

INDEPENDENTLY PUBLISHED BY THE COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS SINCE 1989



MINIMUM SUGGESTED DONATION TWO DOLLARS.

STREET SHEET IS SOLD BY HOMELESS AND LOW-INCOME VENDORS WHO KEEP 100% OF THE PROCEEDS.

VENDORS RECEIVE UP TO 75 PAPERS PER DAY FOR FREE.

STREET SHEET IS READER SUPPORTED, ADVERTISING FREE, AND AIMS TO LIFT UP THE VOICES OF THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY IN SAN FRANCISCO.

STREET SHEET

VICTORY!
850 BRYANT IS SHUT DOWN

2

HOW TO BE HOUSED ALLY

3

SHELTER GUESTS MAY LOSE
RIGHTS UNDER NEW POLICY

4

WHY I QUIT
THE SRO TASK FORCE

6

OAKLAND FORMALIZES CRUEL
ENCAMPMENT POLICY

7

ABOLITION NOW



Seth Katz
prettyboizines.com

NEWSFLASH

CITY TO CLOSE DOWN SHELTER IN PLACE (SIP) HOTELS:
WHERE WILL RESIDENTS GO?

There are plans to shut down seven SIP hotels with over 500 residents by 12/21. The sites slated to be closed first are Lombard Plaza Motel, Abigail Hotel, Americania, Good Hotel, La Luna Inn, Nob Hill Hotel, and Executive Hotel Vintage Court. Seven more hotels are set to close by the end of March, another six by the end of May and the final five by June 21st, 2021. All placements in hotels are slated to stop on November 15th according to internal documents shared with this paper.

The 2,400 residents currently staying in hotels are categorized as vulnerable by the City, meaning they are otherwise homeless and are either over 65 years old or have underlying health conditions. All 2,400 people are expected to be moved out of these hotels by the end June of 2021. But as numbers of COVID-19 cases continue to rise, plans for what will happen to the residents and where people will go is still very unclear.

“A hotel room Can save a life but poltricksters and violent scarcity models can take our lives” says Tiny of POOR Magazine. “This move by SF Politricksster mayor is nothing less than violence against unhoused San Francisco residents just tryin to get some rest.” Tiny also reported that residents of hotels she had spoken with had not even been informed of the plan to close down the hotels.

Brian Edwards with the Coalition on Homelessness said that “if SF gets as serious about rehousing folks in SIP hotels as they’ve been about clearing encampments during the pandemic, this might not end up being a shitshow.”

The Local Homeless Coordinating Board is planning a hearing On November 2nd and the Board of Supervisors will have one on November 10th. Please call in if you can and demand permanent housing for anyone displaced from these hotels.

Are you currently sheltering in a SIP hotel? Share your story with us by emailing qwatts@cohsf.org or call us at (415) 887-2379.

VICTORY! NO NEW SF JAIL COALITION & THE CLOSURE OF 850 BRYANT ST.

Seth Katz

In late September 2020, after years of work and support heightened over the past several months via No New SF Jail Coalition, San Francisco is no longer imprisoning individuals in

County Jail 4, 850 Bryant Street.

No New SF Jail Coalition, founded in 2013, is an abolitionist coalition based in community accountability



(image via @ShutDown850 on Twitter)

DONATE TO
KEEP STREET
SHEET GOING
STRONG!



SCAN ME

coalition.networkforgood.com

COALITION
ON HOMELESSNESS

The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition’s work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: they bring their agendas to us.

WANT TO GET
INVOLVED?

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

PHOTOGRAPHERS
& VIDEOGRAPHERS
& TRANSLATORS
& ARTISTS
& WRITERS & POETS
& COMIC CREATORS
& COPYEDITORS

DONATE!

LAPTOPS
& DIGITAL CAMERAS
& AUDIO RECORDERS
& SNACKS

CONTACT:

STREETSHEET@GMAIL.COM

STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

Editor, Quiver Watts (they/them)
Assistant Editor, TJ Johnston
Vendor Coordinator, Emmett House

Our contributors in this issue include:

Stella Kunkat, Christin Evans, Tiny, Brian Edwards, Jordan Davis, Seth Katz, Audrey Benson, Eviction Defense Collaborative Staff, Jiffy Phan, the Coalition to Stop the EMP, Robert Gumpert

and transformative justice practices. They work towards dismantling the prison industrial complex and shifting power dynamics towards communities rather than

the state. No New SF Jail Coalition worked tirelessly and persevered to pass legislation, introduced by Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer, to close County Jail 4 at 850 Bryant. The Board of Supervisors passed the ordinance to close the jail by November 1, 2020, with a 10 to 1 vote. At the San Francisco Sentencing Commission’s Safety & Justice Challenge Subcommittee meeting, city leaders released the first draft of the subcommittee’s “Final Report” of the operational plan to close County Jail 4.

The preface for this story starts back several years ago in 2013 when there were plans to demolish 850 to build a replacement jail. No New SF Jail Coalition and the community pushed back and the Board of Supervisors moved against the potential new facility. But the coalition nor the community continues on page 6...

HOW TO BE A HOUSED ALLY

Stella Kunkat

Despite the city’s provision of approximately 200 safe campsites and its plan to reopen 1,000 shelter beds, thousands of unhoused San Franciscans are still without any form of shelter while San Francisco “Shelters-in-place” during the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of this ongoing shortage of resources and safe shelter options for unhoused San Franciscans, the Coalition on Homelessness launches a campaign on How to be a Housed Ally to People Experiencing Homelessness. At its core, the campaign wants to encourage housed San Franciscans to reconnect with and support their unhoused neighbors, calling for a neighborhood-based response to the ongoing health & economic crises that over 6,000 unhoused San Franciscans are currently facing.

The campaign is centered around a guide developed by the Coalition on Homelessness on “How to be a Housed Ally to People Experiencing Homelessness.” This guide contains detailed suggestions on how to support unhoused neighbors effectively. In 10 steps, the guide outlines how to best approach, interact with and aid unhoused people. It provides helpful contextual information, a list of potential needs, access to relevant resources, and ideas of how to organize as a neighborhood network. Importantly, the guide also mentions what not to do as a housed person, namely, calling the police on homeless people in non-violent and non-emergency situations and dumping trash out on the streets close to where a homeless person is sleeping in their tent or vehicle.

Christin Evens, who is a volunteer with the Coalition on Homelessness, spearheaded this campaign. There were multiple reasons for why this campaign came into existence, according to Christin. “We were seeing the rise of a lot of anti-tent and anti-homeless groups, like Safe Healthy Haight which was established in May of this year. In reaction to that and to counter the message a neighborhood group of housed people, called Cole Valley Height Allies, formed to give neighbors a space to collaborate on real solutions to homelessness. In addition to that, there was an increase of people calling the CoH office in the past months with the heightened visibility

of homelessness in San Francisco.” These callers are mostly housed people that have a hunch that calling the police is counterproductive, but are looking for answers on how to support or interact with unhoused people in their neighbourhood.

According to Christin Evans the goal of this campaign was to build off of a previous handout that the CoH had already made on 10 Things To Do When You See A Homeless Person. “We updated the handout with information and tips relevant to the Covid-19 situatuion and expanded the idea to encourage housed neighbors to come together and support their unhoused neighbors.”

As part of this campaign members of the Coalition reached out to a number of unhoused people to ask them directly how housed people can be allies to them. The most common suggestions were to offer access to water and electricity and to donate leftover food and other resources, such as trash bags and brooms to keep one’s area clean. Beyond these materialistic ways of helping, however, people told us that a simple “Hello! How are you doing?” and a smile can mean a lot. As Leslie, one of the interviewees said, “acknowledging [homeless people] in a positive way could make

a big difference The positive effect of showing someone acknowledgement, respect and directly talking to them can not be understated, especially since many unhoused people tend to be very lonely. The key to being a good housed ally is therefore also direct communication and relationship building with your unhoused neighbors. A foremost recommendation of the guide is, “Ask people what they need. People know best what they need and most will tell you if they have an urgent need.” Furthermore, the guide calls for housed neighbors to educate themselves and continue learning the basic facts about homelessness and the current situation. Look out for the full length recordings of the interviews with Asteria, Michael, Leslie and Edward and learn about many more ways that housed people have been of help to them on the Coalition’s social media.

The campaign will culminate into a panel event held over Zoom, where housed and unhoused San Franciscans are welcome to join the conversation about how to best be an ally to people experiencing homelessness. The event will be moderated by Christin Evens, joined by the Coalition’s Executive Director Jennifer Friedenbach and June Lin-

Arlow from Cole Valley Height Allies, as well as the interviewees Asteria, Micheal and Leslie. ■

The event is open to the public, so please join us on Monday, November 9th, at 7pm for an excellent conversation using this Zoom invite:

Topic: How to be a Housed Ally
Time: Nov 9, 2020 06:45 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/6261859846>

Meeting ID: 626 185 9846
One tap mobile
+16699009128,,6261859846# US (San Jose)
+12532158782,,6261859846# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 626 185 9846
Find your local number: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/6261859846>

PHOTO JOURNAL by Audrey Benson

These are two photos of temporary shelters. There is also a picture of a street that DPW swept near me where a lot of folks were living for a period of ~7 months. They were given hardly any notice of the sweep, and they were left with just these bullsh*t "find a safe place to sleep" signs. Now the street is eerily empty.



CITY ATTEMPTS TO GUT LONG STANDING PROCEDURAL PROTECTIONS FOR SHELTER RESIDENTS. RESIDENTS AND ADVOCATES OUTRAGED.

Eviction Defense Collaborative Staff

Since it was implemented in 1992, San Francisco’s Shelter Grievance Policy has protected shelter residents from unjust eviction by utilizing a clear notification process, requiring administrative hearings with neutral arbitrators, and extending to all residents the right to representation by a Shelter Client Advocate. Almost 30 years later however, the Shelter Grievance Policy is under assault by city administrators. In these unprecedented times it is crucially important that the homeless community, shelter providers, and tenant organizers demand that the City keep in place the established Shelter Grievance Policy, and expand its protections from unjust evictions to ALL temporary shelters in San Francisco.

THE REORGANIZATION OF THE SHELTER SYSTEM UNDER COVID-19

On September 24th, 2020 at a quarterly meeting of the Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee, representatives from the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, to the express shock of community members and service providers, unveiled a new ‘exit policy’ for shelters and hotels that have been classified as Stay-In-Place (SIP) shelter system. Up until that point, the ten member independent oversight body, which manages the application of the grievance process, had been lobbying city officials for months to formally classify the temporary Shelter-In-Place Hotel program sites under the Shelter Grievance Policy. Instead of implementing the SGP in accordance with the wishes of the unhoused community and SGAC however, policy makers at the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing unilaterally decided to scrap the longstanding grievance process, and implement a new policy which completely negates the due process rights granted to temporary shelter residents.

Changes in shelter governance started to take place in April of 2020 as the Covid Command Center expanded under the state of emergency put into effect by Mayor Breed on Feb. 25. In the following weeks, policy makers from the Human Services Agency, the Department of Public Health, and HSH would begin to coordinate a massive effort to shelter the unhoused community. Referrals into the regular Temporary Shelter System were ended out of concerns of rapid transmission of COVID-19 in congregate shelters, and the TSS was ‘thinned’ to around 25% capacity by Apr. 8. Since then nearly all of the City’s adult temporary shelters have been reclassified as SIP sites; done in part through the temporary shuttering and reopening of the City’s largest congregate shelters such as MSC-South. Now operating under the authority of the CCC, the newly created ‘Alternative Housing System’ includes emergency housing units in private hotels, trailers, and RV’s throughout the city. The CCC is responsible for making referrals to these

units, as well as administering the rules and procedures that govern the AHS. Traditionally, the City’s Temporary Shelter System has included all of the programs defined as temporary shelters under the City’s Coordinated Entry Standards of Care mandate; which include adult and family congregate shelters, private room family shelters, Navigation Centers, and transitional housing programs. Under the Standards of Care all shelter operators that are connected to the CE system are required to use the established grievance process. However, officials from the CCC and HSH have expressly refused to recognize the AHS as being under the authority of shelter grievance policy, including the Interim Director of HSH, Abigail Stuart-Kahn.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE SHELTER GRIEVANCE POLICY AND DUE PROCESS FOR SHELTER RESIDENTS

San Francisco is a city famous -or infamous, depending on who you ask- for it’s stringent tenants protections from unjust eviction. Since the adoption of the Shelter Grievance Policy by the Human Services Agency Commission, it has been understood by policy makers that, while not legally regarded as tenants, shelter residents are entitled to eviction protections during their stay in temporary housing. The grievance policy is designed to provide shelter residents with formal avenues to resolve disputes, offer protections against unjust evictions, and to hold service providers accountable to shelter residents.

Originally born out of concerns from shelter residents about a lack of due process protections for people who have faced evictions from the City’s homeless shelters, the SGP is an innovative fair hearing system that provides a formal, neutral and transparent process for residents to address allegations made against them. Key components of the grievance process include requirements that shelter providers have an efficient notification system; residents are entitled to a quick and fair hearing, which includes an arbitration process where a neutral arbitrator makes independent judgments on matters of dispute; implementation of clear standards of documentation and rules of evidence; and provides every resident facing eviction a resident advocate trained in shelter policy and the grievance process.

The first step in the appeals process is an informal hearing conducted by shelter management. During an informal hearing the impacted resident, and their Shelter Client Advocate representative, meet with shelter management to debate the merits of a DOS, or to work out a mutual resolution; at this stage of the appeal process shelter management makes a decision to uphold, modify or overturn

an eviction. If the eviction is upheld and the client does not agree with the decision, the resident may appeal the hearing decision at an independent arbitration. When the rules are properly applied and residents are adequately represented, 70% of people who are issued denials of service are allowed back into shelter.

Arbitrations are a crucial component to the Shelter Grievance Policy because they are a formally independent appeals process intended to remove conflicts of interest between City administrators and individual service providers. The arbitrator's function is to interpret shelter rules, operating procedures, and to be the final decision-maker regarding disputes to their application therein. Shelter residents and service providers alike utilize the arbitration process to ensure that eviction decisions are being thoroughly reviewed, to resolve conflicts of interest by transferring final decision making power away from shelter and city staff to attorney arbitrators, and also to equalize the balance of power between resident, service provider and funding agency.

Taken together these procedures create a robust system of due process rights which go a long way in protecting the stability of residents' housing.

THE ALTERNATIVE EXIT POLICY

The Alternative Housing System Immediate Exit Policy proposal put forth by the CCC, represents a hard departure from the best practices established through 30 years of experience with the Shelter Grievance Policy. The changes made therein are a complete negation of the due process rights shelter residents have been historically granted in San Francisco, and only serves to undermine the agency of shelter residents in the steep imbalance of balance of power between City administrators, service providers, and themselves.

Under the new AHS Exit Policy, the fair hearing and arbitration process will be entirely replaced by a hotline phone number and City email address. The hotline number will be intermittently checked by a CCC staffer, who is required to respond to readmittance requests within 5 business days (although getting a response can take weeks or even months). Under the new policy residents have no right to an

The AHS effectively strips shelter residents of their right to due process without any proof of wrongdoing and leaves them with no formal avenue to appeal decisions or omissions. The new policy represents a complete negation of institutional protections and masks the intent to strip people to the mercy of government. The consequences of which are displacement of shelter residents and increased homelessness.

informal hearing with shelter management, or to have their case heard by an independent arbitrator. These changes formerly remove all neutral decision making or participation from the eviction process, and leave all decision making power in the hands of shelter staff and City bureaucrats.

Furthermore, all standards for documentation and evidence are left entirely to shelter staff; many of whom are not properly trained to handle sensitive case material, and often improperly document ‘critical incidents’. The rules of evidence are also extremely permissive, allowing service providers to take action against residents based solely on allegations made by other residents, and not witnessed directly by staff members, which has been

considered historical best practice. Without adequate standards of documentation or evidence, it is nearly impossible to mount a defense or challenge unfounded accusations. This leaves residents who have been evicted without due cause no avenue to challenge the merits of the allegations made against them.

Once a resident has been evicted they are required to submit a ‘readmission request’ to the City challenging the allegations made against them. However this is a near impossible task due to the fact that staff are not formally required to provide documentation of alleged rule violations, and oftentimes residents are evicted without being served a notice at all. The new AHS Exit Policy does not require service

providers to use a standardized notification system, and so, without access to all available information, or, as in many cases, even being told what the specific allegation or infractions was, the new readmittance system removes any ability to face one’s accusers, and forecloses any opportunity for dispute resolution.

Technology also becomes a huge barrier to mounting an appeal because many people in the unhoused community do not have regular access to a computer or phone. For many former residents this barrier is insurmountable because once on the street, gaining access to a computer or a space to charge their phone is oftentimes a matter of chance. This is especially true during Covid-19 where many places unhoused people go to access these amenities are now closed. It also goes without saying that living on the streets is incredibly harsh, and oftentimes peoples phones and computers are stolen. Thus, the sole reliance on technology in the appeals process creates an insurmountable barrier for a vast number of residents who are unable to afford or maintain the required devices. Many former residents who have submitted appeals have done so by utilizing a Shelter Client Advocate to manage the process for them while they try to check in regularly. However, since a response from the

CCC can take as long as a month, many people give up because they simply do not have the ability to maintain the required communication.

Under the new policy the right to representation by a Shelter Client Advocate will also be eliminated. This deprives residents access to a robust defense team, and also the professional technical expertise of long time advocates. Taken together, the Temporary Shelter System under Coordinated Entry, and the SIP Alternative Housing System under the CCC, represents as many as 80 individual shelter sites, each of which have their own particularities. In ‘normal’ times, but especially during the pandemic, residents are routinely transferred between several different shelter sites, operated by a nebulous system of service providers and City employees. The expectation that residents can or will have a working knowledge of all the rules and operating procedures of all the sites, as well as the Coordinated Entry and SIP Alternative housing systems, is an entirely unrealistic expectation. Eliminating access to Shelter Client Advocates leaves residents at a distinct institutional disadvantage, and undermines their ability to interact with the City on equal footing.

Truth be told, the proposed AHS Exit Policy is not an appeals process at all, or even an avenue for dispute resolution. In reality, all ‘requests for readmission’ are at the mercy of unnamed City bureaucrats, the decisions of which are entirely shielded from independent review. The AHS Exit Policy effectively allows residents to be evicted without any documented proof of an infraction,

and leaves them with no formal avenue to appeal decisions. The omission of these key due process components represents an intentional and massive transfer of institutional power away from homeless people to unaccountable government bureaucrats. The consequence of which only serves to disempower shelter residents and the unhoused community.

SHELTER RESIDENTS DEMAND EVICTION PROTECTIONS IN SHELTER

Unhoused people are considered by many to be the most marginalized class of people in our society. It goes without saying that a commitment to social justice for unhoused people therefore must include a right to stable housing, no matter how informal their tenancy status may be before the eyes of the law. The rights that shelter residents are entitled to in San Francisco through the Shelter Grievance Policy are unique in the entire country, and since it’s adoption in 1992 residents have been entitled to eviction protections during their stay in temporary housing. There is no doubt that the AHS Exit Policy represents a hard departure from best practices established through 30 years of experience, formerly negating key due process procedures granted to shelter residents. More now than ever in these dire times it is crucial that policy makers double down on their commitment to justice and implement the Shelter Grievance Policy in the Alternative Housing System immediately. ■

PHOTO JOURNAL

by Audrey Benson

I interviewed James at 15th&Julian. He spoke to how the recent increase in sweeps has been affecting the efficacy of the program he is working for (his role was passing out food).

“It is understandable that people want to have clean streets and stable neighborhoods... but we also have to recognize the homeless encampments are also neighborhoods themselves. By reducing the stability of the unhoused we are actually making it that much more difficult for them to actually get services consistently and try to move on with their lives.” -- James Pollock with Harm Reduction Therapy Center, 45 Franklin



WHY I QUIT THE SRO TASK FORCE AND WHY IT SHOULD BE ABOLISHED

Jordan Davis

On Tuesday, October 20, Supervisor Matt Haney introduced legislation stating that all permanent supportive housing, where the vast majority of people exit homelessness, should have rents no more than 30% of income. This was led by the #30Right-Now Coalition, led by many of the affected tenants, plus organizations such as the Supportive Housing Providers Network, Homeless Emergency Service Providers Association (HESPA), DISH, Episcopal Community Services, Housing Rights Committee, Coalition on Homelessness and so many more.

But, I wish to talk about how it almost never happened, thanks to the Single Room Occupancy Task Force, an advisory body of city appointees dealing with SROs where I served for several years, and where I introduced passed a resolution, with a bare majority, calling for a 30% standard in city contracted hotels. Over the 2 1/2 years I served on that body, I had come to realize how this city-run backwater commission has failed low-income tenants for over two decades, and why it needs to be abolished.

Started in 1999 in response to a rash of fires in hotels, the SRO Task Force was formed to develop policies that would help make SROs habitable and safe places to live, and is often mentioned in the same breath as our SRO sprinkler ordinance, more than that later. The SRO Task Force was also tasked with developing SRO visitor policies, which are enforced by the rent board. However, in practice, the committee does not do much, due

to a bias towards landlords, a glut of departmental representatives, lack of capacity from certain seats, attendance issues, and bad appointments.

When I first got on the SRO Task Force in May 2017, there were 2 tenant seats (I occupied one of them), 2 landlord seats, 1 non-profit employee-officer seat, and 1 seat from each of the SRO Collaboratives (Mission, Central City, Chinatown, and SRO Families), all appointed by the Board of Supervisors. In addition, there were several departmental representatives from Department of Building Inspection, Department of Public Health, and the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. My second meeting, I helped pass a recommendation for gender neutral restrooms in SROs, and...it wasn't unanimous. Two landlord reps voted against it, as well as my fellow tenant representative.

Over the next few years I served on that body, there wasn't much done; sometimes it felt like the Republicans in Washington, a lot of obstructionism, conflict of interest, a lot of loud anti-tenant Archie Bunker-esque rhetoric from Bruce Burge (landlord rep) and Dan Jordan (other tenant rep, who was directly employed by Clifford Gilmore, who sat on the Task Force as the Central City representative). The Mission, Chinatown, and SRO Families reps were good, but were overextended and missed many meetings, leaving me to fight alone. But nobody else would pursue pro-tenant policies, and it became nothing more than a over glorified country club for discussion of SRO issues rather than a meaningful body for

advancing recommendations

And when the Task Force came up for reappointment in 2019, I recruited several people to run, a queer DSA member who helped hand out Ng5s and who wanted to create a more activist board, and a queer supportive services person who has extensive background in mental health and senior/disability issues. Both were shot down in favor of another employee of Clifford Gilmore's (RJ Sloan) and Dion Roberts, a person with mayoral connections who runs a boutique hotel. Rules chair Hillary Ronen said it was about "balance", but the other tenant rep was once again employed by Clifford Gilmore, who tends to be more pro-landlord. That made no sense to me.

I talked a lot in a previous article about the 30% resolution in supportive housing, how I was gaslighted, tripped up, mistreated, and had to deal with Reagan-esque rhetoric, how I went on a hunger strike because of that, and how the resolution that passed was a miracle, but the whole process left a bad taste in my mouth. But it wasn't until a few months later until I realized how much I was bamboozled all these ywars

After a transphobic remark by another member at the October 2019 meeting, me and the same queer tenant leader who was rejected were talking with the chair of the task force, Jamie Sanbonmatsu, who represents the Department of Building Inspection. He said that the body never actually came to a consensus about the sprinkler ordinance, that

landlords and tenants will never agree on everything, how the Task Force was created because the City never wanted to deal with the issue, and how he didn't even want to deal with this, given that he was chief housing inspector and it took energy away from his job "fining landlords". Shocked, me, the tenant leader, and Jamie came to an agreement that the Task Force needed to be "nuked", and the commission never met again.

A few months later, I went into city hall, walked up the steps, went to Supervisor Ronen's office, and delivered my letter of resignation, in which I also called for the dissolution of the Task Force. We are fortunate in this city to have a lot of advisory bodies for different interests, but when they are balanced against community and have representative from people with traditional institutional power and there is no capacity, they then become government country clubs supported by unpaid labor from city staff where the meetings are like a more toxic version of "The View"

Autumn is coming, and as trees shed leaves, so should the city shed her unworkable advisory bodies and seek to create commissions that are truly active in fostering community power and good government, whether advisory or oversight. We have to pull the plug on the SRO Task Force, and create new conduits for inside outside strategy and participation for low income tenants. As it stands, outside organizing will win many battles for low-income tenants, this is our time, and we shouldn't be held back. ■

VICTORY! 850 BRYANT IS FINALLY CLOSED!

continued from page 2...

stopped there: they knew that this was only the beginning. The city had been aware of this building as a threat since 1996: it was earthquake unsafe, unsanitary, and overall hazardous. This urgency only increased under COVID-19. And, of course, the financial threat; according to the Coalition's website: "closing 850 Bryant will save SF an estimated \$25 million/year, which is better spent on community resources that actually help people: housing, healthcare, access to healthy food, and mental health/substance use treatment." In addition to these significant dangers, there is the matter of human rights under failed

carceral policies. Punishing those (particularly those unhoused, people of color, immigrants, and poor) because they cannot afford to pay bail is objectively inhumane.

The community worked together with clear demands for changes. These included: no new jails, no transfers to other counties, no increased electronic monitoring, a safe closing of 850, decriminalization of homelessness, a reduction in the number of people held pre-trial, investment in housing, mental health care, and voluntary substance-use treatment. They made demands via involvement in public hearing and committee meetings, lobbying

of city supervisors, and vast social media activism via #ShutDown850. After months of organizing, this victory represents success to abolitionists everywhere. No New SF Jail Coalition released this statement on their website: "Our victory demonstrates that we can make real, material gains against the prison industrial complex through committed and sustained organizing."

When speaking with Andrew Szeto of the Coalition, he shared with me how community involvement was impacted by the pandemic. The first of which being online organizing: "after shelter-in-place began, we had to figure out how to mobilize from home. Utilizing online mobilization tactics, such as Twitter storms and selfies with signage, was very activating. They also generated a lot of grassroots media and support which really aided in visualizing our cause. Also, when shelter-in-

place happened, working groups within the coalition were helping individuals recently released with updated resources to reflect changes from the pandemic."

But the Coalition isn't done yet. No New SF Jail Coalition, through abolitionist theory, continues to challenge our city at its intersection of racism, xenophobia, and classism. This includes urging San Francisco to shift its focus from policing and detaining to increasing community-based support systems (public transit, housing, education, public health.) If you are interested in supporting the Coalition, their Abolition in Action webinar series (www.nonews4jail.org/abolition-in-action-series) is a wonderful way to get involved and keep pressuring the city to keep this close moving forward as planned. ■

CRUEL ENCAMPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY MADE OFFICIAL IN OAKLAND DESPITE COMMUNITY UPROAR

Jiffy Phan

On October 20, the Oakland City Council unanimously passed the Encampment Management Policy (EMP), despite hundreds of public comments decrying the policy and public demonstrations organized by a coalition of homeless advocacy organizations. The policy threatens to force unhoused people out of the encampments they have created to survive in 98% of Oakland.

The EMP sounds innocuous enough, especially how the councilmembers frame this policy they claim will help unhoused communities. Even Mayor Libby Schaaf encouraged housed people to support the EMP, with an email she sent out the day before the vote: Fellow Oaklanders: Ending homelessness is a moral imperative that demands action right now. Maintaining safe and healthy public spaces is also the city's responsibility. Tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. the Oakland City Council will vote on an Encampment Management Policy that will improve the well-being of all of our residents.

Sounds nice, doesn't it? Even the email looked pretty with the iconic Oakland Tree on the letterhead. Mayor Schaaf presents herself as a laid-back, likeable person who will make the city a better place to be in. Anybody can check out her Twitter page and see how she's a people-person, especially when congratulating Kamala Harris with: "Big #Town love to @KamalaHarris from your hometown mayor. #KHive couldn't be prouder. Kamala threw down and kept it real like an Oakland girl through and through! #HellaProud"

Well, appropriating African American Vernacular English in the Bay Area and voting to criminalize homelessness is a foolproof step to get everybody to deeply loathe you and your cronies — looking at you, Lynette McElhaney, Noel Gallo, Dan Kalb and all of the other councilmembers and the entire

police department...). How many pats on the back have the mayor and councilmembers have given themselves for these abusive policies, while unhoused people's homes have been broken into and swept away? Whom do you enrich if you pass a law that hurts instead of heals the community?

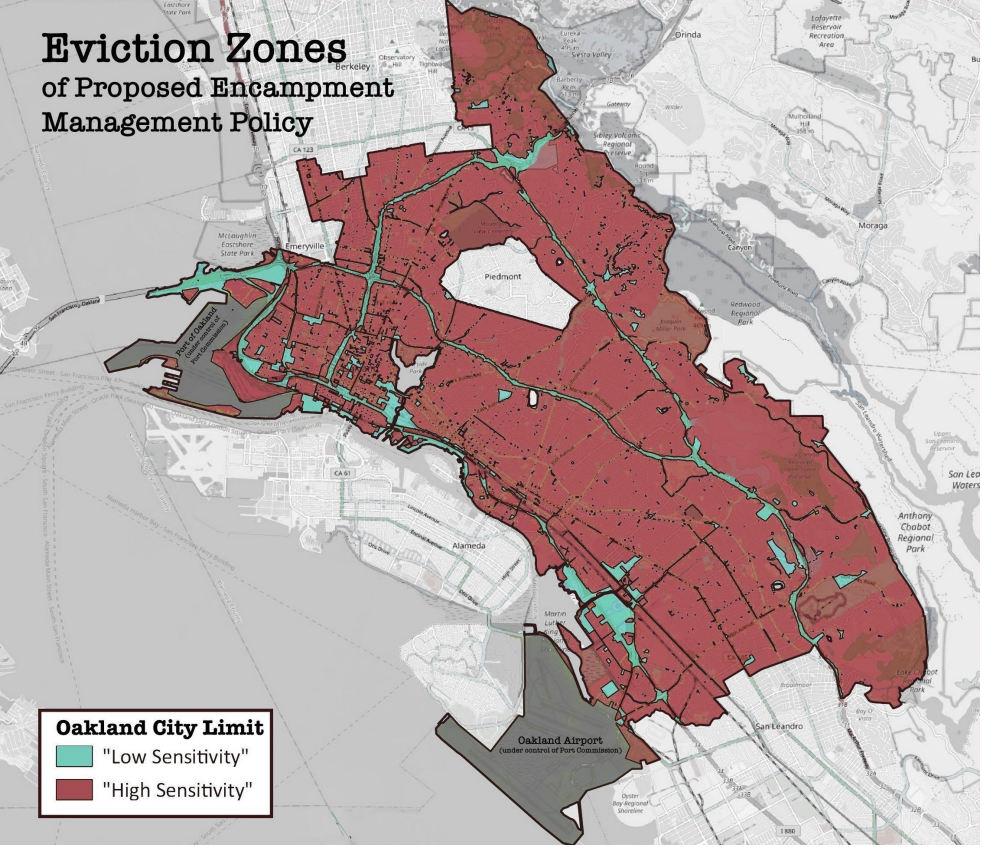
It is no surprise that this policy has no real solutions for those who live in these encampments that the mayor and NIMBYs are so afraid of. The EMP does not offer any housing, services or shelter to those who it will displace. It does not provide any security to housed people who are at risk of being evicted by their landlord because of unemployment and recession during the pandemic. This policy is basically saying that all encampments, tents and RVs are banned in a whopping 98% of the City of Oakland, meaning unhoused people will be banned from sleeping in public areas that are accessible to them. There are hardly any pathways to real housing for the residents who live in the encampments. To squeeze the thousands of Oakland's homeless residents from 140 encampments into the remaining 2% of Oakland in which camping is not yet criminalized is inhumane. Importantly, this policy also violates the federal health guidelines that encampments should not be swept during the COVID-19 pandemic. The EMP further criminalizes homeless Oaklanders in order to inflate property values at the cost of human lives, and we will not tolerate it.

In the weeks ahead the October 20 vote, House the Bay has been working alongside The Village, Punks with Lunch, Love and Justice in the Streets, East Oakland Burrito Rolls, Berkeley Free Clinic and several other organizations and community members to form the Coalition Against the EMP. Many people volunteered to watch for cops at encampments, while others have dedicated their time to calling and

emailing Oakland councilmembers, urging them to vote against this cruel policy.

No matter how difficult the council members have made it for the general

the max. With each hour that passed our chants of "F*** THE EMP" grew louder, and Kalb was visibly distracted during the Zoom meeting. "YOU ARE ON STOLEN LAND" was chanted loudly into the air, as we faced council members



community and unhoused people to make a Zoom call under two minutes to oppose the policy, we made sure that they heard us.

On the day of the action, the Village's text blast encouraged everyone to come out to a home demonstration in front of councilmember Gallo and Kalb's affluent homes during the scheduled zoom meetings. While Gallo greeted the coalition community with a lukewarm promise to vote against the EMP, Kalb hid himself away from the people who have showered the neighborhood with lively music and chanting "F*** THE EMP." Plastic ghosts were hung on Gallo's fence to represent the broken promises he made that continued to haunt him, and an enormous megaphone was facing towards Kalb's home. At both homes, the DJs played their mix and cranked the volume to

who have the privilege of owning a home on land that isn't theirs while aiming to push homeless people out of Oakland.

The Coalition to Stop the EMP is aware that this is not the first time the city made policy to abuse unhoused people. Even if the EMP had been rejected, it is no surprise Mayor Schaaf and her cronies betrayed the Oakland community. Our resistance to this racist, anti-homeless policy will be our ongoing commitment to protect those around us who are at risk of being evicted and punished for living in encampments. Mayor Schaaf's name signed under the Oakland Tree, and the councilmembers surrounding her like its twisted branches, shows no life and no growth in the Bay Area. Only rot and a corrupted system. The EMP may have been under construction for years until now and might look like it is succeeding with its sweeps and tow trucks. But that will never stop the new relationships between local organizations who will rise up and fight back in defense of unhoused citizens. We want permanent housing for all and will not tolerate the continued abuse from the City. ■

Join the Village Oakland's rapid response network to receive updates on Oakland encampment evictions (and to mobilize when they're happening) by texting HOMESNOW to 797979. Join House the Bay's housing defense text blast by downloading the encrypted messaging app Signal and texting HELLO to +12058507329



Home



© 2020 Robert Gumpert taptas.com gumpert@ix.netcom.com

“**H**ome (is) anywhere got a roof over my head, under the freeway, construction sites, living pretty much anywhere the rain can’t get to me”

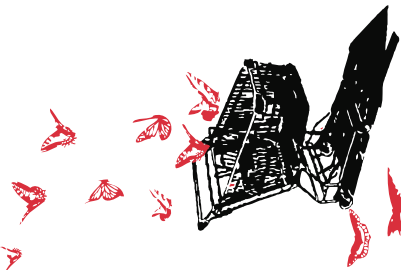
“**T**ent city”, “the Snake Pit”, it’s different people that associate with other people that know each other. Sometimes we be in groups, sometimes we be faced off in little sections but we always near by. (The City) thinks that it’s criminal activity when people, a group of tents, are gathered together. (It makes life harder) because basically we help each other. If one got food, we all got food. You know what I’m saying? If one got cloths, we all got cloths. When they break us up like that it makes it harder for us. The women to find friends that have cloths, and the guys our tools come up missing to work on our bikes.”

Name: Eric Forks, 35
Date: 20 September 2019
Place: Perry and 4th Street
Without a home: 6 years

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 3481
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94188

Coalition On Homelessness
280 Turk Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
415-346.3740
www.cohsf.org
streetsheetsf@gmail.com

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Coalition on
Homelessness
San Francisco

It’s time for our annual
STREET SHEET

POETRY ISSUE

SUBMISSIONS OPEN!

Deadline: December 15th
Poems can be emailed to
qwatts@cohsf.org or mailed to
280 Turk Street, SF 94102