



# Plan to End Homelessness

Alameda County, CA



# Our Goal

Right now, in Alameda County, approximately 5,600 people experience homelessness on any given night. Over the next five years we aim to reduce that number to less than 2,200 people. If we achieve this goal no one will have to sleep outside.

This strategic update to the *EveryOne Home Plan to End Homelessness* asks for all of us to act with renewed urgency in our efforts. Every year, more than 12,000 people experience an episode of homelessness in Alameda County. The number has increased dramatically in recent years, and most are unsheltered. For some homelessness may only last a few weeks, but, for more than half it will last a year or longer.

Our current housing crisis response system cannot meet the growing need. For every 2 people who become homeless for the first time in Alameda County, only one person returns to a permanent home. Service providers help at least 1,500 people return to permanent housing every year, yet there are 3,000 people becoming homeless for the first time. At this rate, homelessness could increase by 1,500 people per year.

Homelessness is a stark symptom of inequality and visible evidence of structural discrimination. African-Americans are 11% of the population of Alameda County however they represent 49% of the people experiencing homelessness. Communities of color, low-income households, people with disabilities, LGBTQ individuals, and

survivors of violence and trauma, all experience homelessness at higher rates and face greater barriers to housing stability. Our response must redress, not perpetuate those inequalities.

To tackle these problems we need to aggressively pursue strategies that prevent people from becoming homeless, expand affordable housing, offer critical interventions that ensure the safety and dignity of people living without housing, and urgently reduce homelessness in our most impacted and vulnerable communities.

Homes end homelessness. While this plan supports short-term interventions—such as shelter, safe parking, outreach, and hygiene stations—the goal is not more shelter, it is fewer people needing shelter. Above all, this plan calls for ending homelessness by preventing it before it starts and expanding permanent, affordable housing.

Our goal is ambitious. We will not change the trajectory of homelessness with the current pace and scale of our response. It will take bold, coordinated action and significant investment to reduce the number of people becoming homeless and increase the number of people returning home.

## THE PROBLEM

For every 2 people who become homeless for the first time in Alameda County, only one person returns to permanent housing. If these rates continue, homelessness will increase by 1,500 people per year.



Sources: HUD System Performance Measures, 2017; Point in Time Count, 2017; HMIS Annual Performance Report Data, 2017. Values have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

## THE SOLUTIONS

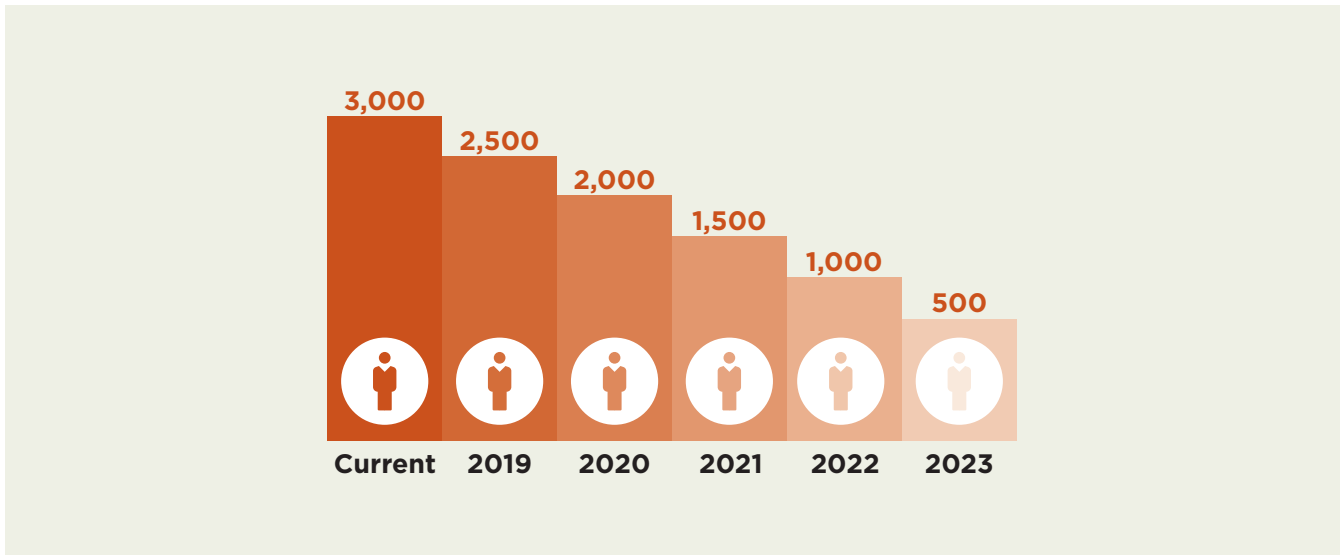
We know what works to end homelessness. This plan answers the question of what it will take to bring these solutions to scale. It outlines effective housing interventions and determines how much we will need of each to achieve our goal.



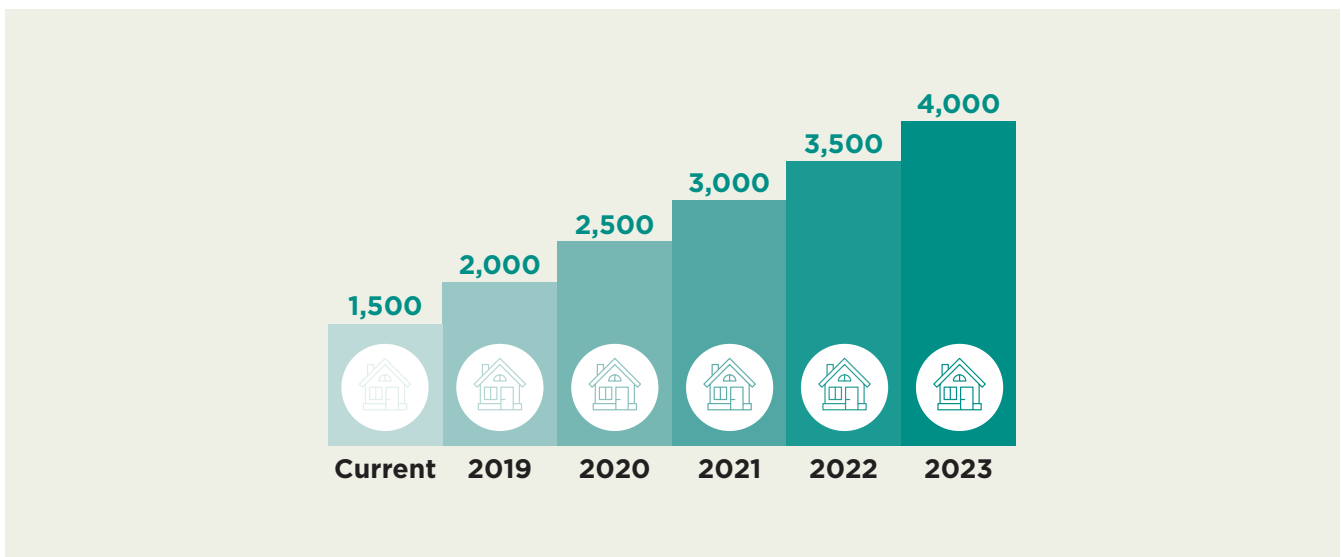
Sources: Alameda County Point-In-Time Count, 2017; HMIS Annual Performance Reports, 2017.

## OUR FIVE-YEAR TARGETS

- 1 Every year for the next five years, reduce the number of people becoming homeless by 500, until 500 or fewer people become homeless in 2023.



- 2 Every year for the next five years, increase the number of people returning to permanent homes by 500, until 4,000 or more people move out of homelessness in 2023.



## REACHING OUR GOALS: OUR COMMUNITIES

By targeting our efforts, it is possible to end homelessness for highly impacted and vulnerable communities in Alameda County. This requires focusing on the racial disparities and structural inequalities that lead to homelessness and a commitment to delivering equitable results.



**End unsheltered family homelessness by December 2019 and all family homelessness by the end of 2023**



**End chronic homelessness among veterans by March 2020 and all veteran homelessness by December 2021**



**End chronic homelessness among older adults by December 2020**



**Reduce chronic homelessness among persons with serious mental illness by 30% by December 2021**



**Reduce all chronic homelessness by 50% by 2023**



**Develop an action plan for youth in 2019**



**Ensure safe access to permanent housing for people experiencing domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault**

## PROPOSED STRATEGIES

This plan embraces four broad strategies that, together, will bring the necessary capacity, investment, partnership, and collective impact to achieve our goal.



### Expand Capacity

Our system needs to significantly expand capacity in several areas. To prevent homelessness, we must expand to be able to assist 2,500 individuals and families per year with temporary financial assistance and legal support. To house more people, we must add 2,800 units of permanent supportive housing and another 4,000 subsidized permanent housing units dedicated to extremely low-income people experiencing homelessness. We must also expand street outreach and other services to the unsheltered, which includes stabilizing existing shelters and increasing the number of shelter beds. This is important in the first years of the plan, until more permanent housing is available.



### Increase Investment

Expanding capacity requires shifting or identifying new sources of financial investment from all levels of government. The plan estimates an additional \$228 million per year is needed to achieve and sustain the results envisioned. A dedicated local funding stream would support a scaled response, keeping people in their homes and creating opportunities for deeply affordable housing. Advocacy with state and federal policymakers for additional resources is ongoing, but it must not hold up or take the place of local investment.



### Build Stronger Partnerships

Engaging the leadership and expertise of people experiencing homelessness in governance, policy, planning, and service delivery is essential to our success. This strategy includes expanding employment opportunities and career development within our system as well as ensuring that decision making bodies include those most impacted by the choices being made.



### Align Public Policies

Local policymakers can advance policies to reduce homelessness, such as protecting renters, increasing affordable housing for homeless and extremely low-income households, protecting the dignity, health and safety of those forced to live on the streets, and counteracting the disparate racial impacts of housing policies.

## PROPOSED ACTIONS

We will reach our goal if everyone in Alameda County agrees to take bold action, whenever and wherever possible. This plan outlines a range of actions that can be tailored to local communities. Actions that address major barriers to housing, are designed with a racial equity lens, and honor the dignity and safety of all community residents, especially those living without housing, will have the greatest impact.

### Prevent People from Becoming Homeless:

- Adopt policies to keep renters in their homes
- Increase the availability of flexible temporary financial assistance
- Increase connection to income and benefits

### Protect the Dignity of People Experiencing Homelessness:

- Repeal or stop enforcing policies that criminalize homelessness
- Develop a humane and consistent response to the needs of unsheltered people
- Evaluate access to and outcomes of the Housing Crisis Response System
- Engage the leadership of people experiencing homelessness
- Provide services for health and sanitation
- Expand language accessibility to the Housing Crisis Response System
- Expand, coordinate, and enhance street outreach
- Stabilize existing shelter capacity and provide additional shelter/safe spaces

### Expand Housing Opportunities:

- Use land for housing efficiently
- Meet Inclusionary Zoning policies and Housing Plan targets
- Expedite the development of affordable housing
- Establish a dedicated revenue stream for housing operations and services
- Prioritize the most vulnerable for affordable housing
- Expand landlord partners
- Increase permanent supportive housing
- Increase stock of and accessibility to alternative housing opportunities
- Expand supportive services to help people stay housed

CAPACITY



INVESTMENT



PARTNERSHIPS



POLICY



## **About the 2018 Strategic Update**

This document is a strategic update to the *EveryOne Home Plan to End Homelessness* which was first published in 2007. The update was produced through a year-long community process that included 25 key stakeholder interviews, six focus groups attended by 70 people currently homeless in the county, multiple community forums with over 200 participants, and a review of best practices and plans from communities with similar homeless populations and housing markets. It is informed by data from countywide Point-In-Time Homeless Counts, homeless housing and services inventories, and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The EveryOne Home Leadership Board wishes to thank all who contributed to the update and who are now working to make its vision a reality in our community.

## **About EveryOne Home**

EveryOne Home is leading the collective effort to end homelessness in Alameda County. We're building momentum, using data to improve our efforts, and aligning resources for long-term solutions.

