



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# SERVING THE HOMELESS

UPDATES ON HOMELESS SERVICES IN THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

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## News Briefs

Two public meetings were held recently to discuss the latest plans for the Cortez Hill Family Center. A July 30 community meeting attracted approximately 25 residents. Issues discussed included the conditional use permit, environmental review, and the process for selecting the center's operator. City staff answered questions. Another presentation was made to the Centre City Development Corp. Projects Committee on Aug. 1.

On Aug. 1, a plan to develop transitional housing for displaced seniors was approved by the City Council's Land Use and Housing Committee. Under the plan, the City would help house up to 50 displaced seniors in downtown. The City has committed to provide 100 new transitional housing beds for homeless people with special needs this year. The full Council is scheduled to consider the plan this fall.

On July 20 and 21, City Attorney's Office staff volunteered at Stand Down. The annual event, sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of San Diego, provides homeless veterans with food, shelter, benefits counseling, legal and medical services, and employment and housing referrals. The City Attorney's Criminal Division worked with the Public Defender's Office and the Superior Court to help clear misdemeanor warrants of participants.

## Unique City/County Program Houses 250 Homeless Persons

As of July 1, a unique City/County collaborative program completed its goal of placing 250 downtown homeless persons in housing combined with treatment, rehabilitation, and other services.

The Integrated Services Program is funded through Assembly Bill 2034 and specifically assists downtown homeless people who are mentally ill or dually diagnosed (mentally ill with substance abuse problems).

A three-year, \$10.1 million grant from the state Department of Mental Health was awarded to the County in November 2000. The funding allows the program to assist 250 homeless individuals at a time.

The collaborative program is the only AB 2034 program that has met its goals to date and one of the few to provide housing.

The majority of funding and staffing for housing is provided by the City and two of its agencies, Centre City Development Corp. and San Diego Housing Commission. Additionally, the City's Homeless Outreach Team provides street outreach with the support of the Downtown San Diego Partnership, Centre City Development Corp. and the County. County Mental Health Services also manages program services.

A number of social service providers are partners in this effort, including lead contractors Telecare Corp. and the

Community Research Foundation. Others taking part include Episcopal Community Services, Catholic Charities, Family Health Centers, the Alpha Project, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, St. Vincent de Paul, Volunteers of America, and the Vietnam Veterans of San Diego.

## Brush Fire Prevention Project Puts Homeless to Work

To help prevent brush fires, the City's Fire and Life Safety Services has hired the nonprofit Alpha Project to cut weeds in urban canyons. This fire prevention project not only provides a crucial service to numerous communities threatened by brush fires, it provides immediate employment opportunities to homeless individuals until they find other, more permanent jobs.

### More Information About Homeless Services

The City's Homeless Services Program is administered by the Community Services Division of the City's Community and Economic Development Department. For more information about the Homeless Services Program, call (619) 533-6525, or visit the City's web site [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov) and click on Services.