



HOUSING FOR A HEALTHY SANTA CRUZ

City of Watsonville: Developing a Local Action Plan

Addressing Local Housing and Service Needs and Homelessness

Background Information Presentation – September 24, 2024

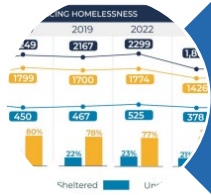
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Presentation Overview



Housing for Health
Partnership
Framework



Lack of Supportive
Connections



Housing Affordability
Gap



Loss of Hope &
Sense of Purpose



Health Issues



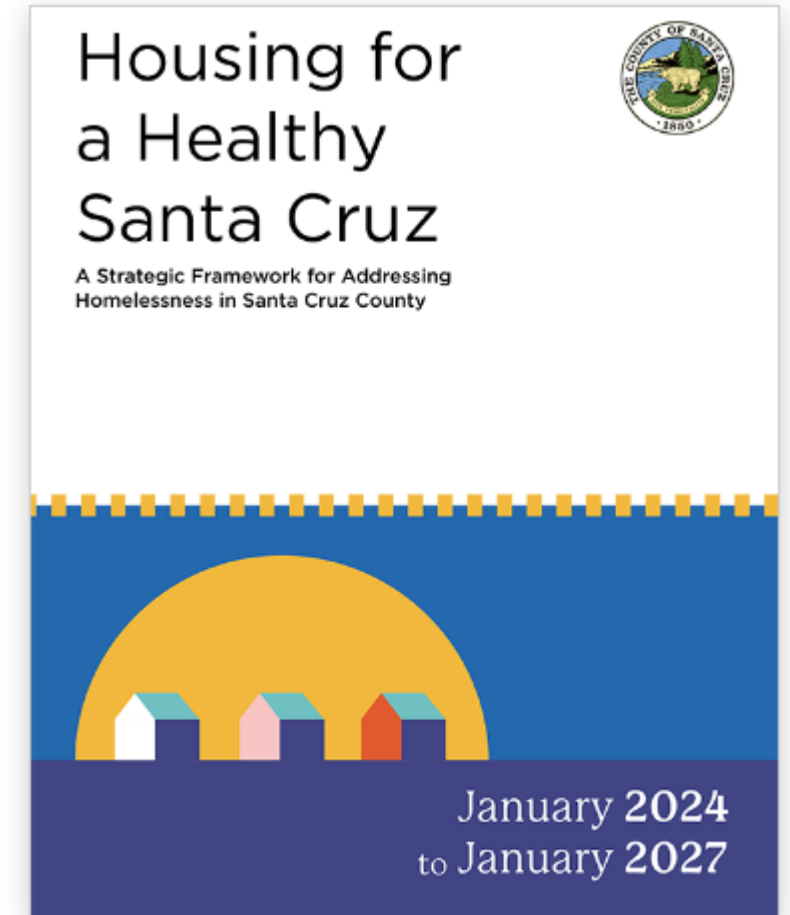
Local Data &
Narratives

"If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."
— Sen. Cory Booker



Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz Framework

- Accepted and filed by Watsonville City Council – April 27, 2021
- Mission – “Strong collaborative action to ensure all residents within the County have stable, safe, and healthy places to live.”
- Framework implementation support through HUD-designated Continuum of Care (CoC) – *2 seats on Policy Board*
- Framework guides 6-month collaborative action plans; opportunity to collaborate on action plan cycles
- Action plans based on primary causes of housing instability and homelessness



Framework: Causes of Housing Instability and Homelessness

- 1) **Housing Affordability Gap** – *cost of housing exceeding incomes*
- 2) **Health Issues**
- 3) **Lack of Supportive Connections/Othering**
- 4) **Loss of Hope and Sense of Purpose**



Housing Affordability Gap

- “Affordable” = 30% of gross income on housing + utilities
- \$77.96/hour two-bedroom “housing wage” in Santa Cruz County; need 3.5 jobs at mean renter wage to afford a two-bedroom
- 1 of 3 people in County on Medi-Cal; <\$20,500/year for an adult to qualify
- Median rent all units in Watsonville = \$3,244/month (Zillow); studio = \$1,900/month



Health Issues

- Behavioral/cognitive health and chronic health conditions more common among people at-risk of or currently experiencing homelessness (bi-directional impacts)
- Conditions that impact daily living activities can impact relationships, personal economics, and housing tasks – paying bills, cleaning, self-care, etc.
- Health system – financial/organizational structure assumes individual motivation and ability to get care

SELF-REPORTED HEALTH ¹

Current health conditions that may affect the housing stability or employment of those experiencing homelessness.

SUBSTANCE
USE
DISORDER



46%

of survey respondents report having a substance use disorder

PSYCHIATRIC
OR EMOTIONAL
CONDITIONS



37%

of survey respondents report having a psychiatric or emotional condition

PTSD



33%

of survey respondents report having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

PHYSICAL
DISABILITY



29%

of survey respondents report having a physical disability

CHRONIC
HEALTH
CONDITION



28%

of survey respondents report having a chronic health condition

TRAUMATIC
BRAIN
INJURY



13%

of survey respondents report having had a TBI

HIV/AIDS
RELATED
ILLNESS



4%

of survey respondents report having an HIV/AIDS related illness

DISABLING CONDITION

A disabling condition is defined by HUD as a developmental disability, HIV/AIDS, or a long-term physical or mental impairment that impacts a person's ability to live independently but could be improved with stable housing.

55%



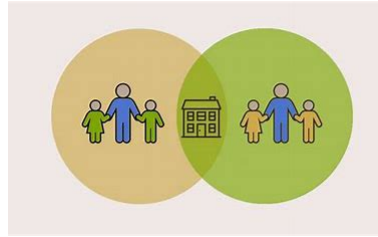
of survey respondents report having at least one disabling condition



Lack of Supportive Connections/Othering

- Living with others in non-lease situation most common place before homelessness
- *"Doubled-Up" – counted as "homeless" by Dpt. of Education standards
- PVUSD – 1,734 students experiencing homelessness, FY22-23

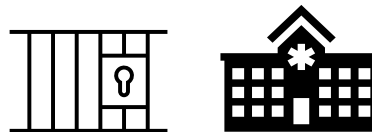
California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness (June 2023) – last "sheltered" living situation data



Non-leaseholder situation – 49%*



Rental or Homeownership – 32%



Institutional Setting – 19%



Lack of Supportive Connections/Othering

- 15% cited family/domestic violence as primary cause of homelessness (2024 Santa Cruz County – PIT survey)
- Discrimination in housing, employment, and health care settings frequently reported in statewide study on homelessness – *8 out of 10 reported feeling some form of discrimination*
- 63% of respondents in statewide study noted at least one social reason for losing housing



Loss of Hope and Sense of Purpose



46% of respondents in statewide study reported having “given up or (not having) the time or energy to look for housing”



20% with substance use challenges reported wanted treatment but not being able to get it

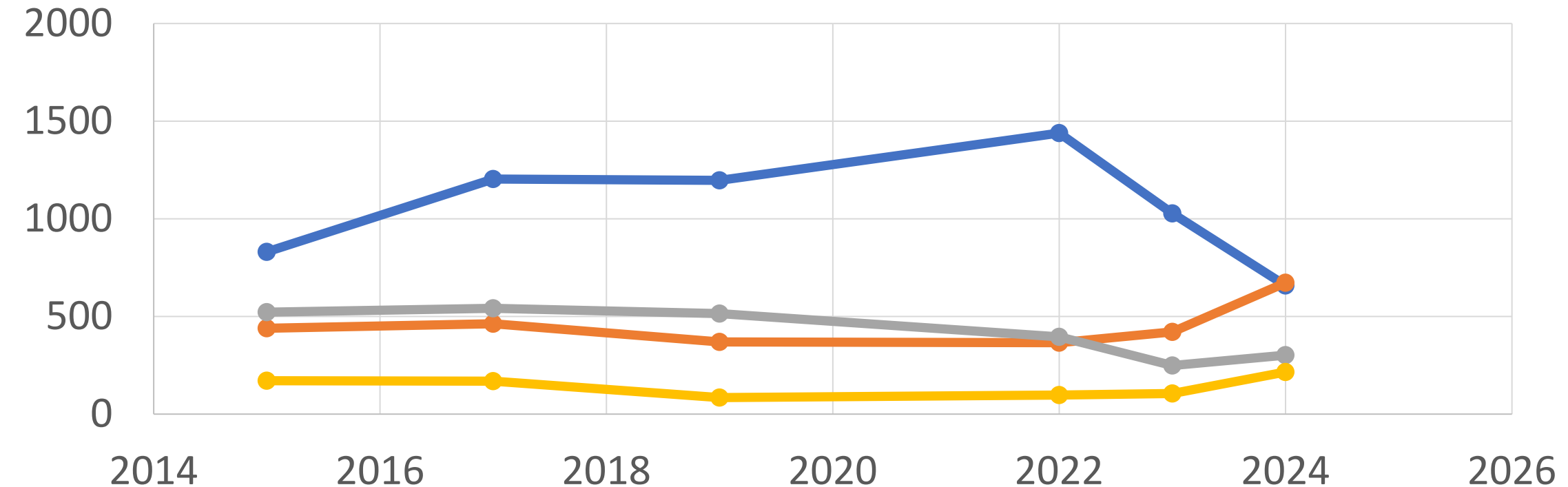


Over one out of three reported important documents and medications being lost in forced displacements (statewide study)



More than two-thirds of workers surveyed felt they need more resources to do their job well (NAEH survey, 2023)

PIT Count by Jurisdiction Over Time



—●— City of Santa Cruz —●— Watsonville —●— Unincorporated —●— Other

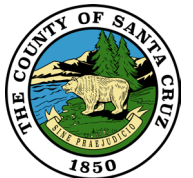
Other = Capitola, Scotts Valley, County Office of Ed.



2024 PIT Count – Types of Unsheltered Homelessness by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Car, RV, or Van	Street or Building	Tent	Total Unsheltered Persons
Watsonville	14%	43%	43%	583
Unincorporated*	58%	17%	24%	424
City of Santa Cruz	32%	37%	30%	384
Capitola	86%	14%	0%	50
Scotts Valley	93%	7%	0%	44

*Includes County Office of Education data on unsheltered students and families.



South County Housing Resources

- **Association of Faith Communities (AFC)**– expansion of rotating faith shelter and safe parking
- **Permanent Supportive Housing** – Tabasa Gardens, Sparrow Terrace, Resetar, and others
- **Homekey Youth Transitional Housing Project** – Freedom House
- **South County Housing Collaborative** – CORE funded, family-focused
- **Countywide Housing Assistance Fund** – rehousing and prevention
- **South County Homelessness Prevention** – CORE funding set-aside; \$500K/year for 3 years starting July 2025
- **Low-Barrier Navigation Center (LBNC)**– >\$10M multi-year, multiple jurisdiction investment
- **Others** – Community Care Expansion preservation, other permanent and temporary housing partnerships, youth services



Best Practices

- **Pathways to Housing – Housing First** – SAMHSA evidenced-based
- **Supportive and Supported Housing** – SAMHSA evidenced-based
- **Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) Section 8**– intervention for families
- **Low-Barrier Navigation Centers** – preferred form of temporary shelter/housing
- **Targeted Homelessness Prevention** – legal, financial, and social work services
- **Getting to Zero – Community Solutions – Coordination** – ending veterans homelessness resources and initiative

