



SAN DIEGO  
HOUSING  
COMMISSION

**News Release**

January 19, 2016

**ONE WEEK TO GO—  
DONATIONS OF WINTER COATS AND RAIN GEAR URGENTLY  
NEEDED FOR THE 10<sup>th</sup> PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT  
Resource Fair, Golden Hall on January 27**

**San Diego, CA** – With only a week left to go before [The 10<sup>th</sup> Project Homeless Connect – Downtown San Diego](#), San Diego City Council President Sherri Lightner today issued an urgent call for new or gently used rain gear and winter coats to help homeless San Diegans weather the El Niño storms that are expected to make this year one of the wettest winters on record ([watch the video](#)).

“Project Homeless Connect can be a very important step in helping homeless San Diegans begin to put their lives back together,” said Council President Lightner, who donated two down jackets.

Donations of raincoats, winter jackets, blankets, sweatshirts, umbrellas, gloves and shoes may be dropped off in Golden Hall at the San Diego Community Concourse, 202 C St., on the day before the event, Tuesday, January 26, 2016, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Joining Council President Lightner – and contributing some of the first items to the donation drive along with her – were San Diego City Councilmembers David Alvarez, Chris Cate and Scott Sherman.

“This is really a one-stop shop, if there ever was one, for services for the homeless men, women and unfortunately children as well,” Councilmember Alvarez said about Project Homeless Connect. He donated a purple backpack.

Councilmember Cate, who donated a blanket, an umbrella, and a package of new socks, attended Project Homeless Connect for the first time last year.

“I was blown away by the number of services being offered to the homeless and the number of volunteers from throughout the City who were providing those services,” said Councilmember Cate.

A long-time supporter of Project Homeless Connect, Councilmember Sherman donated several pairs of brand-new socks.

“I urge everyone in the community, if you have a chance, to donate or get out and volunteer your time,” said Councilmember Sherman.

Service providers who can assist with vision exams, employment counseling and substance abuse counseling are still needed, and can register at [www.sdhc.org](http://www.sdhc.org).

Mayor Kevin Faulconer will serve as Honorary Chairman of the 10<sup>th</sup> Project Homeless Connect – Downtown San Diego, which will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, in Golden Hall.

“Project Homeless Connect addresses both the immediate and longer-term needs of homeless San Diegans,” said Richard C. Gentry, President & CEO of the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC), the event’s lead organizer, as he thanked Mayor Faulconer, Council President Lightner and the City Council for their support of Project Homeless Connect over the years.

Father Joe’s Villages will provide hot meals for homeless San Diegans at Project Homeless Connect, as well as staff to register participants.

“The only way to break the cycle of homelessness is to connect them with these services,” said Deacon Jim Vargas, President & CEO of Father Joe’s Villages, who donated a gray sweatshirt.

Last year Project Homeless Connect assisted 1,145 homeless San Diegans, and more than 80 organizations provided services, such as flu shots, medical screenings, DMV-issued identification cards, haircuts and hot meals and snacks.

At the kickoff event, SDHC provided a profile of the homeless men and women who attended [The 9th Project Homeless Connect](#), which was held on January 28, 2015. The profile was based on a survey of the participants conducted during the resource fair:

- More than 60 percent were either living on the streets, in their vehicles or in shelters.
- 79 percent were single,
- 59.8 percent were men, and
- 57.7 percent were 51 or older.

For the sixth consecutive year, SDHC is the lead organizer for The 10th Project Homeless Connect. Major partners include the City of San Diego; Interfaith Shelter Network; Father Joe’s Villages; and Family Health Centers of San Diego.

###

**Media Contact:**

**Maria Velasquez, Sr. Vice President Communications & Legislative Affairs**

**619-578-7560**

[mariav@sdhc.org](mailto:mariav@sdhc.org)