

Appendix A

Background and Data Sources

Home Together Background

The Home Together 2026 Community Plan, released in May of 2022, is a five-year plan to dramatically reduce homelessness and associated racial disparities in Alameda County. The Plan reflects and responds to increasing rates of homelessness and overwhelming racial disparities within the homeless population in Alameda County. This growth reflects conditions resulting from decades of housing rental and sales price increases relative to flat wages, along with policies that have drastically reduced funding for housing that is affordable to very low-income households. The current housing shortage has created a competitive housing market where tens of thousands of households in our county are at risk of homelessness each year, with numerous households losing their homes.

Centuries of structural racism in which Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (referred to as BIPOC) communities have faced limited opportunity to achieve economic security, and discriminatory housing policy has led to the stark overrepresentation of BIPOC within the homeless population. Centering this racial equity impact, stakeholders in the Oakland-Berkeley-Alameda County Continuum of Care

(CoC) have generated plans to invest both much more and differently in creating program models and pathways that meet the needs of those most impacted by homelessness.¹

The Home Together Plan serves as a roadmap for system transformation. It lays out goals, strategies and investments needed to make homelessness in Alameda County a rare, brief, and nonrecurring experience by 2026 and combat racial disparities in homelessness by fully centering equity in the response to homelessness.

To achieve the Home Together Plan, including decreasing racial disparities, the Plan outlines strategies and activities under four goals:

- 1. Prevent homelessness for our residents whenever possible;**
- 2. Connect people to shelter and needed resources;**
- 3. Increase permanent housing solutions; and**
- 4. Strengthen coordination, communication and capacity of stakeholders throughout the system.**

The purpose of this lookback at the first year of the Home Together Plan implementation is to review progress and identify course corrections that will be needed in future months and years in order to stay on track towards achieving the goals in the Home Together Plan. The first year progress update combines data from across jurisdictions in Alameda County in four specific areas: funding and investments, system inventory, strategies and activities and key service and outcome measures. Progress reported in for the first year of the Plan includes data from County Fiscal Year 2021–2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022).

¹ Oakland-Berkeley-Alameda County Continuum of Care. Centering Racial Equity in Homeless System Design. January 2021. <https://homelessness.acgov.org/reports.page?#systemdesign>

Data Sources

Data used to analyze progress during FY21-22 comes from a variety of sources. Information related to funding sources, changes to homelessness response system inventory and Home Together activities is compiled from reports provided by jurisdictions and partners in the community. The Alameda County Office of Homeless Care and Coordination (OHCC) has developed a set of tracking tools to support collection of this information, which will be compiled from partners once per year in preparation for an annual Home Together progress update. Information about key systemwide service and outcome measures comes from the Alameda County Homeless Point-In-Time Count (PIT) and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Additional data about homelessness response system programs and operations comes from the Alameda County Office of Homeless Care and Coordination.

The PIT data is an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness who are either sheltered or unsheltered on a specific night, whether or not they receive services in Alameda County. The demographics of those thought to be experiencing homelessness at that point in time are estimated based on a survey of a smaller number of people experiencing homelessness.²

² In the weeks following the 2022 Point in Time Count in Alameda County, a survey was administered to 1,517 unsheltered and sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness in order to profile their experience and characteristics.



Data from HMIS includes people who have engaged with the homelessness response system and enrolled in one or more of its programs. HMIS data for a fiscal year (such as FY21-22) represents a larger group because it covers a year period, but it excludes people who have not engaged with the homelessness response system at all or have not agreed to share information about themselves.

Differences in the racial and ethnic makeup of the two groups may reflect real-world differences in who experiences homelessness versus who engages with the homelessness response system, and may also be impacted by differences in how questions are asked (and by whom) or reflective of particulars about conditions such as weather or coverage during the PIT count and the follow-up survey. Exploration of these differences, what they mean for the effectiveness of the system and who it does and does not reach are critical to consider moving forward in order to ensure that the community's racial equity goals are achieved.