

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

POINT IN TIME COUNT

| 2024



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many dedicated individuals made this successful count possible. Thank you to Santa Barbara Alliance for Community Transformation (SBACT) and countless service providers who recruited volunteers and engaged staff.

Thank you to over 450 volunteers who conducted the 2024 Point in Time Count as well as the numerous outreach workers who helped count individuals living in encampments and hard to reach areas. We extend our sincerest appreciation to our unhoused neighbors whose participation provided invaluable insights reflected in this report. Finally, thanks to CenCal Health for their generous financial support.

PROJECT COORDINATORS & REPORT AUTHORS

Kimberlee Albers, County of Santa Barbara

Jett Black-Maertz, County of Santa Barbara

David Webster, County of Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara Alliance for Community Transformation (SBACT)



SANTA MARIA / SANTA BARBARA COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Continuum of Care (CoC) is the regional planning body that coordinates the community's policies, strategies, resources, and activities to prevent and end homelessness, including the Point in Time count. Through the CoC, providers, individuals with lived experience, and community stakeholders engage in discussions and develop strategies to address the issues facing Santa Barbara County's low-income population, individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and other at-risk populations, and become part of the solutions being offered to address those challenges.

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Sylvia Barnard – Good Samaritan Shelter

Bridget Baublits – Santa Barbara County Education Office

Jonathan Castillo – PATH Santa Barbara

Jesús Armas – County of Santa Barbara Community Services Department

Claudia Dato – City of Goleta

Rob Fredericks – Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

Rick Gulino – People's Self-Help Housing

Mark Hartwig – Santa Barbara County Fire Department

Jennifer Heinen-Stiffler – Channel Islands YMCA

Noel Lossing – Child Welfare Services

Richard Matens – Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

Gina Quiroz – Person with Lived Experience

Toni Navarro – Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness

Ken Oplinger – Domestic Violence Solutions

Chanel Ovalle – City of Lompoc

Rosa Rojo – City of Santa Maria

Rebecca Segundo – University of California, Santa Barbara

Kristine Schwarz – New Beginnings Counseling Center

Elizabeth Snyder – Dignity Health

Deanna Vallejo – Santa Barbara Foundation

Youth Action Board – Youth with Lived Experience

DEPLOYMENT SITES

Thank you to all the organizations and municipalities who generously allowed us to use their facilities for the 2024 count.

CARPINTERIA

Carpinteria Veterans Memorial Building

GOLETA AREA

Goleta City Hall

ISLA VISTA

Isla Vista Community Service District

LOMPOC

Veterans Memorial Building (VFW)

SOLVANG

People Helping People

SANTA BARBARA EAST

Franklin Community Center

SANTA BARBARA WEST

Christ Presbyterian Church

SANTA MARIA

Minami Center

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires communities nationwide to conduct comprehensive counts of their unhoused community members during the last 10 days of every other January. Known as Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts, these surveys measure the extent of homelessness in each community and gather information about individuals and families in shelters and transitional housing, those sleeping on the streets, in vehicles, abandoned properties, or other places not meant for human habitation on a given night. Since 2019, the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County CoC has conducted an annual unsheltered PIT count using consistent methodology to better track population shifts, demographics, and areas of occupation (with the exception of 2021 when an unsheltered count was not conducted due to pandemic safety concerns).

The PIT Count is just one piece of the puzzle. While informative, its data should be considered within the context of broader community information, including data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), individual service providers, Fulcrum mapping software, the Coordinated Entry System, and more. The County Housing and Community Development division of the Community Services Department oversaw the PIT Count, working with Santa Barbara Alliance for Community Transformation (SBACT) and over 450 community members.

This report aims to help service providers, policymakers, funders, and local, state, and federal governments gain a better understanding of the currently unhoused population. It assists in measuring the impact of current policies and programs, and informs future planning. Continuums of Care report their local PIT Count findings to HUD. This information helps the federal government better understand the nationwide nature and extent of homelessness. Additionally, PIT Count and survey data guide local strategic planning, capacity building, and advocacy efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

A dedicated count of unaccompanied children and transition-age youth (24 and younger) was also conducted on the same afternoon. This separate effort aimed to improve understanding of youth homelessness. The Youth Action Board and trained youth enumerators conducted the count and administered surveys in known youth congregation areas. The results contribute to HUD's initiative to measure progress towards ending youth homelessness.

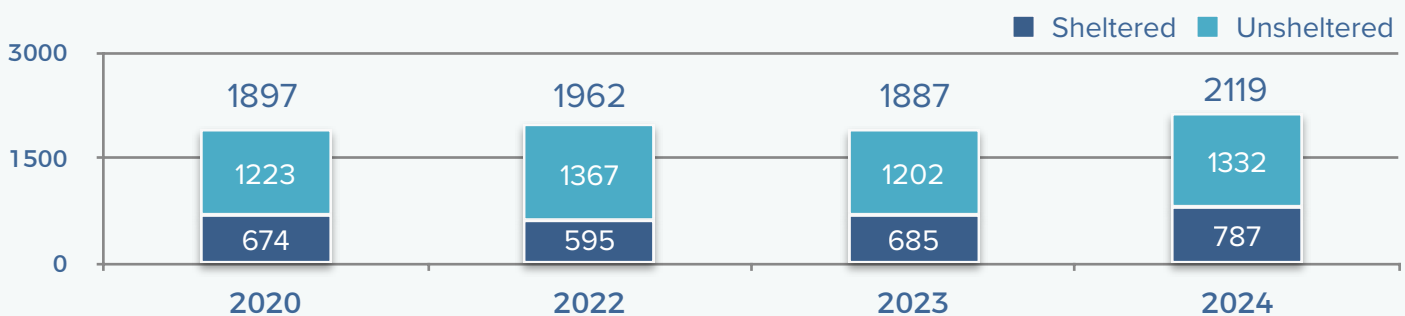
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care adopted a standardized approach to Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts in 2019 to ensure consistent data collection and minimize methodological discrepancies. This standardized method is based on best practices and has been used in all subsequent counts, including 2024. The County collaborated with the CoC and SBACT to conduct the 2024 count, which also included a simultaneous Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) of beds dedicated to serving unhoused individuals and families. As there is now 5 years of PIT data based on consistent methodology, this report will highlight the past 5 years when appropriate and provide insight to the multi-year data.

While homelessness is multifaceted and individual, HUD dictates a specific definition for the PIT Count. Based on the answer to "where did you sleep last night?", individuals are assessed for eligibility within this definition. Only those meeting HUD's criteria are included in the final count. Many of the charts included in the 2024 Point in Time Count report look at the five years of data using the same counting methodology (2020-2024 without 2021). During the pandemic, decreased shelter capacity for disease control and tenant protections likely created some fluctuations in the data that were not sustained.

The 2024 Point-in-Time Count provides a snapshot of homelessness in Santa Barbara County. On the night of the Point in Time Count, 2,119 persons experiencing homelessness were counted. This represents a 12% increase over the 2023 count of 1,887. The total number is made up of 1,332 (63%) persons living unsheltered and 787 (37%) persons living in shelters or transitional housing projects dedicated to persons experiencing homelessness. Persons experiencing homelessness are living throughout the county: 1,374 (65%) persons counted in south county, 583 (27%) persons counted in north county, and 162 (8%) in mid-county.

Number of Unsheltered and Sheltered Persons Experiencing Homelessness by Year



An increase in the number of persons in vehicles, persons experiencing homelessness for the first time, and families with minor children are largely responsible for the 12% increase seen in the number of persons counted.



The number of persons counted living in vehicles increased from 611 in 2023 to 710 in 2024 (up from 487 in 2019). The number of persons reporting that they were experiencing homeless for the first time increased from 849 in 2023 to 1114 in 2024. The number of families with children experiencing homelessness increased from 93 households (272 persons) in 2023 to 125 households (364 persons) in 2024. Contributing factors to the number of families, persons living in vehicles, and persons experiencing homelessness for the first time include: the end of pandemic emergency rental assistance, lifting of the tenant protections including eviction moratoriums, soaring rents, and lack of affordable housing county wide.

In order to better understand the increase in the number of persons counted in the different living situations, the following chart shows a comparison of the number of persons in each living situation and % increase.

LIVING SITUATION	2023	2024	%
Unsheltered (living on streets or outdoors)	591	622	5%
Unsheltered (living in vehicles)	611	710	16%
Unsheltered Total	1202	1332	11%
Sheltered (living in emergency shelters or transitional)	685	787	15%
Total	1887	2119	12%

Santa Barbara County has had a 57% reduction in the number of veterans between 2020 and 2024 PIT Counts. 90 veterans counted in 2024 (210 in 2020). This number is consistent with the current coordinated entry system list of veterans experiencing homelessness. Resources to address veteran homelessness have increased during this time period including both long term subsidies with supportive services (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing- VASH), shorter term rental assistance (Supportive Services for Veterans and Families – SSVF) and shelter beds paid by the Department of Veteran Affairs. Sustained adequate funding with local coordination and committed services providers has made this progress possible.

The number of households with minor children has fluctuated in the five-year period. In 2022, shelter capacity was restricted for disease control. Tenant protections and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program likely kept more families in housing.

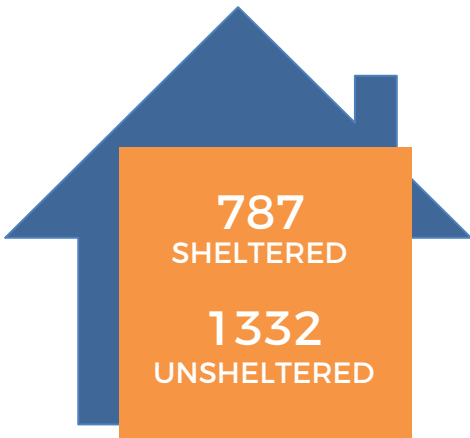
	2019	2020	2022	2023	2024
Households with minor children	115	90	63	93	125

The number of beds dedicated to homelessness including interim, rapid rehousing, and permanent housing increased from 2,767 in 2023 to 3,002 in 2024. An additional 261 beds will be coming online this Spring, including 59 permanent housing units at Buena Tierra in Goleta and two large new interim housing projects, La Posada and Hope Village, are opening. Increasing housing and shelter inventory is one of the primary focus strategies of the Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness adopted in February 2021.

While the Point in Time Count report provides a snapshot of persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County on a single night, it serves as a starting point for deeper analysis and action. The Homeless Management Information System is a comprehensive data base that captures client information. As resources have increased, HMIS shows a steady increase in the number of persons served since 2020. This trend aligns with inflow data indicating increased demand for housing, shelter and services. Addressing the growing need for supportive services and lasting housing solutions demands further investigation and collaborative efforts to ensure the well-being of all community members.

For more information regarding the survey methodology, please see Methodology on page 19.

2024 SURVEY



TOTAL: 2119

SLEEPING LOCATION



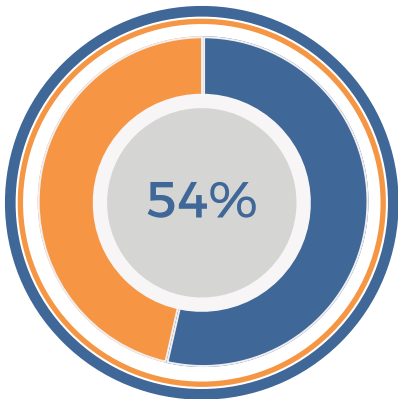
OUTSIDE
622



VEHICLE
710



SHELTER
787



FIRST TIME HOMELESS
1114

GENDER



715 (34%)
WOMAN
(GIRL IF CHILD)



1380 (65%)
MAN
(BOY IF CHILD)



4 (.02%)
TRANSGENDER



5 (.02%)
NON-BINARY



4 (.02%)
QUESTIONING



11 (1%)
MORE THAN
ONE GENDER



VETERANS
90



CHRONICALLY
HOMELESS
610



UNACCOMPANIED
YOUTH UNDER 18
31



FAMILIES
WITH CHILDREN
125

DISABLING CONDITION



MENTAL HEALTH
ISSUE
725



SUBSTANCE
USE DISORDER
580



CHRONIC HEALTH
CONDITION
625

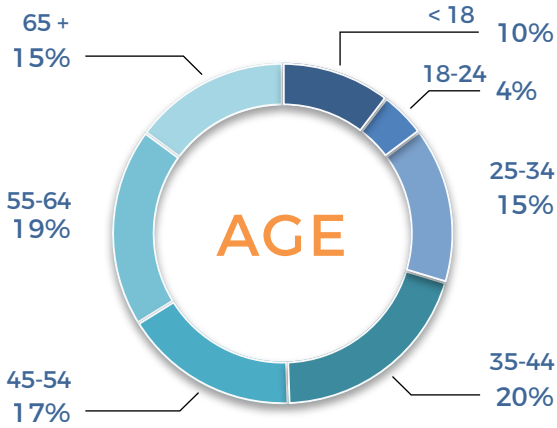


HIV/AIDS
DIAGNOSIS
8



DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITY
155

2024 SURVEY



AGE RANGE	TOTAL PEOPLE	PERCENT
<18	220	10%
18 - 24	93	4%
25 - 34	315	15%
35 - 44	420	20%
45 - 54	354	17%
55 - 64	401	19%
65	316	15%
TOTAL	2119	

BED COUNT



INTERIM HOUSING
910



RAPID REHOUSING
453



PERMANENT HOUSING
1639



TOTAL BEDS
3002

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS



327



The number of individuals counted in the 2024 Point in Time Count was 2,119, an increase of 12% since 2020.

Chart 1 – Total number of people experiencing homelessness by city/area

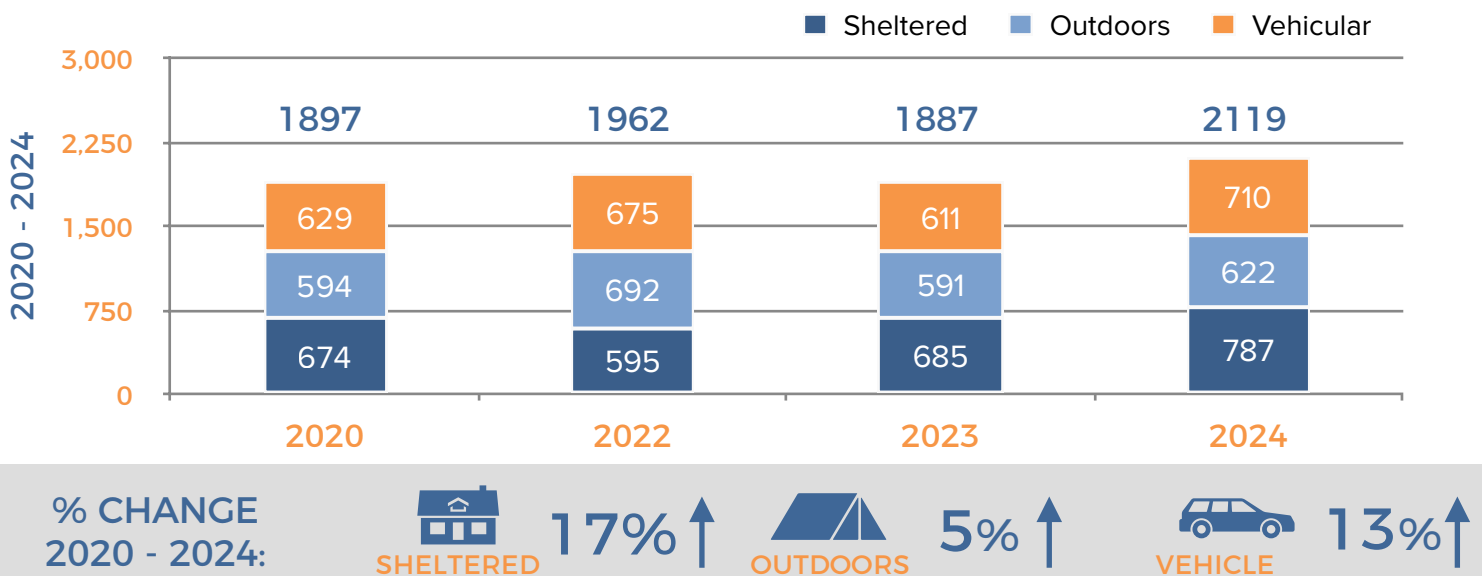
City/Area	2020 Total	2022 Total	2023 Total	2024 Total	Δ 2020-2024
Carpinteria	39	21	23	42	8% ↑
Goleta	166	92	136	148	11% ↓
Santa Barbara	914	822	787	987	7% ↑
Isla Vista	69	112	88	96	39% ↑
Lompoc	142	215	158	155	9% ↑*
Buellton/Solvang/Santa Ynez Valley	2	12	20	6	200% ↑**
Santa Maria	382	457	472	424	11% ↑
Guadalupe	3	2	8	0	100% ↓
Unincorporated North	119	153	122	116	3% ↓
Unincorporated South	61	76	73	145	138% ↑
Totals	1,897	1,962	1,887	2,119	12% ↑

*Lompoc numbers do not include the Bridge House shelter, located just outside the city limits. 2020-2024 numbers have been adjusted to capture Bridge House shelter counts in Unincorporated North.

**Buellton/Solvang/Santa Ynez Valley has a 70% decrease between 2023 and 2024, the percentage of change between 2020 is 200% because the numbers are so small (2 in 2020 and 6 in 2024).

Sheltered, Unsheltered, and Vehicular Homelessness

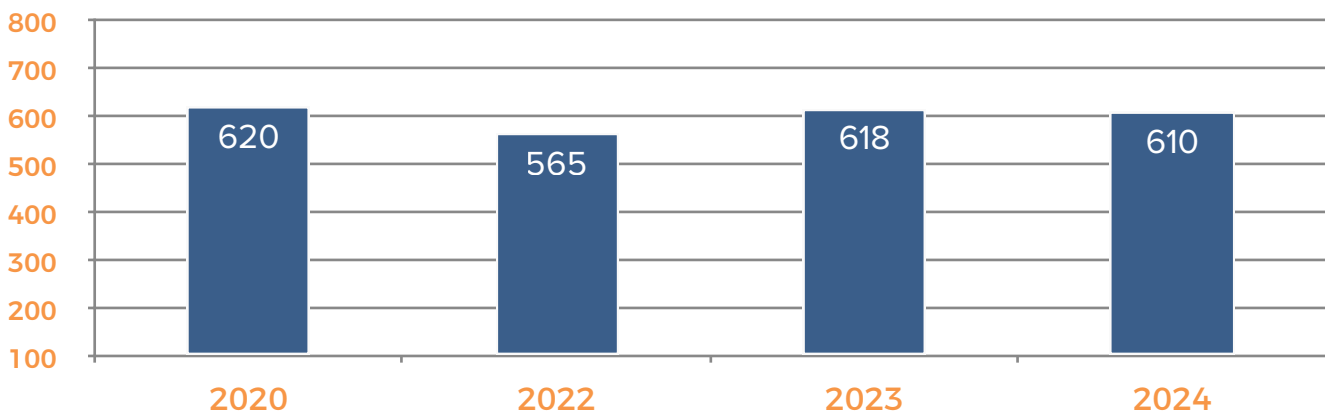
Chart 2 – Analysis of Sleeping Locations from 2020 to 2024



Chronic Homelessness

Chronic Homelessness is defined as an individual or family that is homeless and resides in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, and has been homeless and residing in such a place for at least 1 year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years. The statutory definition also requires that the individual or family has a head of household with a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, posttraumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability (24 CFR § 576.2).

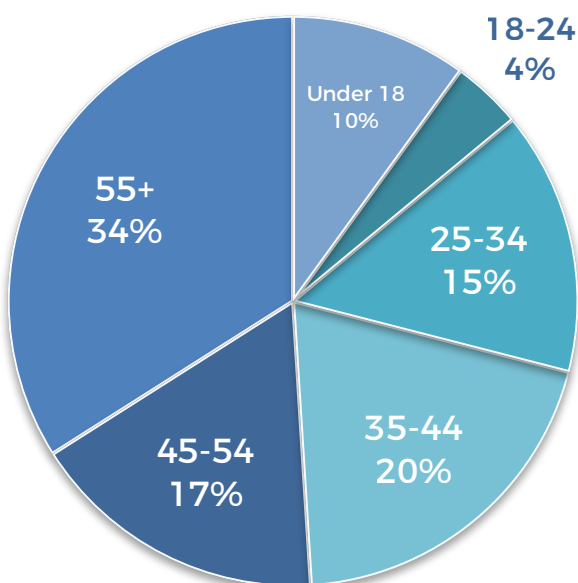
Chart 3 – The number of people experiencing Chronic Homelessness on the night of the count



There were 610 (29% of those counted) chronically homeless individuals counted in Santa Barbara County in 2024. Someone assessed to be experiencing chronic homelessness typically requires more supportive services for an indefinite period of time to remain housed, suggesting the need for more permanent supportive housing and funding dedicated to ongoing services.

Age

Chart 4 – Ages of those experiencing homelessness on the night of the Point in Time count



In recent years there has been growing concern over the lack of supports for an aging population. More than a third (34%) of those counted were over the age of 55. Youth under the age of 24 experiencing homelessness make up another significant portion of the number counted: 4% or those surveyed were transitional age youth between the ages of 18 and 24 and 10% were children under the age of 18. It is known that youth who experience an instance of homelessness are more likely to experience homelessness again at some point in their life. Addressing youth homelessness now could lead to a decrease in homelessness in the future.

Families Experiencing Homelessness

Chart 5a - Number of Families

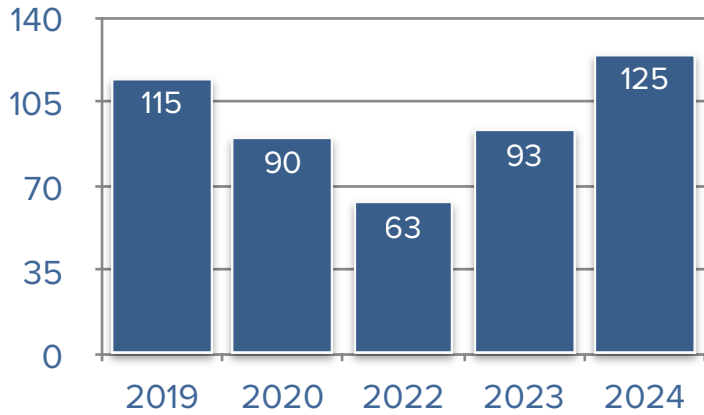
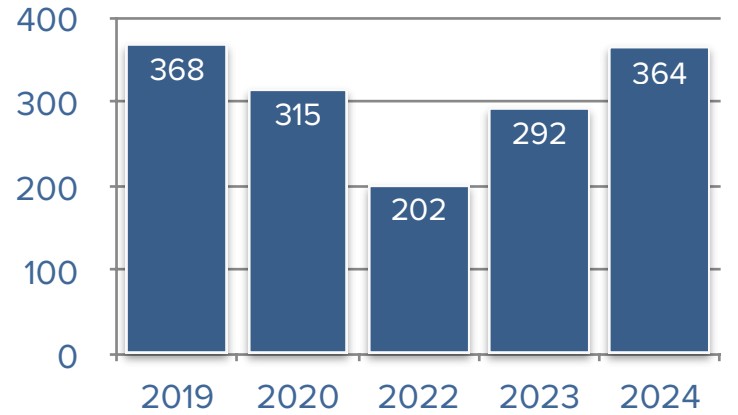


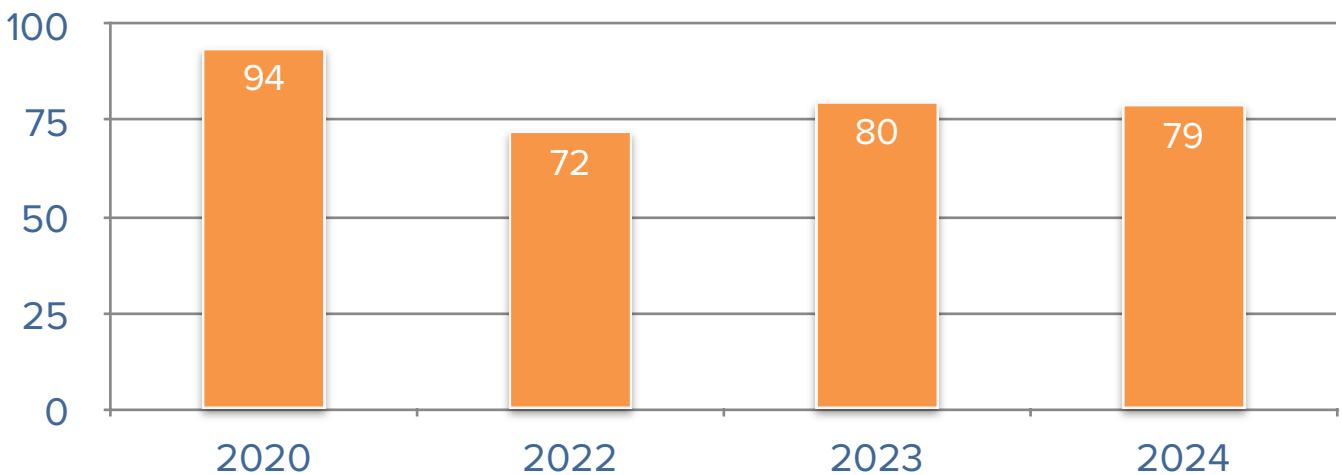
Chart 5b - Number of people in families with children



The lowest count of families experiencing homelessness was in 2022 when 63 families were reported, but there has been a steady increase since. Inconsistent shelter capacity during the pandemic and the end of pandemic era assistance, the lifting of the eviction moratorium, and lack of affordable housing county wide are likely contributing factors.

Number of Unsheltered, Unaccompanied Youth

Chart 6 - Children (under 18) and Transitional Aged Youth (18-24 years old)

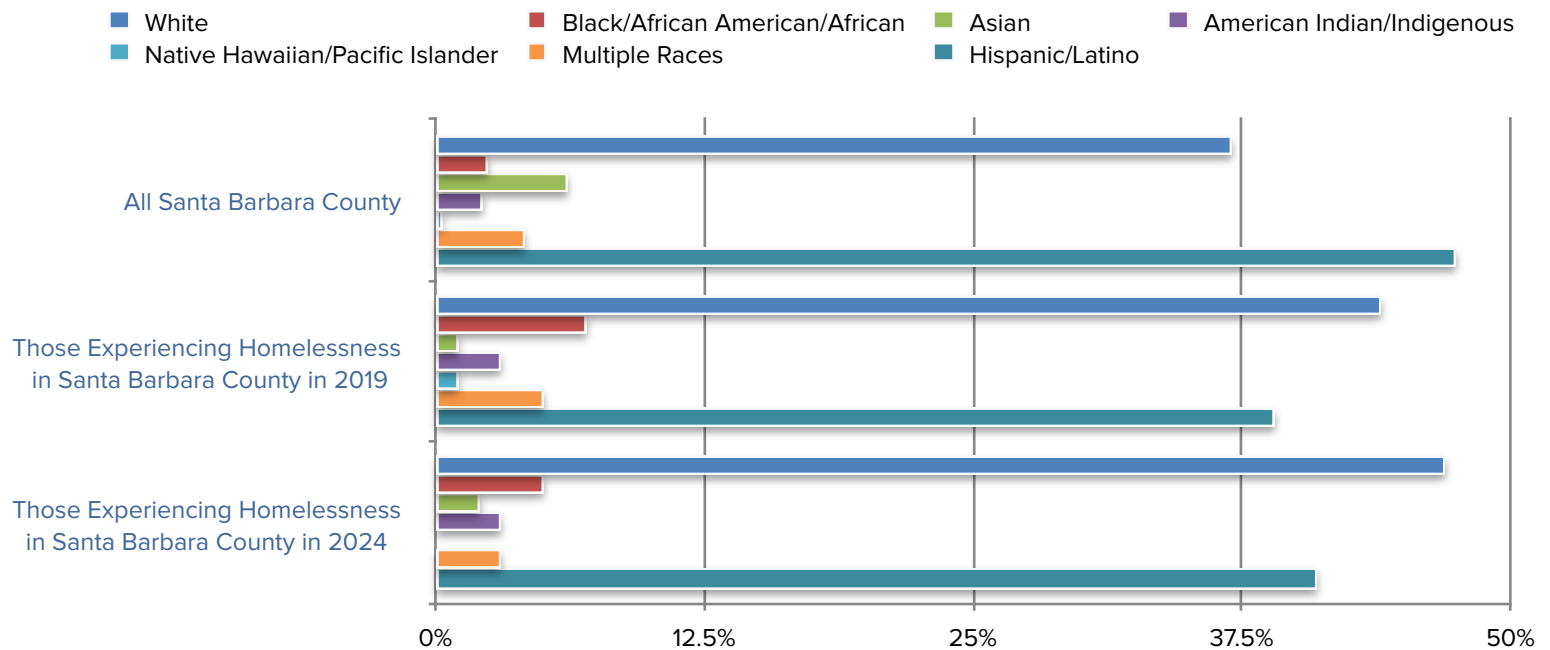


Between 2019 and 2024 the Continuum of Care undertook several efforts to decrease the number of youth experiencing homelessness, including the formation of the Youth Action Board, a 100 day challenge to end youth homelessness, the adoption of the Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness, and an award of \$5.3M from the Department of Housing and Urban Development specifically targeting unhoused youth ages 18-24. The unsheltered number of unaccompanied children (31 individuals) and youth 18-24 (48 individuals) has remained relatively flat over the past 5 years. As the programs roll out with the new funding and plan implemented, a reduction in transitional age youth is expected.

Race and Ethnicity

In 2024 the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) combined race and ethnicity, two demographics which had been previously gathered separately. To facilitate an accurate comparison, the chart below uses the race and ethnicity categories used prior to 2024 and by the US Census Bureau.

Chart 7 - Year over year shift in racial demographics of those experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County compared to the general population using the most recent census data.



Black, African American/African individuals are the only racial group disproportionately represented (5% of the unhoused population) compared to the general population (2.4%). In 2019 7% of those surveyed indicated they were Black/African American/African. While the percentage of American Indian/Indigenous experiencing homelessness appears roughly in alignment with the general population. In previous years, there has been a disparity in the number of American Indian/Indigenous. It is essential that this progress is verified with other data sources and efforts continue to ensure racial disparities do not exist. The PIT is a single data source. Racial disparities are being continuously monitored using multiple data sources.

In recent years the County of Santa Barbara and the Continuum of Care developed a plan to address racial equity. All funding applicants are asked to analyze the population they serve and the demographics of their staff and compare it to the demographics of their service area. Additionally, all funding applicants are required to demonstrate a commitment to furthering racial equity through the development and implementation of internal racial equity plans and policies for correcting disparities. Through this work, we can see a notable shift in racial representation within the homelessness response system.

First Time Experiencing Homelessness

53% of survey respondents indicated this was their first experience of homelessness, compared to the 47% who indicated this was not their first-time experiencing homelessness.

Chart 8 – Is this your first time experiencing homelessness?

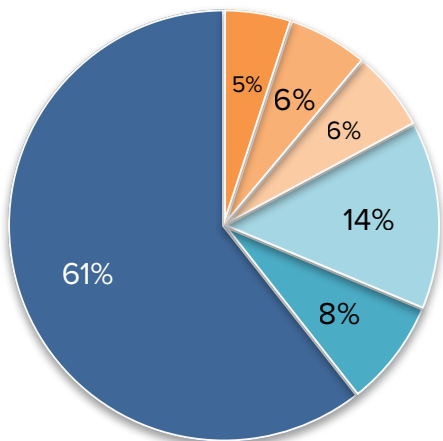


The increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness for the first times indicates a growing need for homelessness prevention and housing retention programs. As the cost of living in Santa Barbara County increases and the lack of available affordable units, preventing homelessness will be a challenge.

Residential History

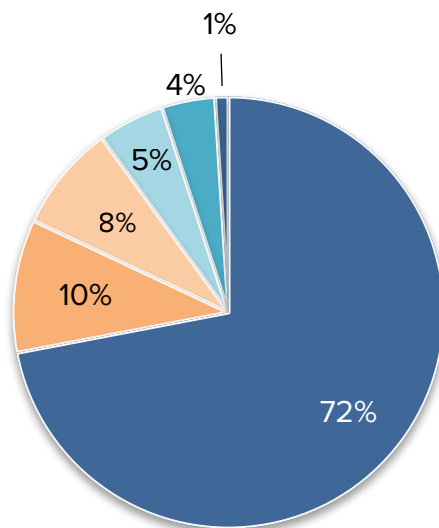
The Santa Barbara County Point-in-Time Count includes questions exploring the residential history of unhoused individuals and families.

Chart 10 - How long have you lived in Santa Barbara County?



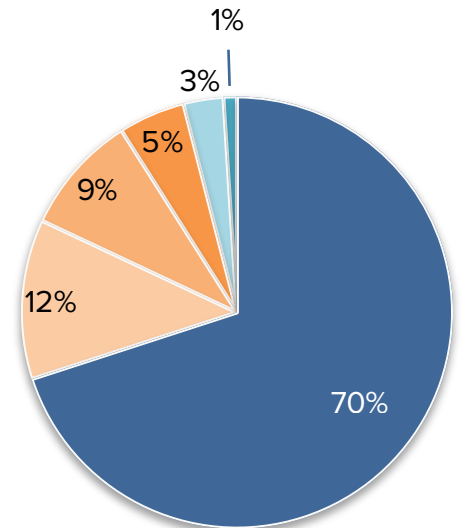
- 1 Day - 30 Days
- 31 Days - 6 Months
- 6 Months - 1 Year
- 1-5 Years
- 5-10 Years
- More than 10 Years

Chart 11 - Where were you living when you first became homeless?



- Santa Barbara County
- Other California
- Out of State
- San Luis Obispo County
- Ventura County
- Kern County

Chart 12 - Where was your most recent permanent address?



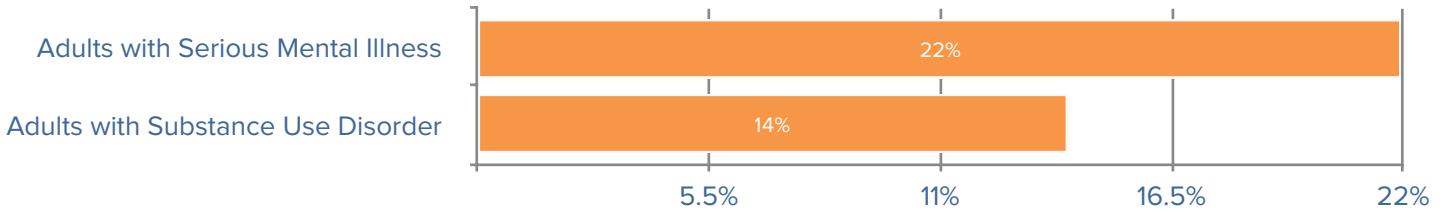
- Santa Barbara County
- Other California
- Out of State
- San Luis Obispo County
- Ventura County
- Kern County

This indicates that a majority of persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara have lived locally for over 10 years and became homeless while living here.

Disabling Conditions

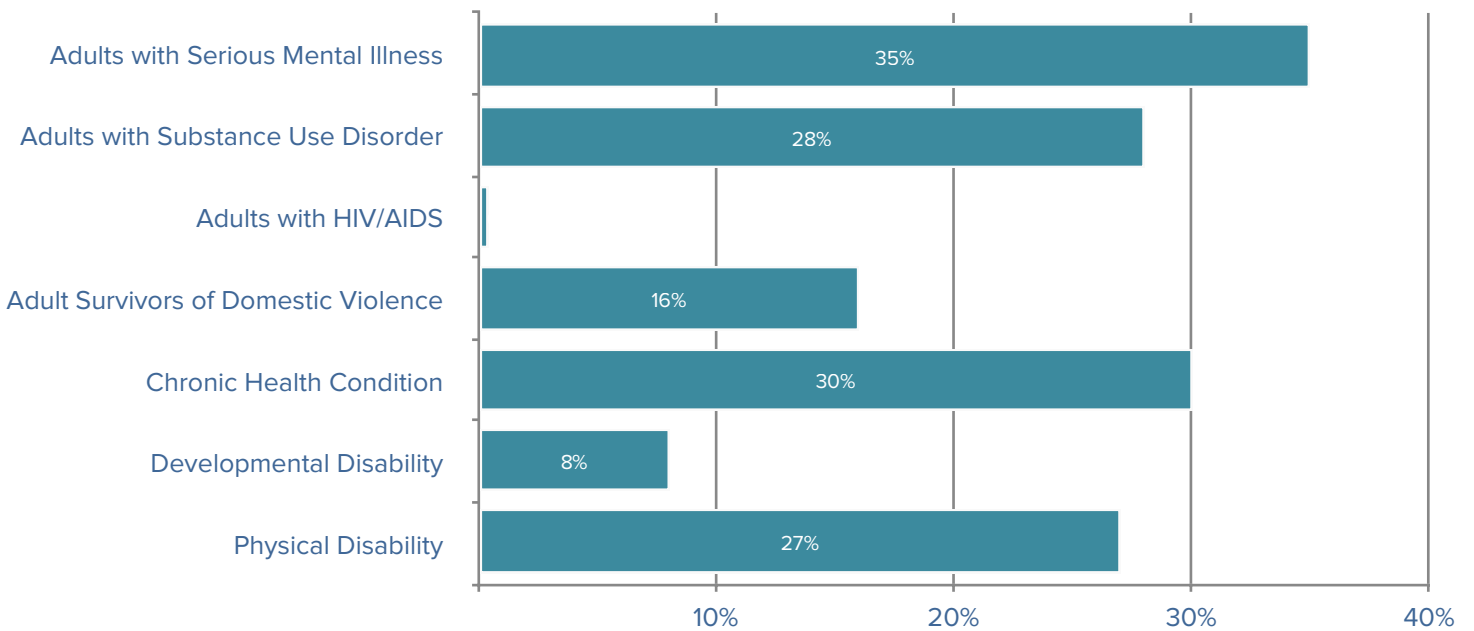
Chart 12 – Disabling conditions using the HUD definition and data gathering requirement.

Homeless Sub-populations using HUD Definition*



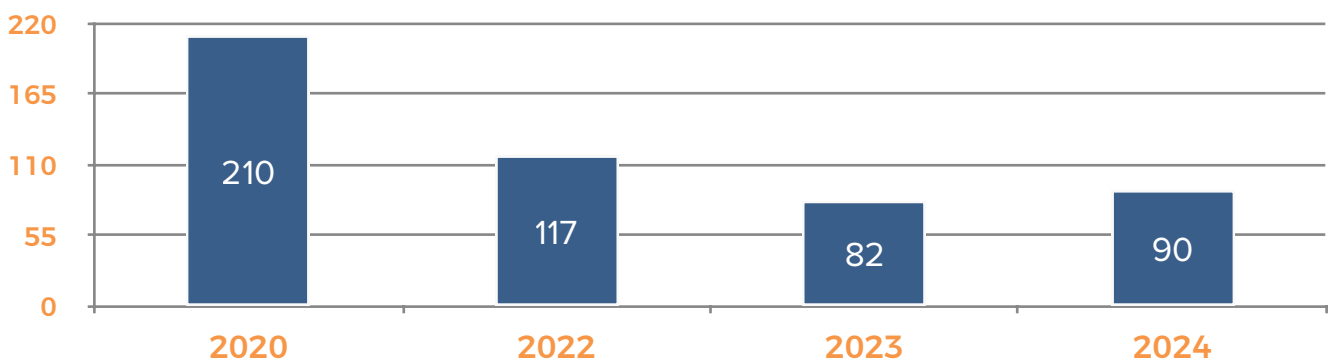
*For HUD reporting, mental illness and substance use disorder require that the condition is "expected to be long-term or of indefinite duration" in order to qualify. This typically results in a lower count. Because of this, the chart below shows those reporting a disabling condition without the long-term qualifier.

Chart 13 – Disabling conditions without the HUD long term condition qualifier.



Veterans

Chart 14 - The 2024 Point in Time Count shows the sustained gains in addressing veteran homelessness since 2020. There has been a 57% decrease since 2020.



Housing Inventory Chart

Since 2020, significant efforts have been made to expand the number of beds dedicated to people experiencing homelessness.

Definitions

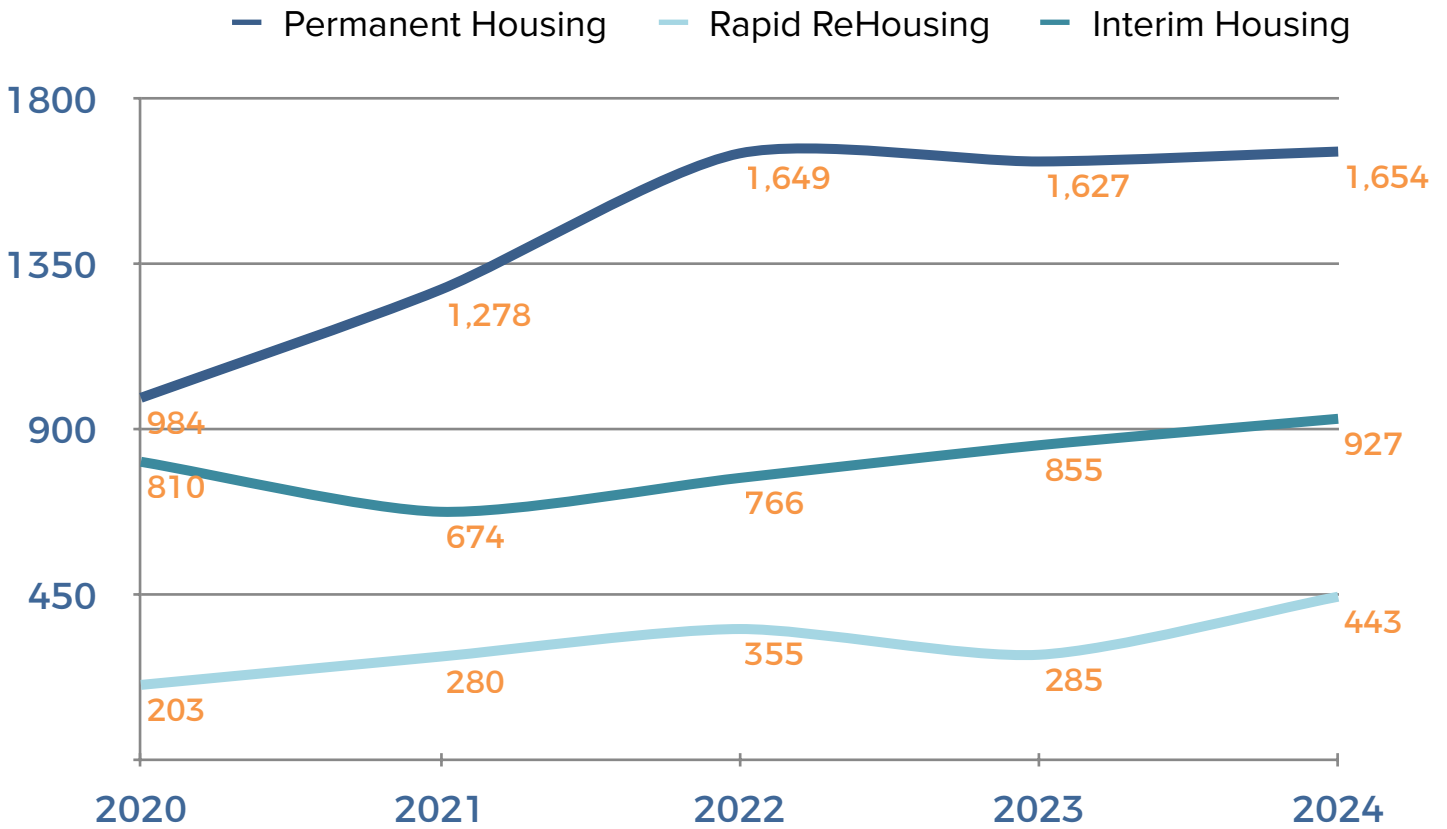
Permanent Supportive Housing – Units and long-term rental subsidies paired with supportive services.

Interim Housing – Emergency shelter, low barrier navigation centers, transitional housing, and/or bridge housing.

Rapid Re-Housing – Time-limited rental assistance with wraparound case management.

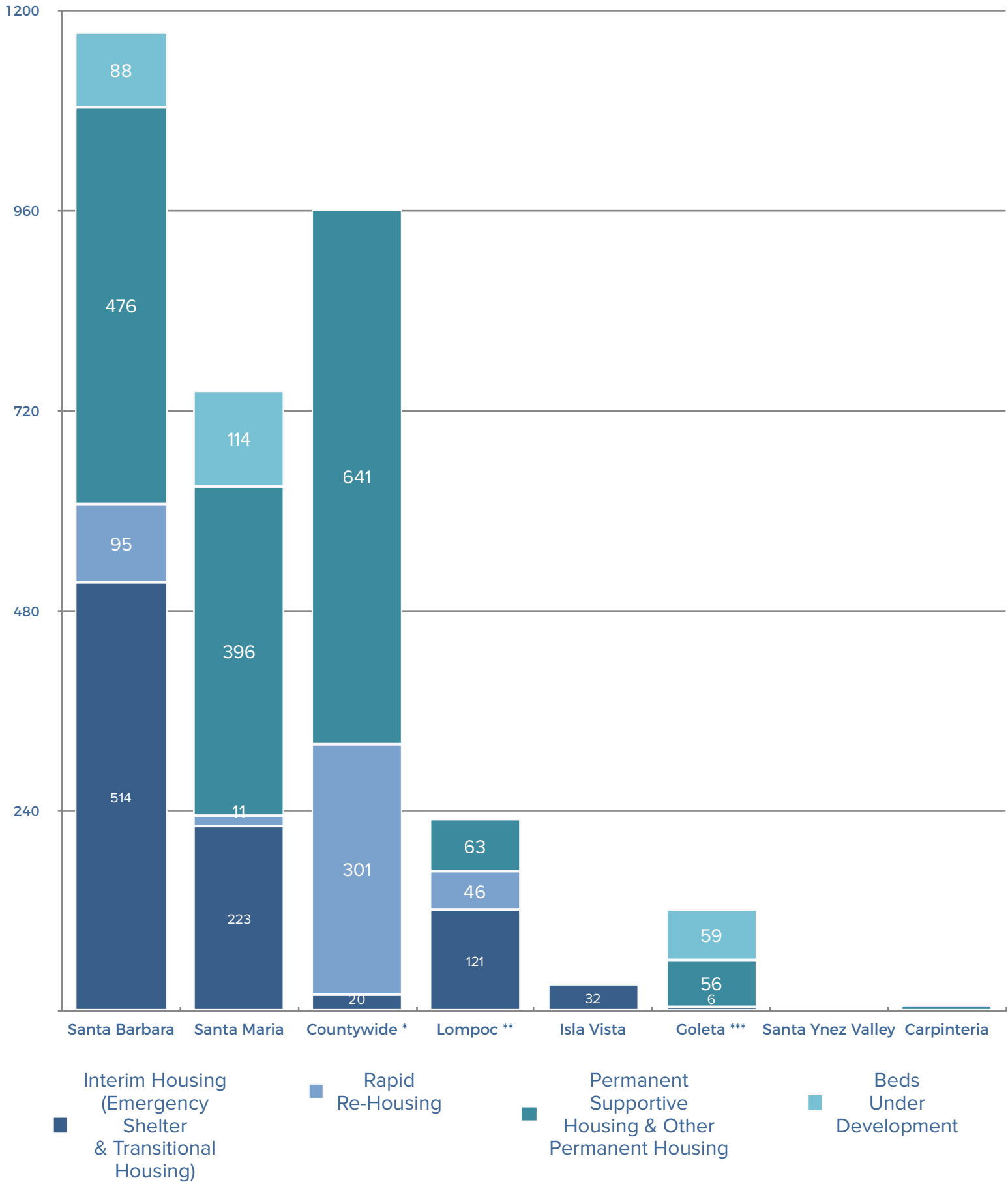
Under Development – The project and beds are fully funded, but not yet ready for occupancy.

Beds Dedicated to Homelessness



There are currently 261 beds under development, representing additional capacity in the pipeline for early Spring 2024. Increasing housing and shelter inventory is one of the primary focus strategies of the Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness adopted in February 2021.

Housing Inventory by Area



* Countywide reflects housing programs with multiple locations or rental subsidies that can be utilized throughout the county.

** Emergency Shelter beds denoted as Lompoc are in the unincorporated area near the city limits.

*** The City of Goleta contracts for beds in other jurisdictions.

METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The purpose of the 2024 Santa Barbara County Homeless Point-in-Time Count and Survey was to produce a point-in-time estimate of people experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County, a county that covers approximately 2,745 square miles. The results of the street counts were combined with the results from the shelter counts to produce the total estimated number of persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County on a given night, using the HUD definition of homelessness for the Point-in-Time Count. An in-depth qualitative survey was used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences and demographics of those counted. A more detailed description of the methodology follows.

DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

The HUD definition of homelessness was used for the Point-in-Time Count:



Sheltered individuals and families: “living in a supervised publicly or privately- operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals)”; or,



Unsheltered individuals and families: “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 camping ground.”

INCLUDED IN THE COUNT

- ✓ Makeshift shelters
- ✓ Streets
- ✓ Vehicles
- ✓ Parks
- ✓ Abandoned buildings
- ✓ Bus or train stations
- ✓ Airports
- ✓ Camping grounds

NOT INCLUDED IN THE COUNT

- Couch surfers
- Double-ups
- Rehabilitation or mental health facilities
- Most in jail or prisons
- Awaiting eviction or foreclosure
- Hospitalized

Counting Santa Barbara County's homeless population involves two steps:

01

Counting people in shelters: Data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) was combined with information from non-HMIS participating shelters to ensure all sheltered individuals and families were included.

02

Counting people living outside: Volunteers, along with agency and government staff, combed the county (excluding the Channel Islands) on January 24th, between 5:30 AM and 9:00 AM, searching for individuals and families in streets, parks, tents, or vehicles. A separate count focused specifically on encampments from 9 AM to noon and was completed by training outreach workers, and a youth specific count took place from 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM.

Persons living in vehicles is also part of the unsheltered county. With the help of the New Beginnings Safe Parking Program, parking locations were visited and counted. Staff and volunteers looked for signs of habitation in each vehicle, such as blocked windows, personal belongings, or condensation. They noted vehicle details and partial license plate numbers to avoid double-counting. An average of 1.15 individuals was estimated to occupy cars, RVs housed an average of 1.56 individuals, and vans averaged 1.21 individuals. NBCC staff left flyers on each vehicle counted to alert volunteers that it had been counted and attempt to verify through homeless through a follow up call.

COMPONENTS OF THE METHOD

The 2024 street count methodology followed an established, HUD approved methodology used in PIT counts throughout the country, with the dedicated youth count, encampment count, and vehicular count. The CoC once again used the Counting Us mobile phone app, which is designed to automate the collection of data for the homeless census Point-in-Time Count and Survey.

The Counting Us app allows volunteers to record both observational and survey data in the field, even without cell phone coverage. The data collected is available in real time, is easily accessed via the Counting Us website. There was also outreach and contact with those living in encampments by trained outreach workers. Location data from Fulcrum mapping software was used to facilitate coverage.

In 2024 SBACT once again assisted with County-wide planning and implementation of the count. This organizational expertise helped streamline count organization and volunteer recruitment.



The Point-in-Time Count methodology used in 2024 had these primary components:

GENERAL STREET COUNT AND SURVEY

an enumeration of unsheltered homeless individuals between the hours of 5:30AM to 9:00AM;

YOUTH STREET COUNT

a targeted enumeration of unsheltered homeless youth under the age of 25 between the hours of 2:30 PM and 5:30 PM;

SHELTER COUNT

an enumeration of sheltered homeless individuals on the night before the street count. This data was pulled from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and reports from non-HMIS participating providers;

ENCAMPMENTS

an in-person, targeted survey of encampments by trained outreach workers

VEHICULAR COUNT

New Beginnings Counseling Center Safe Parking Program staff conducted a target count and survey of those living in their vehicles. This data was then deduplicated once the count was complete.

The street count aimed to avoid double-counting individuals who used shelters. Therefore, it was conducted before most shelters released their residents. In areas with shelters, teams prioritized counting the surrounding areas first.

To efficiently cover the entire county within the available time, eight dispatch centers were strategically placed across different regions: Carpinteria, Goleta, Isla Vista, Lompoc, Solvang, Santa Barbara East, Santa Barbara West, and Santa Maria. Counting routes were planned and assigned to the nearest dispatch center for quick deployment of teams.

The County of Santa Barbara uses mapping software to assist outreach teams in identifying encampments throughout the region and partnered with New Beginnings Safe Parking Program to ensure a thorough vehicle count. The robust nature of this method and data allowed teams to more accurately count and interview those living unsheltered in previously hard to reach locations and vehicles.

On the count day, teams of two or more volunteers and an outreach worker were formed for each designated area. Equipped with maps, training materials, and supplies, teams walked or drove through their assigned tracts, covering all accessible streets, roads, parks, and highways. One team member recorded data in the Counting Us app to prevent duplication, while others assisted with navigation and observation.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The success of the count relied heavily on collaboration between various county and community agencies. This collaboration involved outreach efforts, volunteer recruitment, logistical planning, methodological decisions, and interagency coordination.

Local homeless and housing service providers, along with advocates, played a crucial role as partners in both planning and implementing the count. Notably, the Santa Barbara Alliance for Community Transformation (SBACT) was contracted to assist with planning and execution of the count.

Thanks to these local efforts, the count benefited from enumerators with diverse knowledge and expertise. This included knowledge of areas frequented by homeless individuals, those living in vehicles, and people residing in encampments. Additionally, community partners were instrumental in recruiting individuals with lived experience of homelessness to participate in the street count and surveys.





VOLUNTEER TRAINING & RECRUITMENT

Over 450 dedicated community members, including volunteers and agency staff, joined forces to conduct the Santa Barbara County homeless population count on January 24th, 2024. To ensure a smooth and accurate count, comprehensive training was provided in the week leading up to the event. This included:

Virtual and in-person training sessions: These sessions equipped volunteers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively participate in the count.

Mobile app training: Volunteers learned how to use the "Counting Us" app to record data efficiently and accurately, even in areas with limited cell service.

Safety protocols: Training covered crucial safety measures, including de-escalation techniques and avoiding potentially hazardous situations. Law enforcement was also notified of the count activity.

On the day of the count, volunteers and agency staff worked collaboratively:

Enumeration teams: Volunteers and staff formed teams to canvass designated areas and visually count homeless individuals.

Dispatch centers: Volunteers, service providers, and staff supported seven dispatch centers by welcoming volunteers, distributing materials, and providing guidance.

Every effort was made to prioritize volunteer safety:

Teamwork: Volunteers were deployed in groups, instructed to stay together, and not enter private spaces.

De-escalation training: Volunteers received training on interacting with individuals who may be experiencing mental instability and safely disengaging from potentially uncomfortable situations.

IMPLEMENTATION

On January 24th, 2024 surveys were conducted to gather qualitative and quantitative data about individuals experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County.

The surveys covered various aspects of homelessness, including:

- Demographics
- Past Residency
- Military service history
- Duration and recurrence of homelessness
- Nighttime accommodations
- Access to services

Multiple-choice and closed ended questions were used to gather comprehensive information using the Counting Us mobile app to facilitated efficient data collection, even in areas with limited cell service. Volunteers and Outreach workers were trained on the specifics of the count and methods of engagement in the week prior to the count.

Transparency and limitations:

The data presented may reflect some variance due to self-reported information.

Missing values are excluded, resulting in potential discrepancies between the total number of respondents and conducted surveys.

This Point-in-Time (PIT) Count data is one piece of a larger picture. It should be considered alongside other community resources such as:

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Individual service provider data

Fulcrum mapping software

Coordinated Entry System

The County Housing and Community Development division, in collaboration with Simtech Solutions and over 450 community members, oversaw the successful execution of the PIT Count and surveys.



DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as an unaccompanied individual or head of a family household with a disabling condition who has either continuously experienced homelessness for a year or more, or has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness totaling 12 months, in the past three years.

DISABLING CONDITION

Defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as a physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that is expected to be long-term and impacts the individual's ability to live independently; a developmental disability; or HIV/AIDS.

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The provision of a safe alternative to the streets, either in a shelter facility or through the use of stabilization rooms. Emergency shelter is short-term, usually for 180 days or fewer. Domestic violence shelters are typically considered a type of emergency shelter, as they provide safe, immediate housing for survivors and their children.

FAMILY

A household with at least one adult and one child under the age of 18.

HOMELESS

Under the Category 1 definition of homelessness in the HEARTH Act, includes individuals and families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements, or 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 camping ground.

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

HUD

Abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

PRECARIOUSLY HOUSED

A person who is staying with the household because they have no other regular or adequate place to stay due to a lack of money or other means of support.

SHELTERED HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

Individuals who are living in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs.

SINGLE INDIVIDUAL

An unaccompanied adult over the age of 18.

TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH

Young people between the ages of 18 and 24 years old who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as their own child(ren).

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Housing in which homeless individuals may live up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently. Supportive services – which help promote residential stability, increased skill level or income, and greater self-determination – may be provided by the organization managing the housing, or coordinated by that organization and provided by other public or private agencies. Transitional housing can be provided in one structure or several structures at one site, or in multiple structures at scattered sites.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

Children under the age of 18 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian and are not a parent presenting with or sleeping in the same place as their own child(ren).

UNSHELTERED HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

Individuals who are living on the streets, in abandoned buildings, storage structures, vehicles, encampments, or any other place unfit for human habitation.