Detailed Prevention Objectives and Strategies

To "Prevent homelessness for our residents" is the first of four primary goals outlined in the *Home Together 2026 Community Plan*. This goal is advanced through four strategic objectives, each with identified strategies. What follows are specific recommendations to achieve each of the *Home Together* strategic prevention objectives, and to guide implementation of the associated strategies. Through extensive community engagement that helped shape this Framework, one new strategic prevention objective related to policy is included, as well as a set of policy recommendations.

Objective 1: Address racial disparities in mainstream/upstream systems to prevent racially disproportionate inflow into homelessness.

This strategic objective recognizes that many publicly funded mainstream systems serve disproportionately high numbers of the same racial, ethnic, and other marginalized groups that are overrepresented in homelessness. Some of these systems also house people for some period of time, for example through stays in treatment facilities, incarceration, or through foster care placements. To reduce homelessness, these systems must prioritize the housing stability of those they serve, work with the homelessness response system to identify those at greatest risk of homelessness and connect those households to necessary prevention services. As discussed earlier, the integration of these mainstream systems into the community's homelessness prevention response is critical to the success of the response, and to reducing the disproportionate inflow of BIPOC communities into homelessness.

Strategy 1.1 speaks to all mainstream public systems and the steps they need to take to support homelessness prevention. Starting with *Strategy 1.2.* there are additional recommendations specific to those mainstream institutions expressly identified in *Home Together*.

STRATEGY 1.1
Partner with school districts, social services agencies, child welfare, community health organizations and others to connect people to prevention and economic supports in a timely manner and through trusted sources.

Recommendations

1.1.a | Obtain a leadership-level commitment from all publicly funded mainstream systems in Alameda County that recognizes their stake in those they serve having stable permanent housing, and their role in the development, implementation, and resourcing of the community-wide homelessness prevention response.

1.1.b | Develop screening questions that all publicly funded systems serving low-income households use to determine whether a household is at risk of experiencing homelessness and what types of prevention or other services they would most benefit from. Screening questions should focus on housing precarity. Incorporate these questions into existing intake assessments or, where necessary, create a separate screening tool that uses the standardized set of questions. Pilot the questions and adjust as necessary prior to deploying across mainstream systems. Ensure such screening takes place at county health and mental health access points, as well as other access points.

1.1.c | Identify points of contact within each mainstream system where people already provide information about themselves (e.g., applying for free school lunches, TANF, unemployment, Medi-Cal, clinical visits etc.) and train staff who directly serve people in these situations on asking the housing status and homelessness prevention screening questions and how to make appropriate referrals to needed services.

1.1.d | Develop and fund effective and efficient pathways that trained staff in mainstream systems use to directly connect people at imminent risk of homelessness to the homelessness prevention services network (see *Strategy 2.2*) and to other needed services. Leverage existing systems, such as 211, but recognize that it is most effective to provide a warm hand-off to needed services.

1.1.e | For each system that works with a significant number of people who may be at risk of experiencing homelessness, determine whether they, and/or their contracted community-based partners providing direct services, require dedicated housing navigation staff to assess their clients and make appropriate referrals to homelessness prevention and other services. Prioritize funding to these positions.

1.1.f | Mainstream systems that discharge people from temporary housing situations — e.g., the criminal legal system, foster care, and residential treatment/care — should assess a person's risk of homelessness and develop a plan for permanent housing as early as possible in the person's stay. These systems should allocate sufficient funding to successfully implement these permanent housing plans and prevent people from exiting into homelessness.

1.1.g | For each mainstream system that works with a significant number of people who may be at risk of homelessness, determine whether specialized housing-related needs of the populations require the system to develop or expand its own homelessness prevention programming. For example, those with severe mental illness or who need support with activities of daily living may require a level of supportive services to retain housing that is best provided by the Health Care Services Agency (HCSA) and its community health partners, rather than by the homelessness prevention services network recommended under *Strategy 2.2*.

1.1.h | Leverage mainstream system convenings of community-based organizations to educate and train those organizations on the tools and services available to support homelessness prevention so that they can help people in their communities access homelessness prevention services.

1.1.i | Ensure that all mainstream systems participating in the community-wide homelessness prevention response collect and share information - preferably in a shared information system - in a way that allows for appropriate referrals, care coordination, and ongoing monitoring and quality improvement of homelessness prevention efforts. Monitoring should include the effectiveness of the screening questions, of the referral processes, and whether there are racial, ethnic, and other disparities in who is assessed and successfully navigated to appropriate services.

STRATEGY 1.2
Work with institutions in the criminal legal system to create housing planning and homelessness prevention resources.

Recommendations

1.2.a | Align homelessness prevention services for the reentry population with current criminal legal system reform efforts in Alameda Couty. This includes expanding homelessness prevention resources as part of the Center of Reentry Excellence (CORE), operated by the Alameda County Department of Probation. In addition, support implementation of Goal 2 of the *2020 Community Corrections Partnership Plan*, which seeks to reduce recidivism by initiating "reentry planning at the earliest possible point of contact with the criminal justice system and continue until 'successful' reintegration." Successful implementation of Goal 2 includes the provision of "high-quality, peer involved, and comprehensive housing services."

1.2.b | Explore with the Alameda County Probation Department the opportunity to expand and incorporate a wider range of homelessness prevention resources, including Housing Problem Solving services, offered through the Reentry Housing Program, which assists adults on probation to secure long-term stable housing.

1.2.c | Engage with the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council to identify opportunities to expand housing-related reentry services for youth who are most likely to experience literal homelessness; review progress on reentry needs assessment and planning outlined in the *Alameda County 2010* blueprint for Collaborative and Effective Juvenile Reentry, specifically with respect to how housing risk is assessed.

1.2.d | Identify opportunities for the Alameda County Probation Department and Alameda County Behavioral Health to coordinate around identifying and maintaining permanent housing for people on probation or parole with severe mental health conditions.

1.2.e | Assess the racial and ethnic demographics of the people being served by Alameda County's reentry programs and develop strategies to ensure that all housing-related programming reduces, rather than exacerbates, disproportionate inflow into homelessness for BIPOC communities.

STRATEGY 1.3
Ensure that workforce services are accessible to and structured to support people whose housing is unstable.

Recommendations

1.3.a | Establish and deepen existing partnerships between workforce, eviction prevention, homelessness prevention, and homelessness response systems.

Prioritize:

- providing housing stabilization services for participants in employment training and supportive employment programs, in order to promote successful completion of those programs or retention of employment, and connect households receiving eviction and homelessness prevention services with workforce assistance that results in housing-wage employment and long-term housing stability.

- building support and partnerships with existing and emerging employment social enterprises (ESEs), providing jobs to individuals who have experienced homelessness, incarceration and other significant challenges. ESEs provide both income and supports for workers and can access dedicated funding streams.

1.3.b | Partner with colleges and adult education programs to explore providing households at risk of homelessness with access to certification and accreditation programs that support entrepreneurship and home-based business opportunities.

1.3.c | Use the homelessness prevention network's outreach into geographic areas and populations with the highest concentrations of people likely to become homeless to provide information to the community on workforce education, training, and employment opportunities.

1.3.d | Determine where it is most effective to build Housing Problem Solving and flexible financial assistance capacity into existing workforce programs, rather than to rely exclusively on referrals of households at risk of homelessness to the homelessness prevention network.

STRATEGY 1.4
Target resources to assist children and vulnerable transition aged youth leaving their homes or foster care.[1]

Recommendations

1.4.a | Build on the work of the County's child welfare/foster care system to support successful transitions to permanent housing for vulnerable youth at risk of homelessness. Explore extending successful strategies to transition aged youth who are preparing to leave family homes that rely on long-term housing subsidies for stability.

1.4.b | Explore with the Social Services Agency using a portion of the CalWORKS Housing Support Program, TANF, and other family benefit programs for targeted homelessness prevention.

1.4.c | Assess learnings from current Tipping Point funded pilot programs connecting youth to stable housing and career track employment training opportunities; take lessons learned to create and expand youth employment and housing programs.

1.4.d | Identify opportunities in schools, community settings, and other service delivery forums to teach and train families and youth about housing rights and resources.

1.4.e | Meet the childcare and transportation needs of parents of young children and transition aged youth that are at risk of homelessness. Fund these services as part of housing stabilization and the homelessness prevention response.

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[1] This is a new strategy, not specified in *Home Together,* that emerged through engagement with community stakeholders on the HPST.

Objective 2: Focus resources for prevention on people most likely to lose their homes.

While many very low-income households will experience a housing crisis, most will not become literally homeless, even if they are highly economically vulnerable. In addition, households that seek out financial assistance and prevention services are not necessarily those most likely to experience homelessness without support; many who experience homelessness do not seek services prior to losing their housing.[2] Given limited resources and the priority to reduce inflow into homelessness, it is essential to target homelessness prevention resources to those most likely to lose their homes.

STRATEGY 2.1
Work with government and private funders to increase targeted prevention for people most likely to become homeless.

Recommendations

2.1.a | Set specific annual goals for increased homelessness prevention services capacity and develop a workplan to pursue federal, state, and local government funding, as well as philanthropic and private sector support, to achieve those goals.

2.1.b | Prioritize investment of new and existing homelessness prevention resources to programs that target those resources to the households most likely to experience homelessness. Use the best available research on the factors that increase the likelihood that someone experiencing a housing crisis will end up experiencing literal homelessness, including people with extremely low incomes, histories of homelessness, and living in neighborhoods with high rates of poverty and evictions. Ensure that impacts of targeting are regularly evaluated and that targeting is adjusted as appropriate.

2.1.c | Assess and adjust all investments in homelessness prevention services as necessary to ensure that those services are reducing the inflow of overrepresented BIPOC households into homelessness.

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[2] A recently released study by the University of California San Francisco reported that only 36% of the people experiencing homelessness interviewed for the study reported seeking assistance prior to losing their housing, and most of these sought support from friends or family rather than public institutions. CASPEH_Executive_Summary_62023.pdf (ucsf.edu)

STRATEGY 2.2
Tailor outreach and prioritization to reach those at highest risk and coordinate these efforts in all areas of the county.

Recommendations

2.2.a | Develop a homelessness prevention services network that coordinates targeted homelessness prevention efforts for all of Alameda County. Model the network on existing efforts in Oakland and Santa Clara County. Align with All Home's larger regional homelessness prevention efforts. Incorporate learnings from other effective service delivery networks, such as the childcare services network in Alameda County.

2.2.b | Identify a lead agency or leadership partnership for the homelessness prevention services network. Provide staffing and ongoing budget that allows the agency or partnership to effectively carry out its roles, including: (a) advancing the shared network priorities of reducing inflows into literal homelessness and eliminating racial disparities; (b) coordinating bi-directional referral processes with mainstream systems; (c) centralizing the administrative aspects of prevention services delivery to achieve efficiencies and expand opportunities for smaller community based partners; (d) training in shared service delivery models, including effective prevention targeting, and person centered, trauma informed, and culturally responsive services; (e) developing and maintaining a shared information system; and (f) leading ongoing evaluation and network performance improvement.

2.2.c | Use available data to identify and prioritize outreach into the highest need neighborhoods and geographic areas. Conduct outreach through community-based homelessness prevention providers and trusted community partners, focusing on places people visit regularly (e.g., markets, churches, salons), to ensure that prevention services are offered to those in housing crisis who are at highest risk of experiencing homelessness.

2.2.d | Ensure that the homelessness prevention services help people at risk of homelessness maintain and build supportive relationships within their local communities and neighborhoods.

2.2.e | Establish agreement among public agencies in Alameda County that receive homelessness prevention funding to use their policy and contracting authority to advance the network's priority to serve those households most at risk of experiencing homelessness.

2.2.f | Provide accessible, widespread participant-focused communication about available services, their duration, and requirements. Ensure that information is distributed in multiple languages and formats through mainstream institutions, the homelessness prevention network, and trusted community-based sources. Explore the use of targeted social media to reach priority populations.

2.2.g | Make homelessness prevention services easier to access by creating multiple easy to use physical and virtual access points to the homelessness prevention services network, streamlining application processes, minimizing documentation requirements, and delivering the needed services quickly. Support providers to be creative and flexible in how they administer and provide services to meet the unique needs of each person's situation.

2.2.h | Require the providers in the homelessness prevention network to use a shared information system, agreed upon data standards and workflows, to allow for efficient intake, referral, care coordination, outcome reporting, and ongoing evaluation of gaps in services and disparities in who is receiving and succeeding in homelessness prevention services.

STRATEGY 2.3
Implement and expand shallow subsidy availability for people on fixed or limited incomes with housing insecurity to relieve rent burden and reduce the risk of becoming homeless.

Recommendations

2.3.a | Establish a pool of shallow subsidies prioritized to households at imminent risk of homelessness that have fixed, limited incomes and will, as a result, repeatedly be at risk of homelessness without an ongoing rent subsidy.

2.3.b | Set an annual target number of new shallow subsidies for prevention that mirrors *Home Together's* targets for new shallow subsidies for people already experiencing homelessness.[3]

2.3.c | Work through the Continuum of Care (CoC), the mainstream systems participating in the community-wide homelessness prevention response, and other local allies, to advocate for the shallow subsidy model and for local, state, and federal funding to meet the prevention-focused shallow subsidy capacity goals.

2.3.d | Evaluate and incorporate learnings from shallow subsidy programs in general, and new placement and prevention uses in Alameda County. Assess how effectively and efficiently they support new placements out of homelessness and homelessness preventions for different target populations, and identify any racial and ethnic disparities in access and outcomes resulting from how shallow subsidies are deployed.

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[3] This recommendation follows from a general community guideline that new housing and prevention slots be created in a 1 to 1 ratio, and at four times the rate of new interim housing slots.

Objective 3: Rapidly resolve episodes of homelessness through Housing Problem Solving.

Housing Problem Solving is an approach to rehousing people on the verge of, or newly experiencing homelessness as quickly as possible, often leveraging their personal networks and small amounts of funding. It uses skills, including strengths-based conversations, mediation, and flexible resources to help people identify immediate housing solutions, whether temporary or permanent. While Housing Problem Solving in Alameda County currently focuses on people who have lost their housing and are served by the homelessness response system, the recommendations here recognize that the techniques associated with Housing Problem Solving can be a highly efficient and cost-effective way to support people to maintain their current housing or move directly to other housing without experiencing or reentering homelessness.

STRATEGY 3.1
Add resources to flexible funding pools for Housing Problem Solving, a practice of helping people newly homeless or on the verge of homelessness to identify rapid solutions to their situation with light financial support.

Recommendations

3.1.a | Evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of current Housing Problem Solving in the homelessness response system. Assess how well it rapidly resolves and prevents homelessness, and the racial and ethnic demographics of who accesses and experiences positive outcomes from the service. Work with current and prospective Housing Problem Solving providers to develop system improvements based on the outcomes of the evaluation.

3.1.b | Identify specific annual program expansion goals that reflect the level of need and the effectiveness of Housing Problem Solving relative to other forms of homelessness prevention and rapid resolution.

3.1.c | Set specific annual targets for additional Housing Problem Solving capacity for the homelessness response system, including for additional staff trained in Housing Problem Solving and additional flexible funding to achieve identified program expansion goals.

STRATEGY 3.2

Offer Housing Problem Solving training and funding throughout the system so that providers can quickly assist people when and where they seek help.

Recommendations

3.2.a | Train staff across provider agencies in the homelessness response system in Housing Problem Solving techniques. Include staff from agencies that do not have direct access to dedicated flexible Housing Problem Solving funds and staff from organizations that are not publicly contracted but that regularly engage with people who are on the verge of becoming homeless (e.g., faith-based communities).

3.2.b | Extend access to Housing Problem Solving flexible funds to all agencies in the homelessness response system that have staff trained to effectively use these funds to rapidly resolve someone's recent homelessness.

3.2.c | Regularly assess the effectiveness of expanded investments in and providers offering Housing Problem Solving. Evaluate the racial and other demographic profiles of those participating in and successfully regaining housing through this intervention.

NEW

STRATEGY 3.3

Provide Housing Problem Solving training and funding to mainstream systems and to organizations in the homelessness prevention network.[4]

Recommendations

3.3.a | Provide Housing Problem Solving training to employees of mainstream systems and community-based organizations that work with participants who, if in a housing crisis, are at significant risk to experience homelessness.

3.3.b | Create an easily accessible pool of flexible funds that trained employees in mainstream systems and community-based organizations can use to problem solve with households.

3.3.c | Ensure that Housing Problem Solving funds are maximally flexible and can pay for any expense that could reasonably support housing retention (e.g., car repairs, emergency childcare, etc.).

3.3.d | Require the use of a shared information platform, or information sharing protocol, to track Housing Problem Services outcomes in mainstream systems and community-based organizations, so that the effectiveness and equity of expanded Housing Problem Solving can be regularly evaluated and reported on.

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[4] This is a new strategy, not found in Home Together, that emerged out of the community engagement process for this Framework.

Each year a percentage of people who have previously been housed with support from the homelessness response system return to homelessness. Black and Native American adults, who encounter the greatest barriers to housing, are vastly over-represented among those who experience homelessness, and disproportionately return to homelessness once housed. *Home Together* seeks to reduce racial disparities and the disproportionate rate at which BIPOC communities return to homelessness.

STRATEGY 4.1

Target time-limited Rapid Rehousing resources to serve households with an ability to increase income. Given the high cost of rent in Alameda County, time-limited resources should be matched with people who have a feasible plan to pay market-rate rent or identify a replacement subsidy.

Recommendations

4.1.a | Work with rapid rehousing providers and coordinated entry to identify and prioritize rapid rehousing to households that are or will be employed, engaged in workforce training and employment programs, in the benefits acquisition process, and/or who are in the process of increasing their incomes but approaching a benefits cliff that may make their housing tenuous until their income increases.

4.1.b | Work with rapid rehousing providers, coordinated entry, and permanent subsidy programs to explore prioritizing rapid rehousing to households that may use rapid rehousing as a bridge to an expected shallow or deep long-term subsidy.

4.1.c | Continue to monitor the rates of return to homelessness for people served in rapid rehousing for racial disparities and for potential impacts of linking rapid rehousing to other strategies such as workforce development and long-term voucher programs.

STRATEGY 4.2
Partner with educational, vocational and employment services to ensure that people moving toward employment have strong support in obtaining and maintaining employment.

Recommendations
4.2.a | Convene rapid rehousing providers, the Social Services Agency's workforce division, the Alameda County Workforce Development Board, and local education and employment training programs, including community colleges, to develop partnerships that allow formerly homeless people to successfully train for and acquire employment in sectors with opportunities for career advancement.

4.2.b | Work with Alameda County Behavioral Health to expand its supported employment program to serve formerly homeless people with mental health and/ or substance use disorder needs who require a more intensive level of ongoing support to secure and maintain private market employment.

4.2.c | Work with organizations developing employment social enterprises (ESEs) that create businesses that support and employ formerly homeless people, people with histories of incarceration and other challenges. ESE's can receive State support and technical assistance resources.

4.2.d | Provide all homelessness response system/workforce partnerships access to flexible funding and emergency rental assistance to support formerly homeless people in overcoming financial setbacks that may jeopardize their continued participation in education, training, and job placement programs.

4.2.e | Track at the provider and system level the racial, ethnic, and other demographics of who is accessing housing/workforce partnership opportunities, and who is experiencing successful outcomes.

STRATEGY 4.3
Establish a flexible funding pool for preventing homelessness, including a shallow subsidy option.

Recommendations
4.3.a | Study a representative sample of households that have returned to homelessness in order to determine the proportion of households that would have benefitted from various types of homelessness prevention services, including flexible funding, shallow subsidies, additional intensive wrap-around support services, and legal assistance. Use the results of this study to help determine the services needed and the appropriate allocation of funding available to reduce returns to homelessness.

4.3.b | Create an allocation of long-term shallow subsidies for formerly homeless people whose limited fixed income places them at ongoing imminent risk of returning to homelessness. Establish criteria for eligibility and prioritization for such a shallow subsidy and determine the number of these subsidies needed using the assessment called for in *4.3.a.* and ensuring that BIPOC communities are prioritized and resourced.

4.3.c | Add flexible funding to existing flex fund pools, that allow providers the resources and maximum latitude to support formerly homeless households that find themselves in short-term financial crises that jeopardize their housing. Couple these flexible funds with Housing Problem Solving supports in order to maximize the likelihood that the funding will successfully prevent a return to homelessness.

4.3.d | Track and evaluate all short and long-term funding allocated through the pool of flexible resources for its impact on the disproportionate rate of returns to homelessness among BIPOC communities and the overall rate of racial disparities in the system.

STRATEGY 4.4
Review and evaluate methods for determining types of housing placements to ensure high rates of success and avoid unsustainable housing placements.

Recommendations
4.4.a | Continue to track emerging research about factors that help predict the type of housing intervention that will best provide long-term stability to households currently experiencing homelessness. Use this research to consider modifying priorities and program standards for different housing intervention types and prioritize processes that allow formerly homeless households to move from one housing intervention type to another as necessary to maintain housing stability.

4.4.b | Using a racial equity lens and available research, expand upon existing program standards that guide providers to develop housing plans with their participants that align a household's capacity and needs with a housing strategy that will likely yield long-term housing stability. Include in the standards the expectation that housing plans include options to access alternative housing resources should the original strategy be unsuccessful.

4.4.c | Evaluate the impact of changes in prioritization and program standards on the racial, ethnic, and other demographic makeup of the people who receive and succeed in different housing placement types. Prioritize program changes needed to resolve any identified adverse impacts on access and outcomes for BIPOC communities overrepresented in homelessness.

STRATEGY 4.5
Provide additional support services, such as behavioral health care and case management, in existing sites and programs for people who have transitioned from homelessness to permanent housing.

Recommendations
4.5.a | Use the study recommended in *4.3.a* to identify the types of supportive services that could have prevented a return to homelessness among those who lost their housing.

4.5.b | Convene supportive housing providers, ACBH, Adult and Aging Services, other appropriate County entities, and people with lived experience to gather additional input on the types of supportive services needed to prevent formerly homeless people from losing their housing.

4.5.c | Using the results of a. and b., and applying an equity lens, adopt capacity and cost estimates to expand supportive services to reduce returns to homelessness. Include specific support service capacity expansion goals in the annual workplan (see *F.1.a*).

NEW ## Objective 5: Create a policy environment supporting homelessness prevention.[5]

The effectiveness of a well-coordinated network of homelessness prevention providers, supported by all the appropriate mainstream systems, depends significantly on the policy environment within which the network operates. How many people are at risk of becoming and returning to homelessness, and thus need the services of a homelessness prevention response, depends on a range of public policies, investment priorities, and legal protections for low-income households at the federal, state, and local levels. The policy recommendations in this section all aim to reduce the number of households in Alameda County that annually find themselves at imminent risk of homelessness.

STRATEGY 5.1
City and county legislators advocate collectively with state and federal leaders for needed policy changes and ongoing funding.

5.1.a | Alameda County should join with other counties and cities across the region to develop a shared legislative platform that prioritizes substantial increases in ongoing funding and policy changes to significantly reduce the number of people who are at risk of experiencing homelessness in the region.

STRATEGY 5.2
Increase the supply of deeply affordable housing.

5.2.a | Prioritize federal, state, and local advocacy for significant increases in funding dedicated to creating deeply affordable housing for those most vulnerable to homelessness and to increase stable long-term housing options for people exiting homelessness.

5.2.b | Continue to engage with the *Alameda County Housing Element 2023–2031* implementation process, and prioritize efforts to create a land use, zoning, and building code environment that supports increased development of deeply affordable housing for those most at risk of homelessness.

5.2.c | Expand access to private market housing for extremely low-income households with rental subsidies. Create financial and support service incentives that encourage landlords to make their units available to subsidy programs.

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[5] This objective is new, not originally included in *Home Together*. It is the result of the national research on homelessness prevention and input from stakeholders on the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Team.

STRATEGY 5.3
Strengthen and enforce local tenant protections.

5.3.a | Advocate at the city, county and state levels to strengthen tenant protections and enforcement of these protections.

5.3.b | Implement the recommended enhancements to tenant protections for unincorporated Alameda County put forward by HCD in the January, 2022 report *Tenant Protections in the Unincorporated County*.

5.3.c | Expand investments in Alameda County eviction prevention; target those investments to households that are most likely to experience homelessness.

5.3.d | Extend code compliance and relocation programs similar to those in Oakland to all of Alameda County. Ensure anyone displaced due to habitability receives support to access appropriate alternative housing.

5.3.e | Evaluate the feasibility of guaranteeing legal representation to all tenants in eviction court, while expanding court-based homelessness prevention services in all areas of the County.

STRATEGY 5.4
Increase enforcement of federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws.

5.4.a | Support increased enforcement and strengthening of federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws that protect against discrimination in critical systems that impact long-term housing stability, including housing, employment, and health care.

5.4.b | Partner with existing federal, state, and local agencies tasked with enforcing non-discrimination laws to provide know your rights education and enforcement navigation to people participating in homelessness prevention services.

STRATEGY 5.5
Reduce barriers to housing stability for people who have been convicted of crimes.

5.5.a | Work with clean slate service providers like East Bay Community Law Center to identify and pursue opportunities to reduce barriers to housing stability for people who have been convicted of crimes and who are at greatest risk of experiencing homelessness.

5.5.b | Educate those most at risk of experiencing homelessness about the increased opportunities for expungement effective July 1, 2023, through *California Senate Bill 731*.
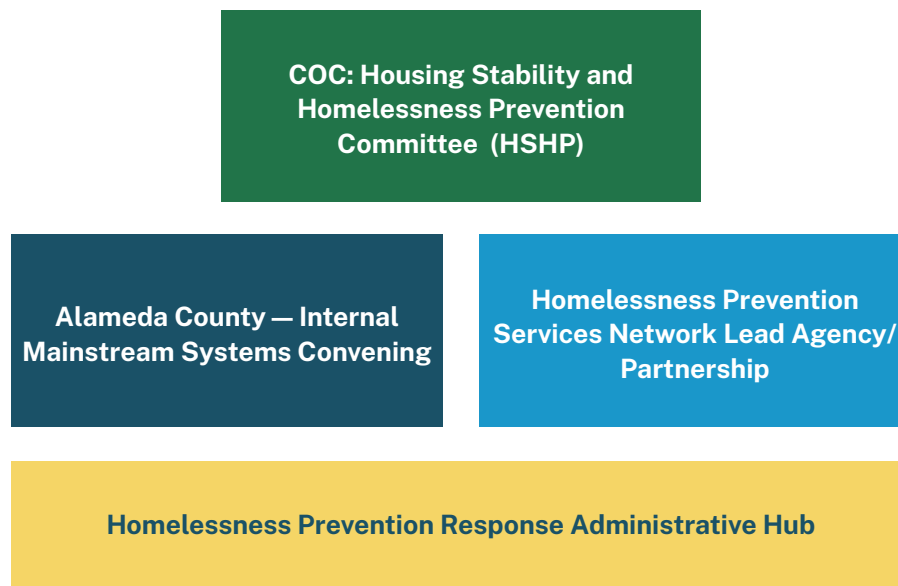
5.5.c | Continue to pursue strengthened "Ban the Box" and "Fair Chance" protections against use of past criminal history to deny employment and housing opportunities to people with past criminal legal system involvement.

5.5.d | Expand state and local funding for employment social enterprises that provide training and jobs to people who have been incarcerated, and provide funding to support interim and permanent housing stability while people are in training and increasing their incomes.

Administration, Funding, and Infrastructure Needs to Support the Homelessness Prevention Response

To be successful, the community-wide homelessness prevention response will require the support of an administrative structure with the necessary infrastructure and funding to successfully carry out its responsibilities. The structure will oversee continued planning, ensure ongoing oversight and accountability, and support implementation. The design of the administrative bodies should reflect the guiding values of the response, including centering the expertise of people who have themselves experienced housing instability and represent the communities that are disproportionately impacted by the systemic inequities that lead to homelessness.

Figure 1 | **Prevention Framework Leadership and Administrative Structure**

COC: Housing Stability and Homelessness Prevention Committee (HSHP)

Alameda County — Internal Mainstream Systems Convening

Homelessness Prevention Services Network Lead Agency/ Partnership

Homelessness Prevention Response Administrative Hub

1 | Develop administrative capacity that ensures implementation, ongoing accountability to goals, and continuous quality improvement.

Recommendations

1.a | Designate the Continuum of Care's Housing Stability and Homelessness Prevention Committee (HSHP) as the public body responsible for providing ongoing public information and recommendations regarding the implementation of the community-wide homelessness prevention response. With support from the Hub (see *1.b.*), HSPS members should actively participate in the development and approval of annual homelessness prevention workplans and funding strategies based on Home Together and this Framework.

1.b | Identify an agency or office within Alameda County to serve as the administrative hub for the community-wide homelessness prevention response (the Hub). Fund a team, initially with an estimated 3-4 FTE, to launch this effort, scaling the team as needed as further prevention resources are added. These staff will provide administrative leadership to the response. They support the administrative bodies' functions, coordinate with mainstream agencies, regional partners, municipalities, and community-based providers engaged in homelessness prevention, manage resources dedicated to the effort, develop budgets and pursue funding opportunities to expand resources, and oversee data collection, reporting, and ongoing quality improvement.

1.c | Create or use an existing convening of Alameda County agencies, departments, and divisions that are integral to the successful implementation of the community-wide homelessness prevention response. With support from the Hub, this group should guide the implementation of the mainstream systems' roles in the homelessness prevention response, including aligning with region-wide prevention efforts, establishing ongoing coordination across systems and with the homelessness prevention network, aligning funding and programs with agreed upon targeting criteria for the system, and ensuring that shared data is collected, reported, and used to evaluate the performance of the response. The County convening should report on its work to the HSHP and have a liaison seat on the HSHP. Representatives from the Lead Agency/Partnership for the homelessness prevention services network (see *1.d.*) should routinely participate in the convening.

1.d | The Lead Agency/Partnership for the homelessness prevention services network, as recommended in *2.2.b.*, should ensure that the network of community-based homelessness prevention providers is implementing the values, program priorities, and service delivery commitment of Home Together and this Framework. The Lead Agency/Partnership works with the convening of County mainstream systems to ensure effective coordination and service delivery between those critical partners in the response. The Lead Agency/Partnership also routinely reports to and receives guidance from the HSPS and the Hub with respect to current system performance and work planning.

1.e | Establish a shared data system, or a method for data sharing from existing data collection systems, operating across participating mainstream systems and the homelessness prevention network. Shared data collection and reporting should support system and provider level transparency on the outcomes achieved through all homelessness prevention investments and allows ongoing evaluation of the demographics of who is being served and who is succeeding in homelessness prevention services. Funding should be prioritized to allow for a full implementation of this data collection system, including for providers delivering services. Duplication of data collection and entry at the provider level should be minimized as much as possible.

1.f | Simplify and streamline access to homelessness prevention financial assistance for providers and their participants by consolidating funding into fewer, more easily accessible, pools, providing maximum flexibility in the use of the funds, and removing documentation and paperwork requirements to the greatest extent possible.

1.g | Establish a learning collaborative through the Hub and Lead Agency/Partnership to provide employees in mainstream systems and homeless services providers in the homelessness prevention response ongoing training, peer to peer learning, and information sharing opportunities.

1.h | The HSPS, with guidance from the Hub and input from the County's convening, should develop and adopt an annual homelessness prevention workplan based on the priorities in *Home Together* and the recommendations in this Framework. The annual workplan will guide programmatic and budgetary priorities for the coming year and progress on that workplan will be reported in the annual *Home Together* update.

1.i | Develop and implement performance metrics and objectives for the work, emphasizing measuring outcomes outputs (e.g., number of households who retained housing over a certain period of time, versus number of households served).

2 | **Provide funding for the core infrastructure and programmatic components of the community-wide homelessness prevention response.**

The community will have to identify and secure significant additional funding to invest in the infrastructure and programmatic objectives set out in this Framework. Without these investments, it will not be possible to achieve the ambitious goal of dramatically reducing overall annual inflow into literal homelessness and ending the disproportionately high rates of homelessness among BIPOC communities (see *Section G* for a discussion of the level of investment needed).

Recommendations

2.a | Fund the necessary staff capacity and operating budget for the Hub and the overall administrative infrastructure; the operating budget should include funding to support compensated engagement by people with lived experience in all aspects of the administration of the community-wide homelessness prevention response.

2.b | Fund the operating budget for the Lead Agency/Partnership for the homelessness prevention services provider network. The budget should allow for ongoing training of network participants in key service delivery practices, including person-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services. It is critical to appropriately fund capacity to collect, evaluate, and report on system level performance data, including racial equity data.

2.c | Fund Ensure that compensation levels, caseloads, and training and support will provide a sustainable working environment for homelessness prevention service providers.

2.d | Fund additional program costs for mainstream systems (and their contracted community-based organizations) associated with participation in the community-wide homelessness prevention response. Depending on the system, this will include staff time for participation in prevention planning and implementation, trainings for staff on homelessness prevention and Housing Problem Solving, housing navigation services embedded with client-facing programs, dedicated housing program solving flexible funds, and more robust specialized internal homelessness prevention programming.

2.e | Fund a shared information/data system(s), or system of data sharing, that allows for effective and efficient assessment, referral, application for services, service coordination, benefit delivery, tracking, and system level outcome reporting and evaluation. This system must support coordination across the County and across community-based providers that participate in the community-wide homelessness prevention response. It would be beneficial if this system also allowed for coordination and reporting across the larger region.

2.f | Track and report in the annual Home Together update all financial resources invested in the community-wide homelessness prevention response, the capacity created by those investments, and any known or anticipated changes in funding levels. Present this report to the HSHP.