



The community provided input on the Countywide Strategic Plan to End Homelessness on Dec 4, 2014 in Santa Cruz (Photo: Edward Garner)



Smart Solutions to Homelessness-Become an Ally!

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Public Input Strong for the Countywide Strategic Plan!



WATSONVILLE & SANTA CRUZ, CA-On Dec. 2 & 4, 2014 over 160 members of the public joined in one of the two community conversations focused on how best to prevent and end homelessness in Santa Cruz County. The events, sponsored by United Way of Santa Cruz County, Smart Solutions to Homelessness, and the Homeless Action Partnership (HAP), were planned specifically to generate input for the initial recommendations of the new Strategic Plan.

"This was not a 'check the box meeting'" said event organizer Jessica Wolf. "We truly wanted to hear from the community--their thoughts for what is important and what they felt was missing so far. We had great engagement from participants and we received responses that will be meaningful to incorporate into the plan."
[Read More...](#)

Read the Santa Cruz Sentinel Articles:

What Are Smart Solutions?

Evidence-based

Produce measurable results

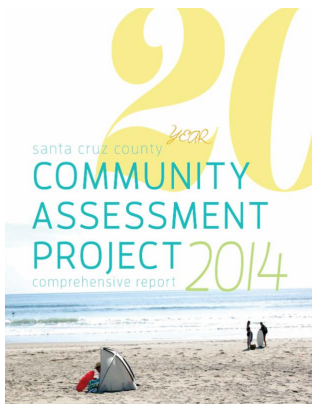
Cost effective

Benefit the entire community

Take a step toward ending homelessness

Support the dignity of each individual

2014 Community Assessment Project Released



The Community Assessment Project (CAP) recognized 20 years of *Measuring Progress, Improving Our County* on November 24th. CAP provides valuable data on our community's Health, Education, Economy, Public Safety, Natural Environment and Social Environment. [View the Report online and learn more here!](#)

Our VISION is a Santa Cruz County in which every community member has some form of safe shelter, and where

Powerful Video, Needs of People Who Are Homeless, Created and Used to Inform Public Forums



Needs of People Who Are Homeless

Check out the powerful video created by Annette March (of [Not the Other: Oral Histories Project](#)) and Smart Solutions. This video was prepared in part for Santa Cruz County's Strategic Planning Process to collect input from individuals experiencing homelessness in Santa Cruz County. Watch and listen as several people share what they need and what they would like to see reflected in the Plan.

Tiny Houses, Large Solutions?



Minim House, center, at Boneyard Studios.
(Photo: John Light/Moyers & Company)

For the last few years, people across the country have begun to look at "tiny houses" as an inexpensive and practical approach to housing people who are otherwise unable to afford housing in their communities. The idea is quite simple: we can change our society's assumptions about what makes a viable living space. At the center of this change is the fact that many people are indicating they would be quite content with an efficient, very small dwelling to call home. These articles explain and explore the possibilities...

[Bill Moyers Website](#)

[YES Magazine](#)

[San Jose Considers Microhouses](#)

[San Francisco Guardian Examines "Housing First"](#)

homelessness is a rare occurrence.

Our MISSION is to improve the way Santa Cruz County works collaboratively to reduce and ultimately end homelessness.

Welcome Robyn McKeen



Robyn McKeen joins the Smart Solutions to Homelessness effort with seven years of experience in social services, including 2.5 years at United Way preceded by 4 years in homelessness and affordable housing direct service. She brings strong organizational and facilitation skills and demonstrated effectiveness as a community organizer.

After receiving her BA at UC Santa Cruz in 2005, she managed the Children's Services Department at an emergency and transitional shelter at the YWCA in Snohomish County, WA. Returning to California, she served as the Resource Coordinator for two HUD-compliant affordable housing complexes in East San Jose and Morgan Hill for two years before joining the United Way team. As a Community Organizer at UW, she currently provides staff support and coordination for the Santa Cruz County Children's Network and Community Prevention Partners, and is enthusiastic about the opportunity to circle back to the fundamental human need of housing. Please join us in welcoming her to the team!



Join us at United Way of Santa Cruz County



Join us at Smart Solutions