



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Initiatives Expand Shelter Options, Create Additional Paths for People to End Their Homelessness

LISTENING SESSIONS INFORMED EFFORTS TO ADD NEW SHELTER, DEVELOP A HOMELESSNESS DIVERSION INITIATIVE

SAN DIEGO—Mayor Todd Gloria, Council President Sean Elo-Rivera, Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, and San Diego Housing Commission Senior Vice President of Homelessness Housing Innovations Casey Snell today announced a package of new initiatives to expand shelter and the options to address participants' individual needs and provide a path toward resolving their homelessness.

The new initiatives include adding 363 beds to the shelter system and implementing a shelter-focused homelessness diversion effort to free up additional beds.

Starting Dec. 1, an additional 165 shelter beds will be made available for single adult men, seniors aged 55 and older and veterans at the campus of Veterans Village of San Diego (VSD) through a master lease and contract with the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC). An SDHC contract with the San Diego Rescue Mission will also add 37 beds to the shelter system, and the Alcohol Use Disorder Shelter (previously known as the Serial Inebriate Program) will add 56 beds, in collaboration with the County of San Diego, which provides services to participants. Another 105 beds would become available at a motel site that would be converted into a non-congregate shelter.

"With hundreds of new beds at multiple sites, we are delivering on our commitment to ensure that no one who is currently sheltered will be sent back to the streets," said San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria. "This is all possible thanks to close cooperation between my administration, the Housing Commission, the City Council, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness and our network of service providers — all who share the same goal of getting people off the street and connected to care."

The interventions discussed today are the result of the Short-Term Action Plan on Homelessness that the City Council asked the City's Homelessness Strategies and Solutions Department (HSSD) and SDHC to develop. The action plan was approved Oct. 1, 2024.

Informed by listening sessions with stakeholders, the new options reflect the continued shift toward a system-level approach to addressing sheltering and supportive service needs of the community.

“Our goal is to get every person experiencing homelessness in San Diego into permanent housing,” Council President Sean Elo-Rivera said. “Doing that will require us to listen to those who have experienced homelessness, collaborate with multiple partners, and make use of all of the resources and tools available. Our short-term action plan did just that, and the options we’re announcing today are the product of that work. This serves as a model for us to move forward in a collaborative process and find the most effective ways to shelter and find homes for San Diego residents in need.”

“These 363 additional beds will allow us to make further progress in moving people off the streets and into shelter and housing,” said Councilmember Stephen Whitburn. “I’m glad that many of these beds will be filled by seniors and veterans who deserve our community’s support.”

SDHC, in collaboration with the Regional Task Force on Homelessness and service providers, will launch an initiative Nov. 1 to focus diversion resources on connecting current shelter participants to longer-term housing more quickly, freeing up their shelter beds to serve others.

Diversion strategies employing flexible financial assistance, shared housing strategies and targeted case management can result in positive outcomes for shelter participants who are experiencing homelessness for the first time or who have existing support systems and the ability to end their homelessness without a long-term subsidy.

“Through recent listening sessions, we have heard from shelter participants that more choices, including non-congregate shelter spaces, and services are needed,” SDHC President and CEO Lisa Jones said. “Working with the Mayor, City Council and service providers, we are making intentional and thoughtful efforts to address these needs and center our approach on delivering the resources needed to best serve our unhoused neighbors.”

Father Joe’s Villages will operate the shelter beds for single adult men and seniors at the VVSD campus, and VVSD will operate the shelter beds for veterans.

“We are honored to have the opportunity to make an even greater impact for people experiencing homelessness in our region through this new partnership at Veterans Village of San Diego,” Father Joe’s Villages President and CEO Deacon Jim Vargas said. “At Father Joe’s Villages, we know that shelter isn’t one-size-fits-all. To adequately address the growing homelessness crisis, we must provide a diversity of tailored shelter options alongside wraparound services, such as healthcare and social work, for increasingly vulnerable populations. We commend the Mayor and the City for listening to the voices of our neighbors and providing intentional community settings.”

“Veterans Village of San Diego is proud to partner with the City of San Diego, San Diego Housing Commission and Father Joe’s Villages to provide critically needed shelter beds for our community,” VVSD President and CEO Akilah Templeton said. “Our core mission is to support America’s veterans as they transition out of homelessness. This partnership reflects our dedication to ensuring that they, along with seniors, have a place to call home.”

Participants residing at the shelter currently operating at Golden Hall, which will close by the end of the year, will be prioritized for placement in the new shelter beds if they do not exit to housing before the shelter's closure.

Golden Hall participants continue to work with on-site case managers and partnering service providers to develop a transition plan that best meets their needs. Dozens have selected to transfer to the City's Safe Sleeping program, which recently added 235 tent spaces; a handful will transition into long-term housing; and appropriate shelter placements will be available through these new initiatives for any remaining participants.

The City [temporarily suspended client intakes](#) at the 264-bed Golden Hall shelter earlier this year. Since then, intensive housing efforts, family reunification assessments and other programs have connected shelter residents to resources. The 165 individuals remaining at Golden Hall are anticipated to transition to permanent housing or other programs before Dec. 20.

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