



## **WORKING GROUP: THE CAMPAIGN**

### **INITIATIVES: INFORMATION & AWARENESS, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Launch a regional public education campaign on ending homelessness and solving the affordable housing crisis, based on successful practices in other areas, to educate community leaders and the public and encourage support for solutions.

#### **The Situation**

On any given night 7,600 individuals are homeless in Santa Clara County. Women and their children comprise 25% of the newly homeless. Yet, as measured by public opinion poll research along with corporate and private investment, the plight of the homeless fails to capture a high priority rating in our county. Organizations that support the needs of homeless have made news headlines about the financial stress of maintaining their shelter programs. The issue remains buried under the weight of other, higher profile, community issues. The lack of affordable housing, however, ranks consistently among the top 4 community quality of life issues in most public opinion polls. Yet solutions continue to seem out of reach.

#### **Progress To Date**

The 10-year Plans to End Chronic Homelessness have been created and approved by the County of Santa Clara and City of San Jose. Both organizations have been working diligently to implement key components but with little public fanfare. Project Homeless Connect has become the major media event to create visibility to the general public on the issues of homelessness.

A 20-year plan to solve the affordable housing crisis in Silicon Valley has recently been published.



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#### **Proposed Strategies**

1. Create a vision for what our community will be when the issues of homelessness and affordable housing are solved.
2. Conduct an information and awareness campaign that sensitizes the community to both the social issues and the solution. This would include necessary public policy work.
3. Develop a civic engagement effort that builds champions for ending homelessness and creating affordable housing in all key community stakeholder groups.
4. Create tools and pathways that will connect those with the capacity to support and engage with organizations that offer solutions.

#### **Desired Outcomes**

1. Issues of homelessness and affordable housing become “Top of Mind” to policy makers, business leaders, and the general public.
2. The community is catalyzed to action around solutions.