MYTH

We can't end homelessness

FALSE

Housing is the solution

TRUE

Research by the National Alliance to End Homelessness shows that providing supportive housing with services can end homelessness. Since 2015, more than 3,700 of us have ended our homelessness and 93% of us remain stably housed. To help the rest of us, we need to build thousands more new housing units throughout San José and Santa Clara County by 2020.

Have questions?
Want to get involved?
Learn more at
bluetarpproject.com
destinationhomesv.org

MYTH

If we build more housing, more homeless people will move here

FALSE

83% of us lived here before we became homeless

TRUE

Most of us were living here before we became homeless, according to the *2017 City of San José Homeless Census and Survey*. We are family members, veterans and friends, just like everybody else who lives here. We are valuable members of the community and appreciate it when we are treated that way. We are your neighbors.

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MYTH

Homeless people do not want housing

FALSE

More than 90% of us want a home

TRUE

We do not want to live without a home. We do not want to sleep in a tent or car or under a bridge, especially in winter. According to the *2017 City of San José Homeless Census and Survey*, 91% of us want to move into housing today, and this percentage will increase when new supportive housing becomes available to us in our communities.

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MYTH

Homeless people are violent and dangerous

FALSE

We are less likely to commit a violent crime than you are

TRUE

We are vulnerable and constantly at risk. According to *Criminality and Homeless Men: An Empirical Assessment*, we are more likely to be the victim of a violent crime than to commit one. Our lives are so dangerous and stressful that more than 100 that of us died while living on the streets in 2016. It is not accurate, however, to associate us with violence and crime.

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MYTH

There is nothing I can do to help end homelessness

FALSE

1. Say hello
2. Spread the word
3. Get involved

TRUE

You can take action in your community and day-to-day life to make a difference. 1) Saying hello and acknowledging us in your neighborhood can be incredibly powerful and help restore dignity for us and for our entire community. Instead of passing by, stop for a minute to get to know us. 2) Tell your family and friends that housing is the solution to homelessness. Talk about ending homelessness at dinner tables and community meetings in your neighborhood. 3) Volunteer at a local nonprofit working to end homelessness. If you don't know where to start, ask a friend.

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MYTH

Homeless people are all mentally ill

FALSE

Some of us struggle with mental illness, just like people who have homes do

TRUE

According to the *2017 City of San José Homeless Census and Survey*, 33% of us suffer from some type of mental illness, 28% have a physical disability, 25% have a chronic health problem and 15% suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Supportive housing is successful for us because services are always included. Case workers help us find jobs, get involved in the community, and overcome substance abuse, mental and physical health problems. When we have homes, it will be easier to work on these issues.

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MYTH

Building new housing is too expensive

FALSE

Housing us can save taxpayer money

TRUE

The truth is that solving homelessness is cheaper than managing it. According to *Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley*, public services cost $62,000 per year for each of the most vulnerable among us. After moving into supportive housing, that cost is reduced to $20,000. In other words, each one of us who gets housing saves taxpayers about $42,000 every year. Convincing, right?

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MYTH

Homelessness is neverending

FALSE

40% of us have been homeless for less than a year

TRUE

24% of us have been homeless for less than six months. At some point, each of us became homeless for the first time. For many of us, homelessness is not part of a long and recurring history, but due to a recent, one-time misfortune. Causes of our homelessness include unstable living conditions, poverty, housing scarcity and family problems. According to the *2017 City of San José Homeless Census and Survey*, 57% of us have become homeless on more than one occasion.

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