

***The San Joaquin
Community Response to
Homelessness
San Joaquin County
Strategic Plan***

Impact Report

2020-2021

April 2022



Introduction and Executive Summary

Introduction from the CoC Board of Directors Chair, Kate Hutchinson

It goes without saying that the last few years have not been easy ones and that the reverberations of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to reshape every aspect of our lives, communities, and workplaces. Despite these unprecedented challenges, the San Joaquin CoC has made enormous accomplishments in its efforts to address and end homelessness in the County. In 2020, *The San Joaquin Community Response to Homelessness San Joaquin County Strategic Plan* was adopted by the CoC, the County, the City of Lodi, the City of Manteca, the City of Stockton, and the City of Tracy, and provides as a visionary framework to work collaboratively towards a common goal.

The Plan was the result of: an extensive analysis of homelessness in San Joaquin County, including progress made to address the crisis; a review of available best practices; and input and review from the community and stakeholders. The result was an ambitious roadmap for addressing homelessness in San Joaquin County. This roadmap encompasses three clear goals, which are further divided into specific strategies and steps.

Since adoption:

- Communities have come together to develop **coordinated emergency and winter shelter efforts** in Lodi, Manteca, and Tracy.
- Across the County over **250 new units of affordable housing** are leased or in production.
- Countywide, construction has been funded, approved, and production begun on **788 new shelter beds**.

A year and a half after it was first approved, the San Joaquin CoC Board hopes that this Impact Report: 2020-2021 will provide a robust overview of accomplishments and a blueprint for continuing this essential progress.

Sincerely,

Kate Hutchinson

San Joaquin CoC Board of Directors Chair

Pandemic Context

Just as the Strategic Plan was being finalized, the COVID pandemic began. COVID has amplified what we already knew was wrong with the homeless system of care and has created unprecedented challenges for those working to combat homelessness. It has also brought opportunities for new partnerships and novel responses. The Strategic Plan, written and envisioned in a pre-COVID world, has been put into action in a post-COVID one. Some timelines have changed and goals have shifted in response to this public health crisis, but nevertheless San Joaquin County has achieved great progress in the midst of a global pandemic.

Highlights from Across the County

Shelter Expansion

The Stockton Shelter for the Homeless is undergoing an expansion this year adding 180 low-barrier beds for those experiencing homelessness in the area. The Shelter will provide a one-stop navigation center where individuals can link up with services, including behavioral health, substance abuse treatment, food and housing.

Lodi

Access Center and Emergency Shelter

The City of Lodi received City Council approval in October 2021 to purchase a location to develop their Access Center and Emergency Shelter. The goal is to have a temporary emergency shelter in operation within the first half of 2022 that can house up to 50 unsheltered individuals and provide services that include housing navigation, income advocacy, mental health, and substance use treatment, and job readiness training. The permanent Access Center is planned for development and will meet the needs of the 2022 Point in Time Count.

Stockton

Warming Center

On December 22, 2021, Tracy Community Connections Center (TCCC) began operating the warming center at Good Shepard Community Church from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. seven days a week. The warming center provides a safe heated indoor space for those seeking relief from the winter elements. TCCC provides guests with daily intake and case management services, meals, showers, and laundry services in partnership with various nonprofits. Shuttle services are available to those that need transportation.

Manteca

Services Provide Stability to Residents

From June through January 2021, five individuals experiencing homelessness in Manteca obtained housing, 18 entered a residential program, another 18 obtained employment, three were reunited with their families, and one started college. The Homeless Emergency Center provided assistance to hundreds of individual residents, including three daily meals, showers, haircuts, overnight shelter, storage, and clothing.

Tracy

Accomplishments:



The Coordinated Entry System (CES) Committee drafted and approved the CES Policy and Procedures Manual governing the CES for the entire system of care.



Cities have come to the table both internally and with the County and nonprofits to coordinate around outreach and engagement.



Family Resource and Referral Center- 211 San Joaquin (FRRC-211) was chosen and onboarded as the lead CES entity and was trained on HMIS and VI-SPDAT. All VI-SPDAT's are now being conducted by FRRC-211.



FRRC-211 worked with the Salvation Army Adult Rehab Center to fill 25 beds through the CES.

Goal 1: Establish a Coordinated and Engaged Regional System of Care

Homelessness is a countywide challenge that requires partnership between numerous jurisdictions, agencies, and sectors. The CoC decided to create a robust Coordinated Entry System (CES) to better prioritize and serve those struggling with housing instability and homelessness. CES is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access to housing and supportive services.

In line with this goal, the CoC adopted three strategies:

- Establish a cross-jurisdictional effort to create shared processes to access funding streams, identify community priorities, and coordinate the countywide homeless system of care;
- Improve data collection, measurement, and analysis;
- Educate and engage the community.

Success Spotlight: Emergency Housing Vouchers and Coordinated Entry

Through the American Rescue Plan Act, HUD made Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) available to assist individuals and families who are homeless or experiencing housing instability. The Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin (HACSJ) widely publicized these vouchers throughout the County and on the Family Resource and Referral Center-211 San Joaquin website. They entered into an agreement with Family Resource and Referral Center- 211 of San Joaquin County (FRRC-211) to handle the calls for EHV referrals.

In just 3.5 weeks, FRRC-211 quickly and efficiently screened more than 5,000 calls from interested individuals and identified those who were eligible for the EHV program, who they referred to HACSJ. Individuals in need of supportive services were also identified and referred to accessible services.

As a result of this collaboration and structure, assistance was provided to 38 San Joaquin County households experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness, representing 102 individuals.

Community Queue Streamlines and Centralizes Access to Housing

In September 2021, the San Joaquin CoC established a centralized community queue of individuals experiencing homelessness who are looking for housing.

Family Resource and Referral Center-211 San Joaquin (FRRC-211) is responsible for maintaining this queue.

- FRRC-211 receives hundreds of calls each week related to homelessness and housing
- Their 6 staff members are trained on VI-SPDAT and HMIS
- Individuals who are eligible for Coordinated Entry are identified and screened using the VI-SPDAT by FRRC-211
- Since September, **89 people have been placed on the community queue** to be placed in housing as it becomes available

NEXT STEPS:

- Establish key organizations, ensuring full geographic coverage
- Set up HMIS to support system
- Draft operations manual to accompany CES Policies and Procedures
- Continue to increase buy-in from providers and housing partners
- Roll out system with selected providers and begin tracking metrics
- Conduct review of Strategic Plan by CoC Board & CoC Board training
- Ensure that all housing and homeless programs are trained and participate in HMIS
- Identify costs of homelessness v. costs savings through best practices

Goal 2: Increase Access and Reduce Barriers to Homeless Crisis Response Services

Connecting and building rapport with people experiencing homelessness is critical in a region where nearly 60% of unhoused neighbors live without shelter – on the streets, in cars, under bridges, or by the river. By expanding outreach, increasing services, and developing low-barrier shelters, the community can target resources to those living in places not meant for human habitation. At the same time, San Joaquin County must be better positioned to support those at-risk of becoming homeless.

To support these efforts, the San Joaquin CoC identified the following strategies:

- Expand low-barrier shelter capacity, hours and services
- Invest in prevention and diversion
- Improve outreach and expand outreach engagement

Accomplishments:

- + The CoC prioritized RRH and homelessness prevention in ESG recommendations.
- + Tracy, Manteca and Lodi collaboratively presented at the July 13, 2021 Board of Supervisor meeting to request financial assistance with the start-up costs for their Navigation/Access Centers and all three cities were awarded funding.
- + Tracy, Manteca and Lodi are coordinating their winter warming centers and temporary emergency shelters to share information, lessons learned, and ideas.
- + The City of Lodi was awarded a \$2 million permanent local housing grant to support Access Center over a five-year period.

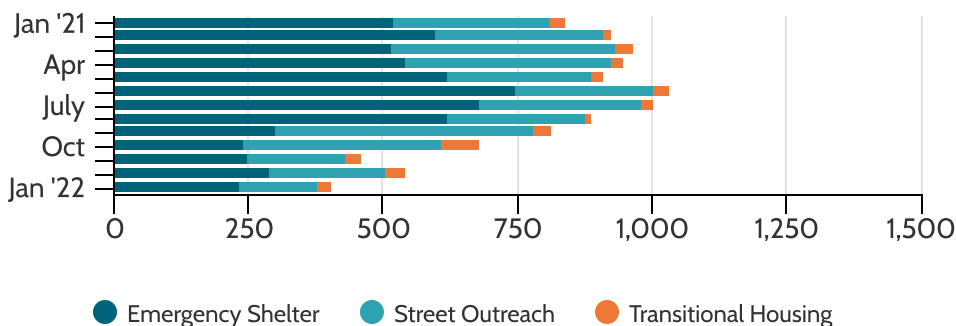
Success Spotlight: Julie Spotts and Dixie Doo Dah

Julie Spotts is 61 years old and says that in her life she has had both success and many obstacles, including years of struggling with addiction and housing insecurity. This Fall, Julie stumbled upon the Showered with Love Clothing Ministry Food Day at Gravity Church where she met Kathryn Siddle, a retired social worker and member of the Lodi Committee on Homelessness (LCOH). Together, they identified what Julie needed: stable housing, an ID, government benefits, a mailing address, connections to mental health providers, bus passes, and veterinary care and supplies for her dog Dixie Doo Dah.

Through the collective efforts of LCOH, Lodi Community Center, San Joaquin Behavioral Health, Community Medical Centers, Stockton Self Help Housing and other community stakeholders, Julie received the support she needed. Today, Julie is living in a home through Stockton Self Help Housing and excited about a future where she can use her experience and advocacy to help others to advocate for themselves and turn around their own lives. As Julie says, “people stay in what they’re in because they know it and they know how to survive there, there’s safety in the knowingness, the unknowingness is what scares people.”



Clients Entering Non-Permanent Housing Programs per Month



NEXT STEPS:

- Identify and engage private sector partners
- Expand low-barrier shelter capacity, incorporating Housing First principles to existing shelters
- Provide best practices, guidance, and consistent definition of terms to support standardization of policies throughout shelters
- Identify permanent funding streams to support ongoing needs
- Develop toolkit to educate partners on available resources
- Continue efforts to include law enforcement as a partner but not a leader of homeless response efforts

Accomplishments:



At Town Center Studios in Stockton, funded by California's Homekey Initiative, 20 new housing units have been rehabilitated and occupied by 26 formerly homeless individuals. An additional 20 units will be completed and occupied in 2022.



The CoC Board Established a Housing Committee to:

- To better deploy permanent housing vouchers, RRH and PSH resources;
- Examine the disparity between local Consolidated Plans, regional housing needs assessments, general plans and actual building; and,
- Enhance capacity/collaboration for the development of future permanent supportive housing



The CoC prioritized PSH in CoC Application

Goal 3: Ensure Access to Affordable and Sustainable Permanent Housing Solutions

Stakeholders in San Joaquin County have overwhelmingly voiced the need for investment into the creation, rehabilitation, and expansion of affordable housing options. Ultimately, without a pathway to housing, many households experiencing homelessness will continue to face instability, experience trauma, and remain on the street.

To achieve this goal, the County adopted the following strategies:

- Increase affordable housing stock for vulnerable adults, youth, and families
- Invest in landlord engagement, navigation, and incentives
- Expand case management, employment, and supportive services



Success Spotlight: April Preciado and her Family

Ms. April Preciado and her four children were staying in a motel for a short stint and have been living at the Stockton Shelter for the last seven months. She is SO excited to finally be able to move into her own home. Ms. Preciado and her daughter, pictured here, who just celebrated her eighth birthday in the families new home.

Ms. Preciado would like to thank the Stockton Shelter for keeping the family safe and sound, and to the shelter staff for supporting the Preciados throughout their stay there. Thanks also goes to the Housing Authority for all the effort in developing the site and for all the work and patience needed to qualify the family for housing assistance.

Affordable Housing for Formerly Homeless Individuals since 2020

(* indicates project is in pipeline, all other projects are complete)

Project	Units
Crossways Residence	39
Harmony Homes	4
Liberty Square	40
Sonora Square*	37
STAND, WPC and Dignity Health Housing Project*	23 (11 completed, 12 in pipeline)
Sutter Commons	9
Town Center Studios	40 (20 completed, 20 in pipeline)
Turnpike Commons	11
Victory Gardens*	48

NEXT STEPS:

- Create inventory of vacant or underutilized properties to target for development
- Continue to evaluate and modify codes and zoning laws at City and County levels that unnecessarily restrict the development of high-density affordable housing
- Secure local funding for prevention and incentives
- Educate landlords on laws against discriminating on income source
- Offer mediation services for landlord-tenant conflicts
- Engage the business community to create internship, apprenticeship, employment, and grant opportunities
- Evaluate population-specific case management needs