

FINDING 1: Shelter Solano, Inc.’s lack of unrestricted funding prevents the shelter from operating at capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS 1 A: Local agency partners associated with Shelter Solano, Inc. must assist acquiring funding streams that increase the number of unrestricted beds.

RECOMMENDATION 1 B: Local agency partners adopt a regionalized service delivery and funding model that does not restrict bed usage based on a bed-night rate agreement with the county and/or donor city, but rather allows access to beds based on client need regardless of the city of origin and works toward reducing the number of homeless living on the streets.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. The City, along with regional partners of the Regional Homeless 2x2 Subcommittee (2x2), staff from the cities of Vacaville, Suisun City, Benicia, Vallejo, and the County of Solano began discussions in 2021 with SHELTER Solano to modify the funding plan and transition away from ‘per bed’ rates. The 2x2 anticipates this will be complete when the facility is fully converted as part of the Regional Navigation Center Plan in 2022 – 2023.

FINDING 2: The Solano County Civil Grand Jury found it difficult to track money and funding between SHELTER, Inc., and Shelter Solano, Inc. Often, the names of the two entities are used interchangeably. It is unclear which funding sources are specifically awarded to Shelter Solano, Inc. and which funding sources are awarded to SHELTER, Inc.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Local agency partners establish a transparent system of tracking and reporting funds that clearly differentiates between SHELTER, Inc. and Shelter Solano, Inc.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. The City is committed to working with SHELTER Inc. and SHELTER Solano to ensure a clear delineation of services and reporting for those served in Solano County. Additionally, CAP Solano JPA is in the process of creating a public report to be maintained on the CAP Solano JPA website that will provide a list of all CAP Solano JPA and Continuum of Care (CoC) funded agencies, the amount of funding received, what the funding is to be used for, and subsequent outcomes.

FINDING 3: Confusion exists in the Solano community regarding what services and/or programming in Solano County is provided by SHELTER, Inc. and what is provided by Shelter Solano, Inc.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Local agency partners work together to develop and implement transparent reporting of services and programming that clearly differentiates between those provided by SHELTER, Inc. and those provided by Shelter Solano, Inc.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. The City commits to working with CAP Solano JPA to create and maintain a public report to be located on the CAP Solano JPA website that will provide a list of all CAP Solano JPA and Continuum of Care (CoC) funded agencies, the amount of funding received, what the funding is to be used for, and subsequent outcomes.

FINDING 4: The Solano County Civil Grand Jury found it unclear which funding sources awarded to SHELTER, Inc, are specifically assigned to Shelter Solano, Inc., and which funding sources were awarded to SHELTER, Inc. to provide services in Solano County.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Local agency partners work with SHELTER, Inc. and funding providers to establish a more transparent and reconciliation method to clearly disclose which funding sources they receive specifically for Shelter Solano, Inc. and which funding sources SHELTER, Inc. receives that are earmarked for SHELTER, Inc. to provide services in Solano County.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. As with Findings #2 and #3, the City will work with other jurisdictions through our role on CAP Solano JPA to create and maintain a comprehensive report to be maintained on CAP Solano's webpage that will articulate what services are provided by each agency in Solano County. Further, if agencies are receiving funds through CAP Solano JPA and/or the Continuum of Care (CoC), the public report will list each agency, the amount of funding received, what the funding is to be used for, and subsequent outcomes.

FINDING 6: Despite improved collaboration between the service providers, funders, municipal government, and county, there remains a lack of an overall leadership role/authority.

RECOMMENDATION 6 A: Overall leadership with authority to address homelessness is required to provide direction, ensure timely coordination of services, demand accountability, and liaison with the community.

RECOMMENDATION 6 B: All stakeholders request the county provide the leadership, authority, and accountability to ensure timely coordination of services delivered in the most efficient, effective manner.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. Following the Fairfield City Council's Homeless Retreat in 2021, the City took the lead in forming a Regional 2x2 Homeless Subcommittee (2x2) and began collaborating with the cities of Suisun City and Vacaville. The 2x2 was soon joined by the cities of Benicia and Vallejo, and in 2022, now includes the County of Solano and all cities.

The 2x2 has been meeting monthly on average, and recently began the discussion on how best to address homelessness regionally. The 2x2 agreed to modify the current

Community Action Partnership of Solano Joint Powers Authority (CAP Solano JPA) agreement established in 1999 and restructure the board to include elected officials from each jurisdiction. Additionally, a new Technical Advisory Committee will be established with representatives from each jurisdiction experienced in homeless initiatives and policies. Each jurisdiction, through their City Council and Board of Supervisors, is in the process of adopting the revised CAP Solano Joint Powers Agreement.

The newly restructured CAP Solano JPA will be the central coordinator of services and funding, providing a countywide, centralized agency for establishing and distributing necessary resources. This restructure is expected to be complete in the fall of 2022.

FINDING 8: The public is unaware of the volume of money coming into Solano County to address the homeless issue.

RECOMMENDATION 8: CAP Solano, JPA should create a dashboard disclosing the money coming into Solano County; how it is used, by whom, and their return on investment (program outcomes).

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. The City, through our role with CAP Solano JPA, has been assisting in the development of a public report that will be maintained on the CAP Solano JPA webpage. This report will include all CAP Solano JPA and Continuum of Care funded agencies, intended use of funds, and program outcomes. The City would support expanding this report in the future under the newly restructured CAP Solano JPA to include additional jurisdictional funding sources and uses.

FINDING 10: Lack of housing makes it difficult for individuals to successfully graduate out of Shelter Solano, Inc. into permanent housing as required by the Housing First Delivery Model used in Solano County.

RECOMMENDATION 10 A: To successfully address homelessness in Solano County requires that the county and cities work together to secure housing in their respective communities.

RECOMMENDATION 10 B: Engagement and education of the general public around homelessness is required to gain the public's understanding, trust, and input in supporting the county's homeless residents.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. It is anticipated that the newly restructured CAP Solano JPA will again include the development of permanent supportive housing as a priority in its updated Strategic Plan. The City is also committed to continuing the development of housing for all income levels as part of the updated Fairfield Housing Element to be completed in 2022. Additionally, in 2020, the City formed a Housing Services Department to better coordinate the

development of affordable housing. Currently, the City has 500 units in development or pre-development phases. Of those 500 units, approximately 70 units are planned for households at or below 30% of area median income, which represents those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

FINDING 11: Ongoing delays in the completion of the dining hall has impacted Shelter Solano, Inc.'s ability to operate at capacity and contributes to the rising number of individuals living unsheltered.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Continue working towards the projected June 2022 completion date to ensure Shelter Solano, Inc. can operate at full capacity.

City Response: The City concurs that the delay in the dining hall completion has impacted SHELTER Solano's ability to operate at capacity. While SHELTER Inc. was able to secure most of the over \$4 million in construction and startup costs, this still left a gap of over \$1 million. In June 2022, Fairfield City Council approved up to \$1 million in gap funding for the construction completion. Simultaneously, the City worked with State Assemblymember Lori Wilson to secure \$1.2 million in kitchen construction funding in Assembly Bill 178, Budget Act of 2022, thus saving the City \$1 million.

FINDING 12: Direct observation and feedback received during Shelter Solano, Inc. site visit revealed shelter maintenance has been neglected.

RECOMMENDATION 12 A: Adoption of a Regional Service Delivery model in Solano County that stabilizes funding to consistently meet operational needs.

RECOMMENDATION 12 B: Scheduled maintenance becomes a high priority budget item as funding streams stabilize.

City Response: The City neither agrees nor disagrees with this finding. The City of Fairfield serves as the lessee of the property and subleases it to an outside agency to operate an emergency shelter. In 2018, the previous operator of what was then known as Mission Solano, was unable to continue operations and had not been providing ongoing maintenance due to a lack of funding. The property was severely neglected, building structures were not maintained nor ADA compliant, and no funding was available to bring the property back up to standards.

The City then went through a public process to identify and secure a new operator. In February 2019, SHELTER, Inc. took over operations. SHELTER, Inc. formed a subsidiary, SHELTER Solano, Inc. to do business at 310 Beck Avenue, and renamed the facility SHELTER Solano. Since that time, SHELTER Solano has secured funding through grants and other sources to rehab the buildings and add the commercial kitchen, as well as provide for ongoing maintenance. Additionally, the Fairfield Community Services Foundation has provided volunteers and resources to update and improve the landscaping and children's play area, providing for a more welcoming

and attractive site.

FINDING 13: Direct observation, document review, and feedback during the Solano County Civil Grand Jury investigation revealed gaps in service delivery along the entire continuum of services.

RECOMMENDATION 13 A: The county secures a comprehensive independent assessment across the continuum of homeless services to include:

- leadership
- level of collaboration among stakeholders
- funding
- how services are accessed
- quality of services provided
- measurement of outcomes
- mechanism to ensure accountability
- transparency of reporting

RECOMMENDATION 13 B: The county develops a strategic plan that includes a timeline for the implementation of recommendations from the independent assessment in recommendation 13 A.

City Response: The City concurs with this finding. The newly restructured CAP Solano JPA is expected to continue the update to the 5-Year Regional Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 currently underway with the goal of prioritizing funding toward the highest, most critical need. The City supports the Grand Jury's recommendation to include assessments identified in Recommendation 13 A.

FINDING 14: A document review conducted by the Solano County Civil Grand Jury revealed discrepancies and inconsistent accounting and reporting practices among the entities providing services to the homeless in Solano County.

RECOMMENDATION 14 A: Entities use a consistent reporting mechanism for the awarding of funding to keep the community informed and assured that the money is being spent effectively and as intended.

RECOMMENDATION 14 B: County performs or hires a Forensic Accountant to perform a Forensic Audit on money being spent across the continuum of homeless services in Solano County.

City Response: Since the City is not aware of all documents the Grand Jury reviewed and for what agency, the City does not agree nor disagree with this finding. The City does agree that there are inconsistent reporting practices among agencies receiving funding from CAP Solano JPA and the Continuum of Care (CoC). The City supports the restructuring of CAP Solano JPA and the current efforts to require consistent accountability, reporting, and outcomes from all Solano County agencies that receive public funding. The City commits to

working alongside all Solano County jurisdictions through CAP Solano JPA to ensure this transpires.