

COMPASSION & ACTION: RESPONDING TO OUR COMMUNITY



2020–2021 IMPACT REPORT
San José Housing Department

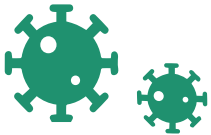
STRENGTHENING AND REVITALIZING OUR COMMUNITY



83 employees committed to strengthening our community



10 teams focused on vital housing initiatives



Over 80% of staff directly involved in City's COVID-19 Response



\$82 million operating budget to support Housing initiatives

OUR MISSION

The Housing Department's mission is to strengthen and revitalize our community through housing and neighborhood investment.

Since the Housing Department was established in 1987, the City has been a leader in affordable housing, creating more than 21,000 new housing opportunities for San José residents.

A major function of the Housing Department is its work as a funder. The Department uses numerous financing vehicles to bring new affordable housing to fruition and rehabilitate older affordable housing.

The Department also funds grants for nonprofits to develop and provide social services, homeless response programs, and community infrastructure. Additional grants support Fair Housing policies, place-based neighborhood efforts, and meal programs for low-income seniors.

The Department oversees a range of other critical programs and initiatives, including rent control and stabilization programs for apartments and mobilehomes, and the City's Ellis Act Ordinance that protects the City's supply of affordable rental housing.

And, working in partnership with other City departments and agencies, the Housing Department works to ensure the City has a variety of housing options in every neighborhood

OUR STAFF 2020–2021

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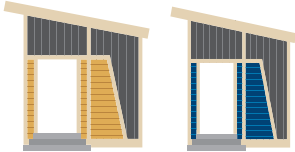
Administration

Mark Gerhardt*
Rajvir Dosanjh
Kathleen Geier
Hsin-Ping Lee
Clayton Poon
Garrett Stanton
Yen Tiet
Ann Tu

**Team Manager*



Placed over **2,900** individuals in permanent housing



Added **four** interim housing communities for formerly homeless individuals and families



Placed over **1,300** medically vulnerable individuals in non-congregate shelters



Opened more than **200** new affordable apartments



Extended rent limits on **670** apartments by another 55 years

Great challenges present great opportunities. I could not be more proud of the way the City of San José Housing Department responded to the pandemic over the past year. Our tremendous staff turned one of the most difficult years any of us have experienced into one of the most productive and impactful years in the three-decade history of this Department.

I cannot recall a year in which we accomplished more for the people of San José than we accomplished in FY 2020-21, providing shelter and housing for thousands of vulnerable residents, protecting thousands more from falling into homelessness, and continuing to make progress on strategic initiatives that strengthen our neighborhoods, expand accessibility and equity in our housing policies, and make San José more inclusive.

Highlights

- In collaboration with our partners, we placed over 2,900 individuals in permanent housing, giving hundreds of children safe, stable homes where they can do homework, play with friends, and just be kids.
- We added four interim housing communities for formerly homeless individuals and families, allowing over 300 people to get off the streets and out of crisis mode so they can move toward self-sufficiency.
- Our team placed over 1,300 medically vulnerable individuals in non-congregate shelters. These are people who were at heightened risk of hospitalization and even death had they been exposed to COVID-19.
- We opened more than 200 new affordable apartments at three locations, providing stable, dignified housing for low-income tenants.
- Our team worked with multifamily property owners to extend rent limits on 670 apartments by another 55 years, ensuring we didn't lose affordable housing and displace vulnerable residents.
- We established an Eviction Prevention Help Center and we worked with the County to implement a Housing Mediation Program to keep people who were impacted by the pandemic from being forced from their homes.



- We operated four emergency shelters to help thousands of homeless residents shelter in place safely while they sought permanent housing during the pandemic.
- Our team implemented an eviction moratorium as well as a moratorium on rent increases to help thousands of City residents remain housed.

In addition to this impressive list of accomplishments, most of which reflect our very aggressive response to COVID-19, we continued to make substantial progress on long-term strategic initiatives. This included rolling out the Citywide Residential Anti-displacement Strategy and collaborating with a constellation of partners to introduce a new Community Plan to End Homelessness.

While FY 2020-21 had too many heartbreaking moments, and it was undeniably a mentally fatiguing year, I look back on those 12 months with gratitude and humility as I reflect on everything the Housing Department staff was able to accomplish. I know the team will continue to do amazing work on behalf of this City and its residents as the calendar turns to 2022 and we contemplate a post-pandemic world.

“Our tremendous staff turned one of the most difficult years any of us have experienced into one of the most productive and impactful years in the three-decade history of this Department.”

Jacky Morales-Ferrand
Director of Housing



Established an Eviction Prevention Help Center



Operated four emergency shelters



Implemented an eviction moratorium as well as a moratorium on rent increases

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION



Committed over \$67 million in new funding for affordable housing



Funded construction of 218 affordable housing units that opened in FY 2020-2021



Refinanced 670 existing units to keep them affordable

The Housing Department's core mission is to fund and facilitate the construction of affordable housing by private developers. This work took on greater urgency during the COVID-19 pandemic when many San José residents found themselves at risk of homelessness due to their inability to pay the high rents that are common in our City.

Financing affordable housing is a complex process in a region where land acquisition and construction are extremely expensive. The Housing Department uses a combination of low-interest loans, grants and tax credits to help developers fund the construction of much-needed housing for the City's most vulnerable individuals and families.

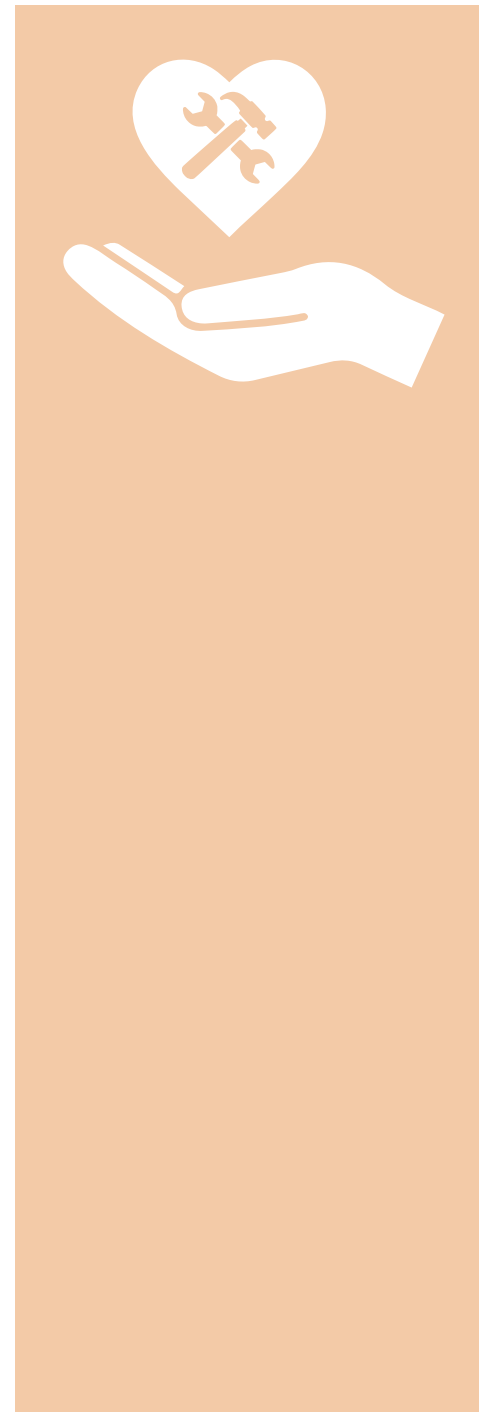
Affordable housing in San José has strict limits on the income tenants may earn and the rents property owners may charge.

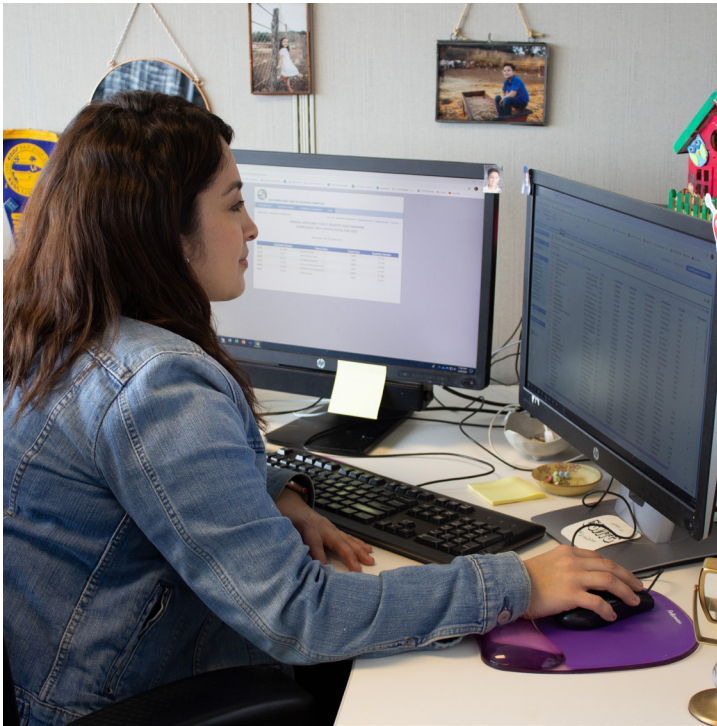
In FY 2020-2021, the Housing Department committed over \$67 million in new funding for the construction of affordable housing. The Department's total portfolio of outstanding loans for the construction of affordable housing now stands at more than \$667 million.

Funding provided by the Housing Department helped developers open 218 new affordable housing units at three locations in FY 2020-2021—Leigh Avenue Senior Apartments, Quetzal Gardens and Villas on the Park.

During that same time, the Housing Department helped developers refinance 670 existing units to keep them affordable for at least another 55 years.

The total number of affordable housing units in the City is 19,719. The community impact of this housing is immense—over 60,000 low-income residents live in these rent-stabilized apartments, protecting them from displacement in one of the world's most expensive cities.





RENT STABILIZATION PROGRAM



 **80%**

Evictions during the past year were down over 80% from the previous year



Handled more than 7,000 inquiries from property owners and tenants



38,492 mailers sent to property owners and/or tenants



88% of property owners registered their rent-stabilized apartments in the Rent Registry



1,000 inquiries received for legal services

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rent Stabilization Program (RSP) shifted its priorities to focus on housing stability for thousands of San José residents facing hardships due to the pandemic.

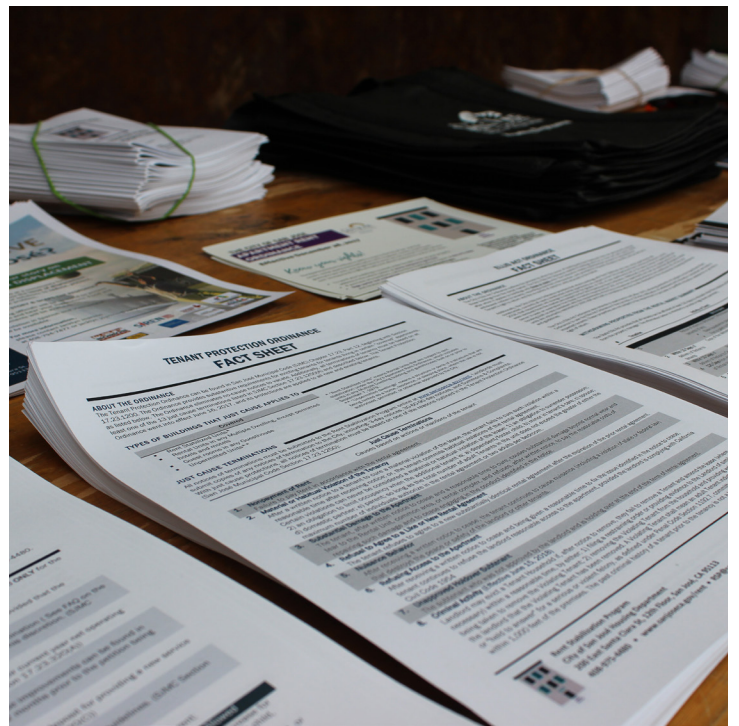
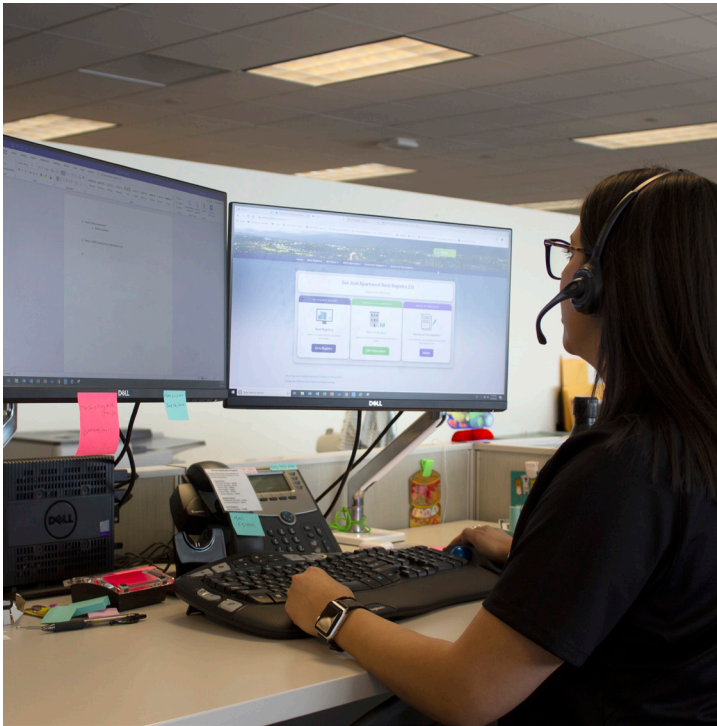
The RSP team's work focused on implementing an eviction moratorium and a moratorium on rent increases to protect vulnerable tenants.

The RSP team's impact was direct and dramatic. Evictions during the past year were down over 80% from the previous year. This reduction was particularly beneficial to rent-burdened, low-income households who were the tenants most likely to find themselves on the street without a helping hand.

The success of the Rent Registry was another important accomplishment, with property owners for 33,770 out of 38,421 rent-stabilized apartments providing the City with required information about their rental units. The Rent Registry helps automate and enhance enforcement of limits on rent increases, protecting over 100,000 residents from the risk of excessive rents during a year in which many people either lost their jobs or saw their hours reduced.

This work was done while the RSP team continued to carry out its responsibilities to oversee the City's ordinances that govern rental housing. During the past year, the RSP team handled more than 7,000 inquiries from property owners and tenants, and more 1,000 inquiries that came into its legal services hotline.

To learn more about the Rent Stabilization Program, go to sanjoseca.gov/rent.



HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE TEAM



Sheltered **8,535** households between April 2020 and September 2021



Opened four interim housing communities for more than **300** individuals and families



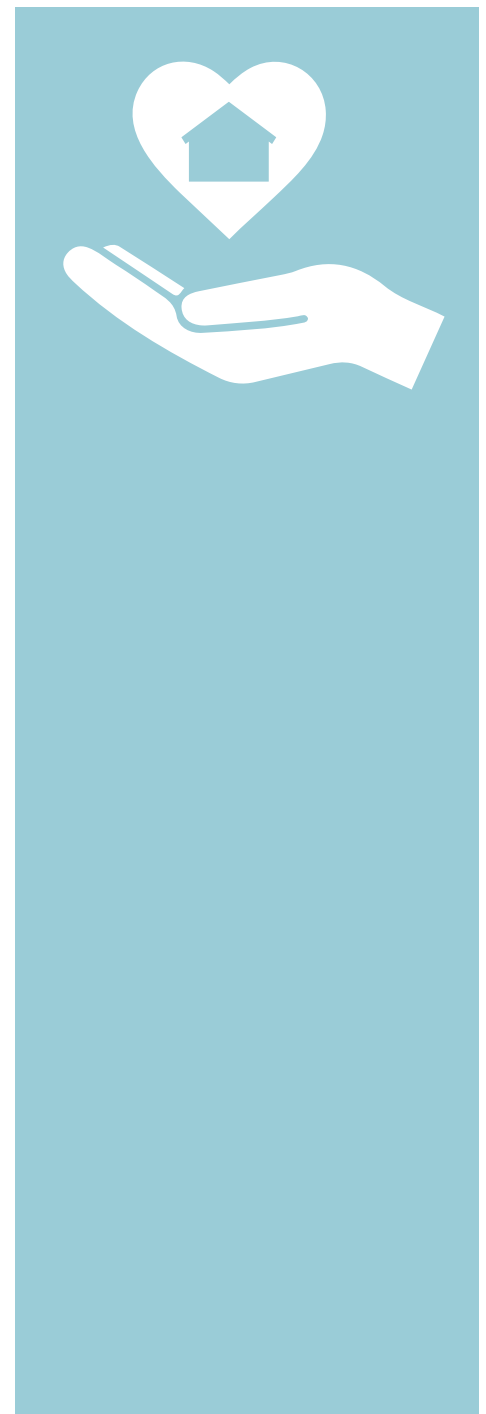
Distributed over **\$36 million** to help **15,000** households avoid homelessness

Many policymakers and San José residents consider homelessness an existential threat to the region's future. Over 6,000 people are homeless in San José, with thousands of people sleeping outdoors on any given night. The City, in collaboration with the Office of Supportive Housing, Destination: Home, and a network of nonprofit partners, is committed to addressing the homelessness crisis. This work involves increasing both short-term shelter capacity and permanent affordable housing, and expanding access to supportive services that help at-risk individuals avoid falling into homelessness.

In FY 2020–2021, the Housing Department sheltered 1,365 medically vulnerable homeless individuals in four non-congregate shelters, keeping them safe during the pandemic. The Housing Department also worked with its partners across the County to shelter a total of 8,535 households between April 2020 and September 2021. However, the Housing Department's impact went far beyond sheltering people during the pandemic. The Department opened three new emergency interim housing communities, providing temporary homes for over 340 homeless individuals, couples, and families while they seek permanent housing.

The Housing Department and its partners also provided approximately 15,000 households with rental assistance totaling more than \$36,000,000 to help these households avoid homelessness. The Housing Department and its partners also placed 2,926 individuals in permanent housing between March 2020 and September 2021.

On a daily basis, the Housing Department helped members of the homeless community live in a safer, healthier and more dignified manner by funding 14,978 mobile showers, and a mobile laundry services that ran 4,220 loads of laundry. The City-funding motel voucher program served 886 individuals during the fiscal year, of which 425 were children.





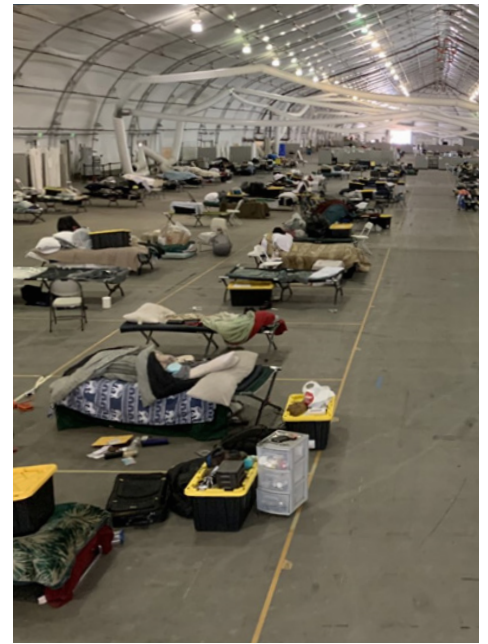
Funded **14,978** mobile showers for unhoused individuals



Funded mobile laundry service that ran **4,220** loads for unhoused individuals



728 individuals served by the motel voucher program including **350** children



GRANTS



Tripled grant funding from previous year to over \$75 million



Over 16,000 residents benefitted from grants for financial assistance, childcare, meals and more



Distributed funds to more than 50 programs, maximizing the impact of services from the Housing Department

The impact of the Housing Department's Grants team has never been greater than it was during FY 2020-2021. In typical years, the team processes \$20-\$25 million in grants. In FY 2020-2021, that total more than tripled to over \$75 million as the City received funds from the The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the American Recovery Act, the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) Program, and more than a dozen additional sources.

These grants served over 16,000 residents, providing critical services, including financial assistance to households on the brink of homelessness, child care and meals to low-income families and individuals, shelter operations, mobile showers and laundry service for homeless residents, eviction protection programs, and motel vouchers and rapid rehousing to help homeless individuals get off the street and out of crisis mode.

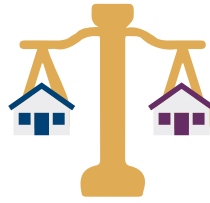
Perhaps most importantly, throughout the pandemic these grants helped fund emergency shelter and housing for medically vulnerable individuals who were at heightened risk of severe illness if they had been exposed to COVID-19.

In all, the Housing Department's Grants team distributed funds to more than 50 programs during the fiscal year. The team maximizes the impact of its work by continually searching for, applying for, and securing grants for programs and services that help the Department further its mission with a particular emphasis on combatting homelessness and supporting the City's rent stabilization efforts.

POLICY



Focused on Community Opportunity to Purchase (COPA)



Advanced work on Assessment of Fair Housing and Housing Element



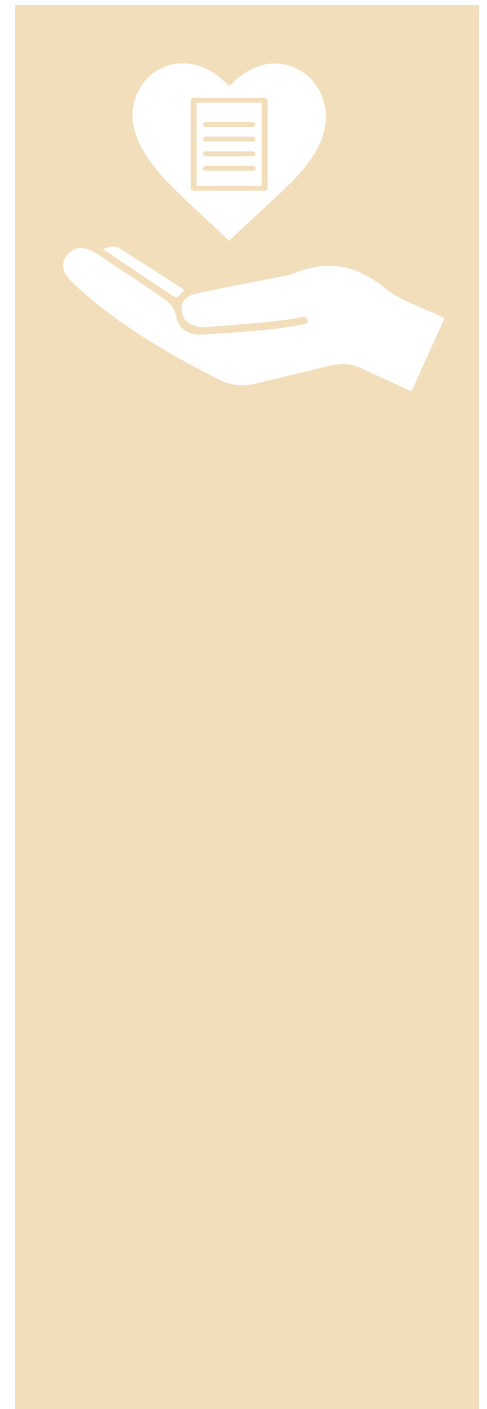
Co-sponsored SB-649, defining and allowing tenant preferences in low-income housing

The City of San José Housing Department's Policy team provides data-informed policy analysis and development in support of the Department's mission. The time horizon for much of its work is a year or longer, and policies it develops often remain in place for many years, making it an extremely impactful group on important issues related to housing. The City Council relies on the team's work as it considers taking action on matters such as affordable housing, displacement, fair housing, and land use.

During FY 2020-21, the Policy team began work on a Community Opportunity to Purchase (COPA) program. COPA would enable nonprofit affordable housing developers to make offers to purchase certain apartment buildings if the owners choose to sell. It could also support tenant purchase programs to help prevent displacement. The team's work included collaborating with over 50 organizations and hundreds of residents, hosting 17 stakeholder meetings, seven community feedback sessions, and researching similar programs in other cities. COPA is expected to be considered by the City Council in 2022.

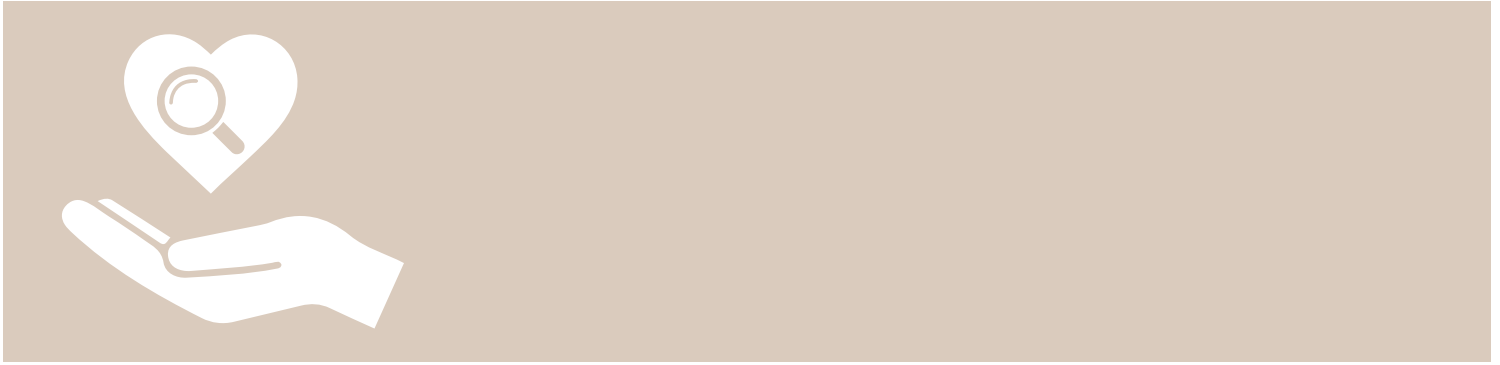
The Policy team also advanced the City's new Assessment of Fair Housing and the 2023-2031 Housing Element in coordination with the City's Planning Department. This work involves analysis and writing, sponsoring public educational events, and hosting outreach meetings. These plans will guide the City's future growth of housing and community investments so that all San José residents are better served by the housing market.

Other important work by the Policy team during FY 2020-21 included co-sponsoring SB 649. This bill recognizes tenants at risk of displacement so they are eligible for tenant preferences, which would give them a priority when applying for affordable housing. The bill passed unanimously in the State Senate. The Policy team also created the Council-approved Diridon Affordable Housing Implementation Plan, planned a program to build nonprofit capacity to undertake affordable housing, and provided organizational support for the South Bay Community Land Trust.





HOUSING INSPECTION AND REHABILITATION



A major part of the Housing Department's mission is to strengthen and revitalize communities through neighborhood investment. The Housing Inspection and Rehabilitation Team plays a critical role in this effort, working with homeowners on flood repair projects, overseeing minor repair programs with nonprofit partners, and building and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership.

In FY 2020–2021, the majority of the Inspection Team's time was focused on the Housing Department's COVID-19 response. Throughout much of 2020, the team worked in tandem with nonprofit service partners, security teams, and the City's Department of Public Works to stand up four shelters that were used to help unhoused residents shelter in place safely. Each shelter required space for sleeping and eating, bathrooms, showers, office space for the service partners, handwashing stations, seating, and quarantine zones, while keeping in mind social distancing requirements.

The impact of this work was significant and, in many cases, life-changing. The four shelters at Bascom Community Center, Camden Community Center, Parkside Hall and South Hall created opportunities for over 400 homeless individuals and families to shelter in place during the pandemic. This not only kept vulnerable residents safe, it also helped slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

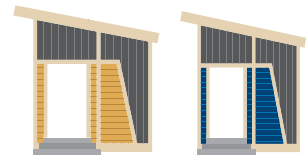
In addition to the COVID-19 response efforts, the Inspection Team completed its work on the Rebuilding for Heroes program, which focused on housing military veterans, continued its inspections and work on affordable housing developments financed by the City, and finished its work on the City's Bridge Housing Communities on Mabury Road and Felipe Avenue. The impact of these efforts spans hundreds of apartments and homes, and helps thousands of residents across the City live in safe, dignified housing.



Stood up **congregate shelters** that provided **430** beds and served over **1,700** individuals throughout the pandemic



Conducted 111 inspections of shelters, apartment buildings and affordable housing



Opened four non-congregate shelters that serve over **300** people on any given night

ADMINISTRATION



Managed the expenditure and commitment of more than **\$210 million**



Managed over **70** agreements with external service providers, grantees and contractors



Filled **33** full-time positions + additional **41** contract and temporary employees



The Administrative and Operations (A&O) Team was the engine that enabled the Department to function at a high level throughout the pandemic and its impact was felt in many ways.

The A&O team managed the expenditure and commitment of more than \$210 million, including a spending increase of 65 percent over the previous year. The funding for Pandemic-focused programs came from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the American Recovery Act, the State of California's Project HomeKey program, the City's General Fund, and many other sources.

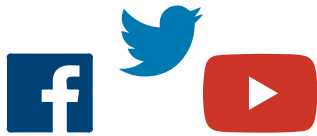
While much of the A&O team's work is internal, it was indispensable in allowing staff to continue helping the community. The team managed over 70 agreements with service providers, grantees and contractors to build shelters and interim housing, provide meal programs and essential services, and oversee temporary ordinances such as the residential eviction moratorium.

The A&O team also implemented City policies regarding remote work at the Department level, ensuring employees had necessary equipment to work from home, health and safety protocols were followed by employees, and workspaces complied with social distancing and enhanced hygiene requirements.

And despite most Department employees working from home, our administrative professionals selflessly shared the responsibility of on-site staffing to keep answering inquiries from the public, supporting the Department's leadership team, and handling critical day-to-day tasks.

Perhaps most importantly, the A&O team supported recruiting and filling 33 full-time positions as well as 41 contract and temporary employees, far exceeding the hiring pace of typical years. This was necessary to ensure the Department could provide all the emergency services needed during the pandemic while continuing to perform its regular duties.

COMMUNICATIONS



Grew social platform audience to over 4,000 followers



Created over 100 materials in 3 languages including mailers, flyers, videos, and social posts



Launched the *Dwellings* podcast



Established online Eviction Help Center to assist vulnerable tenants impacted by the pandemic

The Communications Team was focused on the pandemic during FY 2020-21. Housing policy at the state and local levels was in flux during the year, making it imperative for the Department to be proactive in its communication with tenants and property owners.

The team's impact was visible in many ways, perhaps none more so than producing and promoting more than a dozen public-service videos in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. These videos helped tenants and the public understand the rules related to eviction moratoriums, rental assistance, emergency shelter and housing. The Department's videos received thousands of views across the Department's YouTube channel, website and email communication platform. In addition, the Department's Twitter and Facebook channels reach over 4,000 followers.

During FY 2020-21, the Communications Team established an online Eviction Help Center to assist vulnerable tenants impacted by the pandemic. The help center provides resources for tenants in need of emergency rental assistance, mediation and legal aid, and information about pandemic-specific housing legislation. Additional communications work during the pandemic included community outreach related to temporary shelters and warming centers, public meetings for State-funded Project Homekey proposals, and outreach to neighborhoods located close to emergency interim housing (EIH) communities.

Despite focusing most of its time and energy to the City's pandemic response, the Communications Team's impact was evident in many other ways. The team was proud to launch the *Dwellings* podcast, which has garnered thousands of listeners who want to learn more about critical housing issues and steps the City is taking to make housing more accessible and equitable for the entire community. The team also supported the Housing Department's longer-term strategic priorities through community outreach and proactive communications for the Citywide Residential Anti-displacement Strategy and the Community Plan to End Homelessness.



Housing

San José Housing Department

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