# HOMELESS SERVICES DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT

Calendar year 2024

Dated 8/5/2025

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# Introduction

*The San Luis Obispo County Five Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness (Five Year Plan) was developed during September 2021- July 2022, led by a cross-community steering committee*.

The Five-Year Plan was approved by the Homeless Services Oversight Committee on July 18, 2022, and adopted by the County Board of Supervisors on August 9, 2022.

The purpose of this report is to provide information and updates on progress made in the calendar year 2024 toward achieving the Five-Year Plan's goals.

To address the needs of community members experiencing homelessness, partnership is needed across sectors that involves the collective effort and commitment of public, private and non-profit organizations so that we can develop a seamless, adequately resourced system that is easy to navigate and does not pose unnecessary barriers to those we are trying to serve.  Per the Plan's design, achieving the goals will take the coordinated efforts of the County, the cities, and stakeholder groups.  In this spirit of cooperation, the County and its partners have engaged in system wide changes during the implementation of the Five-Year Plan in order to address identified system gaps and achieve the collective vision.

The Homeless Services Division acknowledges this report is not all inclusive and there is significant and impactful work being done by many community partners including Cities and non-profit providers who are not represented in this report.

Progress toward resolving homelessness would not be possible without the commitment and participation of all system partners.

At the time the Five-Year Plan was created, the following baseline data was utilized:

- 1,483 people were observed as experiencing homelessness throughout SLO County in the 2019 Point-In-Time (PIT) Count

- 1,448 people were observed as experiencing homelessness throughout SLO County in the 2022 PIT Count; of those, 1,158 (80%) were observed as unsheltered, **making San Luis Obispo's rate of unsheltered homelessness the 3rd highest in the country among largely suburban counties.**

The Five-Year Plan included the following specific targets:

1. Reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness to 50% of the 2022 levels within five years
2. Reduce the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to 50% of the 2022 levels within five years
3. Build at least 300 interim housing units, 500 permanent supportive housing units and 1,667 low-income housing units

# Five Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness

*The Five-Year Plan laid out six lines of effort as a roadmap to guide data-based decision making and focus efforts that would result in achieving specific targets and ultimately reducing homelessness.*

1. Create affordable and appropriately designed housing opportunities and shelter options for underserved populations

2. Focus efforts to reduce or eliminate the barriers to housing stability for those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, including prevention, diversion, supportive services and housing navigation efforts

3. Improve and expand data management efforts through HMIS and Coordinated Entry system to strengthen data driven operational guidance and strategic oversight

4. Create, identify and streamline funding and resources

5. Strengthen regional collaboration

6. Build public engagement through information sharing and partnership

*The Five-Year Plan acknowledges that:*

- In order to achieve the community goal of reducing homelessness, a collective effort must be made to not only build additional housing, but to also increase the services needed to support people experiencing homelessness (or are at risk of it);

- In order to reduce homelessness, services must address barriers such as trauma, mental health, substance use and addiction, and physical health challenges; and

- The plan needs to be flexible and adaptable to changing needs so that service delivery is data driven and informed by current needs and best practices.

*Finally, the Five-Year Plan identified the following target timeline for activities:*



**Summary Timeline**

| 2022-2023 | 2023-2025 | 2025-2027 |
|---|---|---|
| • Build Interim Housing Capacity<br>• Prevention<br>• Data | • Expanded Service Capacity<br>• Regional Compact | • Increased Housing Capacity<br>• Data-driven refinements |

*Since the Five-Year Plan was adopted in August 2022, much progress has been made which is outlined in this report.*

# Homeless Services System of Care Overview

*A region's homeless services system of care consists of community partners that provide or support housing, shelter, services and resources for people who are experiencing homelessness or who have recently experienced homelessness in the community. A Continuum of Care is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.*

In San Luis Obispo County, the Homeless Services Oversight Council (HSOC) is the oversight body of the County's Continuum of Care (CoC) that is responsible for:

- Recommending funding allocations to homeless services providers
- Convening public and private service providers to examine local homeless data to identify gaps and service needs
- Facilitating planning and policy development conversations in a collaborative forum
- Advancing the needs identified at all levels through advocacy, training and collaborative decision making

The CoC (and HSOC) membership includes a broad range of stakeholders including elected city officials, County Board of Supervisors, Social Services, Behavioral Health, nonprofit service providers, affordable housing developers, Office of Education, local businesses, hospitals, law enforcement, healthcare providers, faith-based members, victim services representatives, veteran service representatives, and interested community members. HSOC meetings are open to the public and subject to Brown Act.  For more information about HSOC or to view meeting information please visit: https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Social-Services/Homeless-Services-Division/Homeless-Services-Oversight-Council.aspx.

The County's Board of Supervisors serves as part of the homeless services continuum including approving funding recommendations and providing direction on priorities.

In addition to the HSOC meetings described above, HSOC has delegated subcommittees to work on specific tasks. Subcommittees may be standing committees or may be special committees with limited duration. As of August 2025, the HSOC subcommittees that are operating are:

**Coordinated Entry Committee**

The Coordinated Entry Committee oversees the development of the policies, guidance, and procedures of the four components of the Coordinated Entry System (CES): access, assessment, prioritization, and referral. The Committee also ensures that the guidance and procedures developed by CES workgroups are in alignment with the principles of the CES policies.

**Data and Performance Committee**

The Data and Performance Committee focuses on analyzing homeless services data and seeks to identify trends, gaps, and needs and develop recommendations to HSOC to address these items.

**Services Coordinating Committee**

The Services Coordinating Committee identifies and discusses service needs in the community. The Committee provides opportunities for provider agencies to collaborate and share information on specific issues, including coordination of services.

# Homeless Services Division

*In 2023 the County formed the Homeless Services Division within the Department of Social Services. The County's Homeless Services Division serves as a critical piece of the region's system of care. It was formed to consolidate the County's homeless and affordable housing development related staff, create more stability and predictability in funding and program structure, reduce duplication, allow for more meaningful mid-term and long-term planning and provide centralized coordination to help streamline homeless services.*

**The Homeless Services Division is composed of three units:**

Grants and Land Use:

The Grants and Land Use unit focuses on administration of multiple Federal and State grant programs intended to encourage development of affordable housing and homeless services. They also oversee required quarterly and annual reporting and development of action plans required by the departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Housing and Community Development.

Continuum of Care (CoC):

The CoC unit focuses on operational support of HSOC and supporting the work efforts and recommendations made by HSOC and its subcommittees. The CoC unit is also responsible for ensuring compliance with HUD CoC requirements including monitoring of System Performance Measures (SPMs).

Data and Community Relations:

The Data and Community Relations unit focuses on administration of the countywide HMIS and has oversight of HMIS data. The Data and Community Relations unit is responsible for monitoring and reporting HMIS data, the required Point in Time Count and working closely with community service providers.

The Homeless Service's Division responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Pursuing and Administering State, Federal and Local funds to support efforts to address homelessness in San Luis Obispo County
- Supporting efforts for the development of new affordable housing in the county through funding opportunities and other initiatives
- Administration of the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Completion of required State and Federal reporting
- Development and oversight of required State and Federal planning documents
- Support of the Homeless Services Oversight Council and its various subcommittees to achieve efforts to improve the local homeless services continuum of care
- Completion of annual Point in Time (PIT) Count
- Coordination and collaboration with other entities serving populations impacted by homelessness to coordinate and streamline services
- Administering efforts to address encampments located on properties within the County's jurisdiction
- Analyzing data, examining trends, making recommendations, and coordinating with partners to identify strategies and funding available to make progress toward goals outlined in the County's Five-Year Plan to Reduce homelessness

# Line of Effort One

*Create affordable and appropriately designed housing opportunities and shelter options for underserved populations.*

Line of Effort One focuses on the need to increase both the number of interim and permanent housing opportunities for prioritized beneficiary groups experiencing homelessness and to create opportunities for unsheltered individuals who may have specific housing barriers.

The Five-Year Plan included the specific goal of adding 300 Interim Housing units, 500 Permanent Supportive Housing units and 1,667 Low-income (and below) Housing units over five years.

In 2024 the following progress was made:



### Affordable Housing:

230 Affordable Housing units were completed in 2024.

- o Rockview at Sunset in Morro Bay, 34 units
- o Toscano Apartments in San Luis Obispo, 37 units
- o Pismo Terrace, Pismo Beach, 49 units
- o Anderson Hotel in City of San Luis Obispo. Completed September 2024. 66 affordable rental units
- o Summer Holly Lane in Nipomo,10 self-help built homes
- o Vine St in Paso Robles. 9 single family homes
- o Sunset Terrace in Shell beach. 25 units for Seniors.

### Interim Units

30 interim beds were added in 2024 with the expansion of 5Cities Homeless Coalition's opening of the Balay Ko on Barca cabins project

### Permanent Supportive Housing

64 Permanent Supportive Housing beds were added in 2024 with new units completed at Pismo Terrace in Pismo Beach and the Anderson Hotel in San Luis Obispo.

The affordable housing units noted above are ones that the County's Homeless Services Division was involved with. There are other affordable housing developments built which are reported directly to the California Department of Housing and Community Development(HCD). Prior year data is not available from HCD until approximately July of the following year. This accounts for any discrepancies between numbers reported in this report and numbers reported on the HCD website.

In addition, the pipeline of affordable housing units continues to grow as the 2024 Action Plan awarded funding to 3 housing projects that will bring 147 more units of affordable housing to the County.

Altogether, including units not funded by HSD, there are a little over 1,100 permitted affordable housing units planned to come online between 2025 and 2028 provided they are able to obtain full funding. This number can be significantly impacted by the availability of funding and other systemic factors.

In addition to these efforts, the County focused efforts to move forward the Welcome Home Village Project which will bring 40 units of Permanent Supportive Housing and 14 units of Interim Shelter once completed. The Welcome Home Village Project is anticipated to open late 2025.

# Line of Effort Two

***Focus efforts to reduce or eliminate the barriers to housing stability for those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, including prevention, diversion, supportive services and housing navigation efforts.***

Line of Effort Two focuses on strengthening supportive services across subpopulations to assist people who are experiencing homelessness in obtaining and maintaining housing.

In 2024, the following progress was made:

- Both Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP) 2 funding and County General Fund support (GFS) were prioritized for region wide prevention, outreach and diversion efforts

- 9 clients moved out of unsheltered homelessness and into permanent housing (funded by Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and GFS)

- 11 clients exited unsheltered homelessness and entered shelter programs (funded by ESG and GFS)

- 29 clients received rental and/or deposit assistance to obtain or maintain permanent stable housing through Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention programs (funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and ESG)

- 836 individuals received supportive housing services through Permanent Support Housing Programs (funded by CDBG)

- 15 households received necessary home rehabilitation and access improvement services to allow these households to remain independent and stably housed

Additionally, Line of Effort two calls for incorporating lived experience perspective alongside a trauma-informed and culturally responsive lens when addressing homelessness response. The Homeless Services Oversight Council (HSOC) has created two seats reserved for people with lived experience of homelessness and add a seat for a person with lived experience on the HSOC's Executive Committee.

# Line of Effort Three

*Improve and expand data management efforts through HMIS and Coordinated Entry system to strengthen data driven operational guidance and strategic oversight.*

Line of Effort Three focuses on improving and expanding data management efforts through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and the Coordinated Entry system to strengthen data-driven operational guidance and strategic oversight

As outlined in the Five-Year Plan, having a single HMIS database which can be utilized to collect system data, deliver a streamlined and automated experience to both service providers and community members, and be utilized to assess system performance is key to being able to sustain a high functioning system.

## In 2024 the following progress was made:

- Successfully launched conversion from legacy HMIS system to the new Clarity HMIS. This conversion required training hundreds of users across more than 13 agencies and transferring seven years of homelessness data to yield a high functioning Homeless Management Information System. This work commenced in the second half of FY 23/24 and continued into FY 24/25. This migration represents a huge milestone in being able to accurately capture data across the homeless services system;

- Expanded Coordinated Entry Services to provide matching assistance for referrals to permanent supportive housing and added HMIS functionality to allow case managers to share documents for referred clients; making the referral process more efficient;

- Revised Coordinated Entry policies and procedures to increase consistency among programs and decrease barriers to housing placement;

- Development of internal ticketing system for HMIS which process on average over 340 requests for assistance each month

Now that the new HMIS system "Clarity" has launched, the Homeless Services Division is focusing on systems analysis and using available data to drive recommendations for policy improvements and analysis of overall system performance.  Homeless Services Division staff will continue working with HMIS participating agencies to encourage direct entry of data into HMIS in order to continue advancing the use of HMIS as a tool designed for service provision and care coordination.

# Celebrating one year of Clarity Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Every homeless services continuum of care is required to operate an HMIS to centralize homelessness data.  As part of the line of effort three in the Five-Year Plan to reduce homelessness, San Luis Obispo County invested in an overhaul and upgrade from the legacy HMIS to a new HMIS known as Clarity.  Clarity went live in March 2024 and has outpaced expectations. Below is a brief summary of what has been achieved:

- The number of enrolled agencies has increased from 11 agencies to 21 agencies. This allows better data tracking, more comprehensive data capture and more accurate reporting of the scope of San Luis Obispo County's homeless services system

- The number of HMIS users increased by 54%. This supports better data sharing and empowers providers with data drive tools to center client care

- Improved care coordination through database enhancements like secure in-app messaging, direct referral to the community queue for permanent supportive housing placements and assessment notification for case managers

- Updated reporting capabilities with more than 110 reports available for users to meet funder needs and provide agencies with deeper insights to support decision making

- Introduced a helpdesk ticketing system averaging around 340 messages each month with an average resolution time of less than 6 hours improving user support and response time

- More than 244 users completed more than 1,000 courses int eh Talent Learning Management Software, increasing training opportunities and expanding the number of courses available for continuous learning

- Created an online knowledge base with more than 101 articles, offering a centralized hub of resources and guides for HMIS users

# Line of Effort Four

***Create, identify and streamline funding and resources***

Line of Effort Four focuses on increasing funding and resources through new federal, state and private grant opportunities, and aligning funding available to address homelessness and community needs and priorities.

## In 2024 the following progress was made:

- Completed implementation of the Neighborly Grants Management System, which streamlines grant management by posting funding notices, managing the application process, and tracking outcomes and reporting.
- Migrated data on County First Time home buyer loans into Neighborly so that management and oversight of data is centralized, there is approximately $56M in outstanding loans that will collected through their maturity dates bringing additional revenue to the County which can be reinvested;
- Submitted grant applications which, if awarded, will bring $11.6M in funding to San Luis Obispo County;
- Received funding awards totaling a little over $23.4M that will be distributed to various programs in the community for homeless services and affordable housing
- Recovered $291K CDBG program funds from project that was awarded and then stalled;
- Awarded $15.1 million to community based organizations in FY24/25. Note some awards cover multiple fiscal years

Since the Homeless Services Division was established, The Department of Social Services has been able to pursue and allocate funding into the Homeless Services continuum at an increased pace. The chart below represents funding awarded to DSS Homeless Services both prior to HSD's establishment in FY22/23 and after.
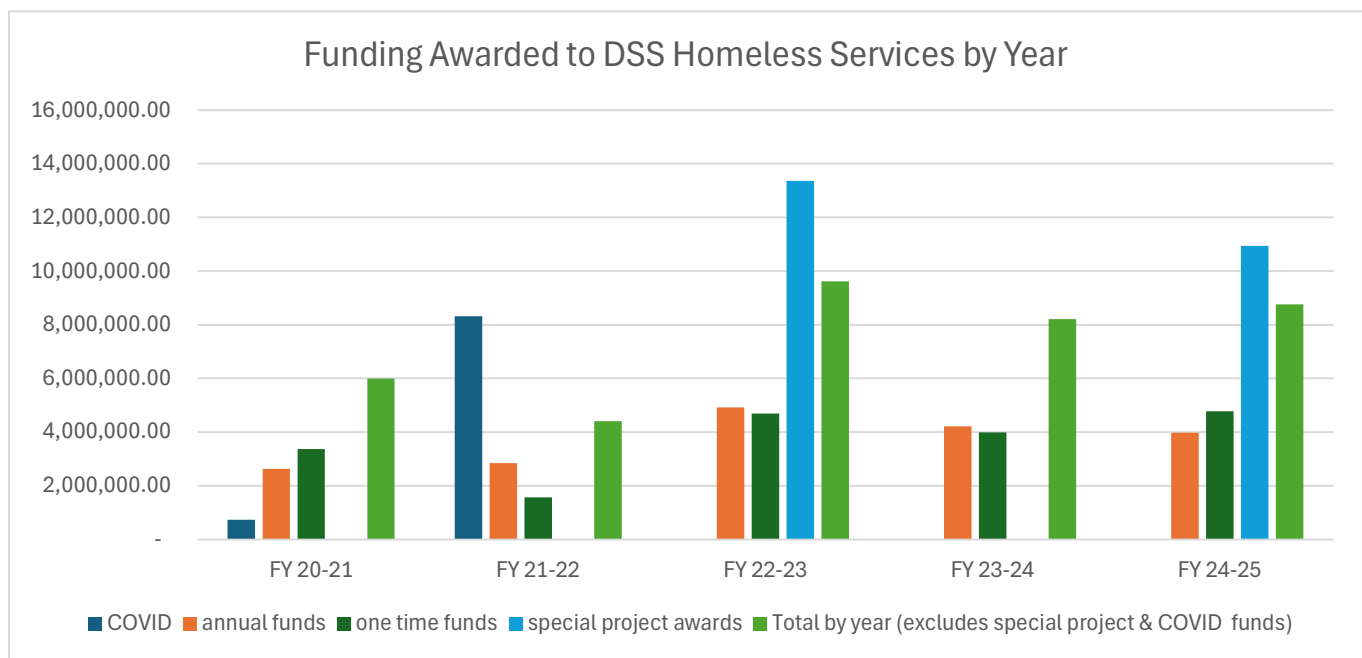
# Line of Effort Five

Line of Effort Five focuses on creating a regional coordinated response to homelessness to minimize duplication of efforts and improve system effectiveness to reduce homelessness.

## In 2024, the following progress was made:

- Continued support of the Affordable Housing Task Force

- Increased level of coordination across agencies through development of Coordinated Entry policies and working with partners to make housing referrals more efficient

- Partnered with Santa Barbara County to address encampments in the Santa Maria Riverbed resulting in 149 persons served and more than 150 tons of debris removed

- Conducted 2024 Point in Time (PIT) Count

- Gathered and distributed information of Warming Centers operations to Cities, County Office of Emergency Services, United Way, Adult Protective services, and other parties.

- Coordinated with local domestic violence provider to resolve data collection issues with their stand alone database

- Collaborated with SLOCOG to host Hafsa Kaka, Governor Newsom's Sr. Advisor on homeless. This visit included a roundtable with community partners and site visits to local service providers

# Line of Effort Six

***Build public engagement through information sharing and partnership.***

Line of Effort Six focuses on engaging and educating the public and other key stakeholders with outreach materials, data dashboards and improving community partnerships to increase support for addressing the needs of the homeless.

In 2024 the following progress was made:

- Increased community engagement in providing input to a variety of workgroups, forums, and outreach campaigns.
- HSD increased community member responses to the Community Development Needs Assessment by over 290%. In 2023 we received 316 responses and in 2024 we received 918; primary outreach included use of social media platforms including Instagram, Facebook, and NextDoor, promotion through Cities' partners, press releases, and more.
- Coordinated and hosted multiple community information sessions including:
  - Two Point in Time Count community information and training sessions
  - Six Community Development Needs Assessment in-person community workshops
  - Four Welcome Home Village Community and Stakeholder information sessions
  - Three Homeless, Housing Assistance and Prevention Program community information and input sessions

- Increased social media presence to share system wide homeless services information.
- For key initiatives, developed and implemented communications plans, which included press releases, media engagement, social media presence, and distribution of memos and talking points for to stakeholders.
- Continued to facilitate access to countywide warming center services by coordinating a consistent notification system for service providers, emergency services, and general public.
- There were more than 250+ volunteers for the 2024 PIT Count – the largest public-facing event for HSD to date. Volunteers were recruited county-wide from media outreach, social media, and word of mouth with people participating from the Carizzo Plains to Cambria to Nipomo. Of the 250 volunteers, more than 30% shared that they had no affiliation with a volunteer organization or a homeless services provider, with the PIT Count being their introduction to addressing local homelessness.
- Held five in-person workshops regionally to promote community engagement in the Community Development Needs Assessment planning process
- Provided first annual report to the public on homeless services activities and progress on the Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness

As part of the County's resiliency and rebalancing initiative the communications program manager position was eliminated beginning in FY25/26. This position oversaw community outreach including town hall events, media responses, social media communications etc.

# Point in Time (PIT Count)

The County-wide Point in Time (PIT) Count consists of two activities:

- Sheltered Count
    - The Sheltered Count includes all individuals who reside in emergency shelters or transitional housing on the night of the PIT Count. This activity occurs every year on a single night in January
- Unsheltered Count
    - The unsheltered count counts individuals experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT Count, but who are not residing in a shelter. This includes people residing in locations not meant for habitation such as vehicles, outdoors, streets or sidewalks or homemade structures. The unsheltered PIT Count occurs every other year on a single night in January.
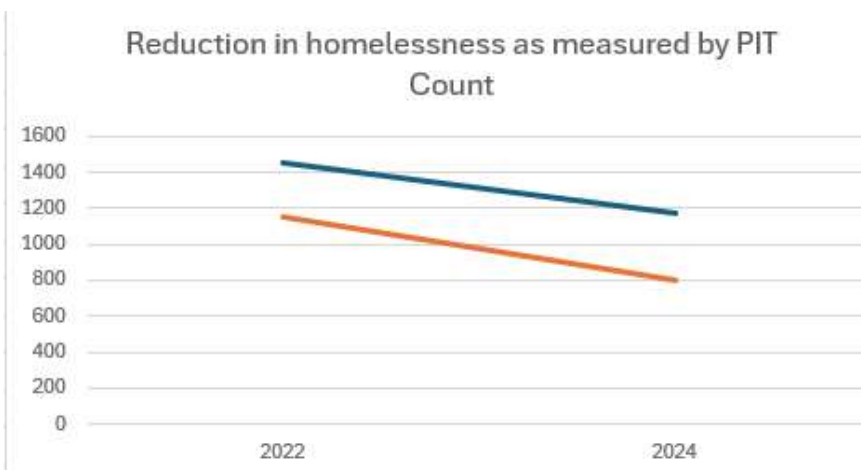


In 2024, the County conducted both the sheltered and unsheltered Point-in-Time Count and observed an encouraging trend with **a reduction of 30.8% in unsheltered homelessness and a reduction of 19% in overall homelessness** when compared to the 2022 PIT Count.

During the 2024 PIT Count, 510 individuals were interviewed allowing for a closer look at the County's residents experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Of the people interviewed, the Count learned:

- 88% have lived in San Luis Obispo County for at least 1 year or longer
- 42% have been experiencing unsheltered homelessness for 5 years or longer
- 38% have been experiencing unsheltered homelessness for between 1-5 years

*While the PIT Count provides valuable information, it is important to remember this represents the count of individuals experiencing homelessness on a single day and does not account for the total number of persons who may need homelessness services during the year. Additional information is shared in the data review sections below.*

**The next unsheltered Point-in-Time Count will be conducted in January 2026.**

# Highlight on Behavioral Health Programs

- The County Behavioral Health Department (BHD) added 18 transitional housing beds and services for individuals experiencing homelessness with serious behavioral health conditions through the Behavioral Health Bridge Housing program.
- Over the last year, the Homeless Outreach Team, a partnership between the BHD and Transitions Mental Health Association (TMHA), met and engaged 420 unhoused individuals, 84 were screened for mental health services, 52 received a health screening or check-up by a program nurse, and 33 were enrolled in more intensive full services partnership (FSP) services. Of the 33 individuals enrolled:
  - 6 (18%) individuals secured housing.
  - There was a 63% reduction in days spent at the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF), compared to the prior 12 months before enrollment (130 days compared to 354).
  - There was an 89% reduction in days spent at the Jail/Juvenile Hall, compared to the prior 12 months before enrollment (247 days compared to 2,240).
- In FY 2023-24, the Community Action Team (CAT) with the San Luis Obispo Police Department engaged 407 unduplicated individuals, and 74 unduplicated individuals were treated for mental illness, substance use, or co-occurring disorders. Additionally, 13 individuals received employment, education, or housing services.
- From July 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025, the Sheriff's CAT provided 710 encounters, 39 individuals received medication in the field, 470 clients received ongoing interventions, 133 psychiatric 5150 evaluations were performed in the field, and 176 individuals were provided transportation for medical clearance and case management.
- The County BHD is working towards expansion of CAT into South County. The Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, and Pismo Beach Police Departments are collaborating with the BHD to utilize a Behavioral Health Licensed Psychiatric Technician amongst the agencies for the expansion.
- The County BHD began implementation of Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court on December 1, 2024. This new civil court process is designed to link individuals who have Schizophrenia and other Psychotic Disorders to County Behavioral Health services, under the oversight of a judge, for up to 24 consecutive months and is meant to be a diversion process to prevent hospitalization, conservatorship or incarceration. In the first six months of implementation, the County received 12 CARE petitions with two in the initial phase, eight dismissed without prejudice, and two care agreements.
- The BHD added a new 24/7 community based mobile crisis team (MCT) in partnership with Sierra Mental Wellness Group. The MCT began operating on January 1, 2024, and it provided over 600 responses in calendar year 2024 including de-escalation, brief crisis interventions, and connections to services for individuals experiencing a mental health and/or substance use disorder crisis.
- In partnership with CenCal Health and Good Samaritan, a new 12-bed sobering center was opened on the Health Agency campus in San Luis Obispo in June 2024. To date through April 2025, there were 433 admissions and an average of 43 admissions per month. Sobering Centers provide a safe, supportive environment to become sober and provide warm hand-offs for additional substance use and health care services.

# Data Review

This report covers progress made in calendar year 2024 with the exception of PIT Count report data which compares data collected during the 2019, 2022 and 2024 PIT Counts.

### Individuals Experiencing Homelessness who were unsheltered
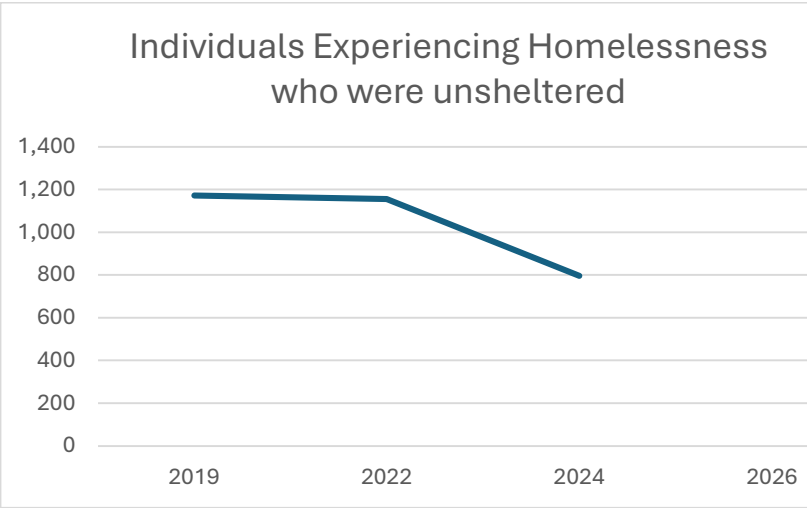


As measured by the Point-in-Time County, from 2022 to 2024 the County of San Luis Obispo saw a 31% reduction (from 1,156 to 797) of individuals who were experiencing unsheltered homelessness. In 2022, 80% of individuals experiencing homelessness were unsheltered, this was reduced to 68% of the total population in 2024.

The County notes that there was a methodological change in the way the Point-in-Time Count was conducted from 2022 to 2024 which may account for some of the reduction. More details can be found in the full community report available online at https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/PIT-Count.aspx.

The number of people who are served by the homeless services system encompasses more than just those counted on the single night of the Point-in-Time. The chart below shows the number of unduplicated persons served, the number of households (which may include one or more persons) and the PIT Count for unsheltered years.

Of note, this chart reflects the power of the new HMIS to better capture data. It should not be read that homelessness is increasing, but rather that our new HMIS is better capturing the true scope of the need in San Luis Obispo County. It is especially interesting to note that while the total numbers served show an increase due to better data capture, the PIT count shows a reduction of homelessness on a single night.



Annual Persons served compared to PIT Count
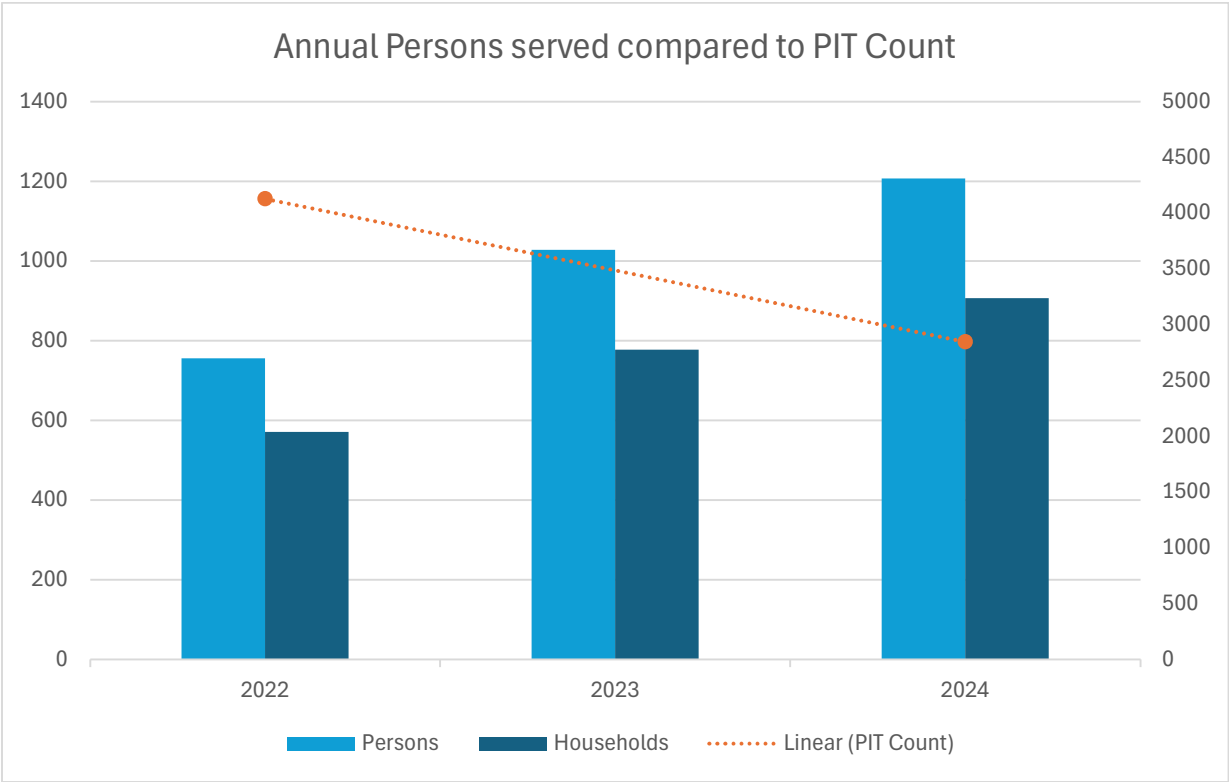
# Funding Review

One of the biggest challenges for addressing homelessness is the lack of consistent and stable funding sources that can be used to address needs across the homeless services array. The charts below show an overview of funding awarded by the Homeless Services Division. Note that these amounts are only for funds award for the fiscal year indicated and do not include any previously awarded funding that covers multiple years.

The chart below shows the projected average funding coming into the County for future fiscal years. Notably the projected one-time funds will decrease significantly barring any additional funding made available to the County.
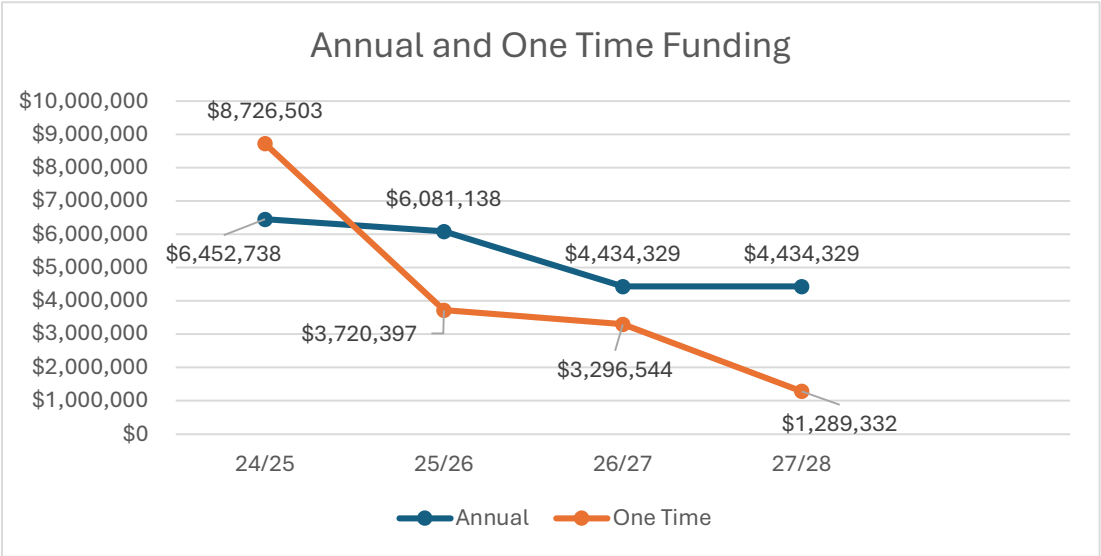


Please note this chart is an estimate based on best available information as of the date produced and is subject to change. Additionally, these amounts are the total estimates and are used to fund the homeless services continuum inclusive of prevention, outreach, sheltering operations and building affordable housing.

Funding sources administered by the Homeless Services Division include:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
- Permanent Local Housing Allocation Program (PLHA)
- HOME Investment Partnership (HOME)
- HOME American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP)

- Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP
- Housing and Homelessness Incentive Program (HHIP)
- Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care (HUD CoC)
- County Local Funds (General Fund)
- Other competitive awards

# Progress toward housing goals
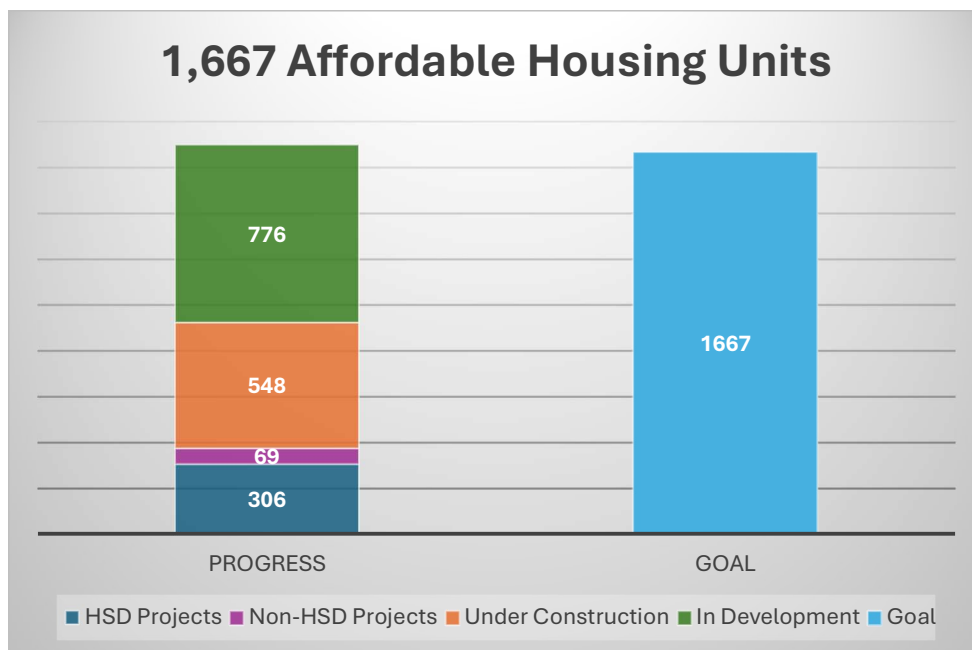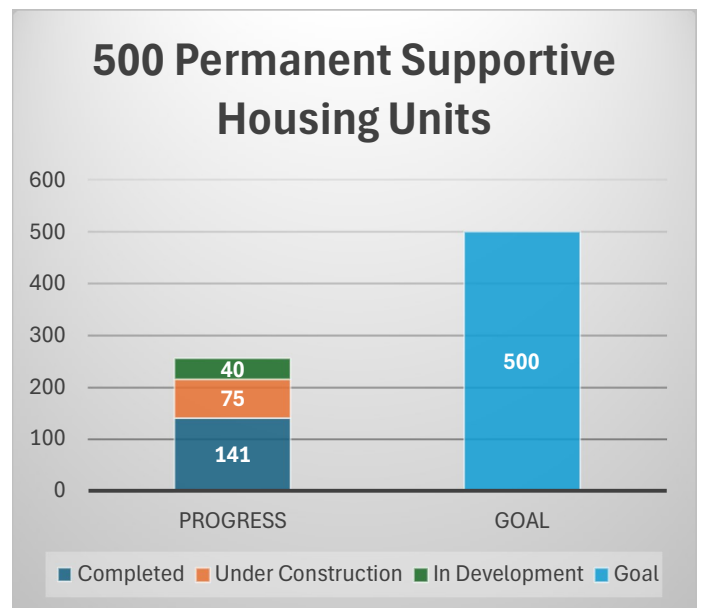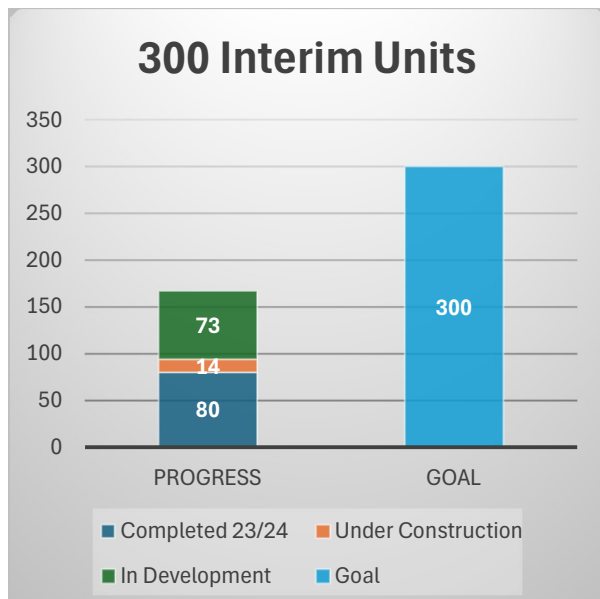
# Conclusion and Next Steps

As we celebrate the progress achieved and approach the half way point of the County's Five Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness it is time to begin preparing for the next iteration of the Plan.

Beginning in Spring 2026 the Homeless Services Division will work with stakeholders to examine system data and develop recommendations for updates to the County's Five Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness. The goal is to bring the updated plan to the Board of Supervisors in Fall of 2027 for adoption in 2028.

Priorities for the next reporting period include:

- Updating the Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness

- Using HMIS to refine system processes and ground decisions in data

- Identifying and addressing system gaps

- Advocacy at all levels for sustained and ongoing funding dedicated to homeless services

- Continued pursuit of strategies to make progress in all lines of effort

# Cumulative progress toward 5-Year Plan Goals:

| Line of Effort 1: | |
|---|---|
| • 375 Affordable housing units completed (306 HSD projects, 69 non-HSD projects)<br>    o 76 units in 2023 & 230 units in 2024 | |
| • Permanent supportive housing beds expanded by 141<br>    o 77 units in 2023 & 64 units in 2024 | |
| • Expansion of winter sheltering with the opening of South County warming center | |
| • Interim shelter bed capacity increased by 80 beds<br>    o 50 beds in 2023 & 30 beds in 2024 | |
| • Home Safe Program housed 106 older adults or adults with disabilities | |
| **Line of Effort 2:** | |
| • Both HHAP 2 funding and County General Funds prioritized for region wide prevention, outreach and diversion efforts | |
| • Implementation of Bridge Housing | |
| • Rollout of HMIS along with on-demand training using TalentLMS and an encyclopedia of knowledge-based resources with HelpScout | |
| • Two seats reserved on the HSOC for people with lived experience | |
| • Outreach programs supported by ESG and GFS resulting in 9 individuals transferring from unsheltered homelessness to permanent housing and 11 individuals exiting unsheltered homelessness and entered shelter programs | |
| • Rapid Rehousing programs funded by CDBG supported 29 clients from rental or deposit assistance | |
| • PSH programs funded by CDBG provided 836 individuals with supportive housing services | |
| • Minor home repair projects funded 15 households in necessary home rehabilitation and access improvement | |
| | |
| **Line of Effort 3:** | |
| • Development and implementation of the new Clarity HMIS system including training/onboarding for HMIS users | |
| • Improved the Point in Time (PIT) count data collection | |
| • Conversion completion from Legacy HMIS to the new Clarity HMIS system | |
| • Added user-friendly functionality to allow case managers to easily share documents and increased technical support to HMIS users | |
| • Developed internal ticketing system for HMIS – process an average of 340 assistance requests monthly | |
| • Revised Coordinated Entry policies and procedures to increase consistency among programs and decrease barriers to housing placement | |
| | |

| Line of Effort 4: | |
|---|---|

- Formed the Homeless Services Division within the Department of Social Services

- Increase in homeless funding flowing into the County
- Implementation of the Neighborly Grants Management System. This system streamlines grant management from posting of notices of funding availability to application to tracking of outcomes and reporting.
- Migrated data on County First Time home buyer loans into Neighborly so that management and oversight of data is centralized
  - Approximately $56M in outstanding loans that will be collected through their maturity dates bringing additional revenue into the County which can be reinvested;
- Recovered $291K CDBG program funds from project that was awarded and then stalled;

| Line of Effort 5: | |
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- Affordable Housing Task Force was created and support ongoing
- Increased level of coordination across agencies through the development of various Coordinated Entry polices, creating a uniform approach on prioritization of housing placements, referrals and the ability to coordinate by seeing where clients are in the system of care through HMIS
- Formed a Youth Advisory Board
- Gathered and distributed information of Warming Centers operations to Cities, County Office of Emergency Services, United Way, Adult Protective services, and other parties
- Planned and coordinated a strong regional collaboration for the 2024 Point-in-Time Count
- Increased efforts for participation by individuals with lived experience
- Coordinated with local domestic violence provider to resolve data collection issues with their stand-alone database
- Partnered with Santa Barbara County to address encampments in the Santa Maria riverbed which resulted in 149 persons being served and more than 150 tons of debris removed

| Line of Effort 6: | |
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- Increased community engagement and received input through workgroups, forums, and outreach campaigns

- Coordinated and hosted multiple community information sessions including:
  - Two Point in Time Count community information and training sessions
  - Six Community Development Needs Assessment in-person community workshops

- - Four Welcome Home Village Community and Stakeholder information sessions
  - Three Homeless, Housing Assistance and Prevention Program community information and input sessions
- Increased social media presence to share system-wide homeless services information
- HSD increased community member responses to the Community Development Needs Assessment by over 6400%. In 2022, prior to HSD's formation, the County received 14 responses. In 2023 HSD received 316 responses and in 2024 we received 918
- 2024 PIT count success with more than 250+ volunteers which was the largest public-facing event for HSD to date
  - Volunteers were recruited county-wide through media outreach, social media, and word of mouth
  - PIT count includes both sheltered count and unsheltered count
  - With the 2024 PIT count we saw a 31% reduction in individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness and a 19% reduction is overall homelessness
- Created a centralized resource "Get Involved" webpage to direct interested community members to volunteer opportunities
- Improved access to countywide warming center services by developing and coordinating a consistent notification system for service providers, emergency services, and the public
- For key initiatives, developed and implemented communication plans including press releases, media engagement, social media presence and distribution of memos and talking points to stakeholders
- Implemented a media relations plan for the Homeless Services Division