



Council Agenda Report

From: Angelica Fortin, Community Services Director

Subject: Approval of the Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness

CEQA Determination: The City finds that this action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State Guidelines Section State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15060, subd. (c)(2)-(3), 15378.

Date: December 5, 2023

Facts

1. [City Council Adopted Goals and Strategic Priorities](#) includes Housing and Homelessness as one of six areas of priority during the FY 22-23 and 23-24 budget cycle. Creating a Regional Homeless Services Strategic Plan was included as an objective to addressing the goal area.
2. [In May of 2022](#), the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce presented the results of the [Unhoused Futures Studies Task Force](#) study, which was conducted in partnership with the City. The study laid the groundwork for future strategic planning.
3. In May of 2023, the City commissioned a working group to develop a strategic Plan to Address Homelessness. The invited group was comprised of a cross section of key City staff, several members of the former Unhoused Futures Studies Task Force, members of the Paso Robles Community who have “lived” homeless experiences, and representatives from stakeholder agencies and organizations.
4. On July 7th and 8th, 2023, the City hosted two public meetings to solicit feedback from the community at large. An online feedback form was made available to encourage additional participation.
5. Over a six-month period, City staff met with the working group to identify areas of focus, goals, and actionable objectives that aligned with City priorities and the [San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness](#) adopted in August of 2022.

Community Outreach

The strategic plan working group met four times throughout the strategic planning process. In addition, two publicly noticed community meetings were held to solicit feedback early in the process to help guide the work of the working group. Public meeting information was shared via social media, the City’s website, and through the local press. An online feedback form was made available as an alternative engagement option.

The strategic planning working group included representatives from the following organizations:

County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health
County of San Luis Obispo Health Agency
County of San Luis Obispo Homeless Services Division
El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO)
Housing Authority San Luis Obispo (HASLO)
NAMI San Luis Obispo County

Paso Robles Housing Authority
Paso Robles Joint Unified School District
Paso Robles Templeton Chamber of Commerce
Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance
Philanthropy Faith Hope & Love
Transitions Mental Health (TMHA)
Travel Paso
Twin Cities Community Hospital

Options

1. Take no action;
2. Approve the Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness;
3. Provide alternative direction to staff.

Analysis and Conclusions

Guided by the FY 22-23 and 23-24 City Council Adopted Goals and Strategic Priorities, the City initiated strategic planning to address homelessness in Paso Robles in May of 2023. Recognizing the complexity of issues related to homelessness, the City commissioned a working group comprised of a cross section of key City staff, several members of the former Unhoused Futures Studies Task Force, members of the Paso Robles Community who have “lived” homeless experiences, and representatives from stakeholder agencies and organizations to develop the plan. The group met several times during the summer and fall of 2023. Having conducted a “SWOT” (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, the group used feedback collected at two public meetings and through an online feedback form, to develop and refine six areas of focus that aligned with the San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness:

- Programs and Services: Coordinate local and regional efforts to address homelessness through a dedicated Homeless Services Manager.
- Behavioral Health: Improve access to behavioral health and substance abuse resources.
- Education, Outreach and Training: Implement an outreach and communications plan to increase public awareness regarding homelessness and available resources.
- Housing Continuum: Inventory, develop and increase housing along the housing continuum including emergency shelter, transitional housing, and affordable housing options.
- Funding and Resources: Identify and pursue local, regional, state, and federal funding opportunities.
- Policies and Procedures: Develop and implement sustainable policies and procedures that promote health, safety, and housing stability.

Subsequently, the working group and City staff worked collaboratively to develop goals and objectives in each area. Four of the thirteen goals developed were identified as foundational to the plan’s success and should be achieved within the first year of implementation:

- Hire a City Homeless Services Manager to coordinate City services, ensure continuity of effort, prevent duplication of services, and manage related grants.
- Implement a communication plan to share the *Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness* within the community.

- Conduct a financial needs assessment to determine funding needs and potential funding options needed to complete the plan objectives.
- Develop a budget that supports the priorities of the plan and provides the greatest return on investment.

The remaining goals will be prioritized annually by the Homeless Services Manager, in coordination with the identified coordinating partners, and presented to City Council in an annual report.

Fiscal Impact

Approving the Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness carries no immediate financial obligation for the City. However, the plan includes the addition of a Homeless Services Manager that will be responsible for completing key tasks, coordinating partnerships, and monitoring and reporting progress on the plan. The estimated cost for the new position and related operating costs is \$200,000. This, and other action items requiring General Fund support, are indicated in the strategic plan document, and staff will seek funding for these items as a part of the City's budget development process for Fiscal Years 2024-25 and 2025-26. Some action items requiring funding will be supported through grant and partnership opportunities.

CEQA

The City finds that this action, approving the Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness, is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State Guidelines Section State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15060, subd. (c)(2)-(3), 15378 because it has no potential to result in either a direct, or reasonably foreseeable indirect, physical change in the environment. Alternatively, the action to approve the Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness is exempt from CEQA on the basis that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.

Recommendation (Option 2)

Approve the Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness.

Attachments

1. Paso Robles Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness