

Craig Gustafson, a spokesman for Mayor Kevin Faulconer, listed action steps the mayor has taken to address homelessness this year after a request from Voice of San Diego. Gustafson's response has been lightly edited for clarity.

The city continues to work with regional partners – including the San Diego Housing Commission, the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, county leaders and service providers – on several different avenues to help reduce homelessness.

On June 21, the mayor released a ["Housing SD" plan](#) – a set of proposals that would increase housing supply, lower costs and promote smart growth to address the lack of housing affordability for low- and middle-income San Diegans. Creating more housing opportunities will help keep folks on the verge of homelessness from ending up on the street.

The city is also taking the following actions:

- Late last year, the Mayor's Office asked the San Diego Housing Commission to analyze the operations of the City's three shelters – PATH Connections, Father Joe's Village and the YWCA – and recommend changes to eliminate or lower barriers of entry. Based on those recommendations, we're finalizing new contractual terms with those service providers and expect to have those in place by fall.
- Per the city's request, the San Diego Housing Commission has contracted with the Downtown San Diego Partnership to expand its Family Reunification Program. The contract was signed on June 1. Now that staff is in place the program kicked off June 26 with the goal of reconnecting 400 homeless individuals with their family/friends over a six-month period.
- Following the request for statement of qualifications process for the assessment center, the city is using the responses to develop a request for proposals to be released in July.
- The city continues to look for viable locations to expand the existing storage program that Think Dignity operates for homeless individuals to store their personal property. This would result in less personal belongings on the street and allow individuals to take the necessary steps – job interviews, counseling, etc. – to turn their lives around without fear of losing their belongings.
- The Mayor's Office is assisting the City Attorney's Office to expand the SMART "pilot" program. The City/County grant proposal was recently selected to receive a \$6 million grant from the state to do so. A potential site for the program's expansion was scheduled for the City Council's Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee on June 28 and then to the full City Council.
- The Regional Task Force on the Homeless is also moving forward on the 211 diversion program to keep people who are homeless or on the verge of homelessness from entering a shelter in the first place. The city is standing by to provide financial support once they identify how much funding they require. Implementation is scheduled for fall 2017. (Note: Gustafson later clarified that a separately promised 24/7 hotline that homeless folks and those who want to help them could call at any time to connect them to a shelter bed remains in the works with the Regional Task Force.)
- San Diego police officers are now using the Homeless Management Information System computer system that service providers use to improve data collection on homeless individuals accessing services.
- The county increased the number of Psychiatric Emergency Response Team clinicians working with the homeless throughout the region by 10, with eight of those assigned to the City of San Diego.

- Also, in cooperation with the county, the General Relief Program was recently expanded to Mission Bay Park.