OUR VISION
is to end homelessness in Sonoma County

OUR MISSION
is to assist people to transition from homelessness to a permanent home

THESE GUIDELINES
inform and support the strategic plan and our work

MINIMIZE BARRIERS
Quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without barriers to entry • Focus on client expectations and natural consequences

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS
Build strong partnerships with human services organizations, government, nonprofits, healthcare sector, and businesses that share our vision to end homelessness in Sonoma County

EXPAND PHYSICAL PRESENCE
Expand our presence throughout Sonoma County as critical way to achieve our vision

REACH THE MOST VULNERABLE
Establish outcomes, implement services, and report on specific goals and strategies to reduce length of stay at the shelter and transition chronically homeless into permanent housing (including PSH).

MEET CLIENT NEED
Explore ways to provide for the unique housing needs of clients, such as Sober Living Environments, gender-specific housing, family-friendly housing, and/or LGBTQI-friendly housing

PRIORITIZE TRAINING
Provide training for staff on how to deliver services to perform in a low-barrier, housing-focused environment • Provide tools and training to enable efficient data entry and access to housing and service availability in the County
Goal 1. HOUSING
Provide housing and services that assist clients to obtain and keep housing and improve their quality of life

OUTREACH
Provide housing-oriented outreach and in-field assessment • Create partnerships with other services providers to strengthen data sharing

SHELTER AND RESPITE
Offer short-term adult shelter and family shelter • Maintain a winter shelter as needed • Expand COTS respite and develop a partnership with a healthcare provider to meet the needs of respite population • Provide in-home case management and targeted services for up to two years after program exit

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
Explore strategies to house permanent supportive housing clients in single occupancy units • Obtain free and/or discounted houses • Expand Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) by 67% and Integrity Housing by 37%

RAPID RE-HOUSING
Double Rapid Re-Housing efforts • Open a service location in Santa Rosa that specializes in Rapid Re-Housing and provides access to continuum of services and housing

Goal 2. SERVICES
Meet the unique service needs of our clients and community

HEALTH SERVICES
Provide service options for individuals choosing to seek support for addiction, mental health challenges, and other health-related needs.

CHILDREN’S SERVICES
Collaborate with existing community resources, including quality, affordable childcare services and afterschool programs

INCOME SERVICES
Provide benefits advocacy to assist clients with income and connect them to local resources

FOOD SERVICES
Provide healthy meals for people living in the emergency shelter and a daily lunch for any community member experiencing food insecurity • Partner with organizations with food-related missions • Develop menus that improve overall health • Provide education and training on nutritious meal preparation • Upgrade facilities to create a dignified and positive client experience • Leverage food programs with outreach
Goal 3. COMMUNITY

Strengthen our internal company culture and external community relations

MISSION CULTURE
Create a mission-oriented company culture that enables employees to thrive and experience a rewarding career. • Recruit and support talent at all levels through hiring, training, retention, and professional development. • Provide professional human resources support.

TOOLS
Provide the tools and technology employees need. • Strengthen and build leadership capacity. • Ensure employees have the training and skills needed to perform their work with excellence and confidence.

STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE
Document our practices and continually measure our accountability toward our vision to end homelessness. • Create and implement systematized performance standards for all programs to enable COTS' capacity to grow, as needed. • Develop and track key performance indicators.

BOARD INVOLVEMENT
Strengthen active involvement from the Board of Directors in fund development, community outreach, and programs. • Recruit influential board members from outside the Petaluma area to support our expansion into other areas of Sonoma County.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL PRESENCE
Generate community awareness about COTS' services, success, and needs. • Develop and implement a strategy to engage the community beyond Petaluma. • Develop a national and regional presence at conferences as attendees and/or presenters. • Participate in relevant professional associations to understand and implement evidence-based practices and align with state and national priorities for ending homelessness.

CLIENT FOCUS
Increase outreach clients into the community so that individuals and families experiencing homelessness and food insecurity know how to access COTS' services and housing.

VOLUNTEERISM
Promote volunteerism that supports our mission and enhance the experience that community volunteers have with our organization and with those we serve.
Goal 4. SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure financially sustainability and adequate resources

THINK LIKE A BUSINESS

Establish a social enterprises initiative that will generate income for COTS and employ people experiencing homelessness • Develop a business plans for a yard maintenance social enterprise and consulting practice designed to assist government agencies and nonprofits to implement best practices in ending homelessness • Add cash generators through social enterprise, Integrity Housing, and equitable rent increases • Provide technical assistance on a fee-for-service basis • Generate modest fee-based income from food programs

GROW AND SAVE

Plan for adequate capital replacement by placing $32,000 per year into a capital reserves fund • Allocate at least 50% of planned gift income received toward our endowment growth • Grow philanthropic revenue received by a total of 9% over five years

HIRE WELL

Attract and retain talent by providing more competitive pay and benefits • Grow by using sustainable staffing models and outsourcing, as needed • Control costs by conducting an annual assessment of contracted services – costs and benefits.

This five-year strategic plan was created by the COTS Strategic Planning Team, facilitated by independent consultant Dr. B.J. Bischoff, over a three-month period from August to November 2017. The Strategic Planning Team was comprised of members of the Board of Directors and staff.