



September 6, 2022

The Honorable Victoria Wood  
Superior Court of Napa County  
825 Brown Street  
Napa, CA 94559

**Subject: City of Napa Response to the Napa County Grand Jury Report entitled  
"Homelessness in Napa" dated June 14, 2022.**

Dear Judge Wood,

The City of Napa has received and carefully reviewed the Napa County Grand Jury Report entitled "Homelessness in Napa" dated June 14, 2022. While the City Manager and Deputy City Manager were listed as "Invited Responses" in the report, the City Council has a legal responsibility to respond to those findings and recommendations that fall under their legal jurisdiction. Pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, this letter documents the City's response to those findings and recommendations in the Grand Jury Report (hereinafter "City Response") that pertain to the City of Napa. The City Response includes responses to Grand Jury findings F1, F2, F4, F7, and F8; and recommendations R1, R2, R4, and R8. The City Response was prepared by City staff and presented to the City Council for their consideration. At the public meeting on September 6, 2022, the City Council approved this City Response and directed the City Manager to submit this respond on behalf of the City Council and city staff.

## **FINDINGS**

**Grand Jury Report Finding 1-** *There are several City and County officials providing leadership toward the goal of reducing homelessness, but a lack of unified integration of the various stakeholders.*

City Response- The City of Napa partially disagrees with this finding.

The City of Napa agrees that there are many County and City officials providing positive leadership toward the goal of reducing homelessness and disagrees there is a lack of unified integration among key stakeholders in the community.

The Continuum of Care (CoC) is the local planning process and entity used by communities to apply for funding from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and many State funding entities. The CoC process was developed by HUD in 1994 to coordinate the distribution of competitive and non-competitive Federal funding for programs assisting individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Prior to the CoC process, organizations

within a single community applied individually for funding from an array of funding programs at the Federal level. As a result, there was little coordination between programs, or applicant organizations receiving funding in the same community. The CoC process was established to ensure coordination within communities and between programs. In 2009, President Obama signed the HEARTH Act (Public Law 111-22), providing Congressional authorization of the CoC process and regulations governing the CoC program were published in the summer of 2012.

The CoC Program is designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and State and local governments to quickly rehouse individuals and families experiencing homelessness while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to those individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The geography covered by a CoC can vary, depending on population size and proximity. The local CoC, Napa City & County Continuum of Care 517, includes all jurisdictions and territories within the geographic boundary of Napa County.

The CoC planning process is organized by a delegate Administrative Entity, typically either a local government agency or a community-based non-profit. For the Napa City-County CoC, Napa County Housing & Homeless Services is the designated Administrative Entity. The goal of the CoC process is to create and continually refine a 10-year plan to end homelessness. The process involves regular collection and reporting of information about homelessness in the community, including bi-annual Point-In-Time (PIT) counts, and information about resources to assist individuals and families experiencing or at-risk-of experiencing homelessness. This information is used to develop a list of priorities for funding, which help determine how much funding a community will receive and for what projects.

The Napa CoC initiated an in-depth planning process from January to June 2022 to update the existing ten-year plan. This planning process was led by a 14-member Steering Committee made up of individuals from a diverse group of organizations representing and serving individuals experiencing homelessness. The resulting 2022 Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness was formally adopted in June 2022. This plan provides the homeless system of care and the greater Napa community with a shared context of how people are experiencing homelessness, details strengths and gaps in the existing system of care and recommends goals and strategies to improve programs at all levels of system response. It is meant to address the needs of the entire County (including all jurisdictions within the County) and reflects input from a vast array of sectors and responders across the community, including direct service providers, public sector staff, business leaders and individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

In addition to the coordinated, integrated, and unified work of the CoC partners, staff at both the County and City of Napa work closely and collaboratively on both day-to-day operations and long-term planning issues. The City and County have had a Cooperative Joint-Powers-Agreement in place since 2017. This agreement clearly defines each entity's role and responsibility in the funding and provision of services to reduce homelessness, including Outreach, Emergency Shelter, and Housing Programs.

Within the City of Napa, there is a bi-monthly work group with representatives from the Napa Police Department, Napa Fire Department, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Community Development, and the City Manager's Office. This work group communicates regularly on homeless related needs and issues that directly impact the City of Napa and its community members.

**Grand Jury Report Finding 2-** *There is a lack of case management to ensure that all homeless persons are directed to the proper social services and health care.*

City Response- The City of Napa agrees with this finding.

The current system does not have the capacity to provide comprehensive case management services to ensure every person experiencing homelessness is connected to proper social services and health care, however this is not unique to this community. The City of Napa is engaged with the County of Napa in the implementation of California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) which seeks to address this finding by providing whole person case management to clients on Medi-Cal. It is the City's understanding that CalAIM will make sustained investments and commitments to provide Enhanced Care Management (ECM) through in-person engagement where beneficiaries live, seek care and access services to connect them to available social and medical support services. The City will engage in planning processes to provide case management for clients that may not be eligible for CalAIM.

**Grand Jury Report Finding 4-** *The current data collection systems used do not provide sufficient analytical data for examining the use of social services. Current data are not being used by administrative support staff to analyze trends specific to demographic groups and to develop enhanced utilization of local services.*

City Response- The City of Napa agrees with this finding.

The City of Napa, like all agencies that provide homeless services in the Continuum of Care, enters data and encounters into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS is limited to the activities of the homeless services system. There are other social services and healthcare systems that have separate and distinct privacy regulations, and therefore, the homeless services providers cannot link or access the data.

**Grand Jury Report Finding 7-** *There is available land which could be used for the development of housing for homeless. Several interviewees stated that suitable land may be available on the Napa State Hospital property, the Veterans Home in Yountville, church properties, and closed school sites (e.g., Harvest Middle School, Yountville Elementary and Stonebridge/Carneros.<sup>19</sup>) Unfortunately, there is not evidence of progress towards finalizing such new locations.*

<sup>19</sup> To attempt to address the shortage of available property for the development of emergency shelters and affordable housing, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive order N6-10 directing the Department of General Services (DGS) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to identify and prioritize excess state-owned property and aggressively pursue sustainable, innovative, cost-effective housing projects. The Napa County sites identified were lower Skyline Wilderness Park; Caltrans properties near Imola Avenue, Redwood Road, and Stanley Lane; Highway 29 at Green Island Road in American Canyon; and along Highway 29 near Yountville. Napa State Hospital has also been considered as possible land for affordable housing development. County housing officials have approached Napa State Hospital administrators to discuss land usage but have been informed that the hospital is currently developing a Master Plan for future hospital land usage including the consideration of workforce housing for their own employees who have to commute long distances. Other sites mentioned as

*possibilities for housing projects are the Yountville Veterans Home, closed school sites, churches, and the Jail Reentry facility.*

City Response- The City of Napa respectfully disagrees with this finding.

The City agrees there is land in the City's boundaries that might be suitable for siting housing for homeless people. However, the actual suitability and availability of that land is a matter that requires additional analysis and negotiations to determine actual feasibility. The City of Napa is actively engaged in discussions with local, State and Federal agency counterparts and private property owners on available land that is located within the city's boundaries. The City of Napa also understands that the County of Napa is actively engaged in similar discussions.

**Grand Jury Report Finding 8-** *Some potential affordable or temporary housing projects have not been approved due to community resistance or NIMBYism. Both the Heritage House and Valle Verde housing projects initially met with community resistance.*

City Response- The City of Napa respectfully disagrees with this finding.

Community input and discussion is always welcome in City processes and at public meetings under the City's jurisdiction. While projects like Heritage House and Valle Verde were met with neighborhood concerns, the project also received significant community support. The project was ultimately approved with a commitment to the neighbors to create open dialogue and discuss any issues that may arise as part of the project. In the last year, the County and City of Napa have invested in two additional permanent supportive housing projects under Project Homekey (an 8-unit, 14-bed project known as "Adrian Court", and a 54-unit, 54-bed project known as "Valley Lodge Apartments"), neither of which received public opposition.

## **Recommendations**

**Grand Jury Report Recommendation 1:** *A leadership council should be formed by those government officials and stakeholders who control the most resources directed to the goal of supportive housing.*

City Response- The recommendation has been implemented.

There is a HUD mandate establishing the CoC as the local leadership council controlling the distribution of Federal and many State resources for programs assisting individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The City is a member of the local CoC and values the vital role a single community planning entity plays in establishing and ensuring coordination between programs, applications, and uses of funding to address homelessness in the Napa community and further respects the work of the steering committee of homeless system leaders who led the considerable planning process to develop the 2022 Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness and the five goals it established:

1. **Expand access to permanent housing**, including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and other housing opportunities, for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
2. **Prevent households from becoming homeless** for the first time, and rapidly

rehouse newly homeless households.

3. **Expand access to and quality of services** for people experiencing homelessness in Napa County.
4. **Build upon cross-system partnerships and collaborations** to target and serve all people experiencing homelessness in Napa County.
5. **Ensure that Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging are core considerations** in program development and that all members of the community have equal access to care.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 2:** *The Continuum of Care should compile an inventory of services available to homeless persons to better inform clients and promote increased collaboration and effective delivery of services by providers.*

City Response- This recommendation has been implemented.

The recommended inventory of services is developed and has been available since 2021, both online and in hard copy. This information is available online at [www.homelessnapa.com](http://www.homelessnapa.com) as well as via a trifold, full-color pamphlet printed and distributed to service providers and community resource providers (such as schools and libraries).

**Grand Jury Recommendation 4:** *Homeless Management Information System data should be more easily accessible to all HMIS users from different City and County departments (while maintaining privacy requirements) to improve the efficiency and quality of service delivery.*

City Response- The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

Napa County staff serves as the HMIS Administrator and staff has identified expanded analysis and data-visualization to better track performance measures and outcomes as well as increase service partner and community member understanding of homeless system data as a top priority for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. It is the City's understanding that to accomplish this goal, Napa County will expand a technical service contract with the existing Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) provider this year. Expanded services will include enhanced system administration, direct user support for all HMIS community partners, training and professional development for system users and services and support for retrieving and analyzing HMIS and Coordinated Entry System (CES) data.

Data is key to the Napa Continuum of Care's ability to make decisions and design homeless-response systems that advance meaningful change. It is crucial to establish a culture that values it, and an administrative infrastructure that delivers it from quality data entry through analysis and design and presentation of insightful reports. The technical skills and in-depth system and specialized knowledge necessary to support this culture and capacity are unique to the system and therefore difficult to hire and/or develop internally. Securing this technical assistance by contract is a top priority for Napa County staff this year. The City of Napa will be available to play a supporting role and participate in work groups and data reviews to ensure

that this objective can be met.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 8-** *City Managers and the County Executive Officer should disseminate more data and information about homelessness to educate Napa residents about the causes and extent of homelessness in Napa and its effects upon persons living on the street. An example would be developing respective government websites to include an information dashboard on homelessness and homelessness prevention.*

City Response- The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

The City of Napa agrees with the recommendation to expand and improve communication strategies to educate Napa residents about the causes and extent of homelessness in Napa. The CoC has an existing website ([www.homelessnapa.com](http://www.homelessnapa.com)) with information including point-in-time (PIT) count data and social and shelter service provider information. This site can and should be enhanced to include more in-depth data sets, human-centered context surrounding that data, and dashboards tracking performance measures and outcomes as well as the detailed information, recommendations and goals included in the 2022 Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness.

The City of Napa thanks the Grand Jury for its service during the 2020-2022 term.

Respectfully submitted,



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Steve Potter  
City Manager

cc: Michael Stone, Foreperson, 2021-2022 Napa County Grand Jury (Napa County Grand Jury, 1754 Second St., Suite D, Napa, CA 94559)  
Michael Barrett, City Attorney  
Molly Rattigan, Deputy City Manager