

SUBJECT: Father Joe's Villages Responds to Comprehensive Shelter Strategy and Passage of Unsafe Camping Ordinance

On Tuesday, the San Diego City Council passed a measure aimed at addressing homelessness. The Unsafe Camping Ordinance makes it illegal to camp on public property when shelter options are available.

The City Council also unveiled a strategy to expand shelters, open safe campgrounds and provide more wrap-around services and connections to provide support for people experiencing homelessness.

Please consider the following statement from Deacon Jim Vargas, president and CEO at Father Joe's Villages:

"Adequately expanding the number and types of shelters, providing wrap-around services and opening safe campgrounds for people experiencing homelessness is critical.

We must also invest in compassionate street outreach solutions and connect our neighbors in need with healthcare and wrap-around services when administering homelessness measures. We are grateful the Mayor understands that an enforcement-only approach would harm our neighbors experiencing homelessness.

With the Regional Task Force on Homelessness reporting [a 22 percent increase in homelessness](#) over the last year, including among seniors and women, we need more accessible housing, shelter options, and services now.

Our homelessness crisis is a housing crisis. We will continue to increase services here at Father Joe's Villages, and we urge the City to prioritize affordable housing. Once people have a safe, stable place to live, we can better uplift them with a diversity of wrap-around services like medical care, counseling, and other services to help them stay on a healthy productive path."

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Deacon Jim Vargas is available for comment and interviews regarding this matter. To schedule an interview, please contact Byron Kimball at Byron@gomixte.com or 619-732-0789 x 297.
