



Solving Silicon Valley's Housing and Homeless Crisis

Links to "the Jungle" encampment media coverage

Last month's closure of "the Jungle," a 68-acre homeless encampment along the Coyote Creek watershed in San José, received national news coverage. While 144 unsheltered individuals were housed and 53 more had rental housing vouchers in hand prior to the encampment's closure, many more had to move out of their campsites on a rainy December 4, 2014, despite months of advance notice. The media captured scenes of drenched families pushing overflowing grocery carts through thick mud while teams of city contractors and workers clad in hazmat suits from the Santa Clara Valley Water District began removing what turned out to be more than 600 tons of garbage and hundreds of abandoned carts. Below are links to some of the most accurate news stories about this encampment closure.

While the County of Santa Clara and City of San José consider housing very low-income families their joint mission, they are up against both a regional affordable housing crisis and difficult odds. "It's almost like a Tale of Two Cities," Destination: Home Executive Director Jennifer Loving told reporters covering the Jungle encampment story. On the one hand, Silicon Valley's extreme wealth and influx of tech workers are driving up the region's housing prices, where the median cost of a rental unit in San José is nearly \$3,000. On the other, a 2.5% vacancy rate, the severe shortage of affordable housing and the high cost of living here can leave low-income working families - even those with housing vouchers - homeless. And it can happen overnight: There are 7,567 homeless people living in Santa Clara County, with 75% of those living in unsheltered locations, according to the 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress.

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/tent-cities-rise-amid-affordable-housing-shortage-silicon-valley/>

[KQED Newsroom \(coverage starts at 12min29sec\): http://video.kqed.org/video/2365382556/](http://video.kqed.org/video/2365382556/)

http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_27069723/mercury-news-editorial-jungle-residents-still-need-city

<http://mobile.nytimes.com/2014/12/05/us/driven-from-silicon-valleys-jungle-homeless-face-limited-options.html?smid=nytcore-ipad-share&smprod=nytcore-ipad&r=3&referrer=>

<http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-silicon-valley-homeless-20141204-story.html#page=1>

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/12/jungle-homeless-camp-san-jose-silicon-valley-video>

Only way to end homelessness is to provide housing for those who need it

Santa Clara County, the City of San José, HACSC, Destination: Home and other nonprofit partners have embraced the "Housing First" strategy for reducing chronic homelessness. This model advocates for providing housing first, and surrounding that housing with supportive services to ensure recovery, stability and a decrease of public systems usage. Our work to respond to the regional crisis of homelessness is ongoing. Examples of our long-term partnerships include:

- Since 1992, when the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara (HACSC) began administering rental assistance for the Shelter Plus Care (now Continuum of Care) program, more than \$84 million has been spent on rental assistance for nearly 2,500 homeless families and individuals in Santa Clara County. In 2006, HACSC established a Housing Choice Voucher waiting list preference to assist chronically homeless applicants. In 2010, HACSC launched the Chronically Homeless Direct Referral program, which prioritizes housing for those enrolled in and actively receiving case management services. This program - designed to match vouchers and appropriate case management services with chronically homeless families quickly and effectively - has assisted 750 chronically homeless families. (Source: HACSC brochure, "Addressing the Needs of those Without Housing" data as of June 30, 2013)



- The Opportunity Center of the Midpeninsula in Palo Alto has provided 193 homeless households with homes of their own and assisted many more individuals and families in finding their ways back to productive, self-sufficient lives. Developed in 2006 by HACSC, Community Working Group and a broad coalition of citizens, charities, local governments and educators, the Opportunity Center combines 88 units of extremely low-income permanent housing with an on-site, drop-in service center for those living without housing and at risk of becoming homeless, without placing requirements on current employment. The center has about 120 drop-in service center clients per day and 44,000 drop-in service center visits per year. (Source: HACSC brochure, "Addressing the Needs of those Without Housing" data as of June 30, 2013)
- Destination: Home (*the public-private partnership that serves as the regional convener for issues related to homelessness*) has been leading a countywide effort to establish a practical and coordinated regional strategy - The Community Plan to End Homelessness. More than 200 stakeholders from public agencies, private-sector organizations, and community-based organizations have participated in this process over the past year. (Source: destinationhomesc.org)
- Between fiscal years 2013-2015, San José's City Council appropriated \$4 million for a rapid rehousing and supportive services strategy to permanently house homeless individuals who have been living in encampments along City waterways. The City's rapid rehousing pilot program was used to find housing for the Jungle residents. In coordination with public and private agencies throughout the County, the City's Homelessness Response Team uses a multi-faceted approach that includes advocating for policies, programs, and funding that support ending and preventing homelessness; researching best practices; and developing and implementing programs that serve homeless and chronically homeless persons residing in San José. (Source: *San José Housing Dept. Dec. 1, 2014 memo*)
- In October 2014, the County approved \$1 million to provide shelter and supportive services to homeless individuals and families during the cold weather season. This included replacing the 125 beds and 15,000 person-shelter days that had been provided at the Sunnyvale Armory cold weather shelter (*where new affordable housing units are being built*) with motel vouchers, emergency shelters and services at various locations. (Source: *County of Santa Clara Oct. 7, 2014 memo to Board of Supervisors*)