

Grand Jury Recommendation R1: The San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury recommends that the County revise its plan to include more specific and quantifiable timelines for implementing the “San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-2027” by December 31, 2024.

County Response: “The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable”

The current Countywide Plan already incorporates detailed timelines and measurable goals for each initiative outlined. The timelines are designed to track progress and ensure that milestones are achieved within specified timeframes. Additionally, the plan includes performance metrics to evaluate our success in reducing homelessness, increasing housing units and improving community engagement.

- Reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness by 50% of the 2022 levels by the end of 2027.
- Decrease the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to 50% of the 2022 levels by the end of 2027.
- Construct at least 200 interim housing units by 2027.
- Build 500 permanent supportive housing units by 2027.
- Develop 1,667 low-income housing units by 2027.

On May 21, 2024, the Board provided direction on future reporting rates for updates on the County’s Five-year Plan to reduce homelessness as follows:

- Full homelessness services update, and presentation completed every two years to align with the Point in Time Count.
- On opposite years, the Homelessness Services Division will provide a brief update with the data currently available.

Grand Jury Comment: The 2023-24 Grand Jury, along with the County’s Citizen Oversight Committee, recommended that the County’s current plan requires the inclusion of measurable time-phased goals. The existing report merely states that each objective will be completed by 2027, which was found to be insufficient for tracking progress.

The Grand Jury concluded that without time-phased goals, it is impossible to determine whether the county is on track to meet the plan’s requirements. Incorporating such goals into the five-year plan is essential for several reasons:

1. Clear Milestones: Time-phased goals provide specific milestones that facilitate progress tracking and necessary adjustments, ensuring the plan remains on course.

2. Enhanced Accountability: These goals enhance motivation and accountability, allowing stakeholders to see tangible progress and understand their responsibilities in achieving them.
3. Early Issue Identification: Time-phased goals enable early identification of potential issues, allowing for proactive course correction rather than reactive measures.

Additionally, while the Board of Supervisors has provided direction for further reporting rates, reporting the status of completed actions does not indicate whether the County is on schedule to meet the plan's commitments. The Grand Jury commends the Board's actions but emphasizes the need for time-phased goals to ensure comprehensive and timely completion of the plan.

CAO Comment Response: Thank you for sharing the Grand Jury's recommendation regarding the inclusion of measurable time-phased goals in the County's current plan.

The County's current plan incorporates detailed timelines and measurable goals for each initiative outlined, specifically designed to track progress and ensure milestones are achieved within specified timeframes. These goals include:

- Reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness to 50% of the 2022 levels by the end of 2027.
- Decreasing the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to 50% of the 2022 levels by the end of 2027.
- Constructing at least 300 interim housing units by 2027.
- Building 500 permanent supportive housing units by 2027.
- Developing 1,667 low-income housing units by 2027.

Additionally, performance metrics are embedded in the plan to evaluate our success in reducing homelessness, increasing housing units, and improving community engagement.

On May 21, 2024, the Board of Supervisors provided direction for future reporting rates for updates on the County's Five-Year Plan to reduce homelessness, as follows:

- A full homeless services update, with a presentation completed every two years to align with the Point in Time Count.
- On opposite years, the Homeless Services Division will provide a brief update with the data currently available.

We acknowledge the importance of clear milestones, enhanced accountability, and early issue identification, as highlighted in the recommendation. However, the County's current plan is designed with a long-term, flexible framework that aligns with our overall strategic goals. The plan's objectives, while set to be completed by 2027, are structured to allow for adaptability as

conditions evolve, and we believe that this approach remains appropriate given the broad scope and complexity of the initiatives involved.

While time-phased goals are valuable for certain projects, the current approach allows for both flexibility and accountability. We believe the existing reporting mechanisms and measurable goals effectively address the Grand Jury's concern and provide the necessary tools for tracking progress, ensuring that we remain on course to meet the plan's objectives.

We appreciate the Grand Jury's and the Citizen Oversight Committee's input, and we remain committed to implementing the plan effectively and transparently. Thank you for your understanding and ongoing collaboration.

Grand Jury Recommendation R2: The San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury recommends that the County implement effective knowledge transfer management and succession planning practices to minimize the impact of staff turnover on completing the required tasks to ensure performance to the "San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-2027" by December 31, 2024.

County Response: "The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable"

The County already has an existing framework and resources in place to manage knowledge transfer within our operational departments. These practices are regularly reviewed and updated to meet organizational needs. Given our current fiscal and operational priorities, dedicating additional resources specifically for the purpose outlined in the recommendation would duplicate existing practices and divert attention and resources away from other critical initiatives related to homelessness prevention and intervention. Efforts remain focused on documenting critical information, strategies and best practices among staff.

Grand Jury Comment: The grand jury's recommendation was made due to multiple interviewees reporting that staffing changes and vacancies within the county leadership created challenges in terms of completing actions required to support the implementation of the plan. The individuals also specifically noted that details of the plan were absent and unable to be provided as this would need to be completed by incoming staff. It was also noted that leadership continuity planning and any knowledge transfer information was unavailable. While we respect that the County may have a framework for knowledge transfer we would respectfully submit that based on findings that the County could benefit from addressing this issue. This could not be more relevant considering that many county entities advised that turnover is one of the major concerns.

CAO Comment Response: Thank you for sharing the grand jury's recommendation. While we appreciate the insight provided, we acknowledge the challenges posed by staffing changes and vacancies within county leadership, as well as the concerns around the lack of detailed plan information due to the need for incoming staff involvement. However, we believe that the current framework for leadership continuity and knowledge transfer is already in place. The County already has existing frameworks and resources in place to manage knowledge transfer within our operational departments. These practices are regularly reviewed and updated to meet organizational needs. We believe that the current framework for leadership continuity and knowledge transfer is already effective and sufficient for addressing these concerns.

Given our current fiscal and operational priorities, dedicating additional resources specifically for the purposes outlined in the recommendation would duplicate existing practices and divert attention and resources away from other critical initiatives, such as homelessness prevention and intervention. Our efforts remain focused on documenting critical information, strategies, and best practices among staff, ensuring continuity and minimizing operational disruptions.

We also recognize that turnover is a significant concern, and we are committed to ongoing improvements. However, at this time, we feel that the existing systems and strategies are adequately addressing these challenges, and we will continue to evaluate their effectiveness as part of our broader operational goals.

We thank you for your understanding and ongoing collaboration.

Grand Jury recommendation R3. The San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury recommends that the County aggressively implement its plan for a comprehensive public awareness campaign to advise the community on homelessness issues. It is further recommended that the County and Cities work together to provide a cohesive voice. The San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury recommends completion by December 31, 2024.

County Response: “The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable”

As indicated in Finding 4, the County through Line of Effort #6 of the San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness has actively pursued public engagement. This includes extensive community outreach, engagement through social media platforms, partnerships with local entities and participation in community forums and workshops. The County's current efforts adequately address the need for a comprehensive public awareness campaign with existing resources and strategic frameworks.

Grand Jury Comment: The Grand Jury's recommendation was based on the “The San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-27”, Line of Effort #6. This particular element of the plan included some measurable time-based goals, which interviewees noted were behind schedule due to staff turnover and leadership changes. The Plan specifically calls for “regional

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Collaboration and Public Engagement”. Is the County’s response that they are now on schedule with its plans, or rather that you will not be implementing the outlined objectives, in part or entirely?

CAO Comment Response: Thank you for sharing the San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury’s recommendation regarding the implementation of a comprehensive public awareness campaign on homelessness issues.

The County is actively engaged in addressing public awareness of homelessness through Line of Effort #6 in the San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-2027. This element of the plan includes specific goals for regional collaboration and public engagement, which the County has been diligently pursuing. These efforts include extensive community outreach, engagement through social media platforms, partnerships with local entities, and active participation in community forums and workgroups. Through these ongoing actions, the County has made significant progress in public awareness and continues to meet the intent of this element of the plan.

Regarding the specific question on whether the County is now on schedule, we can confirm that the overall objectives of Line of Effort #6 are being implemented as planned, and we are on track to meet the public engagement goals. However, the timeline for certain measurable time-based goals related to the plan may not align exactly with the original target dates, as interviewees have noted. Despite this, we believe that the current approach, which already includes comprehensive outreach and collaboration, effectively fulfills the requirements of the plan without the need for an additional, separate public awareness campaign as suggested.

The County’s existing resources and strategic frameworks are adequate to continue advancing our public awareness and regional collaboration efforts. We remain committed to working with cities and local partners to enhance public engagement and ensure continued progress in addressing homelessness in San Luis Obispo County.

Thank you for your understanding and continued collaboration.