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Understanding the “where” of housing and homelessness in San Diego

By Amy Work



Explore, the signature publication of the University of California San Diego Library: Spring 2022, Volume 4, Number 1

The Homelessness Hub at the University of California San Diego was created to fill a critical gap in the San Diego region’s efforts to develop data-driven responses to the region’s homelessness crisis. It all started with a simple question posed by two University of California San Diego Urban Studies and Planning (USP) faculty members: Can we make a map of the homeless encampments reported to the San Diego 311 app? The simple answer was yes, but what became clear is that there was no central source of data, and almost no geo-spatially visualized data, that researchers could use to understand the “where” of housing and homelessness.

As one of the few departments on campus that offer GIS courses, the Urban Studies and Planning faculty are well aware of the geospatial services offered by the



Library. The Urban Studies and Planning faculty members reached out to Amy Work, GIS Librarian, to see what recommendations she had for how to host and make available existing and new geospatial datasets. The faculty was looking for a solution that could be implemented without building from scratch, so they selected Esri's ArcGIS Hub technology. Using ArcGIS Hub as the foundation, the Homelessness Hub now serves as a repository for mapping and documenting homelessness data to support research and policy in the San Diego region.

Read more about this project in Explore, the signature publication of the University of California San Diego Library: [Spring 2022, Volume 4, Number 1, pg 12-13](#)



Screenshot of the article in Explorer magazine

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