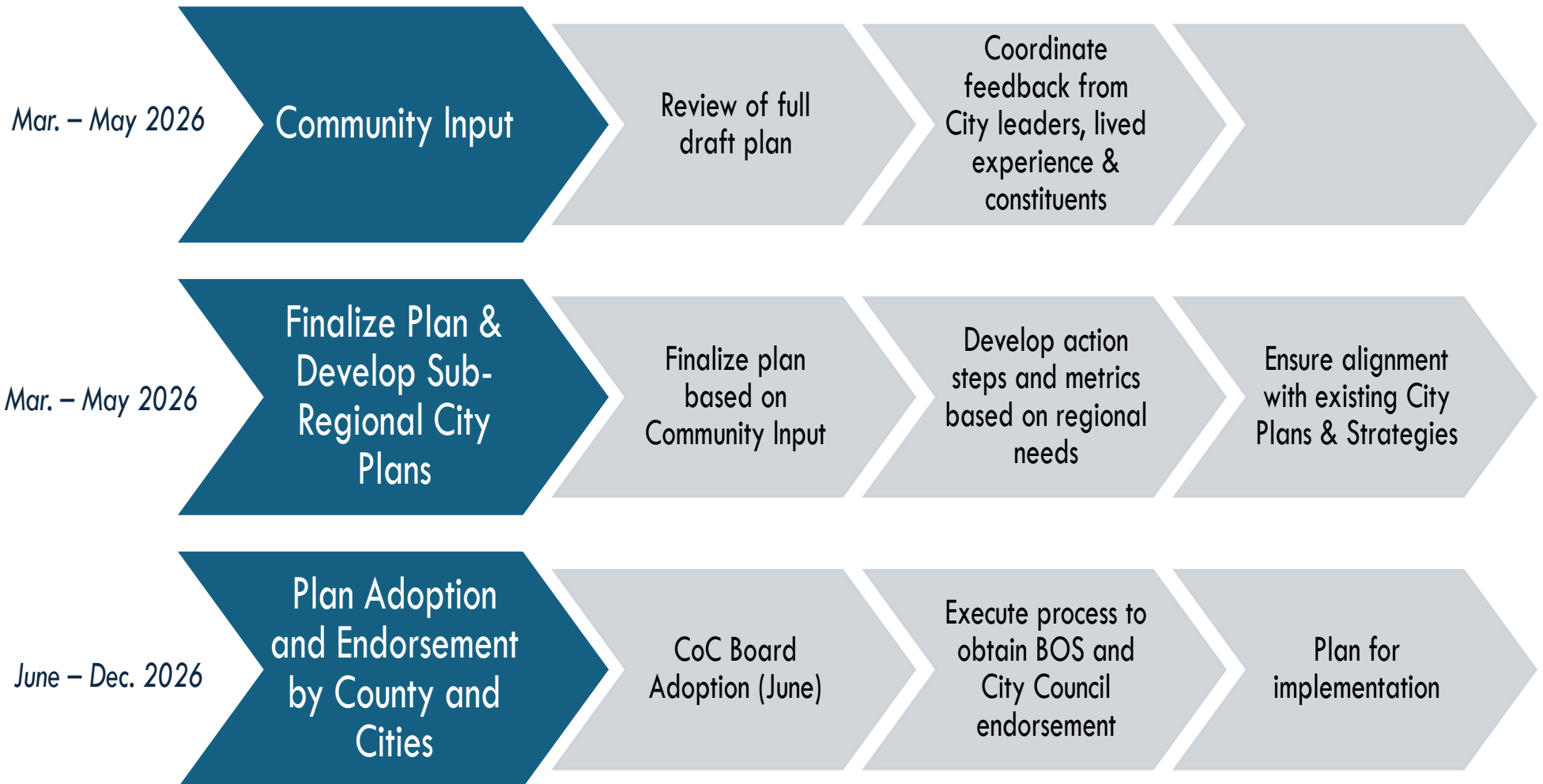
With the new 2024 HMIS data standards, Race and Ethnicity is now one question (previously it was 2 questions) and Hispanic/Latina/e/o was added to the list of Race and Ethnicity options as well as Middle Eastern/North African. Clients may choose more than one race and ethnicity option. We show the responses for each race and consequently; the numbers do not add up to 100%.

2025-2030 COMMUNITY PLAN TIMELINE

Spring 2025 – Summer/Fall 2026



NEXT STEPS



COUNCIL MEETING

04/20/26

Received Before Meeting

3



Palo Alto City Council
April 20, 2026

2020-2025

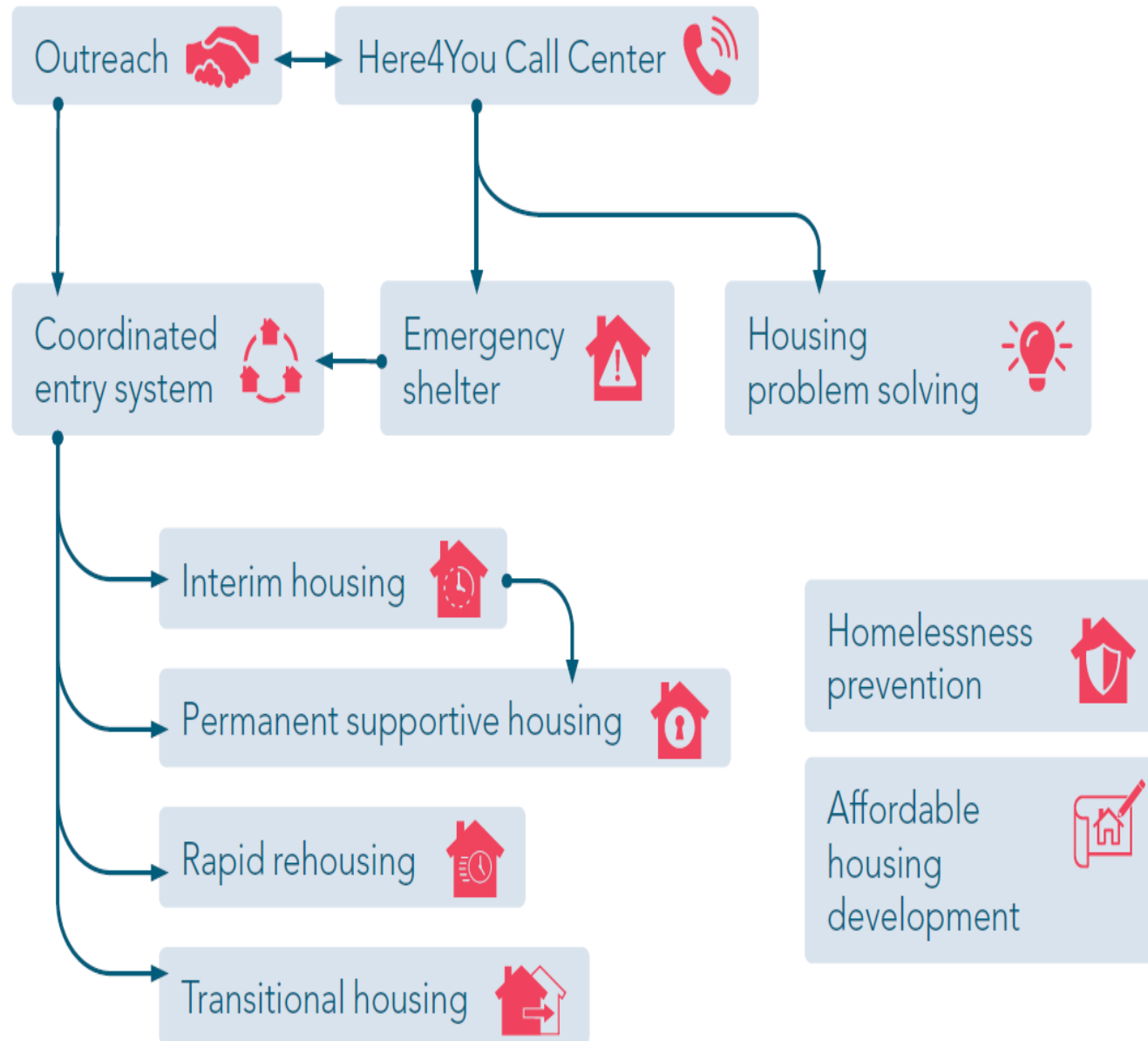
COMMUNITY PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

AGENDA



- Progress from the 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness
- Palo Alto Households Data
- Developing the Next 5-Year Community Plan to End Homelessness
- Next Steps

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SYSTEM MAP IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY



ABOUT THE CONTINUUM OF CARE

- Broad group of stakeholders dedicated to ending and preventing homelessness
- Ensure a community-wide implementation of efforts & programmatic and systemic effectiveness
- County of Santa Clara serves as the lead agency



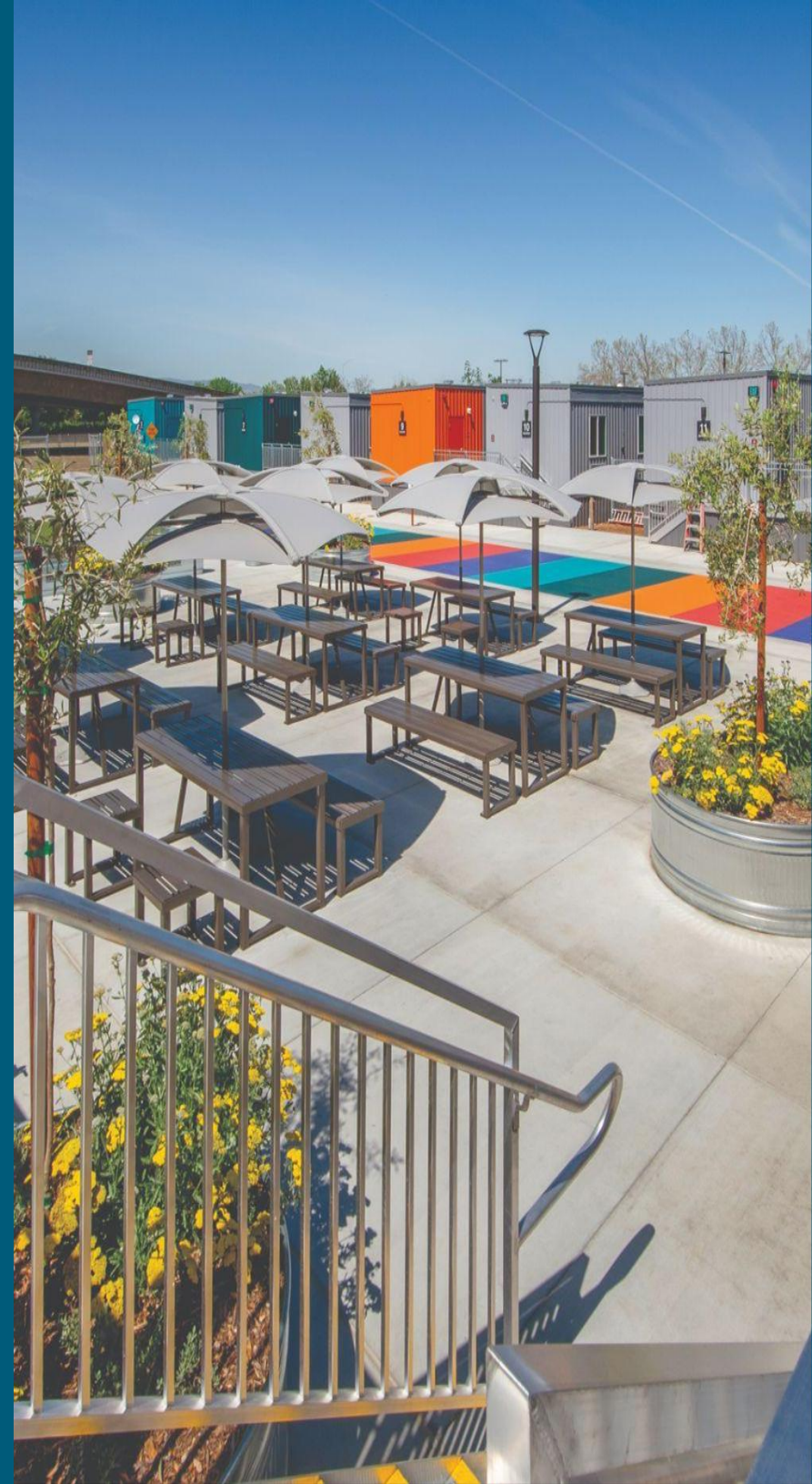
Collective Impact



...and many more!

SANTA CLARA COUNTY COMMUNITY PLAN
TO END HOMELESSNESS

Progress from the
2020-2025
Community Plan to
End Homelessness



2020-2025 COMMUNITY PLAN PROGRESS

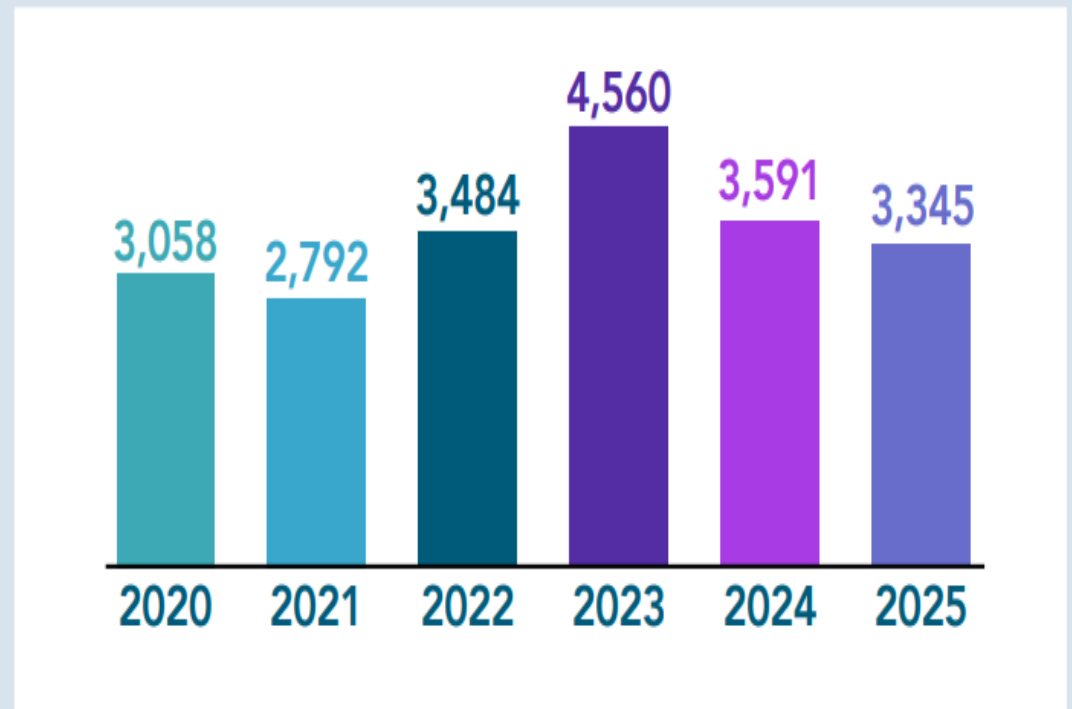
2025 GOAL:
20,000 People
Housed

GOAL ACHIEVED!



20,830
People Housed

PEOPLE HOUSED BY YEAR



2020-2025 COMMUNITY PLAN PROGRESS

2025 GOAL:
20,000 People
Housed

GOAL ACHIEVED!



KEY SUBPOPULATIONS



47%
Chronically
Homeless**



26%
Families
with Children



13%
Young Adults
(18-24)



15%
Veterans



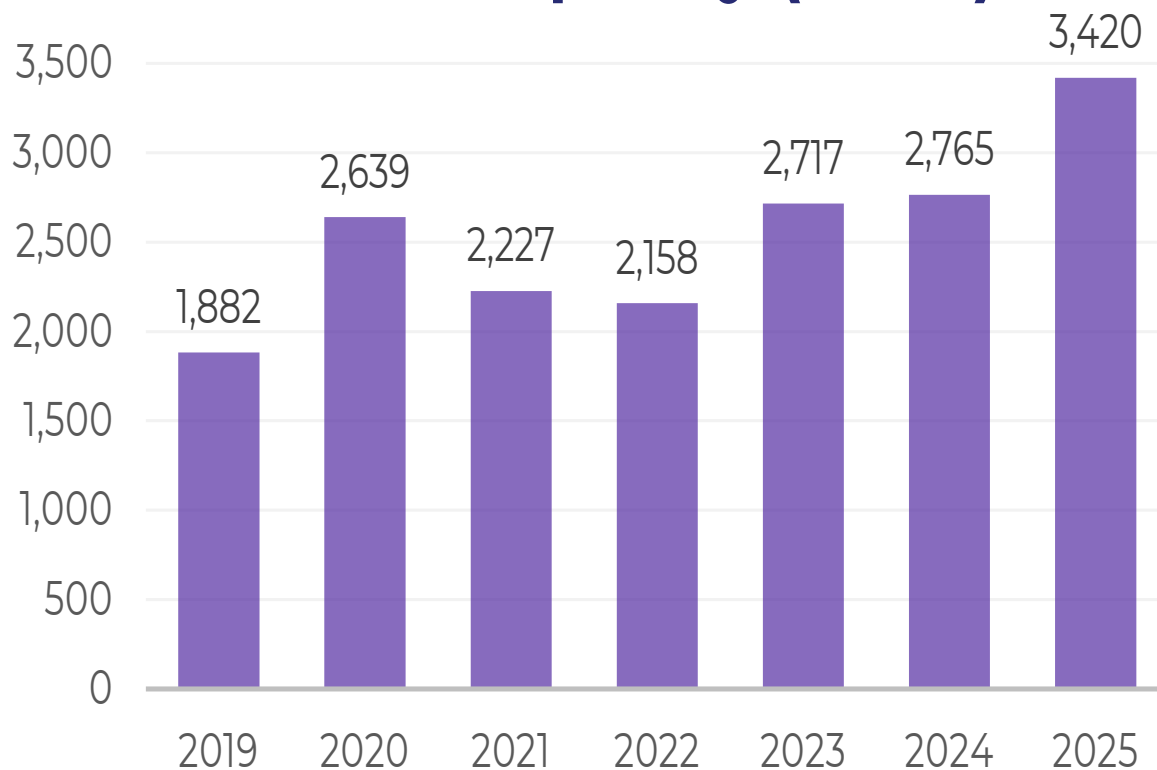
9%
Seniors
(65+)

*Based on number of households housed

**A person who has experienced homelessness for more than a year and has a disabling condition

Temporary Housing & Shelter Capacity Increased by 82%

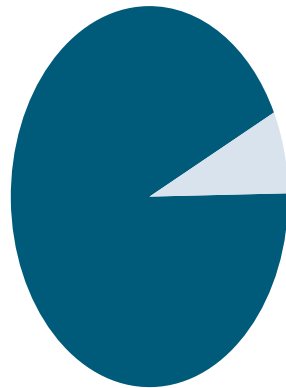
Temporary Housing and Shelter Capacity (units)



27,037 people placed in temporary housing or shelter between 2020 and 2025

38,060 People Received Homelessness Prevention Assistance

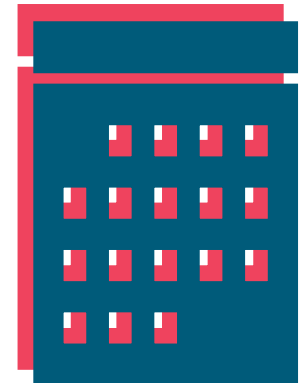
93% of families remained stably housed while receiving services.



ONE YEAR LATER



Only 5% of households became homeless.



Homelessness Prevention Capacity

2,693 households

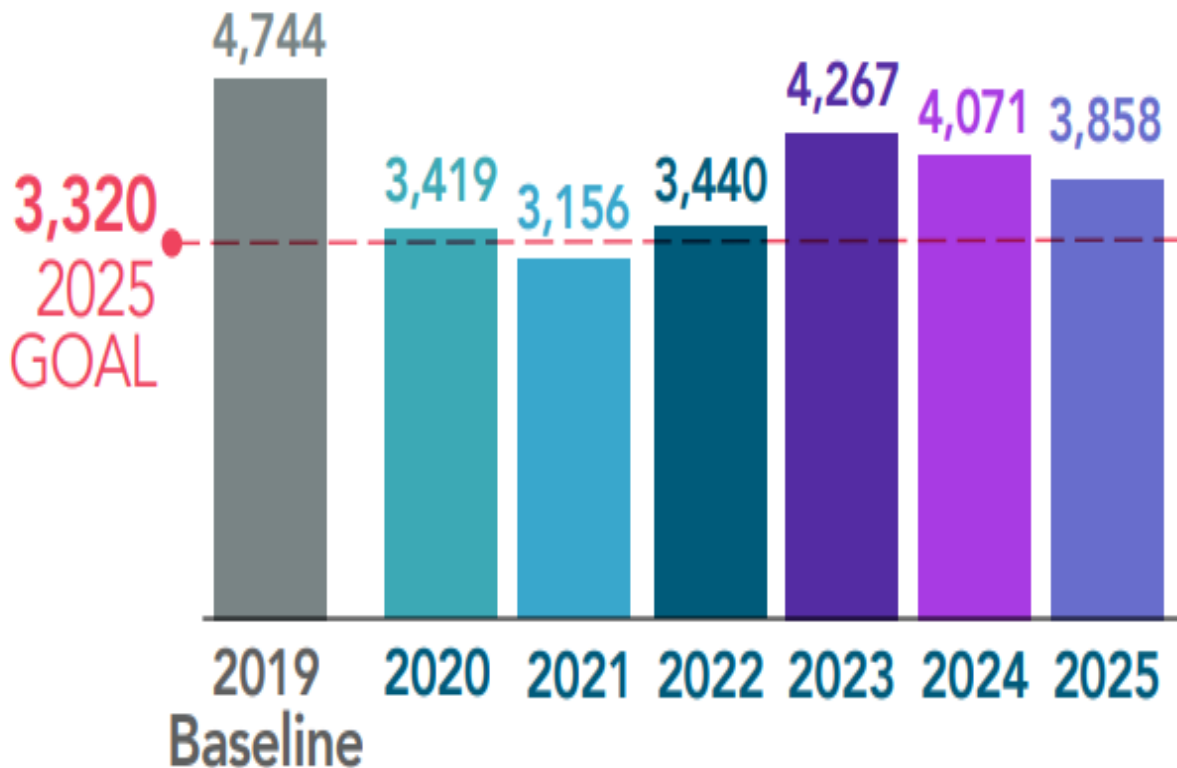
↑ **75% since Jan. 1, 2020**

2025 GOAL: 2,500 households

GOAL ACHIEVED!

19% Decrease in New Households Becoming Homeless since 2019

NEW HOUSEHOLDS ENTERING HOMELESSNESS BY YEAR



IN 2025

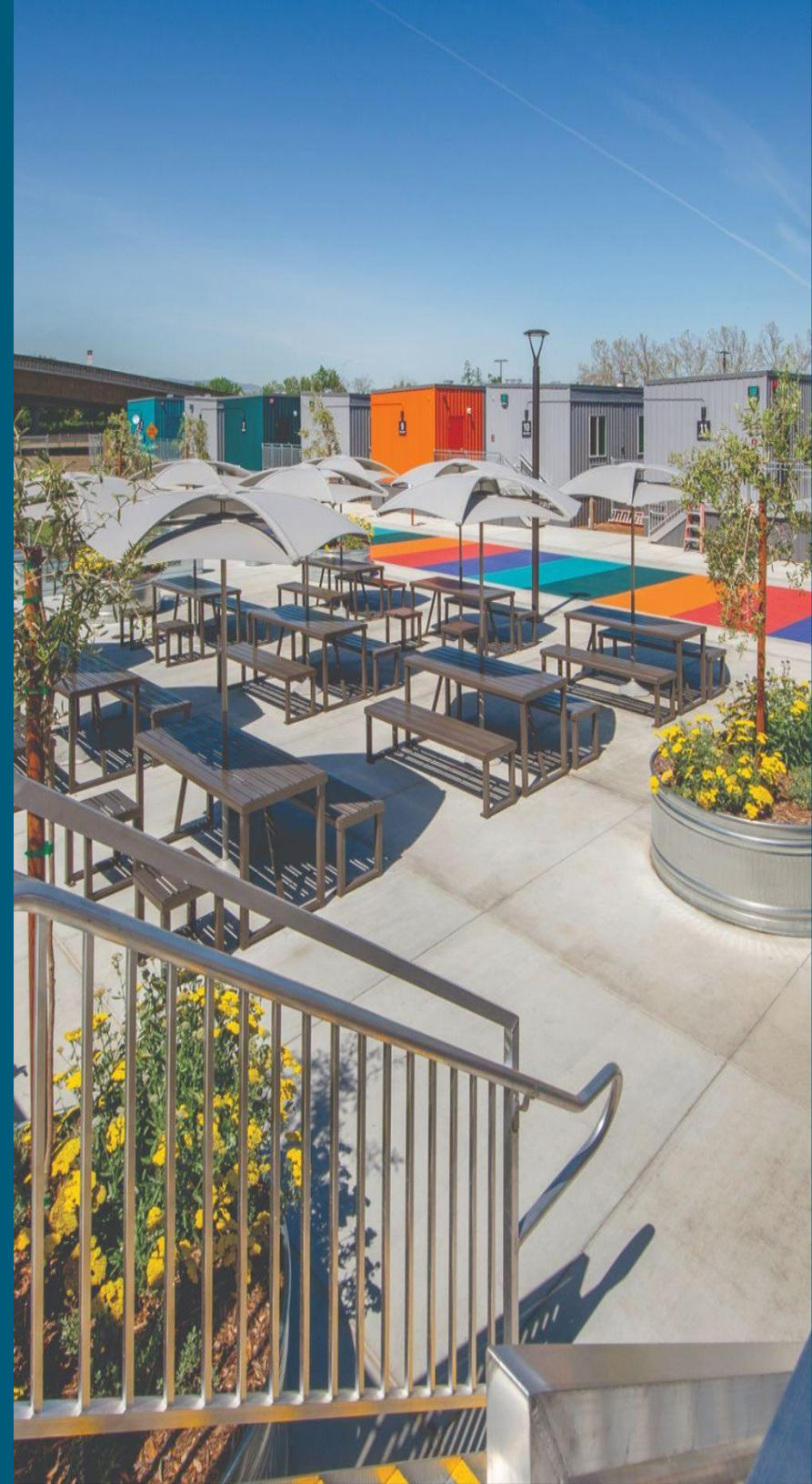
For every **1** household
housed another **1.9**
become homeless

IN 2019

For every **1** household
housed another **2.5**
become homeless

2020-2025 Community Plan Progress

Palo Alto Households



2020-2025 Community Plan Progress:

Palo Alto Households

In 2025, for every **1** household housed, another **2.2** became homeless.

665

People Housed

Across 425 households, ~3% of total

1,702

People Placed in Temporary
Housing and Shelter

Across 1,215 households, ~6% of total

425

People Received
Homelessness Prevention
Assistance

Across 306 households, ~1% of total

HOW ARE PEOPLE FROM PALO ALTO BENEFITING FROM SERVICES?

Palo Alto-Affiliated means:

- Address in Palo Alto
- Lived in Palo Alto prior to becoming homeless
- Works in Palo Alto
- Kids go to school in Palo Alto
- Spend most of time in Palo Alto

Table 1: Palo Alto-Affiliated Households Receiving Supportive Housing System Services in 2025

Program-Type	Total Households Served	Palo Alto-Affiliated Households
Permanent Supportive Housing	4,556	219
Rapid Rehousing	1,679	74
Emergency Shelter	5,102	272
Transitional Housing	529	16
Street Outreach	5,194	187
Safe Parking	550	72
Homelessness Prevention	3,121	29
Housing Problem Solving	4,530	203
Services Only	8,944	563

Estimated Housing Investments For Palo Alto Households in 2025



Program Type	Estimated Annual Cost Per Household	Households Affiliated with Palo Alto in 2025	Estimated Annual Funding for Households Affiliated with Palo Alto
Permanent Supportive Housing	\$37,380	219	\$8,186,220
Rapid Rehousing	\$29,250	74	\$2,164,500
Homelessness Prevention	\$15,500	29	\$449,500
Total			\$10,800,220

*Note: Palo Alto-affiliated households also receive funding to support their housing stability through the Housing Problem Solving program.

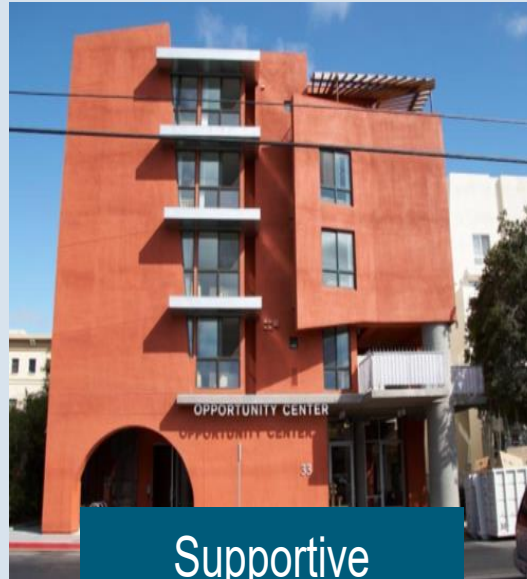
Additional Partnerships in Palo Alto



Affordable Housing Development

Total: \$68.4 million

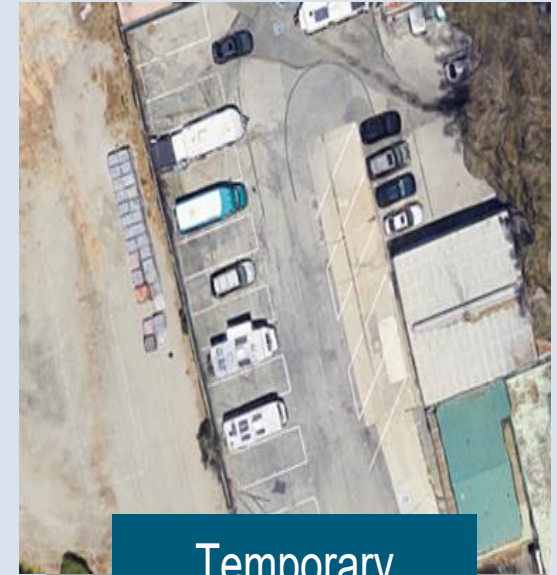
The City and County have partnered on the development of multiple affordable housing developments, including **3001 El Camino**, **Mitchell Park Place**, **Wilton Court**, and **The Acacia**.



Supportive Housing Services and Basic Needs

FY 25-26: ~\$975,000

The County funds several programs at the **Opportunity Center** in Palo Alto, including basic needs services at the drop-in center and supportive services for residents as part of the scattered site permanent supportive housing program.



Temporary Housing & Shelter

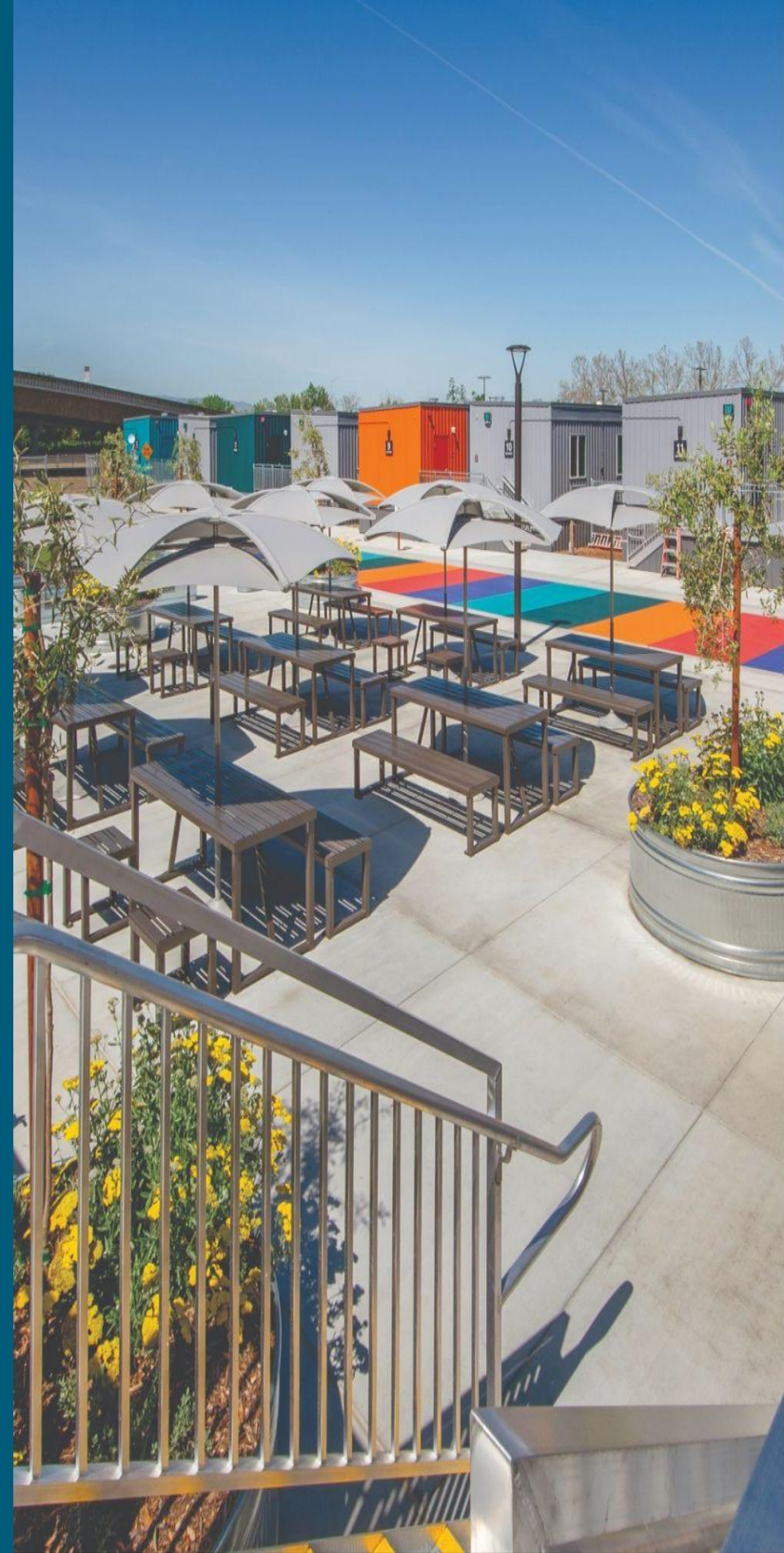
FY 25-26: \$488,987

The County funds **Safe Parking** services in Palo Alto at both the Geng Road site and congregational lots.

The County is also contributing \$4 million to support **Homekey Palo Alto**.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY COMMUNITY PLAN
TO END HOMELESSNESS

Developing the Next 5-Year Community Plan to End Homelessness



2025-2030 Community Plan Timeline



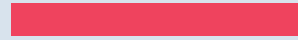
Key Focus Areas

- 1. Prevent People From Becoming Homeless**
Focus: Prevention
- 2. Continue to House People and Support Them in Retaining their Housing**
Focus: Housing through programs (shelter to permanent)
- 3. Strengthen Access to Care and Services for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness.**
Focus: Unsheltered individuals
- 4. Center and Invest in People with Lived Experience to Lead and Transform the Homeless System**
Focus: Lived experience lead throughout the system





Next Steps



**Mar. – May
2026**

**Community
Input**

**Review of full
draft plan**

**Coordinate
feedback from
City leaders,
lived experience
& constituents**

**Mar. – May
2026**

**Finalize Plan &
Develop Sub-
Regional City
Plans**

**Finalize plan
based on
Community
Input**

**Develop action
steps and
metrics based
on regional
needs**

**Ensure
alignment with
existing City
Plans &
Strategies**

**June – Dec.
2026**

**Plan Adoption
& Endorsement
by County and
Cities**

**CoC Board
Adoption (June)**

**Execute process
to obtain BOS
and City Council
endorsement**

**Plan for
implementation**

Sub-Regional Plans

4 Sub-Regional Groups: North County,
West Valley, South County, San José

- **Description of regional characteristics, priorities, and special populations**
- **Summary of existing efforts and investments in homelessness**
- **Framework of shared goals, strategies, and priorities that align with the Plan**
- **Compilation of links to cities' own homelessness plans (where applicable)**



Additional Input Opportunities



Draft Plan posted on the Office of Supportive Housing's website [here](#).



Four Community Convenings in North County, West Valley, South County, and San José

North County Convening:

- **Date:** Thursday, April 30th, 6-8 pm
- **Location:** El Palo Alto Room at Mitchell Park Community Center, 3700 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, 94303

Questions for Council to Consider:

1. Are the Focus Areas included in the draft Plan reflective of the needs and goals of your community?
2. What would the Council like to see included as part of their sub-regional plan?
3. How can we work with the Council to help share this information with the community?

