

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Date: March 28, 2006
Board Meeting Date: March 28, 2006
Special Notice/Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Subcommittee on Homelessness
Supervisor Jerry Hill and Mark Church

SUBJECT: Housing Our People Effectively (HOPE)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Endorse the HOPE plan and its implementation

Vision Alignment:

Commitment: Responsive, effective and collaborative government.

Goal: 22. County and local governments effectively communicate, collaborate and develop strategic approaches to issues affecting the entire County

Commitment: Offer a full range of housing choices.

Goal: 9. Housing exists for people at all levels for all generations and families.

Commitment: Leaders work together across boundaries to preserve and enhance our quality of life.

Goal: 23. Leaders throughout the County provide the impetus for broader regional solutions in land use, housing, children, education, health and transportation.

Background:

Housing Our People Effectively (HOPE) has been created because of an emerging consensus among political and civic leaders, business people, community activists, homeless people and their families, housing and service providers, and other stakeholders in San Mateo County that homelessness must end. HOPE sets forth a ten-year plan of action to ensure that San Mateo County residents who have been homeless or at severe risk of homelessness will secure and maintain safe, permanent, accessible, affordable, and where needed, supportive housing.

In April 2005, Supervisors Church and Hill convened the HOPE Leadership Committee and the Stakeholders Committee. In all over 150 people representing the public and private sectors were involved in the development of HOPE. Specific planning efforts focused on:

- Community Connections: strategies to engage the community to take action to solve homelessness
- Prevention Networks: strategies to outreach to homeless people and to persons returning to the community from institutional care
- Housing Solutions: strategies to provide a range of affordable housing options, including the services necessary for people to maintain their housing and achieve overall wellness
- Quality Outcomes: strategies to ensure the quality and effectiveness of housing and services for homeless people and people at-risk

Every year an estimated 4,000 people experience homelessness in San Mateo County. They include families with children, youth and single adults. Many are living with chronic health conditions such as mental illness, substance abuse issues, HIV/AIDs or other disabilities. Another estimated 26,000 people are precariously housed and at imminent risk of becoming homeless – just one paycheck or medical emergency away from losing their housing.

Homelessness and highly unstable housing situations create great harm – both for the people who experience it and for the entire community. People who are homeless struggle to meet basic human needs for food and clothing and face significant barriers to participation in the workforce and in community life. Without a safe, secure place to live, people are vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Their physical and mental health suffers. Homeless children are at far greater risk of experiencing developmental delays, emotional and behavioral problems, poor school attendance and lower academic performance.

The financial costs of homelessness are also substantial. It is estimated that over the next 10 years it could cost San Mateo County up to \$2 billion to simply continue providing expensive emergency interventions that have limited outcomes. These costs and the consequences are borne by the entire community in the form of diminished community well being as well as the financial burden of paying for emergency and social services, that generally, do not permanently end homelessness for those served.

The HOPE Vision is: Homelessness will end by ensuring that safe, accessible, affordable housing is available in San Mateo County for those in greatest need.

Desired Results

HOPE is a blueprint for achieving results by implementing a set of focused strategies. Incremental progress is anticipated over the next the ten years towards preventing and ending homelessness in San Mateo County.

By 2015:

1. 7,900 individual and family households in San Mateo County who have been homeless or at severe risk of homelessness due to extremely low incomes, chronic

disabilities and/or other health or special needs, will secure and maintain safe, permanent, accessible, affordable, and where needed, supportive housing.

- 2,400 units for individuals and families who are homeless; and,
- 5,500 units of affordable housing for individuals and families with extremely low incomes and high rent burdens

2. 4,300 individual and family households will receive short-term assistance to secure or maintain housing

The HOPE Plan calls for building consensus, solidifying commitments, and strengthening partnerships within our community to achieve our goals on behalf of those in greatest need.

Next Steps

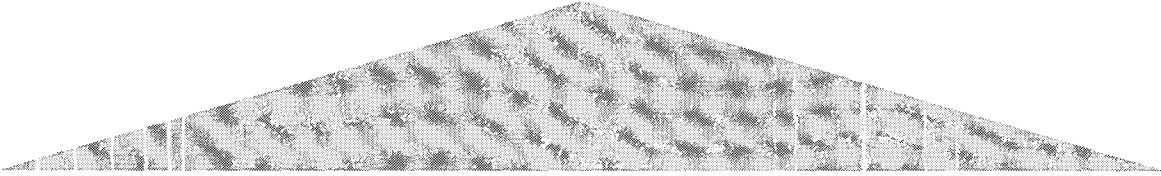
- Subsequent to today's Board action, members of the HOPE Leadership Committee have committed to seeking endorsements of this plan from their respective organizations. Through these endorsements from local municipalities, providers, businesses, faith-based communities and others, HOPE will transition from planning to action.
- The current year one action plan will be activated; it identifies specific steps to be taken in order to ensure the successful transition from the planning process to implementation.
- Actions identified in HOPE will be prioritized in discrete incremental phases and include a thorough analysis of financial options to support implementation. Such actions will be presented to the appropriate jurisdiction(s) for approval.

Fiscal Impact:

1. There is no fiscal impact for endorsing HOPE
2. The estimated cost of achieving all potential desired results by 2015 is estimated at \$1.56 billion
 - \$475 million for individuals and families who are homeless
 - \$1.1 billion for individuals and families who are at imminent risk of homelessness

The resources needed to implement HOPE will be developed using three related strategies:

- Use existing funds more efficiently through better coordination, streamlining and integration
- Use local funds to leverage state and federal resources
- Increase local public and private investment such as increased contributions from individuals and businesses or new revenue streams

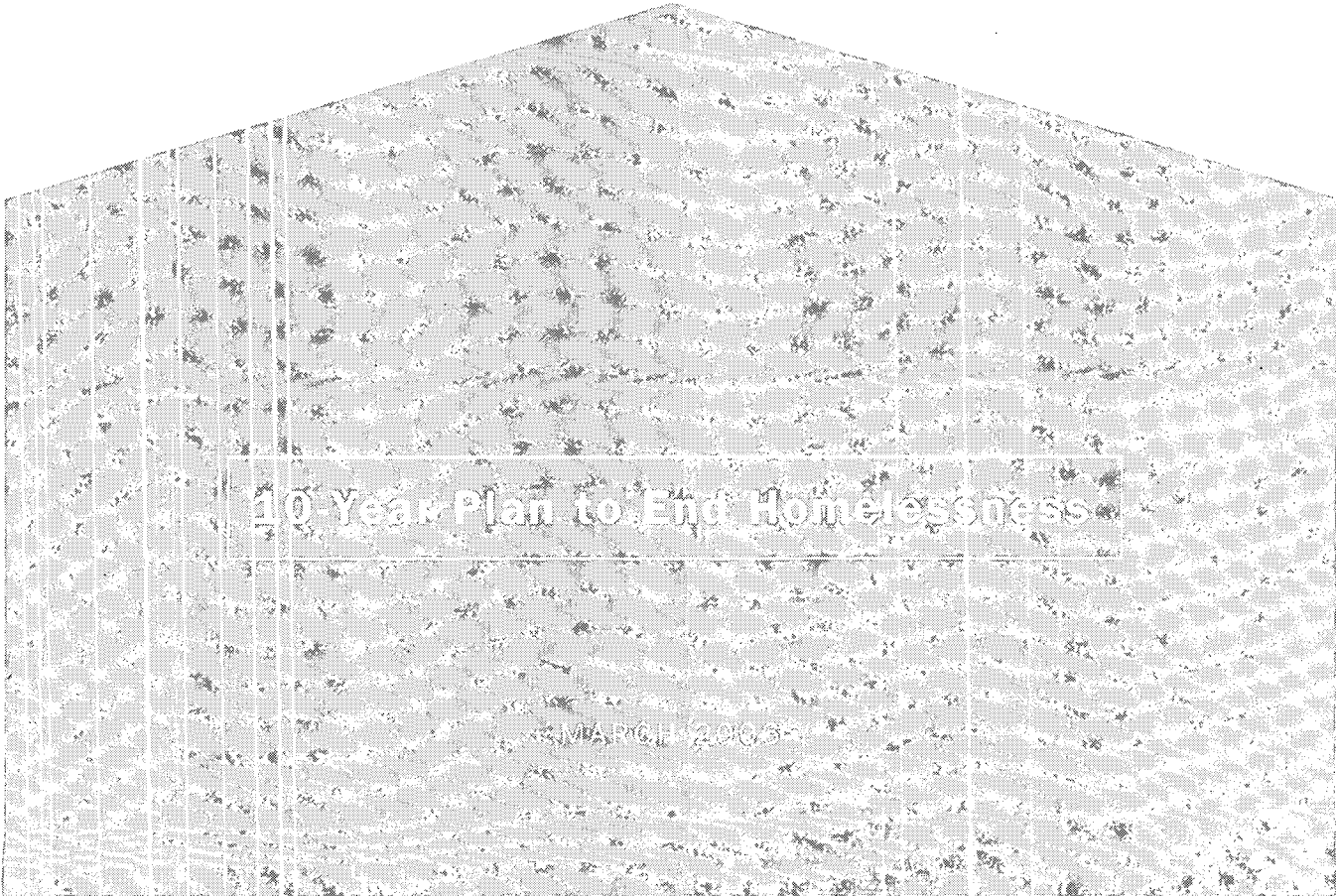


HOUSING OUR PEOPLE EFFECTIVELY

HOPE



Ending Homelessness In San Mateo County



10 Year Plan to End Homelessness

REVISIÃO 2003

Executive Summary



PREFACE

Executive Summary

Desired Results

By 2015:

1. 7,900 individual and family households in San Mateo County who have been homeless or at severe risk of homelessness due to extremely low incomes, chronic disabilities and/or other health or special needs, will secure and maintain safe, permanent, accessible, affordable, and where needed, supportive housing:
 - 2,400 units for individuals and families who are homeless; and,
 - 5,500 units for individuals and families who have extremely low incomes and high rent burdens.
2. 4,300 individual and family households will receive short-term assistance to secure or maintain housing.

Recommendations

The HOPE Plan is built around two key strategies: housing and prevention. To end homelessness, San Mateo County must follow the housing strategy successfully documented in other communities around the country: increasing the supply of permanent affordable and supportive housing for people who are homeless and developing strategies to help them move into housing as rapidly as possible. The second key strategy is to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless in the first place by assisting them to maintain their housing.

The HOPE Plan contains four key recommendations:

1. Increase housing opportunities for people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.

The most effective way to end homelessness is to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of safe, secure, and accessible housing affordable to those with extremely low incomes, including supportive housing for people with complex challenges who need services to remain housed. These new housing opportunities will be created by developing new affordable and supportive housing units and by making existing housing units affordable.

2. Prevent and end homelessness by delivering timely, flexible services to support stability and independence.

Housing alone will not end homelessness. While creating an increased supply of affordable and supportive housing is critical, there is an equally urgent need to ensure that people receive the services they need to secure and sustain housing. Homeless people and people leaving institutional settings need services to ensure that they are able to rapidly access permanent housing and re-enter the community. For those who are housed but who need services to sustain their housing, support is crucial for increasing income, building assets, improving their health and mental health status, creating social support networks, and participating in the full range of community life.

For those who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless primarily due to lack of adequate income, the Plan calls for the provision of refined and expanded Homeless Prevention services in order to secure and/or maintain their existing housing. HOPE also recommends that every individual or family discharged from a public or private institution (such as a hospital, mental health facility, jail or foster care) has access to safe, accessible, affordable or supportive housing. Both of these recommendations are based on the provision of coordinated and integrated mainstream services such as health, mental health, substance abuse, social and employment services.

3. Create system performance standards, track progress towards ending and preventing homelessness, and report results to stakeholders and the broader community.

Developing the housing and services necessary to prevent and end homelessness depends in large measure on having good information to track progress, evaluate results, and determine whether scarce resources are being used most efficiently and are accomplishing the goals set forth in the Plan. Good data is also essential to ensure accountability to the community and to build public support - by demonstrating that progress is being made to prevent and end homelessness. Progress will be reported to community leaders, policymakers, funders, providers, consumers and the general public to ensure continuous quality improvement of housing and services for people who are homeless.

4. Develop long-term leadership and community will to prevent and end homelessness.

Accomplishing the Plan's recommendations depends in great measure on building broad-based community support and developing a structure that will create and sustain the community's will to prevent and end homelessness. The Plan calls for cultivating

community champions and leaders who will ensure continued, sustainable engagement and action around the vision of HOPE, and the mobilization of a critical mass of citizens, decision makers, and key constituencies to support and implement effective solutions to end homelessness.

Resources Needed to End Homelessness

In addition to working smarter, implementation of the HOPE Plan will require new and reconfigured resources to carry out the recommendations. Although much of the needed funding will come from state and federal resources, it is estimated that it will cost approximately \$1.56 billion over ten years to create and operate the recommended 7,900 new units of permanent affordable and supportive housing.

While this cost estimate is sizeable, the price of not doing things differently is also significant, with poor outcomes for the monies spent. Estimates from other communities suggest that the emergency and social services used by people who are homeless can cost as much as \$70,000 per person per year. If applied to San Mateo County, this figure suggests it could cost nearly \$2 billion over 10 years to simply continue providing expensive emergency interventions that do not for the most part end homelessness for those receiving these services.

Therefore, the HOPE Plan lays out several strategies for securing the needed resources:

- through working smarter, using existing funds more strategically and efficiently;
- through coordination and collaboration, using local funds to leverage more state and federal funding; and,
- by showing tangible results, increasing public and private support for and investment in solutions to end homelessness.



Lalaine and her daughter, Kyla, found themselves homeless after Lalaine left an abusive marriage. With help from a local shelter, Lalaine earned a childhood education certificate and found permanent housing.

A Blueprint for Action

The community stakeholders who developed this Plan are committed to immediate action to ensure that the vision articulated becomes a reality. Concrete steps have been identified to ensure that the momentum developed during this planning process continues to build and accelerate in the months and years to come. An Interim Working Group has been formed to oversee garnering Plan endorsements, to establish preliminary implementation structures recommended in the Plan, and to guide efforts related to the Plan's recommendations already in progress.

Although the official launch of the Plan is scheduled for mid-2006, the transition from the planning to implementation phase has already begun. Specific actions are being put in motion to bring together individuals from all sectors of the community to begin to make progress towards meeting the goals set forth in the HOPE Plan:

- ❖ One hundred new units of permanent supportive housing are in development for adults who struggle with poverty, mental health problems and/or other chronic health conditions. Ninety of these units will be created through a partnership between the San Mateo County Health Department Mental Health Services, the Human Services Agency Center on Homelessness, and the Department of Housing, and funded through the county's allocation of State Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) funding.
- ❖ The City of San Mateo is establishing a pilot multi-disciplinary homeless outreach team under the direction of the Police Department. The team will be a unique partnership between the City of San Mateo, San Mateo County and community nonprofits. The team will reach out to and engage with those homeless people living on the streets in downtown San Mateo who have the longest histories of homelessness – offering them services (including health, mental health, and substance abuse services) as well as access to permanent housing.

Preventing and ending homelessness in San Mateo County will not be easy or simple – but it is possible. The time has come to take action to end this crisis in our community. A challenging period of framing the strategic direction to end homelessness is behind us and the next ten years of realizing it will be even more challenging. By working together as a community, we can overcome the obstacles and ensure that safe, accessible, affordable housing is available for everyone in San Mateo County, including those in greatest need.

