



Homelessness Response Accomplishments 2024

Progress in Homelessness Response

In 2024, the City adopted a new Homelessness Response Strategic Plan (2024-27). This new plan builds on our work over the past two years and provides a compassionate approach to homelessness that focuses on building more affordable housing, offering shelter, increasing outreach, prioritizing partnerships with community organizations, and managing large encampments that pose health, environmental, and safety risks.

These efforts have led to a remarkable 36% decrease in homelessness over the past year in the City of Santa Cruz—a testament to the effectiveness of our approach.



Priorities

- Two Safe Sleeping Programs — 1220 River Street Transitional Community and City Overlook Shelter
- Safe Parking Program — emergency, overnight, and long-term options
- Encampment Response and Clean up
- Homelessness Response Team
- Navigation Center at Coral Street Campus
- Severe Weather Shelter
- Affordable and Supportive Housing
- Sustainable Funding



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New Facilities

- On Coral Street, we purchased property to serve the unhoused population with a navigation center, geographically positioned to collaborate with other service providers.
- In Summer 2024, the City was awarded a \$4 million grant from the State. This will fund 20 interim housing units at the Housing Matters campus and provide additional outreach, service coordination for people in need.

Outreach and Shelter Programs

The City's outreach team engages in street-level outreach with people, meeting them in encampments or where ever they may be staying. They offer practical help and support; provide access to shelter and services; and make life-saving connections with people.

Our Safe Parking Program and two shelters — 1220 River Street Transitional Community Camp and City Overlook at the National Guard Armory — are key parts of the City's homelessness response efforts.

At City shelter sites, pets, possessions, and partners are welcome and we provide stable access to food, health, hygiene services. Weekly check-ins with shelter staff and regular community meeting occur onsite with participants. This consistent support gives people more ability to focus on searches for jobs and longer-term housing.

Program participants confirm that a critical step for moving out of an encampment is the availability and access to these types of shelter programs where they can move beyond day-to-day focus on survival.

Services to the Community

- We built an **active homelessness response unit** with new team members who collaborate effectively with nearly every department across the City including: personal outreach to unhoused people; wildfire and flood protection; encampment management; and stewarding relationships with the community.
- Everyday our outreach workers are **removing barriers** to housing entry and helping people toward stable housing.
- We work closely with the County and community partners to **coordinate outreach and data collection** to help us make effective use of limited resources, improve our planning, and track our progress.
- We provide ongoing **stewardship of our natural environment** — protecting our parks, beaches, forests, waterways, rivers, and oceans, ensuring that they are safe and accessible for the community now and for future generations.



Data for this report comes from the 2024 Point in Time count, required by federal and state agencies. Program data reflects accomplishments from program inception - 2024.