

New Point in Time Count shows 20 percent less unsheltered homeless individuals in Costa Mesa

Based on numbers released Wednesday May 11 by the County of Orange, Costa Mesa's extensive measures to reduce homelessness are paying dividends as the number of unsheltered homeless people living in Costa Mesa dropped by 20 percent, compared to the previous count performed in 2019.

"This is fantastic news," Mayor John Stephens said. "I'm grateful to City staff and Mercy House for their heroic work of housing so many people despite the obstacles posed by the pandemic. Since the 2019 count, we have permanently housed a total of 215 individuals, and a Federal court order allows us to enforce laws against camping in our public spaces. Through the hard work of many and the Council's decisive actions, we are in a much better place than we were three years ago."

The Point in Time Count by the County of Orange is conducted biennially to determine the number of people experiencing homelessness on a given night. While the last count took place in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the 2021 count to February 22, 2022 through February 24, 2022.

Costa Mesa Outreach staff and members of the City's Network for Homeless Solutions assisted with the count, which provides vital information that helps the City better understand homelessness and helps guide the City's provision of services.

The positive results are attributed to several factors. First, the City Council's will to address homelessness by creating a temporary 50-bed Bridge Shelter in April of 2019, followed by the completion of the 72-bed permanent Bridge Shelter that

opened in April of 2021 on Airway Avenue.

Costa Mesa partnered with the City of Newport Beach on the permanent shelter for a more regional approach to address homelessness. "The partnership with Newport beach has been exceptional as they work with our street outreach, volunteer and housing efforts," Assistant City Manager Susan Price said.

In addition, since 2013 the City's Network for Homeless Solutions has developed a comprehensive response to homelessness, including street outreach, community policing, nuisance abatement, intensive case management, housing navigation and sustainability, rental assistance, workforce development, affordable/supportive housing and much more.

The Network for Homeless Solutions is a collaborative effort between multiple City departments, Mercy House and other nonprofits and faith-based organizations such as Trellis and the Lighthouse Church.

Since opening its doors in April of 2021, the permanent Bridge Shelter has assisted a total of 204 individuals with shelter and associated services, 33 of whom ended their homelessness by securing permanent housing.

To view the County of Orange's Point in Time Count [click here](#).