

City of Santa Fe - Strategic Actions to Strengthen Homelessness Response System

Santa Fe, NM — The City of Santa Fe is taking decisive steps to improve its response to homelessness—addressing urgent needs with compassion, accountability, and a commitment to doing better. As many cities and even our federal government scale back or sidestep this crisis, Santa Fe is choosing to act.

These staff recommendations—pending direction from the Governing Body—are aimed at improving care, increasing services, adding beds, reducing crime, improving street conditions and safety, and rebuilding trust. They include:

1. **Launching a Citywide Street Outreach Program.** The City has secured a contract for a professional, trauma-informed street outreach team to engage individuals experiencing homelessness where they are. This team will offer connections to services, reduce emergency system strain, and support community wellbeing. Urban Alchemy, a national non-profit, will work to hire staff locally for their outreach teams. They currently provide similar services in Austin, Los Angeles, Culver City, San Francisco, Portland and Birmingham.
2. **Shelter Operations at 2801 Cerrillos Road** The City is committed—full stop—to expanding the number of shelter beds in Santa Fe and improving both the number and quality of providers serving our community. Our goal is to add resources, not take them away. We know the services at this location matter deeply, and we will continue working toward a system that meets the need with dignity, professionalism, and care. The only item related to this site on the May 28 agenda is a closed executive session to discuss real estate matters where staff will provide information about the lease and issues at the site. No decisions have been made nor will be made during the executive session. Any next steps would require public discussion and a formal vote. This is not a new conversation. As recently as October 2024, the City has been open about evaluating the lease at 2801 Cerrillos and the conditions surrounding the site.
3. **Establishing a Micro Community at Richards Avenue.** A resolution will come before the Governing Body on June 3 to authorize the City's second Micro Community at 2395 Richards Avenue. This site will primarily serve families with children and is designed to provide privacy, stability, and on-site supportive services. Micro Communities are a scalable, service-rich alternative to traditional shelter models with 24/7 staffing and security. This site is located next to a Fire Station and the GCCC.
4. **Public Town Hall on Future Sites.** The City will host a public town hall on July 1 to engage residents in identifying a second city-owned site for a future Micro Community. This is part of a broader effort to expand access to dignified, effective shelter options across Santa Fe.

Addressing Community Pain Points

We know the impacts of homelessness are not felt equally. Many residents and local businesses—especially near 2801 Cerrillos Road—have experienced real challenges, including public safety concerns, disorder, and deteriorating conditions. These issues are painful, and they are valid. We are not ignoring these problems. We are working to solve them. That means rethinking how services are delivered, bringing in experienced partners, and building a system that works for everyone: unhoused people, neighbors, business owners, and the broader community.

Standing Firm When Others Step Back

Across the country, cities are being forced to backtrack on progress—cutting services, closing shelters, or criminalizing poverty. Santa Fe is choosing a different path. We are doubling down on compassion and professionalism. We are expanding—not shrinking—access to care. We are taking responsibility for the results our residents and our unhoused neighbors deserve.

A System Built to Work

Homelessness in Santa Fe requires more than goodwill—it requires a system that works. The City is building that system: coordinated, professional, trauma-informed, and sustainable. We are committed to supporting service providers, listening to community voices, and doing the hard work it takes to make things better. Because Santa Feans—housed and unhoused alike—deserve nothing less.

Support for Service Providers

Service providers are central to how Santa Fe addresses homelessness, behavioral health, and community needs. The City directly funds dozens of organizations and will continue to do so. These partners deliver critical services across the city—from shelter and housing to outreach and support. As we work to improve outcomes, the City remains committed to backing the organizations doing this work every day.