

FREMONT HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE PLAN



Prepared for City of Fremont
May 2024
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The entire project team would like to thank Fremont's Mayor and City Council for commissioning this plan and ensuring that it was the result of a community planning process. Hundreds of thoughtful, passionate people contributed their insights, shared their hopes and frustrations, provided data, gave interviews, responded to surveys, attended meetings, and brought their best thinking to the question of how the City of Fremont could improve its response to homelessness.

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Executive Summary

Background

Homelessness is a growing problem in Fremont. Based on the 2022 Alameda County Point-in-Time Count, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Fremont increased by 69% from 2019, growing from 608 to 1,026 people. This rate of growth was higher in Fremont than in Alameda County as a whole, which saw a 22% growth rate during the same period. The increase in Fremont was driven by unsheltered homelessness, which grew by 78% during this time (from 485 to 866 people) and accounted for almost 85% of all homelessness in Fremont. This is reflected in the number of people living in vehicles, which increased from 238 in 2019 to 573 in 2022, a 141% increase.

For many years, the City of Fremont (City) has pursued a multi-disciplinary effort to address homelessness through services, affordable housing production, and encampment mitigation. However, this system cannot keep pace with the problem, and for every person whose homelessness is resolved, there are more than two people entering the homeless response system as newly unhoused. There are substantial gaps in the system, such that many people experiencing homelessness remain disconnected from available resources. Less than 8% exit homelessness each year.

Purpose of the Plan

Fremont's Homelessness Response Plan (HRP) offers a roadmap for addressing homelessness through coordinated and data-driven solutions that remove barriers to assistance, expand housing opportunities, and improve quality of life throughout the community.

The City set forth specific goals to guide the plan's proposed strategies:

- **Goal A: Stop the growth of homelessness.** Eliminate the 23% annual growth rate of people experiencing homelessness by reducing the number of people becoming homeless and increasing the number exiting to permanent housing.
- **Goal B: Increase pathways to housing.** Double the proportion of people who are well served by the homeless response system, meaning that they are on pathways to housing, stay homeless less than a year, and do not exit services to unsheltered homelessness.
- **Goal C: Reduce the impact of unsheltered homelessness.** Benefit those with and without permanent homes in Fremont by decreasing the number of people living in unsheltered conditions and the amount of City resources needed to manage encampment crises.

In acknowledgement of the regional nature of the problem and the central role that Alameda County plays in funding and coordinating homeless services in Fremont and throughout the region, the HRP aligns with the Alameda County Home Together 2026 Plan (2022) and the All Home Regional Action Plan (2021). More specifically, the HRP seeks to expand permanent housing opportunities, prevent homelessness whenever possible, and otherwise build a system that ensures homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Plan Development Process

The HRP was developed over the course of three phases, summarized in the table below.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Data Analysis	Community Engagement	System Modeling & Plan Development
This phase consisted of quantitative data collection and analysis ¹ ; review of county, regional, and other local plans; and a survey of best practices and trends in homelessness response. Information was gathered from June to September 2023, and findings were presented to City staff and community members in October 2023.	This phase consisted of qualitative data collection and analysis, including a community survey, interviews, focus groups, community meetings, meetings with City staff, and presentations to various City boards and commissions from October 2023 to January 2024.	This phase consisted of the system modeling exercise that yielded the recommended strategies and investments included in the plan. It was conducted in the first quarter of 2024 and informed by the data collected in Phases 1 and 2.

Two Additional Questions

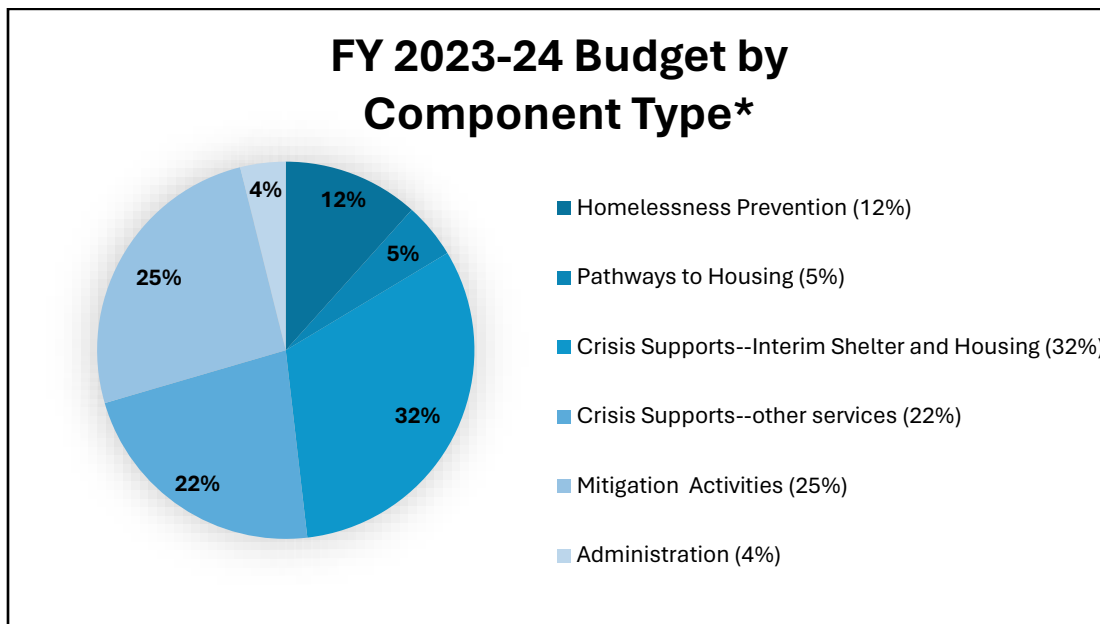
The City also sought to explore two additional questions.

1. **Are Fremont’s unhoused residents from the city?** The analysis of the current population experiencing homelessness did not yield any evidence to support or disprove the theory that the City’s resources attract people experiencing homelessness from elsewhere in Alameda County. The plan focuses instead on how best to serve those currently here.
2. **Are the City’s current investments being directed as effectively as possible?** The analysis of the current homeless response system inventory and expenditures indicates that 79% of the City’s spending to address homelessness goes to crisis support services and mitigation activities. For the purposes of this report, “crisis

¹ The analysis was constrained by data collection and reporting limitations discussed in the methodology section of this report.

support” refers to those services that assist people while they are experiencing homelessness. In the chart below, crisis support services are divided into emergency shelter/interim shelter and other services such as street outreach, food/meals, drop-in centers, safe parking, hygiene stations, and case management. Mitigation activities are connected to reducing the environmental, health, and safety impacts of unsheltered homelessness, such as trash removal, vector control, encampment cleaning, and parking enforcement. Crisis support services and mitigation activities manage homelessness rather than prevent or solve it.

A much smaller proportion of the City’s spending is allocated to prevent homelessness and ensure people return to permanent housing, resulting in high levels of unmet need, which only compounds the burden of homelessness on everyone.



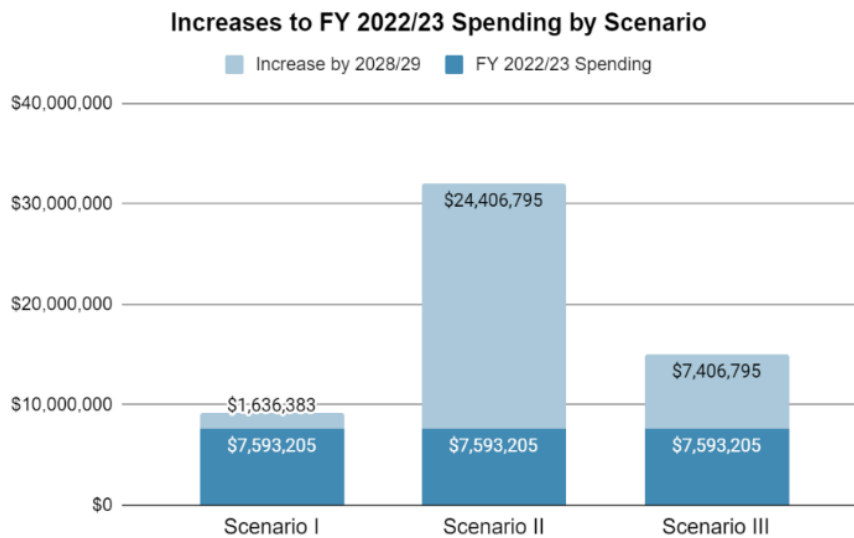
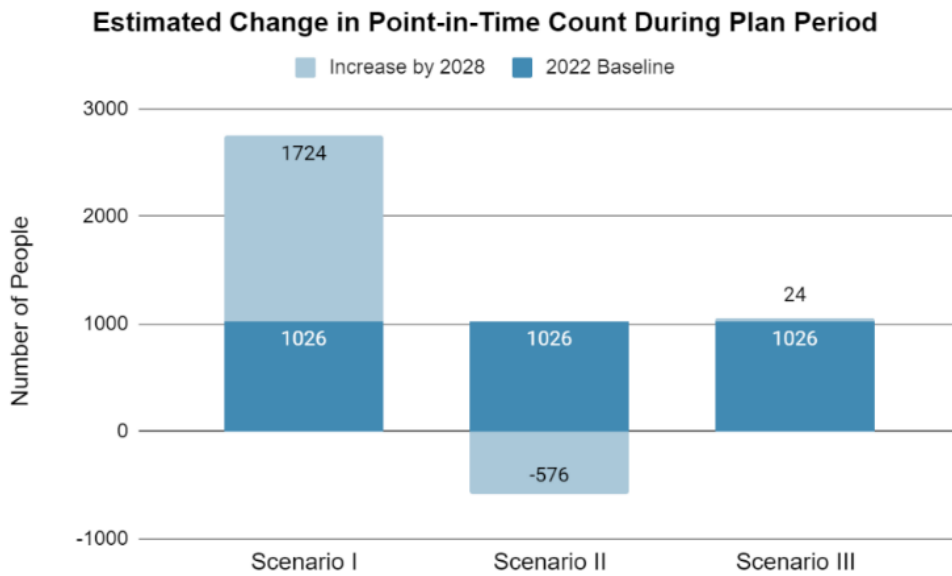
The assessment indicates that the City’s current homeless response is not scaled or balanced to achieve its goals. As noted above, the City spends far more on crisis support services and mitigation activities than it does on prevention and pathways to housing. While acknowledging portions of the City’s spending are restricted to these activities, the strategies in this plan require a greater focus and investment on prevention and housing. The City may contemplate the re-allocation of the least restrictive funding sources away from crisis support services and mitigation and shift them towards prevention and housing solutions.

The strategies and recommended investments contained within the HRP stem directly from the research described above. They also reflect the results of a modeling analysis that examined three scenarios that the City could pursue over the next five years.

Scenario 1: Maintain the Status Quo: What if the City delivered housing, shelter, and services at the current capacity and spending level over the next five years? In this scenario, the City made no significant changes in the system capacity and budget grows by 5% per year from FY 2023-24 levels, totaling an estimated \$9.2 million by year five. Demographic trends are assumed to remain the same. As a result, homelessness doubles and the unmet need for housing and services increases significantly. This scenario did not achieve any of the HRP goals.

Scenario 2: Eliminating Unmet Need: What if the City fully invested in the housing, shelter, and services needed to solve the problem of homelessness and bring the community to “functional zero?” This scenario draws directly upon the system analysis conducted in the Alameda County Home Together 2026 Plan, which estimates the resources needed to achieve a system where there is no unmet need or unsheltered homelessness, and all people experiencing homelessness are served with a pathway to housing. In this scenario, homelessness decreases dramatically, there is no more unsheltered homelessness, and the effectiveness of the system is greatly improved. However, the estimated cost of this scenario is greater than \$32 million per year, which would constitute more than 7% of the City’s entire FY 2023-24 operating budget and is more than four times the City’s current budget for this issue. This scenario was not financially viable.

Scenario 3: Improving Results: What strategies and investments are needed to achieve the goals of the HRP, even if they do not fully solve homelessness? If the Status Quo (Scenario 1) is unacceptable and Eliminating Unmet Need (Scenario 2) is unattainable, what steps can be taken to advance the goals of stopping the growth of homelessness, increasing pathways to housing, and reducing the impact of unsheltered homelessness on the community? With targeted investments totaling an estimated \$15 million by year five and other improvements, this scenario presents the opportunity to significantly improve the system efficiency and reduce unmet need at a feasible cost. This scenario yielded the strategies and investments recommended in the HRP. The results of the three scenarios are compared below.



Strategies and Recommended Investments

The HRP proposes five broad strategies, which include specific actions and investments. They are summarized below along with the broader plan goals they support.

Strategy 1: Prevent homelessness. (Goal A)

- a. Invest local funds in 60 homelessness prevention slots and grow the number of households who are assisted in future years.
- b. Leverage existing prevention infrastructure (Keep Fremont Housed program) with improved targeting to most at-risk households and other modifications.

- c. Strengthen tenant-landlord relations to prevent displacement and eviction.

Strategy 2: Increase housing solutions. (Goals A, B)

- a. Expand the supply of rapid rehousing from 35 to 75 slots in year three and to 140 slots in year five.
- b. Launch a Shallow Subsidy Program to serve up to 145 households by year five.
- c. Support local and state initiatives to increase affordable housing, including streamlined approvals, increased set-aside units for formerly homeless households, and increased density.

Strategy 3: Connect people to shelter, housing, and other resources. (Goals B, C)

- a. Expand the City's Winter Relief program from 5 months to 12 months.
- b. Expand intake hours at interim housing sites and increase connections between outreach teams, Coordinated Entry, and interim housing.
- c. Expand the City's support of regional flexible housing funds, "Flex Funds", to increase system flow and shelter bed turnover.
- d. Increase services to people living in their vehicles, including those in RVs, so they have safe places to stay and pathways to housing. This can include, but not be limited to, expansion of safe parking options.

Strategy 4: Mitigate the impact of homelessness on the community. (Goal C)

- a. Manage RV parking to better meet community needs, including the needs of those living in vehicles. Consider safe parking options or other places for vehicles to be in conjunction with new parking restrictions.
- b. Expand field staff available for encampment assessment, outreach, and triage response in alignment with current practices of the City's Mobile Evaluation Team.
- c. Implement and refine structured encampment response to reduce health and safety hazards, resolve complaints, and connect people to services.

Strategy 5: Strengthen coordination and capacity within the homeless response system. (Goals A, B, C)

- a. Increase accountability with monitoring and reporting on HRP goals and progress, community engagement, and increased involvement of people with lived experience.
- b. Enhance coordination with Alameda County's land use task force to identify and plan for sites that could serve as interim or permanent housing.
- c. Coordinate service delivery with adjacent systems such as school districts and hospitals and across City departments to meet households' needs more quickly and avoid duplication of efforts. Increase information sharing across providers.
- d. Improve community knowledge by improving data collection and reporting and improving public access to data, including program demographics, unmet need, and program outcomes.

- e. Expand system capacity by exploring all possible revenue streams and housing/program sites.

Conclusion

In making recommendations that improve the state of homelessness without solving it, the project team acknowledges that homelessness causes tremendous suffering for those who experience it and diminishes the quality of life for the entire community. The extraordinary cost of housing in California and the profound state of inequity are decades in the making and cannot be undone by one local jurisdiction or over the course of five years. This plan seeks not to abdicate responsibility but to do better than what has been done to date and reduce the problem throughout Fremont.

Introduction

Mission

Fremont’s Homeless Response Plan (HRP) will provide a roadmap for addressing homelessness through coordinated and data-driven solutions which remove barriers to assistance, expand housing opportunities, and improve quality of life throughout the community.

Goals

The HRP’s recommendations are crafted to reach the following goals over the next five years:

- **Goal A: Stop the growth of homelessness.** Eliminate the 23% annual growth rate of people experiencing homelessness by reducing the number of people becoming homeless and increasing the number exiting to permanent housing.
- **Goal B: Increase pathways to housing.** Double the proportion of people who are well served by the homeless response system, meaning that they are on pathways to housing, stay homeless less than a year, and do not exit services to unsheltered homelessness.
- **Goal C: Reduce the impact of unsheltered homelessness.** Benefit those with and without permanent homes in Fremont by decreasing the number of people living in unsheltered conditions and the amount of City resources needed to manage encampment crises.

Context

Homelessness is a regional and national problem. No single unit of local government is equipped to solve the problem alone. In fact, local government agencies are closely reliant upon one another to address homelessness. County agencies typically oversee key mainstream systems that are central to homelessness response, including health and hospital systems, human services/social services agencies, housing authorities, and other key departments. In addition, federal and state funding often flows through counties for local programs, with the expectation that it will be regionally coordinated.

City departments also play a fundamental role, typically responsible for essential front-line and first-responder services like Police, Fire, Public Works, and other departments. Many cities—including the City of Fremont—also devote General Fund and other local dollars to support programs addressing homelessness. They may receive their own allocations of federal and state resources and like the City of Fremont, they may establish human/social services departments of their own. Cities are also responsible for local land use planning

and housing development approvals. Some have their own housing authorities. These roles are overlapping and interrelated, requiring close collaboration and alignment of goals across different government agencies and jurisdictions.

In recognition of this interrelatedness, the HRP aligns with the Alameda County Home Together 2026 Plan (2022), which emphasizes expanding permanent housing options, as well as the All Home Regional Action Plan (2021), which champions preventing homelessness. Both plans emphasize building regional and local housing crisis response systems that operate at “functional zero,” meaning the response system ensures homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. Homelessness is prevented whenever possible and, when it does occur, people are sheltered immediately and assisted to quickly regain a permanent home. A homeless response system operating at functional zero can shelter all who are unhoused and permanently rehouse them within a year. Those becoming homeless and those exiting homelessness are in balance.

The Bay Area region is not at functional zero. The number of people experiencing homelessness is growing, and fewer unhoused people are on a path back to a permanent home. This is especially true in Fremont. Even though the City has pursued a multi-disciplinary effort to address homelessness through services, affordable housing production, and encampment abatement, homelessness increased by 69% between 2019 and 2022. This rate of increase was higher than the rest of Alameda County and most of the Bay Area over the same period.

As the number of people experiencing homelessness has increased over the last five to seven years, particularly those who are unsheltered, all levels of government have struggled with how to fund and manage their response. Municipalities, like Fremont, are stepping up in ways their budgets and departments were not originally equipped to do. The federal government and state of California have recognized this in part by increasing funding, including providing some funds directly to cities either as an entitlement allocation or as a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for which cities can compete. The Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is an example of the former. The Encampment Resolution Fund is an example of the latter. Alameda County has also adjusted to the growing need for city resources, by allocating some state funds, such as the Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) that funds Fremont’s Housing Navigation Center, to cities according to their Point-in-Time Counts. Other cities have added local revenue streams to the voting ballot. Approaches and solutions will vary depending on the jurisdiction and what is currently in place, but there is no question that the feeling of being under resourced, ill equipped, and overwhelmed by the magnitude of this problem is broadly shared by cities and counties across the region.

The City of Fremont determined it needed a plan to guide its comprehensive response to homelessness and issued a Request for Proposals for a qualified consultant to lead a local process that would include best-practice recommendations aligned with the Alameda County Home Together 2026 Plan and a framework to respond to the community impacts

of homelessness. EdeColigny Consulting LLC was selected and started work in June of 2023. The team included six consultants and four lived experience experts. The consulting team had decades of experience addressing homelessness in Alameda County and the Bay Area, as direct service and housing providers, municipal employees, policy makers, and Continuum of Care Directors and consultants. The lived experience experts had more than a decade of combined experience without permanent homes.

Methodology

The HRP was developed over the course of three phases, summarized in the table below.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Data Analysis*	Community Engagement	System Modeling & Plan Development
This phase consisted of quantitative data collection and analysis; review of county, regional, and other local plans; and a survey of best practices and trends in homelessness response. Information was gathered from June to September 2023, and findings were presented to City staff and community members in October 2023.	This phase consisted of qualitative data collection and analysis, including a community survey, interviews, focus groups, community meetings, meetings with City staff, and presentations to various City boards and commissions from October 2023 to January 2024.	This phase consisted of the system modeling exercise that yielded the recommended strategies and investments included in the plan. It was conducted in the first quarter of 2024 and informed by the data collected in Phases 1 and 2.

*The analysis offered by this report looks at performance at the system level using data available through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Services to unhoused people in Fremont are not captured in a common database, leaving gaps in information and hampering the ability to identify duplication of services or compare the effectiveness of a given program compared to another. Not all programs contracted and delivered by the City are documented in HMIS, nor are many of the services the City does not fund. Getting more components of the response system entering data into HMIS would help the City evaluate ongoing performance.

Structure

The resulting HRP consists of the following key sections, which are followed by reference documents and pertinent appendices.

- **Homelessness in Fremont:** This section offers a summary of the state of homelessness in Fremont, including key growth trends, special populations, and other demographic factors.

- **City of Fremont Homeless Response System:** This section summarizes the current array of services and resources available to people experiencing homelessness in Fremont, including an analysis of unmet need and City spending.
- **System Modeling:** This section explores three different scenarios for the City’s overall approach to addressing homelessness to highlight some of the challenges, limitations, and possibilities associated with different investment strategies.
- **Strategies and Investments:** This section translates the results of the system modeling into a set of concrete strategies to address homelessness in Fremont, each of which is accompanied by a set of specific action steps.

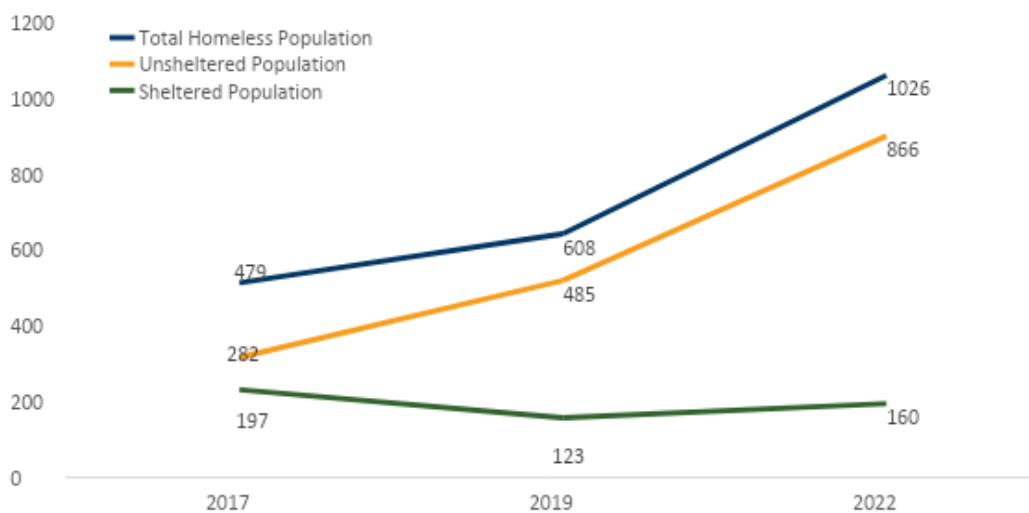
Homelessness in Fremont

Participants in every community engagement setting that informed the HRP expressed grave concern about homelessness in Fremont. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of online survey respondents described homelessness as a very serious problem, and many expressed the belief that the problem is worsening, with more people unhoused, unsheltered, and living in cars parked near schools, parks, and businesses. People without housing report feeling increased hostility, diminished safety, and the inability to find basic resources like food and restrooms. Business owners described having to spend more in recent years to address vandalism and blight associated with encampments. One unhoused participant described having a cup of hot coffee thrown at her from a passing car. The sense that homelessness in Fremont is getting worse is supported by data. This section provides a summary of the state of homelessness in Fremont.

Homelessness Increasing in Fremont²

The number of people experiencing homelessness in Fremont has increased dramatically since the 2019 Alameda County Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, growing 69% from 608 people in 2019 to 1,026 people in 2022. This contributed to an overall 114% increase since 2017 (479 to 1,026).

Fremont Homeless Point-in-Time Counts (2017-2022)



² The information cited in this section comes from the City of Fremont and Alameda County Point-in-Time Homeless Counts. Applied Survey Research (2022). [2022 Alameda County Homeless Count and Survey Comprehensive Report](#). Available online through [this link](#), last accessed April 11, 2024. Applied Survey Research (2022). [2022 City of Fremont Homeless Count and Survey Comprehensive Report](#). Available online through [this link](#), last accessed April 11, 2024.

In 2022, the rate of growth was higher in Fremont than in Alameda County as a whole, where homelessness grew by 22% from 2019 and 73% from 2017. This trend was driven by the growth in unsheltered homelessness in Fremont, which increased by 207% from 2017, from 282 people in 2017 to 866 people in 2022. In 2022, unsheltered homelessness accounted for almost 85% of all homelessness in Fremont, up from 59% in 2017.

Fremont and Alameda County Point-in-Time Counts (2017-2022)

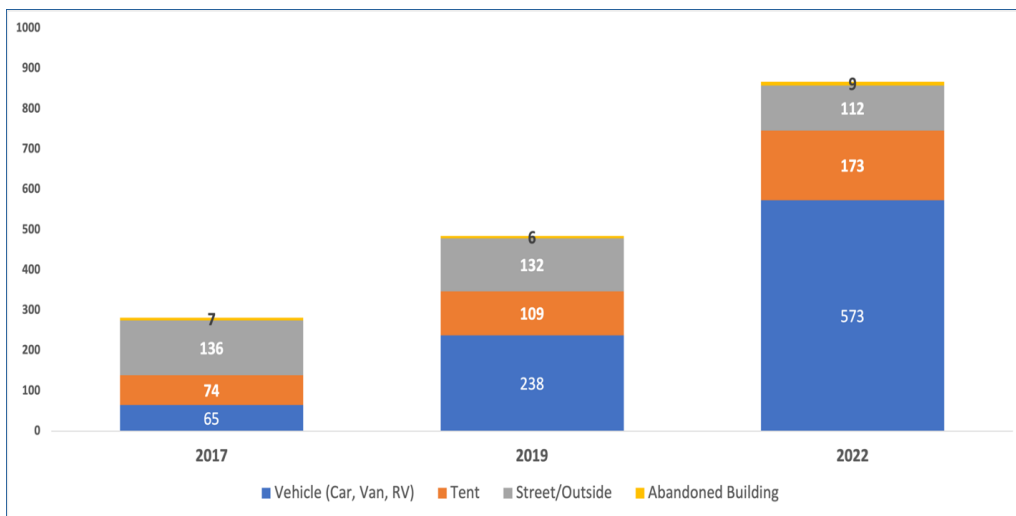
	2017 Count	2019 Count	% Change 2017-19	2022 Count	% Change 2019-22
Fremont	479	608	27%	1,026	69%
Alameda County	5,629	8,022	43%	9,747	22%

More People Living in Vehicles

Most of the growth in Fremont’s unsheltered homeless population is reflected in a growing number of people living in their vehicles, including cars, vans, and recreational vehicles (RVs). In 2022, 573 people were counted living in vehicles, up from 238 in 2019, a 141% increase. In 2022, 66% of Fremont’s unsheltered residents and 56% of all people experiencing homelessness were living in a car, van, or RV. In 2017, only 23% (65) were counted as living in these locations.

The proportion of people staying in vehicles is higher than Alameda County as a whole. In 2022, 3,918 people were counted as living in vehicles in Alameda County, which represented 40% of the County’s total population of people experiencing homelessness.

Types of Unsheltered Homelessness in Fremont Over Time



Racial Disparities

The table below compares the racial and ethnic composition of people served by the City of Fremont’s existing homeless response system in 2022-22; the people counted in the most recent Alameda County Point-in-Time (PIT) Homeless Count; and the overall Fremont population from census data.

Race and Ethnicity in Services, PIT Count, and General Population

Race/Ethnicity	White	Black/ African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Asian	Multiple Races	Hispanic/ Latin (x)(o)(a)
Served by the Fremont Homeless Response System ³	45%	31%	5%	2%	7%	7%	28%
2022 PIT Count Data ⁴	47%	31%	6%	4%	2%	10%	21%
Fremont Census Data	18%	2%	1%	<1%	64%	8%	13%

Black/African American individuals are overrepresented in Fremont’s homeless population, representing 2% of Fremont’s general population but 31% of those in the PIT Count and of those receiving services. Native individuals are also overrepresented, with Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander individuals four times more prevalent in the homeless population than the general population. American Indian/Alaskan Native individuals are six times more prevalent in the homeless population. The sample size is very small for these two groups and should be interpreted with caution. These racial groups are also overrepresented in Alameda County’s homeless population, although to a lesser degree than in Fremont.

In a striking difference from Alameda County as a whole, White individuals are also overrepresented among the homeless population, constituting 47% of Fremont’s homeless population and 18% of its general population.⁵ They are the largest racial group among those experiencing homelessness because since its founding in 1956, Fremont was a predominantly White community that has experienced gentrification in recent decades. The City of Fremont’s Residential Displacement Study Report from June 2021 notes that Fremont has become wealthier than the rest of Alameda County; with 60% of its households having above moderate incomes, compared to Alameda County with 44% above that range. According to the study, rents and home prices are also higher and increasing faster in Fremont than in the rest of the County. These gentrifying conditions often correlate with displacement of low-income residents and a rise in homelessness. In

³ This information comes from an HMIS report of persons served by Fremont-based agencies disaggregated by race and ethnicity.

⁴ Applied Survey Research (2022). 2022 City of Fremont Homeless Count and Survey Comprehensive Report. Available online through [this link](#), last accessed April 11, 2024.

⁵ Applied Survey Research (2022). 2022 Alameda County Homeless Count and Survey Comprehensive Report. Available online through [this link](#), last accessed April 11, 2024.

Fremont’s case, the lower and moderate-income residents were White, some of whom ended up homeless. As one longtime resident from the unhoused focus group put it,

“I am 63 years old. I have lived in Fremont my whole life. We have been priced out. Where else am I going to go but the streets.”

Are Fremont’s Unhoused from Fremont?

A common concern among stakeholders was that people experiencing homelessness in Fremont are not really from Fremont. Some people theorize that Fremont’s service offerings and less punitive parking enforcement attract people—particularly those living in their cars—from other parts of the region.

There is no firm evidence to prove or disprove that theory. According to the Alameda County 2022 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count:

- 81% of people experiencing homelessness in Fremont became homeless in Alameda County, but the precise location in the County is not specified.
- 44% of those surveyed consider Fremont their home, but that does not confirm whether they are originally from Fremont, their last known address was in Fremont, or how much time they may have spent there at some point in their life.
- 72% said they had been homeless a year or more but did not specify what amount of that time was spent homeless in Fremont.

Some providers report the opposite phenomenon, whereby the high cost of housing makes it difficult to find housing for people experiencing homelessness to stay in Fremont. One program offering rental assistance specifically for people from Fremont reports that they were only able to find housing for 23% of participants within the city, with the remaining households moving to nearby jurisdictions. However, this data does not represent the entire universe of people experiencing homelessness in Fremont.

Part of the challenge is defining what it means to come from Fremont. There is no established formula for how long someone must live in a place to be considered from there, or what it means if someone moves away for a time or loses their housing and must leave. For instance, unhoused participants in one focus group discovered that they all attended different Fremont high schools, although their last permanent residences were not necessarily in Fremont.

With no clear evidence to support the theory that Fremont is attracting people experiencing homelessness from other parts of the region and no practical means of determining who is and is not legitimately from Fremont, this plan does not include strategies meant to deter people coming to Fremont or to send them to other jurisdictions. Instead, recommendations focus on serving those people who are currently experiencing homelessness and seeking services in Fremont.

New Homelessness Outpacing Exits to Housing

The number of people becoming homeless in Fremont is more than double the number exiting homelessness into housing. In the 2022-23 program year, providers that entered data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) assisted 77 Fremont households experiencing homelessness to exit to permanent housing. In the same year, 174 people entered the homeless response system for the first time. For every person whose homelessness is resolved, there are 2.25 people entering the system as newly unhoused. This highlights the critical need for services that prevent people from becoming homeless.

Once Unhoused, Few Return to Housing

An estimated 2,050 people experienced homelessness in Fremont between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.⁶ Over 92% of those served by HMIS-using providers remained homeless at the end of that year. They continued to be served by emergency shelters, Fremont's Housing Navigation Center, the Wellness Center, and street outreach, or they exited services back to unsheltered homelessness. It is taking longer to resolve people's homelessness. Seventy-two percent (72%) of those who responded to the 2022 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Survey reported being homeless for a year or longer.

Rates of High Vulnerability Increasing

Seniors make up a growing share of the overall homeless population, representing 18% of PIT Count survey respondents in 2022 and up from 10% in 2017. Of those surveyed for the 2022 Count, nearly 1 in 5 respondents were 61 or older, while the percentage of people served by Fremont-based HMIS providers aged 55 or older is 43%. Homelessness ages people prematurely and exacerbates disabilities present at the time of housing loss. Unhoused people often experience disabling health conditions similar to those of housed people who are 15, 20, even 25 years older.⁷

A large proportion of people receiving services from HMIS-using providers and/or surveyed in the PIT Count reported chronic health conditions and/or mental health disorders. For those that received a housing assessment through Coordinated Entry in the South County Resource Zone, 92% indicated that they had a disabling condition and 61% had a score of 80 or above, which indicates a vulnerability level suited for permanent supportive housing (PSH).⁸ To qualify for PSH, a member of the household must have a disability of a

⁶ This estimate multiplies the Point-in-Time Count Total of 1026 by 1.97, which is the [Home Together 2026](#) factor for converting PIT Counts to annual numbers experiencing homelessness.

⁷ Brown, Rebecca, et al. (2022) "Factors Associated With Mortality Among Homeless Older Adults in California: The HOPE HOME Study." [Journal of the American Medical Association: Internal Medicine](#): 182(10):1052-1060. Available online through [this link](#), last accessed April 11, 2024.

⁸ This information comes from an HMIS report for South County Resource Zone program year 2022-23.

permanent or long-term duration that impacts their ability to maintain housing and employment, and they must have been homeless for a year or more.

Fremont's Homeless Response System

As a community member, I do not know what the City does to respond to people who are homeless. When I shop or go to restaurants or stop at an intersection near freeway overpasses or similar spaces, it seems that there are increasing numbers of people who are either sitting there or camping in tents or makeshift shelters. Whatever the City is doing is not visible to me."

Online Survey Respondent

I have been assessed so many times. Each time, I dare to hope it will be different...then nothing!

Unhoused Focus Group Participant

Overview

An effective homeless response system is designed to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. This requires a balance of:

1. **Prevention resources** to keep at-risk households from becoming unhoused
2. **Pathways to housing**, with permanent housing and other interventions that resolve homelessness
3. **Crisis support services** for people experiencing homelessness, such as outreach, shelter, and supportive services
4. **Mitigation activities** to minimize the impact of homelessness on the community

Defining Fremont's system of care is difficult given the limitations of the information available:

- Not all programs dedicated to serve unhoused people enter data into the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- The City of Fremont does not fund all the services provided to unhoused people in Fremont. For example, the City budget supports initial capital investment for supportive housing but funds no permanent supportive housing ongoing operations and only portions of emergency shelter and supportive services located in Fremont.
- Not all services utilized by unhoused people are designated specifically for people experiencing homelessness, such as food pantries and programs offered at the Fremont Family Resource Center.
- There is no way to account for the services that unhoused people from Fremont use outside city borders, including any shelter, service, and housing programs in nearby jurisdictions in both Alameda and Santa Clara Counties.

In general, the response system discussed here only analyzes programs in Fremont that enter data into HMIS and are dedicated to people experiencing homelessness, plus prevention services.⁹ The financial analysis is limited to the City’s spending.

The available data demonstrates that Fremont’s homeless response system is not to scale or balanced to achieve its goals. Fremont spends far more on crisis support services and mitigation activities than it does on prevention and pathways to housing. Examples include:

- Forty-six percent (46%) of community survey respondents who had experienced homelessness reported that they had used none of the system’s services.
- HMIS data reports serving 1,237 of the estimated 2,050 people who experienced homelessness between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.¹⁰
- Only 18% of those served were sheltered and just 8% exited homelessness.
- Fifty-six percent (56% or 695 of 1,237 people) were served by services only or street outreach programs, which provide valuable information, support, and resources but do not provide housing or resolve homelessness.
- While 211 persons were housed in permanent supportive housing (PSH), just 10 were newly housed in 2022-23. The remaining 200 moved into housing in prior years.
- The interim housing inventory now totals 129 year-round beds and another 60 winter beds. Fewer than 1 in 5 people get sheltered while homeless.
- Fewer than 1 in 30 households living in vehicles have a safe place to park.

Components of Fremont’s current response are described in Appendix B including the role of each in the system, the current need, performance results, cost, and where HMIS and budget data is available.

City Spending

The table below illustrates the City of Fremont’s budgets for the last, current, and upcoming fiscal years. The City currently spends over \$7.5 million addressing homelessness, including roughly \$5.35 million in funding for housing and services, interim housing/shelter, and non-shelter crisis support services; \$1.95 million in mitigation

⁹ Prevention services do not technically serve people who are experiencing homelessness, as they are designed to prevent homelessness. They serve people at high risk of homelessness and have been included in the analysis for that reason.

¹⁰ This data comes from a consolidated Annual Progress Report pulled from HMIS for all Fremont-based providers. The count of people served is unduplicated for each program type. However, some people may have received services from more than one program type (e.g. they may have moved from a shelter into a rapid rehousing program). Thus, the total across programs is not unduplicated and may not represent 1,237 different people. In addition, SAVE’s domestic violence shelter, which does not enter data into HMIS for privacy/safety reasons, served another 126 people for a total of 1,363 people served.

activities; and \$300k on administration.¹¹ The City’s direct investment into homeless response is braided among multiple funding sources with variable flexibility. Mitigation services, funded mostly by Integrated Waste Management fees, are the most inflexible and required to fund environmental preservation and waste management specifically. Whereas the City’s Housing and Homeless General Fund has the most flexibility and can support programs from prevention, through interim shelter and non-shelter crisis support services, to housing pathways. The City can evaluate the investment of Housing and Homeless General Fund dollars.

The current \$7.5 million budget represents a \$2 million dollar reduction from last fiscal year, accounted for by the end of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) prevention funding, which assisted over 1,500 households to maintain their housing during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹² With the sunset of that federal program, the City’s FY 2024-25 budget has no resources to provide prevention financial assistance to any new households.

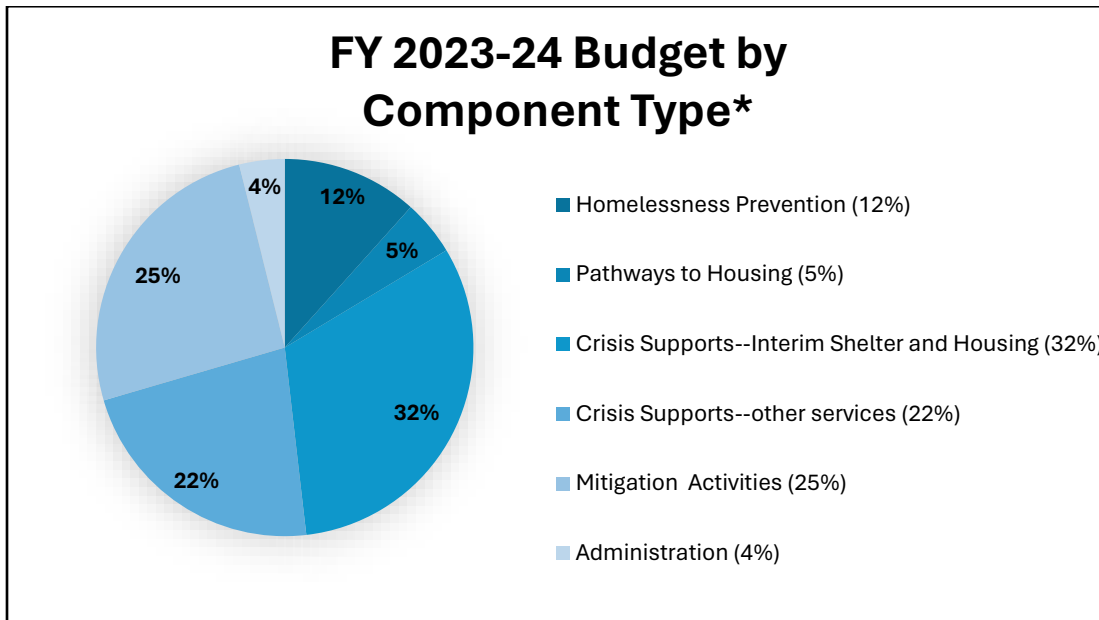
City of Fremont Homeless Response Budgets over Three Fiscal Years

Funding Category	FY 22-23 Actual	FY 23-24 Budget	FY 24-25 Budget
Preventing Homelessness	\$3,306,536	\$883,825	\$443,294
Pathways to Housing	\$325,161	\$359,879	\$362,691
Crises Supports-- Interim Housing/Shelter	\$2,287,084	\$2,414,222	\$3,004,665
Crises Supports—other services	\$1,531,185	\$1,693,708	\$1,528,507
Mitigation Activities	\$1,908,336	\$1,946,076	\$2,361,655
Administration	\$356,849	\$295,495	\$304,487
TOTAL	\$9,715,152	\$7,593,205	\$8,005,299

¹¹ This includes only those City resources that are funded or managed directly by the City of Fremont and are designated specifically for people experiencing homelessness. Programs that serve a general population (such as food pantries) are not shown here, although people experiencing homelessness would typically be eligible for those resources.

¹² All ERAP financial assistance has been fully utilized. The remaining funds in the program are for supportive services and administrative costs.

The chart below illustrates spending in the current homeless response system by component.



*For the purposes of this plan, “crisis supports” are those services that assist people while they are experiencing homelessness. Crisis support services are divided into emergency shelter/interim shelter and other services such as street outreach, food/meals, drop-in centers, safe parking, hygiene stations, and case management. Mitigation activities are connected to reducing the environmental, health, and safety impacts of unsheltered homelessness, such as trash removal, vector control, encampment cleaning, and parking enforcement.

Analysis of Spending

The City of Fremont’s spending is out of alignment with strategies that will reduce and end homelessness. The balance between resolving and managing homelessness does not advance the City’s HRP goals.

- **The City is spending 79% of its overall homeless response on crisis support services and mitigation activities**, compared to 6% for rapid rehousing, flex funds, or housing-focused case management. For every dollar spent on pathways to housing, the City spends \$17 on crisis support services and mitigation activities. While mitigation activities are a City responsibility, without greater investments in services that resolve homelessness, the mitigation burden will continue to grow.
- **Despite the critical need, funding for prevention is shrinking.** The [All Home Regional Plan](#) recommends that for every interim housing/shelter bed created, a system should add two permanent housing opportunities and four prevention slots. Prevention was 34% of the FY 2022-23 budget and has declined dramatically to 12% in the current fiscal year, with a further decline anticipated in FY 2024-25. This is due to the end of Federal COVID-19 ERAP funding, which was only available during the pandemic.

Without prevention services, the number of households becoming homeless will continue to outpace those leaving homelessness.

- **Encampment mitigation is showing promising reductions in cost and crises.** Early data on number of calls and expenditures related to encampment mitigation indicates that as the City implements a more proactive approach, costs and crises are declining. More time and data are needed before drawing conclusions.

Non-City Controlled Resources Addressing Homelessness

Concerns were raised during Phase 2 that the City of Fremont was bearing a disproportionate share of the cost burden for addressing homelessness between the City and the County, and that as a medium-sized, wealthier city, it was not getting its fair share of county, state, and federal resources when compared to neighboring cities in Alameda County. A detailed comparative analysis of Fremont versus its neighboring cities was beyond the scope of this project but during the team's research and analysis, relevant information came to light that underlines how Fremont participates in a regional funding system. Programs funded through other sources constitute a substantial portion of Fremont's homeless response system. Examples include:

- As noted above, the City does not fund operating support for the 229 permanent supportive housing (PSH) units located in Fremont. That comes from federal sources managed by Alameda County.
- The City provides approximately 7% of the operating funds for the 36 Rapid Rehousing slots currently managed by Abode. The remaining \$1.1 million comes from federal sources managed by Alameda County.
- The Housing Navigation Center (HNC) is funded with a combination of City General Fund, County general fund, and state grants, such as the Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP). In FY 2022-23, the County general fund awarded \$330,000 to the HNC compared to \$168,000 from the City's General Fund.
- According to the Home Together 2026 Plan, County funds support roughly 60% of the overall system of care. This implies that that the City's \$5.35 million in funding for housing and services is matched with approximately \$8 million in County resources, although the ratio may vary between budget categories.

System Modeling

System Scenarios

The HRP strategies result from modeling the impact of three different scenarios. The scenarios emerged from sentiments and questions raised throughout the community engagement process.

- **Scenario 1: Maintain the Status Quo:** What if the City of Fremont delivered housing, shelter, and services at the current capacity and spending level over the next five years? In this scenario, the City made no significant changes in the system capacity and budget from FY 2023-24 levels. Spending grew at 5% per year and demographic trends also remained the same.
- **Scenario 2: Eliminating Unmet Need:** What if the City of Fremont fully invested in the housing, shelter, and services needed to fully solve the problem of homelessness and bring the community to “functional zero”? This scenario draws directly upon the system analysis conducted in the Home Together 2026 Plan, which estimates the resources needed to achieve a system where there is no unmet need or unsheltered homelessness, and all people experiencing homelessness are served with a pathway to housing. In this scenario, homelessness decreases dramatically, there is no more unsheltered homelessness, and the effectiveness of the system is greatly improved.
- **Scenario 3: Improving Results:** What strategies and investments are needed to achieve the goals of the HRP, even if they do not fully solve homelessness? If the Status Quo (Scenario 1) is unacceptable and Eliminating Unmet Need (Scenario 2) is unattainable, what steps can be taken to advance the goals of stopping the growth of homelessness, increasing pathways to housing, and reducing the impact of homelessness on the community?

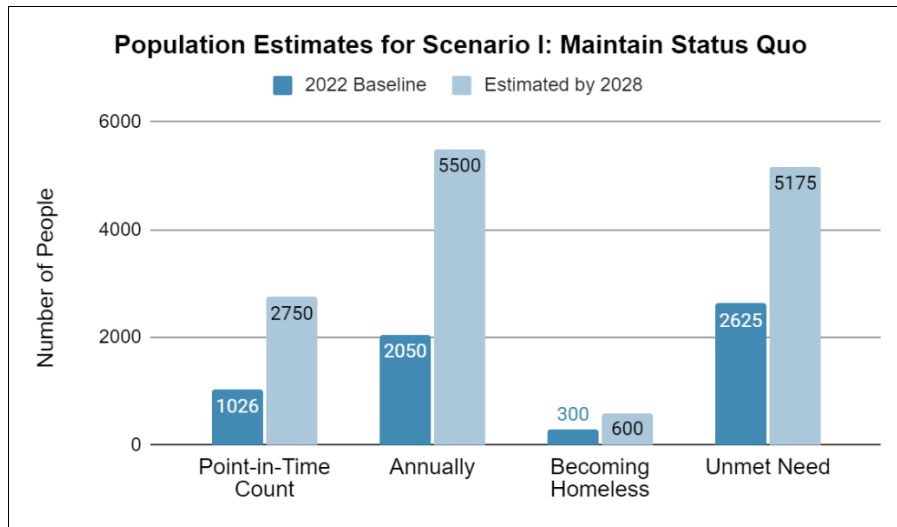
The following sections explore each scenario in depth.

Scenario 1: Maintain the Status Quo

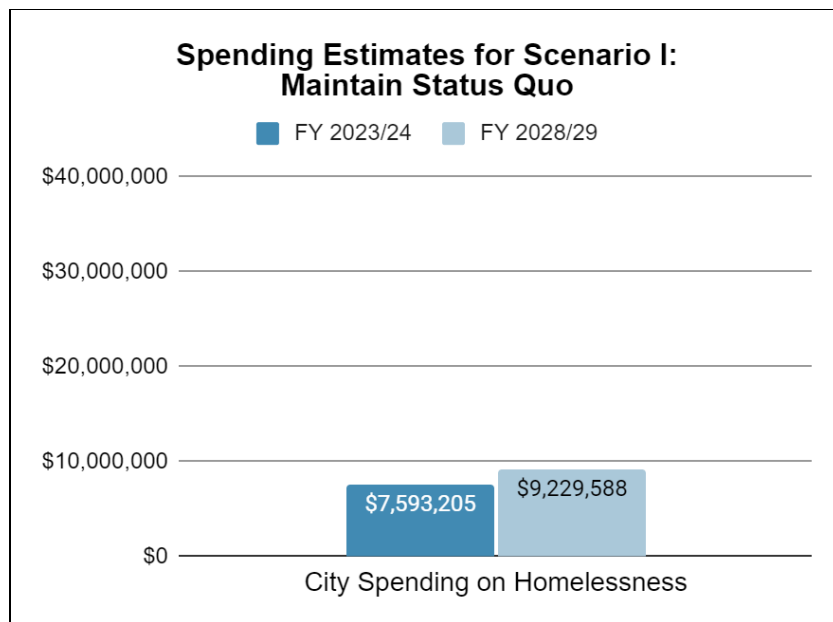
In Scenario 1, the City of Fremont continues to respond to homelessness as it currently does, with no significant changes in the system capacity and budget from FY 2023-24 levels. The scenario also assumes no changes in the demographic trends, with growth rates in the homeless population consistent with recent years. Homelessness is projected to grow at an annual rate of 23%. Inflows continue to outpace exits to housing by a rate of 2 to 1.

What results? The population experiencing homelessness at a point in time and annually more than doubles. People becoming homeless for the first time also doubles. The

proportion of people who remain homeless without a path to housing increases from the current 92% to 94% or 5,175 people as represented by the last bar on the chart below.

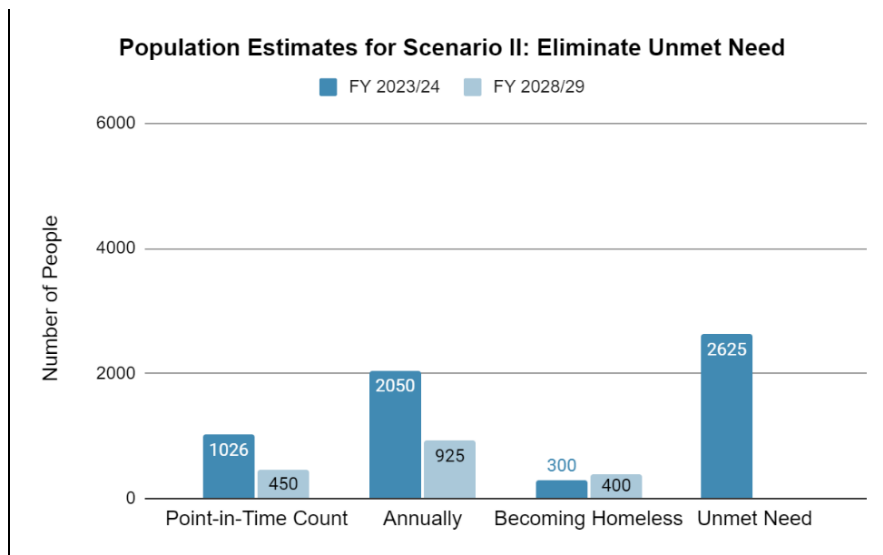


In this scenario, homeless-specific expenditures are relatively contained, increasing at a rate of 5% annually, as the budget graph below indicates. What is not captured is the added costs of so many people living outside without access to sanitation and hygiene services, in addition to added emergency resources like food and medical care. Those costs may not be supported by the homeless response budget, but they will impact the city.

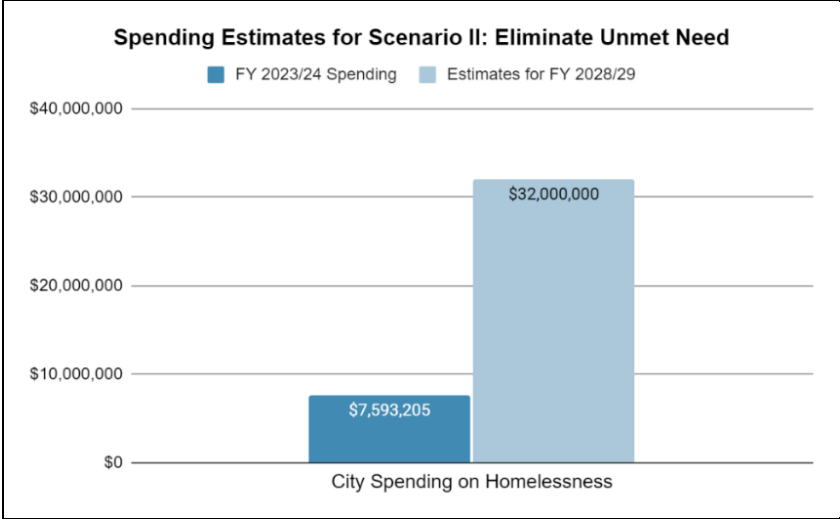


Scenario 2: Eliminating Unmet Need

Scenario 2 presents an estimate of what it would take to get to “functional zero” in five years. This was drawn directly from the Alameda County System Modeling, with the City of Fremont’s resources needed, defined in proportion to the City’s share of the County’s homeless population. The Home Together 2026 Plan estimates the increased investments and capacity needed to have a system with no unmet need and no unsheltered homelessness. All people experiencing homelessness are served with a pathway to housing. As the graph below indicates, homelessness is significantly reduced in this scenario. The Point-in-Time Count and annual numbers are less than half what they are today. Even though more people are becoming unhoused in this scenario, the system is equipped to respond such that all people are rehoused within a year, and none are sleeping outdoors or in vehicles.

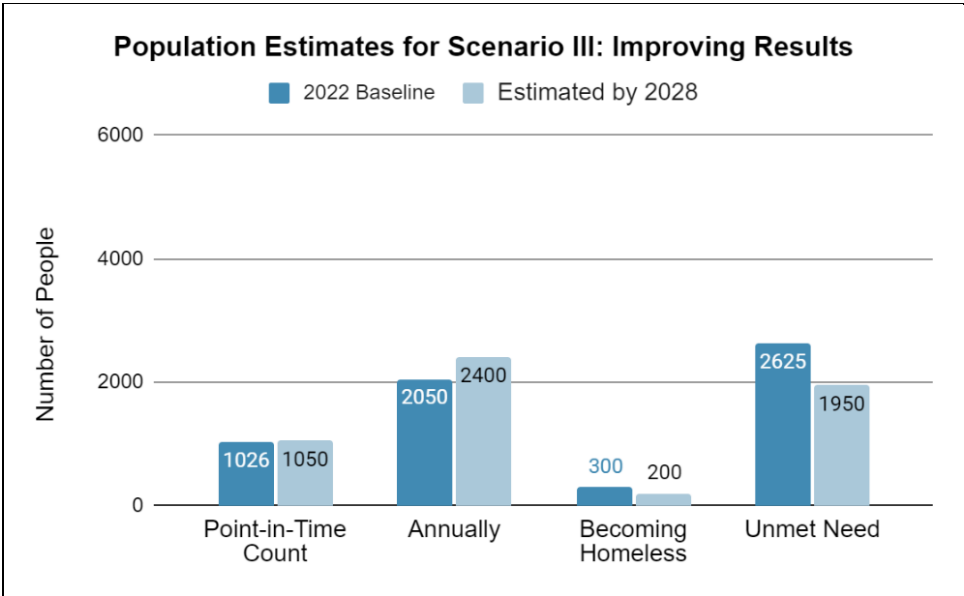


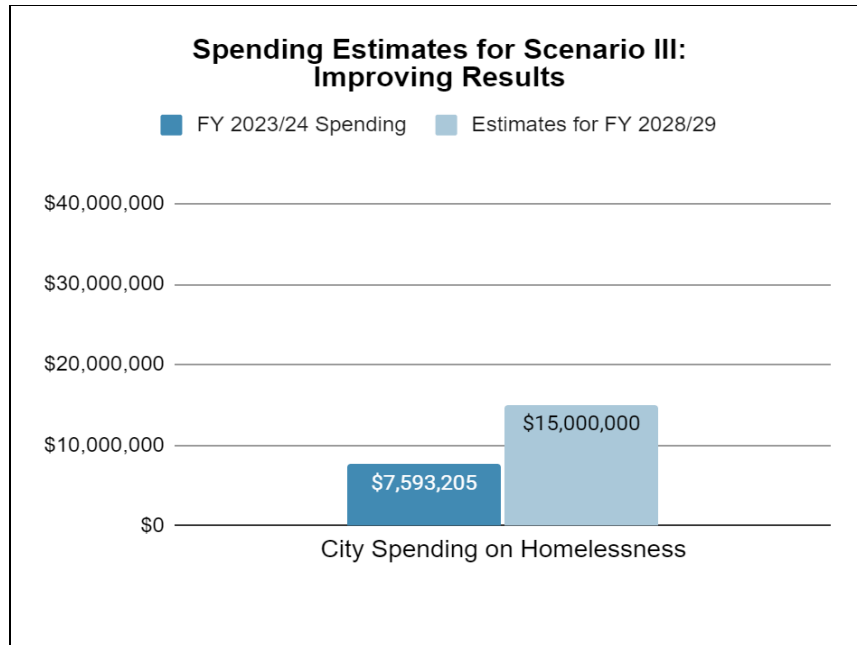
The annual operating budget required to meet this desirable vision is unrealistic given current resources available locally and from state and federal governments, both of whom are reducing COVID-19 level investments related to addressing homelessness. As the chart below indicates, fully implementing the Home Together 2026 Plan is estimated to cost the City upwards of \$32 million per year. That is more than four times what is being spent this fiscal year and is likely not feasible for the City’s budget, absent new revenue streams.



Scenario 3: Improving Results

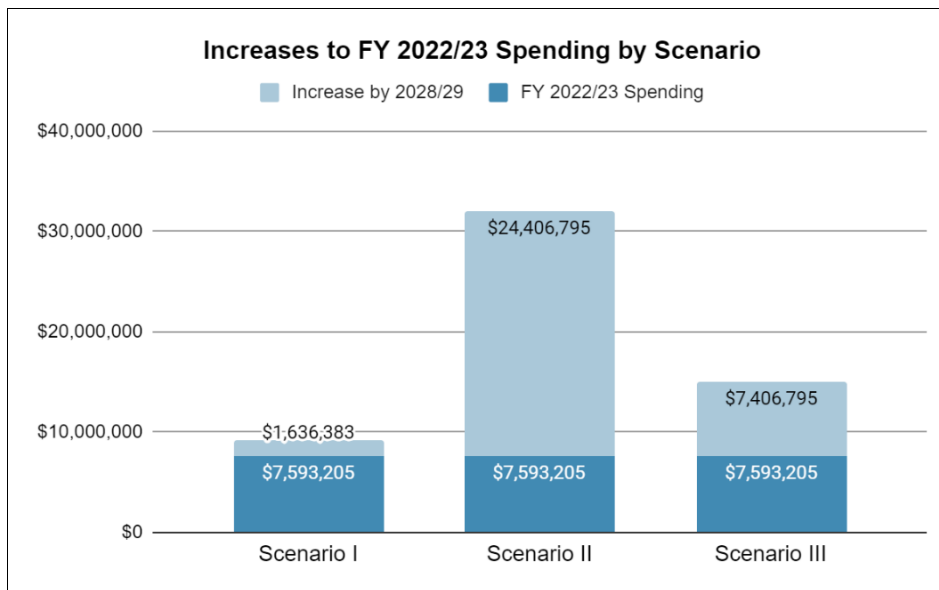
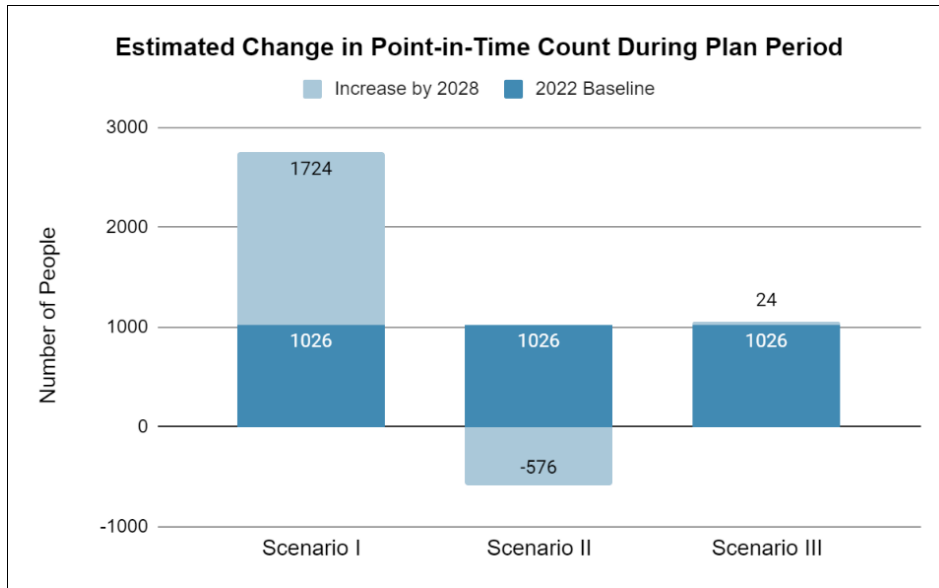
In recognition that Status Quo (Scenario 1) is unacceptable and Eliminating Unmet Need (Scenario 2) is unattainable, Scenario 3 identifies the steps that can be taken to advance the goals of stopping the growth of homelessness, increasing pathways to housing, and reducing the impact of unsheltered homelessness on the community. While this scenario will not end homelessness in Fremont, it presents the opportunity to improve system results and the lives of people experiencing homelessness and within a reasonable budget by making targeted investments and increasing system flow. In this scenario, the Point-in-Time Count remains roughly the same, but fewer people become homeless in a year and more move to permanent housing, reducing the unmet need from where it is today (92%) to 81% (and lower in future years). Expenditures increase from roughly \$7.5 million to \$15 million over that time period. See Strategies and Investment section for details.





In making recommendations that improve the state of homelessness without solving it, the project team acknowledges that homelessness causes tremendous suffering for those who experience it and diminishes the quality of life for the entire community. The extraordinary cost of housing in California and the profound state of inequity are decades in the making and cannot be undone by one local jurisdiction or over the course of five years. The HRP seeks to do better than what has been done and reduce the problem throughout Fremont.

Comparing the three scenarios in the charts below illustrates that Scenario 3 makes an impact with a more reasonable investment. To achieve the results modeled in Scenario 3, the increased investment is strategically targeted to specific system interventions as detailed in the next section.



Strategies and Investments

The strategies and investments detailed below are designed to reach the HPR's goals and achieve the outcomes modeled in Scenario 3: Improving Results. They reflect the recognition that Status Quo (Scenario 1) is unacceptable and Eliminating Unmet Need (Scenario 2) is unattainable. While this scenario will not end homelessness in Fremont, by making targeted investments and increasing system flow, it presents the opportunity to improve system results and the lives of people experiencing homelessness within a reasonable budget. Scenario 3 starts to shift City of Fremont investments to strategies that solve homelessness rather than manage it. Unless the City begins to stem the number of people becoming homeless and increase the numbers of people returning to permanent housing, the demands for mitigation and crisis response will continue to increase and homelessness will grow. The cost estimates in all three scenarios assume a 5% cost of living adjustment (COLA) and that the City would pay the 40% share of the increase for activities envisioned in the Home Together 2026 Plan and that the County would allocate the other 60% through its resources. Increases to interim shelter and mitigation are not envisioned in Home Together and are assumed to be supported by the City in Scenario 3. The increased investments detailed below total \$7-8 million annually. The \$15 million annual expenditure in Scenario 3 assumes these investments can be achieved through additional funding and some reallocation of existing spending. It further assumes that the rate of increase in mitigation costs will slow as the number of people living unsheltered decreases. The City should seek state/regional funding and should evaluate internal allocation of resources in order to make funding the following new/enhanced strategies more achievable.

HRP Goals

- **Goal A: Stop the growth of homelessness.** Eliminate the 23% annual growth rate of people experiencing homelessness by reducing the number of people becoming homeless and increasing the number exiting to permanent housing.
- **Goal B: Increase pathways to housing.** Double the proportion of people who are well served by the homeless response system, meaning that they are on pathways to housing, stay homeless less than a year, and do not exit services to unsheltered homelessness.
- **Goal C: Reduce the impact of unsheltered homelessness.** Benefit those with and without permanent homes in Fremont by decreasing the number of people living in unsheltered conditions and the amount of City resources needed to manage encampment crises.

These strategies align with those in the Alameda County Home Together 2026 Plan but have been updated. Strategy #4 (which is not in the Home Together Plan) has been added to account for the specifics of the homeless response in Fremont.

1. Prevent homelessness
2. Increase housing solutions
3. Connect people to shelter and needed resources
4. Mitigate the impact of unsheltered homelessness
5. Strengthen coordination, communication, and capacity

Strategy 1: Prevent Homelessness

Actions and Investments that help to achieve **Goal A: Stop the growth of homelessness.**

- a. Fund 60 homeless prevention slots at a cost of \$825,000 in year one. Double slots by year three to 120 slots and maintain that number in years four and five for an estimated cost of \$1.2 to \$1.5 million over current spending.
- b. Use and update the infrastructure of the City's Keep Fremont Housed program to target services so that they are more likely to prevent homelessness.
 - Cap assistance to 30% of the area median (AMI) .
 - Conduct outreach to households most at risk of becoming unhoused: non-lease holders, disabled, seniors, and those with a history of homelessness.
 - Conduct outreach in neighborhoods with higher levels of rent burdened and overcrowded households.
 - Rapidly resolve episodes of homelessness with housing problem solving and flexible financial assistance.
- c. Use infrastructure of the City's Rent Review Board to strengthen tenant/landlord relations and housing stability.
 - Offer mediation services for landlords and tenants.
 - Consider landlord liaison services and incentives.
 - Ensure landlords understand and are supported to comply with the updated California Renter Protection Act ([AB1482](#)), which takes effect in July 2024. Consider adopting additional local measures to prevent displacement of low-income residents or households at risk of homelessness, like those in nearby cities such as Hayward, Alameda, Berkeley, and San Jose.

Strategy 2: Increase Housing Solutions

These recommendations help achieve **Goal A: Stop the growth of homelessness** and **Goal B: Increase pathways to housing.**

- a. Expand the supply of Rapid Rehousing (RRH) from 35 slots to 70 slots in year 3 and 140 slots by year 5, for an estimated cost of \$1.4 to 1.8 million additional spending annually.
- b. Launch a Shallow Subsidy Program that can serve up to 145 households by year 5 for an estimated additional cost of \$1 million annually.

- c. Support local and state initiatives to increase affordable housing.
 - Streamline development requirements.
 - Add or increase requirements for units dedicated to unhoused individuals.
 - Allow for more density in developments.

Strategy 3: Connect People to Shelter, Housing, and Services

These recommendations help achieve **Goal B: Increase pathways to housing** and **Goal C: Reduce the impact of unsheltered homelessness**.

- a. Expand the City’s Winter Relief Program from 5 months to 12 months for an increased annual cost of \$1.2 million.
- b. Increase the number of people moving from encampments into shelter and housing by expanding intake hours at interim shelters and increasing connections between street outreach teams, Coordinated Entry, and interim housing.
- c. Expand the Housing Flex Fund (HHF) services, like those available at the Wellness and Navigation Centers, to assist people from all programs serving unhoused residents: emergency shelters, interim housing, and street outreach. This approach should support having more system flow and enable moving people out of shelters more quickly so beds turn over three times per year instead of two times, as they do now for an estimated increased annual cost of \$1.8 million by year five.
- d. Increase services to people living in their vehicles including those in RVs, such that they have safe places to stay and pathways to housing. This can include, but not be limited to, expansion of safe parking outlined in the three-pronged strategy proposed to the Fremont City Council several years ago.
 - Continue to use private host sites.
 - Develop a City-owned safe parking site that could be lower barrier, open 24 hours, and include RVs.
 - Allow sanctioned parking of individual vehicles on a case-by-case basis. Any model used should include access to Rapid Rehousing and the Flex Fund described above. City staff will need to design the specifics of these program types based on sites, budget, and other parking regulations under consideration. Targeted services to additional vehicles would likely cost \$500,00-\$700,000 annually depending upon the program structure.

By investing in any of the Strategy 3 recommendations, more shelter and housing will become available and allow the City more flexibility to resolve encampment concerns.

Strategy 4: Mitigate the Impact of Unsheltered Homelessness

This strategy helps **Goal C: Reduce the impact of unsheltered homelessness**.

- a. Pair expanded safe parking options with implementation of parking restrictions.
- b. Expand field staff available for encampment assessment, outreach, and triage response, in alignment with current practices of the City’s Mobile Evaluation Team. Pair

with access to the Flex Funds that can be used creatively from prevention and diversion support services so people can remain in their homes, to transportation services for people to reunite with family or friends, or to temporary hotel vouchers so people can move indoors.

- c. Continue implementation and refinement of the structured, proactive encampment response to reduce health and safety hazards, resolve complaints, and connect people to services.
- d. Continue to adequately support trash removal and hygiene stations to protect sensitive environmental areas around existing encampments.

The objective of mitigation activities is to result in:

- decreased need for emergency service calls to encampments from fire, police, and medical transportation;
- fewer unsheltered people and smaller encampment populations and footprints; and
- decreased impact on infrastructure such as utilities, water, and structures; includes code enforcement cases and debris removal.

Strategy 5: Strengthen Coordination and Capacity of the Homeless Response

This strategy helps achieve all three goals.

- a. Ensure accountability to broader community for the HRP's progress.
 - Establish clear metrics for all three goals, set baselines for year one, and report out annually.
 - Engage community members in successful implementation of the HRP through a subset of existing commission seats.
 - Develop a mechanism to directly engage and receive feedback from those with lived homelessness experience.
- b. Coordinate implementation at all levels.
 - Participate in County's land use task force recommended as part of Alameda County's Emergency Declaration on Homelessness action plan.
 - Enhance information sharing and collaboration between providers facilitated by executing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for non-City funded programs and convening a common table to share challenges and prevent duplication of efforts.
 - Expand connections to school districts and hospitals to better identify and serve families and the medically vulnerable.
- c. Improve partner knowledge of implementation efforts and progress.
 - Enhance data collection and reporting for information not collected in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
 - Improve public access to data, including race, ethnicity, other demographics, unmet need, and program outcomes.

- d. Increase the system's capacity with new resources.
 - Consider adopting a local revenue stream dedicated to addressing homelessness.
 - Enhance City staff's ability to identify and quickly respond to opportunities to obtain more direct state and federal resources, such as the following.
 - Develop and maintain an inventory of potential sites for interim or permanent housing programs.
 - Track and pursue all available revenue streams from county, state, and federal sources.

Sources

As noted in the Introduction, EdeColigny Consulting referenced multiple sources of primary data, provided by the City, including but not limited to:

- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data
- Other demographic and performance data
- Housing and services inventories, current and under development
- City contracts and spending dedicated to addressing homelessness
- Staff reports to the Fremont City Council
- Annual reports from Fremont providers

Published Sources

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Glossary

Alameda County Office of Homeless Care and Coordination: This office coordinates the County's homeless response across departments and between the County and the fourteen cities within Alameda County including Fremont. A large portion of state and federal funds to address homelessness are managed by the County.

Continuum of Care (CoC): A regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals.

Coordinated Entry System: Alameda County's Coordinated Entry System is used to connect residents experiencing homelessness to resources in the County's homeless response system.

Encampment Cleanup: The removal of debris and waste created by people living outdoors on public or private property and the reclamation of the site.

First time homelessness (or new homelessness): A person or household who has lost housing and become homeless for the first time.

Functional Zero: A state where any person starting a new homeless episode has immediate access to shelter and a permanent housing intervention. This acknowledges that homelessness will never fully disappear from a community. Instead, it aspires to making it rare, brief and, when it happens to someone, they do not experience it again.

Homeless: People who are residing in emergency shelter, transitional housing, on the street, or in another place not meant for human habitation.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): A local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness.

HUD: The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is a federal agency that provides much of the resources dedicated to solving homelessness. They set and monitor the federal requirements communities must meet in order to access those resources, including the requirement to have Homeless Continuum's of Care, Coordinated Entry, and HMIS.

Mitigation: Alleviating and/or reducing the health and safety impacts on people living in encampments and those who live or work in surrounding areas. Can include code enforcement and legal intervention.

Pathway to Housing: The set of programs and resources expected to be used by a household experiencing homelessness in order to be temporarily sheltered and to become permanently housed.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count: An unduplicated one-night estimate of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations (to be distinguished from the number of people experiencing homelessness annually).

Sheltered homelessness: A person experiencing homelessness who is living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide a temporary living arrangement.

Unsheltered homelessness: A person with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or campground.

Appendix A: Community Engagement

From October 2023 through January 2024, consultants sought input from a wide range of interested parties using multiple outreach methods including the following:

- Launch meeting with City staff from all City departments engaged in homeless response, including Police, Fire, Public Works, Economic Development, Community Services, Community Development, City Attorney, Human Services, and City Manager’s Office
- Two in-person meetings open to the public to present initial data findings and hear recommendations and concerns; attended by 55 people
- Fifteen individual interviews with the Mayor, Vice-Mayor, Council members, key homeless service providers, leaders from Kaiser and Washington hospitals, community advocates, and the school district
- Five focus groups: two with people currently unhoused in Fremont, two with business owners, and one with housing providers
- A widely advertised online community survey that had 639 responses from the community including people with lived experience of homelessness, renters, businesses, and homeowners
- Eight presentations to City boards/commissions and advisory groups:
 - Senior Citizen Commission
 - Police Chief’s Youth Advisory Board
 - Recreation Commission
 - Planning Commission
 - Economic Development Advisory Commission
 - Human Relations Commission
 - Citizen Advisory Committee
 - Family Resource Center Leadership Board
- Individuals and groups also submitted recommendations via email

The EdeColigny Consulting team is very grateful for the thoughtful, passionate, and candid input received from all these sources. The hope is for participants to see their aspirations, insights, and concerns reflected in these recommendations.

Draft recommendations were presented in two community webinars on February 29, 2024 and March 2, 2024. The sessions were open to the public and approximately 40 people participated.

Appendix B: Homeless Response System Components Detail

The City of Fremont’s current response is detailed below and organized according to the four components of a homeless response system:

1. **Prevention resources** to keep at-risk households from becoming unhoused
2. **Pathways to housing**, with permanent housing and other interventions that resolve homelessness
3. **Crisis support services** for individuals experiencing homelessness such as outreach, shelter, and supportive services
4. **Mitigation activities** to minimize the impact of homelessness on the larger community

The descriptions include the role of each in the system, the current need, performance results, and costs when Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and budget data is available. Cost estimates for each intervention were developed using Home Together 2026 Plan numbers, City of Fremont budget numbers, cost estimates publicly available from other communities and programs, and estimates from local providers. They are meant to provide an approximate range, as there is a lot of diversity across providers and models and such costs typically increase over time.

1. Prevention Resources

Homelessness prevention is targeted financial assistance and housing problem solving support for households at greatest risk of becoming homeless.¹³ The City of Fremont’s 2024-25 budget calls for spending \$443,294 on prevention. This represents the last of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funds provided by the federal government to prevent evictions during the COVID-10 pandemic. All financial assistance funds have been distributed. This amount is for services and administration only. It will not assist additional households. ERAP funds were not spent exclusively on people at greatest risk of experiencing homelessness.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** This is unknown because the program served a broader population.
- **Current Need:** An estimated 200-300 households enter homelessness each year in Fremont.
- **Current Cost:** The estimated cost of homelessness prevention support is \$12,500 per household served.

¹³ At risk of homelessness means that the person/household will lose their primary nighttime residence within 14 days and has not identified a subsequent residence nor has the resources needed to obtain other housing on their own. Some known risk factors include fixed income below 15% of the area median; being a non-lease holder, couch surfing, staying with family or friends; being senior and/or disabled; and prior experience of homelessness.

2. Pathways to Housing

Ensuring unhoused individuals return to a permanent home is a primary goal of any homeless response system. Unfortunately, only 8% of the 2,050 people, or approximately 200 people, who were unhoused in Fremont during the 2022-23 program year resolved their homelessness. Interventions that assist people to obtain stable housing vary in approach and cost and depend on the needs of a household.

Rapid Exit Flex Funds

Both the Fremont Wellness Center and the Housing Navigation Center have housing flex funds that fund one-time or short-term assistance to help unhoused people exit homelessness quickly. Flex funds can be used on items like move-in assistance (first month's rent or security deposit), clearing rent or utility arrears, moving costs, or other barriers to housing like parking tickets or auto repairs.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** 100 households have been assisted.
- **Current Need:** It is estimated that 10-25% of Fremont's homeless population (200-450 households per year) could resolve their homelessness with one-time assistance, leaving a gap of 100-350 households per year.¹⁴
- **Current Cost:** The cost of one-time assistance varies widely, but current programs report an average cost of \$900 and a range of \$10 to \$6,000.

Rapid Rehousing

Rapid rehousing (RRH) is a form of permanent housing that provides 6-24 months of rental assistance and supportive services focused intently on increasing income and self-sufficiency. Households initially pay a small portion of their income toward rent but over the course of their time in the program, they gradually assume a greater portion of it. When they "graduate," rental subsidies and services phase out, and they hold their own lease to an apartment. Unlike permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing assumes regular program turnover, as households graduate off the assistance. It is generally not appropriate for people with the highest needs, as households must be able to increase their income during the time in the program. Fremont's two RRH programs can assist 36 households at a time. 100% of households exited with at least one form of income, and most (71%) households exit successfully into permanent housing.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** 36 RRH slots assisted 55 people last program year, for an average of roughly nine months.
- **Current Need:** Using the first year of the [Home Together 2026 Plan](#) inventory estimates, Fremont needed 108 RRH slots to meet the need for this intervention.
- **Current Cost:** The approximate cost of rapid rehousing is \$28,000 to \$35,000 per household per year.

¹⁴ This estimate is taken from a system modeling conducted by EveryOne Home prior to the modeling completed in the County's 2026 plan. The County's 2026 plan does not provide this estimate, so it was taken from the earlier version.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is affordable housing that comes with a range of supportive services. It is designed for people with the highest level of need, who are likely to require some level of services for the rest of their lives. Fremont had 169 units of PSH in four different HMIS projects during the 2022-23 program year. Since then, two developments have been completed, adding 60 units to the inventory. PSH is tremendously successful. Ninety-six percent (96%) of the people enrolled in permanent supportive housing reach the 12-month benchmark of housing stability, and the average length of stay is 7.5 years. PSH provides an excellent model for supporting people with complex needs and has a long track record of success. Unfortunately, the supply is very limited, with just seven units turning over in a typical year.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** 169 units assisted 211 people. Only 10 of those units turned over.
- **Current Need:** Using the first year of the Home Together 2026 Plan inventory estimates, Fremont needed 61 PSH units to open and 36 more for frail seniors. The addition of two affordable housing projects, Doug Ford Senior Apartments (45 units) and Granite Ridge Apartments (15 units), meets a substantial portion of the year-one need. There are 68 units in the pipeline.
- **Current Cost:** PSH is a resource-enriched and expensive model, costing \$35,000 to \$40,000 per year.

Shallow Subsidies

Shallow subsidies provide fixed levels of rental assistance for individuals and families that need longer term but more limited support than PSH or another permanent subsidy. This program model was introduced in the Home Together 2026 Plan and is being implemented on a small scale in several cities around the Bay Area, including Oakland and Berkeley. Like prevention, shallow subsidies can be a cost-effective intervention to reduce and prevent homelessness.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** This resource is not currently available in Fremont.
- **Current Need:** Using the first year of the Home Together 2026 Plan inventory estimates, Fremont needed 59 shallow subsidy slots to meet the need for this intervention.
- **Current Cost:** The Home Together 2026 Plan budgets shallow subsidies at up to \$10,000/year for single adults and \$15,300 for families with minor children.

3. Crisis Supports for People Experiencing Homelessness

Interim Housing/Emergency Shelter

Interim housing includes all programs providing time-limited housing assistance, often paired with supportive services and other resources for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The aims of interim housing are typically to provide a safe

place to stay to alleviate the immediate crisis of homelessness and to support residents to move on to permanent housing. Fremont has three year-round interim housing programs offering 129 beds, including 18 for those fleeing domestic violence and human trafficking, plus the City's 60-bed Winter Relief Program. The average length of stay in emergency shelter in 2022-23 was 189 days (just over 6 months) and has increased over time, meaning Fremont's shelters serve fewer people as the "flow" slows down. Forty-six percent (46%) of the people served by Fremont shelters in HMIS exited into permanent housing. Twenty-nine percent (29%) exited to unsheltered homelessness.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** A total of 336 people were sheltered, 240 people documented in HMIS, another 126 served by SAVE, but not recorded in HMIS to protect domestic violence survivors' confidentiality.
- **Current Need:** Assuming the objective of no unsheltered homelessness, the need in 2022-23 would have been 1,025 beds to serve 2,050 people. Only 18% of the need was met.
- **Current Cost:** The approximate cost of emergency shelter is \$24,000 to \$31,000 per bed per year. If people stay an average of six months in shelter, the per person cost would average \$12,000 to \$15,500.

Safe Parking

Safe parking provides a sanctioned place where people can live in their cars without risk of incurring other losses or penalties. It also makes it easier for people to be connected to other essential resources, including housing, as it provides a "home base." By offering basic services like bathrooms, handwashing stations, trash bins, and security, it can reduce some of the hardships associated with living in a vehicle. Such programs can reduce the impact of unauthorized parking elsewhere in the city. There is one Safe Parking program in Fremont which offers roughly 15 parking spots.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** 15 parking slots assisted 36 people.
- **Current Need:** There are 573 people in Fremont living in vehicles. Without more shelter or permanent housing capacity, the City would need to add up to 280 additional sanctioned parking spaces to have no unmet need. The need for safe parking has an inverse relationship to shelter capacity. If the latter increases, the need for safe parking goes down.
- **Current Costs:** Depending upon the services offered, the approximate cost of safe parking is \$15,000 to \$16,000 per car/spot per year or \$5,000 per person served.

Street Outreach Services

Street outreach offers essential non-housing support to unsheltered households who are largely disconnected from care. Outreach focuses on building trust, connecting people to the resources/supplies required to address their immediate needs and mitigate crises, while also helping people access shelter and housing. There is even less "flow" from street

outreach into shelter than there is from shelter to housing. Only 15 or 4.5% of those served by street outreach exited unsheltered homelessness¹⁵.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** 329 people were assisted per HMIS.
- **Current Need:** Of the estimated 1,730 people spending a portion of the year unsheltered in Fremont, 1,300 were not served by outreach. For street outreach, the need is better defined by the gap in resources outreach staff has to offer those staying outdoors and in vehicles. If staff could more quickly connect people to shelter and housing resources, each staff person could serve more people more effectively for less time. Unsheltered homelessness will decrease as prevention, housing, and shelter capacity increase.
- **Current Cost:** The City spent \$393,000 on street outreach through its Mobile Evaluation Teams¹⁶.

Other Supportive Services

This category includes meal programs, shower and laundry services, and drop-in programs. In a system like Fremont's, with very few opportunities to exit homelessness or even move indoors, these services can help ensure survival, but without permanent housing options, they do little to solve homelessness. Only one "support services only" (SSO) program entered data into HMIS. The South County Wellness Center provides meals, drop-in services, laundry, showers, and case management in addition to the flex funds described above. Other programs funded by the City did not use HMIS. The Department of Human Services also provides case management services that assist unhoused people, including helping them to find housing, but they are not exclusive to homeless people and did not enter data into HMIS at the time of this analysis.

- **Assisted in 2022-23:** 359 people were assisted per HMIS, with only 2 recorded exits.
- **Current Need:** HMIS data records that 18% of the 2,050 people experiencing homelessness in Fremont were assisted by services only. Even assuming another 360 were assisted by services outside of HMIS, that still leaves hundreds of people untouched by even basic survival support while homeless.
- **Current Cost:** The City spent \$1.3 million on other supportive services.

4. Mitigation Activities

The category of mitigation activities includes actions taken by the Fire and Police Departments, including the Mobile Evaluation Team (MET), abatement services, and responses to the City's Customer Relationship Management tool, Fremont App, for encampment related service requests. The City spent \$1.9 million on mitigation response in FY 2022-23. These services included abating 409 metric tons of debris, dispatching the

¹⁵ These outcomes are for street outreach programs that enter data into HMIS; they are not funded by the City of Fremont.

¹⁶ No housing or shelter exit data for City funded outreach services were available for this analysis.

Fire Department 958 times, the MET 295 times, and addressing 194 service requests by Fremont residents related to encampments and the unhoused. City staff monitors 200 encampment sites and conducts regular mitigation activities. In 2022, staff implemented a tool at high impact sites to help quantify site conditions. In the last year, the number of Fremont App service requests has decreased, as illustrated in the table below. While there could be numerous factors leading to that decrease, it is hoped that the proactive approach and site condition index tool are beginning to demonstrate a reduced impact of encampments on City costs and services.

City of Fremont Encampment Related Service Requests through Fremont App

	ALL YEARS		6/4/21 - 6/30/22		7/1/22-6/27/23		
	Number	% of Requests	Number	% of Requests	Number	% of Requests	% Change FY21 to FY22
Total	543	100	349	100.0%	194	100.0%	-44.0%