

# Path

to a

# Home



San Luis Obispo Countywide

## 10 Year Action Plan

to

# End Homelessness

Current version of the plan is available at:

**PLAN:** <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/AssetFactory.aspx?did=18276>

**APPENDIX:** <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/AssetFactory.aspx?did=18271>

## Vision Statement

We envision a future in which the housing and comprehensive services necessary to remain housed are available for all, affording everyone maximum self-sufficiency, and the opportunity to be productive and participating members of our community.

## Guiding Principles

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS WORKING TOGETHER**  
through ongoing coordination and collaboration between the County, Cities and Community partners

**SHARING RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH TO ALL**  
by building understanding of homelessness in order to encourage broad involvement and cultivate support for solutions

**CONTINUOUS COMMUNITY BUILDING**  
carried out through investment in affordable and supportive housing, treatment and services for the benefit of All county residents

**FOSTERING OF INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE**  
by creating a model system of care that is equal to the challenge of preventing and ending homelessness

**FLEXIBLE AND INDIVIDUALIZED ATTENTION**  
by tailoring housing and service provision to the specific needs of each individual and family

**FOCUS ON HOUSING**  
with all service provision ensuring the client's housing stability

**COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS WITH A SYSTEMWIDE PERSPECTIVE**  
by providing access to the full range of care available within the system

**STRATEGIC THINKING AND EFFICIENTLY TARGETED INTERVENTIONS**  
enabling us to target interventions for maximum impact and continuously monitor results and adjust for improvement.



# Path to a Home

## Executive Summary

In January 2008, cities, agencies and groups throughout San Luis Obispo county began an important journey, aimed at improving the county's approach to homelessness. The need for change was broadly recognized, as homelessness in the county was continuing to grow. More individuals and families were losing their housing; community members were increasingly frustrated by the effects of homelessness on their neighborhoods, city centers and public parks; homeless programs were struggling to meet growing need with dwindling resources, and local leaders were searching for solutions that were both effective and affordable.

Against this backdrop, and following a national trend to shift emphasis from "managing" homelessness to working to "end" it, a broad-based planning group came together to reevaluate current efforts within the county, consider best practices and lessons learned around the nation, and develop a Plan for a new and more effective response, aimed at ending homelessness in ten years. This document, *Path to a Home* is the outcome of that process.

*Path to a Home* lays out a clear central vision that focuses on ensuring that everyone has access to appropriate and affordable housing and to the services they need to sustain it. It provides a clear "path" of:

- what needs to be done to help people who are homeless or at-risk arrive "home" to stable housing and a place in the community as productive and participating members and
- the system, policy and program changes necessary for the Cities, Communities and County to arrive at their goal of ending homelessness in ten years.

Altogether, it is a new approach, one that puts as much attention on preventing homelessness as on helping people who are already homeless, and which calls for a variety of system level changes to facilitate integration and collaboration between mainstream and homeless agencies in their service provision. This new approach can be described as:

- system-focused, promoting greater effectiveness and efficiency in resource utilization;
- collaborative, **requiring all sectors of the county to contribute to this effort**; flexible and individualized, recognizing that each person in need is unique and requires a tailored response to his/her situation; and
- accountable, insisting on data collection and evaluation to document progress made and guide ongoing revisions and improvements.

# Plan Priorities and Strategies

## 1

### Facilitating Access to Affordable Housing to Put an End to Homelessness

**Strategy 1.1:** Create more affordable permanent housing and permanent supportive housing to help people who are homeless achieve long-term residential stability.

**Strategy 1.2:** Increase the supply of short-term “interim” and transitional housing as a supplement, and not an alternative, to permanent supportive housing.

**Strategy 1.3:** Cultivate and foster inclusive housing opportunities throughout the county for homeless individuals and families.

**Strategy 1.4:** Implement a housing first model of supportive housing.

**Strategy 1.5:** Generate more short-term and shallow subsidies that help people regain and maintain housing.

**Strategy 1.6:** Facilitate and streamline access to housing and housing supports by people who are homeless or at-risk.

## 3

### Ending and Preventing Homelessness through Integrated, Comprehensive, Responsive Supportive Services

**Strategy 3.1:** Create a comprehensive, integrated, flexible system of care which offers effective and coordinated care to those in need.

**Strategy 3.2:** Centralize and streamline access to comprehensive, coordinated support services.

**Strategy 3.3:** Generate greater community participation in the provision of comprehensive support services.

**Strategy 3.4:** Foster employment, volunteerism, and a sense of purpose among homeless people, as a core intervention to prevent and end homelessness.

**Strategy 3.5:** Support creation of profit-generating businesses to provide resources to homelessness “primary responder” agencies.

**Strategy 3.6:** Use mainstream benefits and resources more effectively in support of county goal to end homelessness

## 2

### Stopping Homelessness Before it Starts through Prevention and Effective Intervention

**Strategy 2.1:** Conduct housing focused discharge planning for people exiting jails and prisons in order to prevent homelessness and reduce recidivism

**Strategy 2.2:** Conduct comprehensive, housing focused discharge planning for people exiting hospitals, mental health facilities, alcohol and other drug treatment centers in order to prevent homelessness.

**Strategy 2.3:** Conduct comprehensive, housing focused discharge planning for young people exiting the foster care system in order to prevent homelessness.

**Strategy 2.4:** Create an overall discharge/ transition coordinator to support and coordinate the discharge efforts of each system (corrections, health-related programs and foster care).

**Strategy 2.5:** Create eviction intervention strategies to stop homelessness.

**Strategy 2.6:** Create performance mandates to support new county-wide policy focus of keeping people housed and/or getting them quickly re-housed.

## 4

### Coordinating A Solid Administrative & Financial Structure To Support Effective Plan Implementation

**Strategy 4.1:** Establish a countywide inter-jurisdictional collaborative homelessness governing body to coordinate efforts to prevent and end homelessness and oversee plan implementation.

**Strategy 4.2:** Support plan implementation with dedicated revenue from multiple sources.

**Strategy 4.3:** Collect data on homelessness and program performance to guide planning, program development and funding decisions.

**Strategy 4.4:** Continually improve the quality of efforts to address homelessness by integrating research and experiential findings and promising and evidence based practices into the response to homelessness

# Possible Venues Where the Plan May Happen

## Maxine Lewis Homeless Shelter

Consider program linked to Housing First  
Increase services to be Interim Housing  
Proceed with new facility focus aligned with Plan parameters

- Develop budget
- Find site
- Capital campaign

Participate in Case Management Standards Work  
Participate in Mainstream Benefits Access



## People's Kitchen

Review plan and determine agency direction:

- Interest in Basic Housing Assistance Center?
- Interest in partnering with existing agency location?
- Suitability to launch/host full service program?

Determine facility needs, sites available  
Resources vs. Costs

Participate in Case Management Standards work  
Participate in Mainstream Benefits Access

## ECHO Atascadero Center

Develop program model that carries out Plan  
Proceed with site acquisition and development  
Develop Budget and Resource Identification  
Participate in Case Management Standards work  
Participate in Mainstream Benefits Access



## Prado Day Center SLO

Expand Homeless Outreach effort  
Redesign existing facility and retrain existing staff

Align existing programs to fit the new direction

Participate in Case Management Standards work

Expand Permanent Supportive Housing and Affordable Housing supply

*To find out how you can support this Plan, please contact*

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