



## Encampment Resolution Strategy: Progress Report

### Year 1 (September 1, 2021-August 31, 2022)

The Encampment Resolution Strategy and Encampment Response Protocol approved by the Board of Supervisors on August 31, 2021 is a 3-year effort (2021-2024) with the goal of resolving 45 encampments of varying size and impact. The approved Encampment Resolution Strategy relies on an effective system of care that can ultimately provide shelter, housing, and services to meet the needs of persons experiencing homelessness. As a first step, in 2021 the Community Services Department (CSD) appointed an Encampment Response Coordinator. On January 11, 2022 Qwik Response was contracted to provide the sanitation services for Encampment Response. On June 22, 2022, Good Samaritan Shelter was contracted to provide countywide outreach and engagement to unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness, including encampments.

In October 2021, the State made competitive funding available to resolve encampments. The County of Santa Barbara collaborated with local jurisdictions and other agencies to develop a coordinated approach to addressing a regional need: resolving encampments along transit corridors (U.S. Hwy 101 and CA Hwy 1) where railroad tracks parallel and intersect highways. The efforts will target populations in danger of vehicle/train right-of-way strikes and fires. The County was awarded \$2,520,000 to resolve encampment sites and transition persons to safer sheltered locations. On July 12, 2022, Kingdom Causes, Inc., dba CityNet, was contracted for street outreach to encampments along the transit corridors. CSD staff continues to develop other funded components (interim housing and environmental rehabilitation) and will return to the Board as they are ready to proceed. The State has announced additional funding will become available for encampment resolution in December 2022; CSD intends to apply for this funding.

In Year 1, the Strategy and Protocol have helped the region address encampments in a coordinated and collaborative manner:

- Data supports the scope of issues: most people in encampments are known by name and are engaged with outreach providers, and their needs are known;
- Jurisdictions see the need for immediate interim beds and are working to meet the need;
- The region is overcoming outreach worker staffing and training issues;
- Partners understand the importance of consistency across jurisdictional boundaries;
- Jurisdictions have identified key barriers to resolving encampments, and are working collaboratively to overcome those barriers.

## Goals and Objectives

The goals and performance measures set forth in the Encampment Resolution Strategy are intended to: 1) ensure streets and open spaces are safe and clean; 2) meet the housing, shelter, and service referral needs of individuals experiencing homelessness; 3) improve the medical and behavioral health of individuals experiencing homelessness; and, 4) deliver coordinated services to effectively address and resolve encampments by developing efficient means to manage calls for service and prioritize resources, and effectively share information and coordinate resources countywide. The Encampment Response Coordinator tracks demographics in camps (persons assessed, persons enrolled in services, and persons in closed/cleared sites) to limit inequities or disparities in service and outreach.

### Challenges:

- There remains a lack of shelter beds (congregate and non-congregate); this has limited the ability to complete Encampment Response Team assessments and encampment resolution, as recommended interventions rely on available resources. When available, shelter provides an effective path to housing solutions, rather than moving people from one unsheltered location to another. The lack of shelter bed availability has hindered encampment resolution. Because of this limitation, County resources have primarily been dedicated to removing debris from abandoned encampments.
- There is a lack of affordable housing units for permanent placements; many people who remain unsheltered have all of the documents needed to move into permanent housing, but there are no affordable units available.
- The impacts of approaches not focused on housing placements have also been a challenge: People are moving from one area/encampment to another because appropriate shelter/storage is not available; Barriers to accessing housing and employment and extends the length of time people remain unsheltered; Undermines trust in systems of care and disrupts the engagement of outreach workers.

### Successes:

- In order to launch California Encampment Resolution Fund efforts, the County of Santa Barbara participated in a 100-Day challenge to Address Homelessness. During the challenge, 92 people were enrolled in services, 25 people are ready to be matched to housing, and encampments along the transit corridor were mapped with accurate statuses. Homeless service providers, jurisdictional staff, and key community partners engaged in planning and goal-setting, attended weekly check-in meetings to discuss progress and coach fellow team members through barriers, and have committed to sustaining efforts begun during the 100 day challenge structure.
- County staff continues to coordinate with key stakeholders in an effort to develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and formalize collaborative, organized approaches to address unsheltered homelessness at encampments establishing effective, scalable, and replicable demonstration efforts. Partners will continue to work with CalTrans and UPPR to formalize partnership and address encampments at high risk of injury, fatality, and fire in the transit corridor.
- The opening of new Homekey site in Goleta will offer 59 permanent housing units, as well as one on-site manager unit, and five rooms for support service connections.

Expanded data collection efforts and have given a clear picture of the extent of encampments throughout the county. In Santa Barbara County, an encampment has been defined as a set location that does not move day-to-day; an individual or group sleeps in the space each night, and the footprint is comprised of more belongings than one person could carry in one trip. In the first year of strategy and protocol implementation, twenty-two clusters (each with several sites) have been resolved by County-led efforts, some by people moving into shelter or housing, or by moving to another unsheltered space. Sites on private, city, and other public parcels have been removed by Caltrans, cities, and other community groups. Most identified encampments in Mid and North County have been located on private property or within city boundaries, and County staff continues to work closely with jurisdictions to identify encampments for resolution. Goals and performance measures outlined below are specific to county-owned or county-controlled sites as defined by the Encampment Response Protocol, approved by the Board of Supervisors in August 2021.

### Goals

The mapping software allowed teams to record individual sites, which were most often found in clusters. Of the 380 sites assessed, 148 sites in 14 clusters were assessed by the full Encampment Response Team. An additional 232 sites, reported as inactive abandoned following movement to shelter, housing or another unsheltered location, were assessed by the Encampment Response Coordinator and removed by contracted sanitation services provider.

	<u>Year 1 Goal</u>	<u>Year 1 Actual</u>
Number of encampments assessed	20	380
Number of encampments resolved	15	154
Number of persons identified in assessed encampments	50	231
Number of persons identified in resolved encampments	N/A	112

### Performance Measures

	<u>Year 1 Goal</u>	<u>Year 1 Actual</u>
Participants in resolved encampments who accept alternate shelter/housing	60%	15%
Participants who accept alternative shelter or services are permanently housed	60%	4%*
Resolved encampments not re-established at 3-months	90%	90%
Resolved encampments not re-established at 6-months	80%	50%
Resolved encampments not re-established at 12-months	75%	N/A**
Reduce calls for service to encampment locations (incidents leading to service requests, reduce drug-related and criminal activity)	30%	13%***

\*Individuals from sites not assessed by the Encampment Response Team have been housed.

\*\*Encampments resolved have not yet met the 12-month mark.

\*\*\*Reduction in calls for service to County Fire are detailed below:

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Transient-related incidents</b>	<b>Medical-related</b>	<b>Fire-related</b>	<b>Unauthorized burning (Cooking/warming fire)</b>
Jul 1, 2020 – Jun 30, 2021	387	265/387	47/387	23/47
Jul 1, 2021 – Jun 30, 2022	337 (13% decrease)	196/337	45/337	32/45

The metrics approved and outlined above have not been as accurate in capturing the work and movement of encampments as initially proposed. County-funded street outreach providers began using the Fulcrum mapping software in early 2021, and as of 8/31/21, there were 120 encampments mapped throughout the county. In year 1 (9/1/2021-8/31/2022), 961 sites were mapped by outreach providers. The list below shows a complete picture of encampments throughout Santa Barbara County, as it captures all sites recorded in the mapping software maintained by the Encampment Response Coordinator, part of the Encampment Resolution Strategy. Sites on private, city, and other public parcels, while recorded in the mapping software, have been removed by Caltrans, cities, and other community groups. Working closely with street outreach teams and jurisdictions, the following metrics (as of 8/31/22) have been the most relevant to a complete picture of encampment response and resolution:

1. Active encampments:
  - a. Engaged but not yet enrolled in services: 48 sites
  - b. Enrolled in services: 59 sites
  - c. “Hangout” only: 10 sites
  - d. Active (persons not yet engaged): 313 sites
2. On a path to resolution:
  - a. Moved to shelter: 8 sites
  - b. Housed: 18 sites
  - c. Removed/cleared: 466 sites
  - d. Inactive/abandoned: 231 sites
  - e. Posted for removal: 1 site
3. Other status categories:
  - a. Reported: 84 sites
  - b. Unknown/unable to access: 1

As persons experiencing homelessness and outreach providers await shelter beds and affordable housing units to become available, it is also important to track document readiness, increases in income through employment or benefits, and connections to other services based on individuals’ needs.

Full implementation of the key actions and activities of the Encampment Resolution Strategy and implementation of the Response Protocol is estimated at \$22,664,956 over a three-year period. This funding will be pursued via a request for ARPA funding, grants, state and federal funding sources.

Funding implementation of the Encampment Response Protocol specifically includes staffing, sanitation services, storage of personal property and the mapping software. Sanitation services, which is the actual cleaning and clearing of encampments over 3 years, is \$1,125,000. Combined with personal property storage and contractor costs, a new position (Encampment Response Coordinator), and mapping software, the cost of implementation of the protocol is \$1,935,000.

Funding Required for Successful Implementation of Encampment Response Protocol

Funding for implementation of the Encampment Resolution Strategy also contemplates the expansion of shelter beds and services to address identified encampment needs and also integrates with the guiding Phase II Community Action Plan to address boarder homeless needs. Table 3 reflect expenses incurred in year 1. Staffing challenges impacted the ability for the Encampment Response Coordinator to be fully dedicated to this role. Storage is being provided at a county owned site.

**Table 3: Funding Required for Successful Implementation of Encampment Response Protocol**

Key action/Activity	Year 1	Year 1 Expenses	Year 2	Year 3	Estimated 3-year Cost
Encampment Response Coordinator	\$160,000	<b>\$73,663</b>	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$480,000
Encampment Response sanitation services (debris removal)	\$375,000	<b>\$359,148</b>	\$375,000	\$375,000	\$1,125,000
Storage of personal property and staffing for access to property	\$100,000	<b>\$1,600</b>	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$300,000
Fulcrum mapping software	\$10,000	<b>\$16,747</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
Total	\$645,000	<b>\$451,158</b>	\$645,000	\$645,000	\$1,935,000

In year 2, the Coordinator will convene after-action focus groups, including persons who have experienced homelessness and the Encampment Response Team, to assess the processes in place and to improve implementation for persons in camps and experiencing homelessness, and will return to the Board with recommendations for an updated protocol and strategy.

**Encampment Resolution Strategy and Response Protocol Implementation**

Over the course of Year 1, the Encampment Resolution Strategy and the Encampment Response Protocol have laid the groundwork to move the needle: deployed the Encampment Response team, implemented consistent countywide use of mapping software, expanded outreach teams through extended contracts funded by COVID-19 response and recovery dollars, secured competitively-awarded State funding dedicated to encampments along the transit corridors, appointed an Encampment Response Coordinator,

executed a contract for sanitation services, invested in the County's Multi-Disciplinary Team (Behavioral Wellness, Public Health, and Public Defender) and countywide Street Outreach Housing Navigators. There has been progress in all components of the Encampment Resolution Strategy in the first year of implementation. Progress includes:

1. **Increasing access to shelter:** acquisition of a 50-bed shelter in Isla Vista; relocation of 20 pallet shelter units to the Bridgehouse shelter campus in the unincorporated Lompoc Valley; and opening of a 33-bed modular project, DignityMoves, in downtown Santa Barbara.
2. **Leveraging long-term rental subsidies:** 276 Emergency Housing Vouchers have been awarded and utilized and due to the success of expedited utilization. Over 85% of EHV residents are engaged in supportive services.
3. **Creating new permanent housing units with supportive services:** The award of Homekey project funding at the Super 8 in Goleta will create 59 new permanent housing units with services in an area heavily impacted by encampments, opening in spring 2023.
4. **Robust outreach and engagement:** American Rescue Plan Act funds support two approaches to outreach and engagement. The County Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) is essential for complex cases where justice involvement and severe mental illness create barriers to accessing services and housing, and provides intensive case management services in cases where coordination is needed across County departments. Good Samaritan Shelter is the contracted partner to provide countywide outreach, case management, maintain personal storage options, and assist with coordinating shelter placements for persons living unsheltered, including in encampments. The additional award through California's Encampment Resolution Fund will focus teams on encampments along the transit corridors throughout the county.
5. **Sustained adequate funding:** The historic investment of American Rescue Plan Act funds to address homelessness, specifically to fund a more comprehensive Multi-Disciplinary Team as well as a community-based organization to provide case management to persons living unsheltered, provides the necessary funding to resolve encampments. The \$2.52 million California Encampment Resolution Funding (CERF) grant award to the County will fund outreach and interim housing for persons living in encampments along the transit corridor through June 2024.

Additional highlights:

- I. County-funded street outreach providers began using the Fulcrum mapping software in early 2021, and as of 8/31/21, there were 120 encampments mapped throughout the county. In year 1 (9/1/2021-8/31/2022), 961 sites were mapped by outreach providers. In the first year of strategy and protocol implementation, twenty-two clusters (each with several sites) have been resolved by County-led efforts, some by people moving into shelter or housing, or by moving to another unsheltered space. Sites on private, city, and other public parcels have been removed by Caltrans, cities, and other community groups. Most identified encampments in Mid and North

County have been located on private property or within city boundaries, and County staff continues to work closely with jurisdictions to identify encampments for resolution.

- II. One of the County contracts focused solely on encampment outreach served 159 people last year (including 3 children); of the 103 people who exited the project in that year, 14 people moved into emergency shelter, and 39 moved to permanent destinations (rental units with subsidies, reunited with family, etc.).
- III. The expansion of outreach teams is done through extended contracts funded by COVID-19 response dollars, Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT), and countywide Street Outreach Housing Navigators; the County has extended ESG-CV Encampment and Street Outreach contracts, provided training opportunities to service providers, and the MDT and others have helped guide regional Coordinated Outreach Team meeting attendees through challenges.
- IV. Encampment footprints continue to shift, as more congregate shelter beds have become available in south county, and as people have moved into Rainbow Village in Lompoc. A particular success was found in Lompoc: outreach teams have been working with people in the riverbed for several years. One specific plot of land had over 50 people sleeping unsheltered. The use of that plot has changed to farming, and the City of Lompoc has fenced the area. The City, the County, outreach workers, and shelter providers coordinated communication with people who were unsheltered in the area so they had plenty of notice regarding the changes. The County deployed Qwik Response to remove abandoned debris and waste: a sampling of what they removed: 37 tons of trash in twelve (12) 40-yd dumpsters, 750 pounds of bio-hazard waste (~50 5-gallon containers), 26 propane cylinders, and several containers of needles.
- V. To date countywide, QR has provided nearly 2,000 hours of service.

### Community Assessments, Collaboration, and Coordination

The purpose of the Encampment Response Protocol is to provide increased clarity and coordination around all aspects of encampment responses for property owned and/or controlled by Santa Barbara County. The Encampment Response Team comprised of staff from Community Services, Public Health, Fire, Sheriff, and a homeless outreach worker continues to assess existing encampments reported for health and safety risks, provide education on hazards, and provide linkages to shelter and services. The team evaluates encampments based on criteria outlined in the Encampment Response Protocol and recommends interventions to address and resolve encampments. All interventions include health and safety measures, and are based on health and safety risks, available resources, and capacity. As the Encampment Resolution Strategy moves forward, increased partnerships and opportunities for collaboration and sustainable funding are necessary to address encampment issues.

Heal the Ocean, a community-based environmental organization, provides regular surveys of encampments in South County. Heal the Ocean's detailed surveys and mapping of homeless encampment sites pre-dates the full use of mapping software by the County. Their surveys demonstrate a reduction in

camps and in the estimated number of persons inhabiting encampments. Heal the Ocean continues to note extreme levels of trash and refuse in encampment areas, and has recently expanded surveys to mid-county.

In early 2022, the County of Santa Barbara was awarded \$2.52 million from the competitive State of California Encampment Resolution Funding (CERF) grant program to address encampments along the transit corridor (along U.S. Hwy 101 and CA Hwy 1, where the railroad parallels and intersects highways), targeting populations in documented danger of fires and vehicle/train right-of-way pedestrian strikes. Specific encampment sites, sections of encampments, or closely linked community of encampments being resolved crosses cities in each County supervisorial district, for a total of 53 camps based on current mapping software data. Following the successful application and award of the CERF grant, staff has begun coordination with jurisdictions and agencies along the transit corridor. On July 12, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with City Net to provide outreach and housing navigation services along the transit corridor. Staff will return to the Board of Supervisors in 2023 (unless we think we will go in December) to request approval of Memoranda of Understanding with Cities, CalTrans, and railroad companies, as well as sub-recipient agreements for interim housing operations and environmental rehabilitation.

In order to launch the CERF collaborative efforts, the County engaged in a State-sponsored 100-day-challenge to address homelessness, focusing on encampments along the transit corridors throughout Santa Barbara County. The team's goals were as follows:

- 100% of encampments along the transit corridor will be mapped with accurate status (active, removed, etc.)
- 100% of the individuals in active encampments along the transit corridor will be added to a by-name list
- 60% of the individuals in active encampments along the transit corridor will be enrolled with a homeless service provider and assigned a housing navigator
- 40% of the individuals in active encampments along the transit corridor will be "document-ready"
- 20 will enter emergency/temporary shelter and 20 will enter permanent housing
- Logistical focus areas: coordination (MOU), community/media/landlord engagement, system improvements/data/reporting, financial resources

Following the challenge, the team will meet to determine how to best sustain the efforts of the challenge:

- Celebrate and acknowledge team achievements, innovations and insights
- Identify the most important innovations and new ways of working that have emerged during the 100 days
- Develop recommendations to sustain performance and expand impact
- Prepare to engage with system leaders in order to continue strengthening local systems



As the Encampment Resolution Strategy moves forward, increased partnerships and opportunities for collaboration and sustainable funding are necessary to address encampment issues. The FY 2022-23 CA State Budget included \$700M in funding to resolve encampments, to be awarded through a competitive process in 2022-23 (\$300M) and 2023-24 (\$400M).

### Utilizing Mapping Software for a Data-Informed Approach

Fulcrum, new Encampment/Street Outreach software, has expanded data collection efforts using real-time mapping tools. Service providers have entered records of encampments countywide in various levels of resolution: reported, active, enrolled in services, abandoned, and removed/cleared.

