

Nolan Sullivan Presentation differs from the reality in Sebastopol

The Director's presentation does make the homeless situation look pretty good in Sebastopol. The reality on the street is different.

From the Director's point of view (the presentation), things are going well, and the county is pushing on with their successful initiatives to get homeless under control in the county. Why does it not feel successful in Sebastopol?

Mr. Sullivan may in fact be unaware of the extent of the homelessness problem in Sebastopol. The numbers in his presentation suggest the County is indeed providing significant resources and funding to this city. The Point in Time report shows a dramatic reduction in homelessness in the city. Below are some observations of how the presentation differing from our perception of reality in the city.

Issue 1. – How many homeless are in Sebastopol?

- **County View:** The numbers of unhoused homeless are only 16 in the new Point in Time Count. This is great progress.
- **Sebastopol Reality:** We have a visible homeless problem through downtown and in the Laguna. We had a fire in the Laguna two weeks ago. Fortunately, not during a red flag warning.

Homeless people have been sleeping at city hall and around the library and central square for several years now. Public Works reports a substantial cost associated with cleaning up human waste and drug paraphernalia in public areas downtown each morning. Significant time and expense is incurred repairing damage done by homeless trying to get into fenced areas or locked buildings.

Business owners report a similar burden. Our bootmaker recently reported daily cleanup after a homeless person sleeping in his doorway. Another homeless person has taken up residence at the side door at the old Rite Aid. There are an increasing number of motorhomes moving into retail parking lots around the city.

Our police force reports 50% of their patrol time is spent on the homeless and issues related to the homeless. This was before they started making 40+ calls a month at Elderberry Commons.

These increased demands are being put on a police force that cannot be fully staffed due to budget shortfalls.

Issue 2: Measure O spending directed into Sebastopol.

County View: According to the presentation the city is receiving hundreds of thousands in measure O dollars each year.

Sebastopol Reality: The hundreds of millions of dollars in Measure O money does not appear in the City budgets for the years shown on the slides.

Requests for funding to cover the costs of increased police response to Elderberry has been turned down repeatedly. While the county did contribute about \$50,000 for half an outreach coordinator, that ended this year.

Issue 3: 278 MST calls in Sebastopol this year.

County view: The highly successful MST program has provided 278 service calls in Sebastopol. Seems like a significant number of calls to the smallest town in the County.

Sebastopol Reality: The MST calls are also invisible. There have been no comments at public meetings about MST being in the city nearly every day? In fact, our mayor expressed unhappiness with the lack of MST support and proposed creating our own service. Our acting police chief indicated that MST support response times are so long that the issues are frequently resolved by the time they arrive.

There are many ways the county and the city can cooperate and improve the impact of the significant investment in homelessness. It appears our homeless are also West counties homeless. The new data included in Mr. Sullivan's presentation shows significant declines in every region of the county except West County. 2025 is a great time for the County to focus their efforts on reducing the homeless population in West County and reducing the homeless burden on the city of Sebastopol.

Point-in-Time Count

- 2025 **DRAFT**
Numbers by City
and Overall.
- Final Count to be
released in
Aug/Sept 2025.

JURISDICTION	UNSHelterED			SHelterED			TOTAL		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
North County	103	141	60	15	16	31	118	152	91
Cloverdale	9	6	7	0	3	4	9	9	11
Healdsburg	18	37	12	15	13	17	33	50	29
Town of Windsor	26	26	23	0	0	10	26	26	33
Unincorporated	50	67	18	0	0	0	50	67	18
South County	337	434	168	163	181	174	500	615	342
Cotati	9	21	0	6	10	6	15	31	6
Petaluma	157	143	88	88	97	103	245	240	191
Rohnert Park	141	205	46	69	74	65	210	279	111
Unincorporated	30	65	34	0	0	0	30	65	34
West County	143	128	137	70	49	44	213	177	181
Sebastopol	47	108	16	40	10	0	87	118	16
Unincorporated	96	20	121	30	39	44	126	59	165
Sonoma Valley	109	74	82	20	12	8	129	86	90
Sonoma	40	13	15	0	0	0	40	13	15
Unincorporated	69	61	67	20	12	8	89	73	75
Santa Rosa	599	805	676	695	664	552	1,294	1,469	1,228
Santa Rosa	465	701	588	695	664	552	1,160	1,365	1,140
Unincorporated	134	104	88	0	0	0	134	104	88
Undisclosed Location	0	0	0	12	23	20	12	23	20
Total	1,291	1,577	1,123	975	945	829	2,266	2,522	1,952