

First Tiny Home Community for the Homeless in San Jose Opens



By [Emma Fiala](#) | [Creative Commons](#) | [TheMindUnleashed.com](#)

([TMU](#)) – More than 6,000 homeless people live in San Jose, California, and thanks to a years-long effort they will now have access to tools to help themselves get off the streets and into permanent housing thanks to [an innovative initiative](#). With bike racks and freshly planted flowers, The Maybury Bridge Housing Project serves as a place for the homeless population of San Jose to receive support while searching for permanent housing.

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, California Governor Gavin Newsom, and nonprofit [HomeFirst](#) CEO Andrea Urton were all present at Thursday's grand opening celebration.

"This is intended to have individuals become acclimated to being part of a community, to learning how to take care of

their units, building independent living skills,” Beatriz Ramos with HomeFirst explained.

In December 2018, the San Jose City Council approved the project but it was delayed due to community pushback as well as legislative roadblocks. As a result, Governor Newsom recently said he will create a streamlined process to approve and develop projects like this one.

“If we can get the obstacles out of the way, cities can move quickly to address this crisis,” Liccardo [told](#) *San José Spotlight*.

“We came together as a community because we learned through this process that it takes a village to build a tiny home village,” Liccardo also said. *“We are housing people, and that is critical, but we know we have much more work to do because we need many more resources.”*

One such resource is Measure E, which [seeks](#) to boost the availability of affordable housing. On March 3 voters will have their say in whether Measure E moves forward or not.

To qualify for one of the 80-square-foot homes that features a single bed, desk, and shelves, homeless individuals must have a qualifying vulnerability index score, be enrolled in a rapid rehousing program, and have a job or on the verge of getting one. Slightly larger units will be made available for residents that use wheelchairs. Maybury Bridge residents will stay in the units for only around 60 days. If they stay longer, their minimal rent [will increase](#) by 10% after six months.

Shared amenities in the community include laundry and kitchen facilities as well as bathrooms. A computer lab, multiple meeting rooms, a dog park, and a lounge are also available.

According to James Stagi, San Jose Housing Policy and Planning administrator, the cost of each home came out to about

\$55,000. The entire project cost around \$2.2 million.

The project was paid for with money from San Jose's general fund, a one-time Housing Authority award, and California's Homeless Emergency Assistance Program. Tenants [will be charged](#) \$20 per month or 10% of their income.

"There's no way we can resolve this crisis unless we are working collaboratively together at every level of government," Newsom said. "The state vision to solve this crisis will be realized, at the local level – project by project, large and small."

Of the project, HomeFirst CEO Andrea Urton said:

"I was homeless as a teenager, and this site is where I would have wanted to live. To know that it's already working brings me such a great sense of pride and hope for the future. It's a little overwhelming. We're grateful that this site will provide 40 individuals a respectful and dignified respite while they wait for permanent housing on their journey."

By [Emma Fiala](#) | [Creative Commons](#) | [TheMindUnleashed.com](#)