

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

SEEKING GREENER PASTURES 2	JUDGE BLOCKS FRESNO ANTI-ENCEMPMENT ORDINANCE 3	EARLY SF HOMELESS NUMBERS DOWN 4	DO THE RICH SEE INEQUALITY AS A ZERO-SUM GAME? 6	CITY COLLEGE CUTBACKS HARM THE COMMUNITY 7
----------------------------	---	----------------------------------	--	--



Photo by Kenneth Madrigal

SEEKING GREENER PASTURES, ONLY TO FIND HOMELESSNESS IN THE BAY AREA

BY SAMEL LEPARAN NTIWUAS

My name is Samel Leparan Ntiwuas. I live just down the street from the house where I grew up.

I grew up in Oakland and San Francisco. My folks succeeded in their own ways, at one point owning a home, which was once considered the very foundation of financial stability. Then, when life chose to give me a bitter test, I joined the surging number of unsheltered immigrant people who spill out around freeways, along train tracks, and through vacant lots in the Bay Area.

Most people who can help take more time to better understand how residents with good jobs and deep roots in the community wind up among the city's homeless population. Like me, nearly all unhoused people in Oakland I have interacted with were living in Alameda County when they lost their housing.

Each person has a unique life story, but we all suffered the same, haunted by the legacy of racist development policies, job loss, financial troubles, drug addiction, medical crises, and mental illness. And we all find that our path back into a home is hindered by insufficient support from the city and astronomically rising housing costs.

My parents were immigrant folks who came here to San Francisco for greener pastures and a fresh start. They worked their way up just as their other folks had to stability, and this gave me a fair chance to live in a new foreign country with no relatives and more competition for survival.

My father died when I was still young and I remained with my mother, who struggled to make ends meet through means that I had no choice but to accept for survival. She suffered mental illness due to the nature of her job and contracted a disease that up to now I only guess works not to know at all. I lost my mother, my only hope for a life in a new country.

This was the beginning of all my struggles: trying to find financial support for my mother and trying to keep up with the bills and all the relevant requirements to keep our house. But all was in vain. Being a Black person, racism got the better of me. If by chance I was able to get a job, I was paid poorly or went home with no pay at all.

Financial constraints, sickness, and mistreatment became the norm. I wished that my family would stay with one of our relatives, but the milk was already spilled. I visited different offices in search of help, but in some I was helped and in some ignored, and this made my visits fruitless. I tried to avoid joining drug gangs and cartels, but my situation became more and more unbearable. My refusal to join these gangs made me rub shoulders with most of these groups, and to some extent they treated me as a rat who would snitch on them when given a chance. Little did they know that I was not interested in fights with gangs, which always lead to deaths. I knew this from Cate, one of my neighbors in the streets whose tent was next to mine, and who was stabbed while sleeping. May her soul rest in peace.

Racist development policies, financial troubles, and my mother's mental illness made us lose everything. The road to a home was blocked by lack of support from the city, and by rising housing costs. My mother is stuck in a mental facility and I am out lost with nowhere to go and no way to make money, no one to run to, because everyone I ask for help doesn't, for their own reasons. I watch from a distance a place that was once my home, now renovated, with some rich family now enjoying it, and tears never stop running down my cheeks. Just the thought of my family moving to a new country for greener pastures only for me to end up all alone with my mentally ill and sick mother, now confined in a mental institution, makes me ask God very many rhetorical questions.

DONATE TO
KEEP
STREET SHEET
GOING !



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:

QWATTS@COHSF.ORG

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
Interim Editor, TJ Johnston
Vendor Coordinator, Emmett House

Coalition on Homelessness staff also includes Jennifer Friedenbach, Jason Law, Olivia Glowacki, Miguel Carrera, Tracey Mixon, Carlos Wadkins, Kelley Cutler, Tyler Kyser, Ian James, Yessica Hernandez, Solange Cuba

Our contributors in this issue include: Samel Leparan Ntiwuas, American Civil Liberties Union, TJ Johnston, Kenneth Madrigal, Jeanne Kuang, CalMatters, Justice Taylor, and Robert Gumpert. Graphic design assistance Jess Clarke

Red Star Black Rose

WRITING: We are always looking for new writers to help us spread the word on the street! Write about your experience of homelessness in San Francisco, about policies you think the City should put in place or change, your opinion on local issues, or about something newsworthy happening in your neighborhood!

ARTWORK: Help transform ART into ACTION by designing artwork for STREET SHEET! We especially love art that uplifts homeless people, celebrates the power of community organizing, or calls out abuses of power! Cover dimensions are generally 10x13 but artwork of all sizes are welcome and appreciated!

PHOTOGRAPHY: Have a keen eye for beauty? Love capturing powerful moments at events? Have a photo of a Street Sheet vendor you'd like to share? We would love to run your photos in Street Sheet! Note that subjects must have consented to being photographed to be included in this paper.

VISIT WWW.STREETSHEET.ORG/SUBMIT-YOUR-WRITING/ OR BRING SUBMISSIONS TO 280 TURK STREET TO BE CONSIDERED

I have been beaten, abused, accused, forced to sell and use substances for my survival, with nothing in return. I am now hiding from a gang leader of a drug cartel who promised to chop off my head. Cruelty at its best. The Bay Area was once my home, the friends I had are now ghosts and the small homeless tents we try to put up are always stolen, burned, or even sold by our fellow homeless folks. The pain does not seem to end, so only our stories are shared, our problems may be halfway solved. ■

FEDERAL JUDGE BLOCKS FRESNO ORDINANCE RESTRICTING PUBLIC ACCESS TO ENCAMPMENT SWEEPS

By American Civil Liberties Union - Northern California

FRESNO - A federal district court has issued a ruling that blocks the City of Fresno from enforcing an ordinance that puts unconstitutional restrictions on reporters, advocates, and other members of the public documenting how city workers treat unhoused people during encampment sweeps.

“The court recognized that this law was unconstitutional from the start because it is vague, over broad, and threatens to sweep in significant free expression protected by the Constitution,” said Hannah Kieschnick, a staff attorney for the Democracy & Civic Engagement Program at the ACLU of Northern California.

In February, city leaders amended an existing ordinance to authorize buffer zones around abatement activity, such as encampment sweeps, taking place on public property. Anyone who enters the off-limits area “without express authorization” from the city could now be charged with a misdemeanor or fined up to \$250.

The ACLU Foundation of Northern California and the California Homeless Union, represented by the Law Offices of Anthony D. Prince, filed a federal lawsuit in March, seeking to strike down the new law. The lawsuit is on behalf of Dez Martinez, a longtime advocate

who was once unhoused, Robert McCloskey, a reporter and activist, the Fresno Homeless Union, and Faith in the Valley.

“When you know something is wrong, stand up and fight. Speak up, even if your voice cracks,” said Plaintiff Martinez. “I’m so happy because my street family members will continue to have support when they need it most and we’ll be able to bear witness to what the City is trying to do.”


In the ruling issued Tuesday, United States District Judge Dale A. Drozd said, “the amended ordinance and the arguments made in support of its application suggest that intention of

the ordinance is in reality simply to avoid public scrutiny.”

The Fresno ordinance represents the intensifying war against unhoused people occurring all over California, which we documented in a recent report, “Outside the Law: The Legal War Against Unhoused People.”






This lawsuit is part of the ACLU’s larger work fighting to protect and defend the civil and human rights of people experiencing homelessness.

Read the lawsuit and the court’s ruling at <https://www.aclunc.org/home>. ■



Are you currently experiencing homelessness in San Francisco? Do you have tickets, towing costs, or booting costs you cannot pay?

You can work with any Coordinated Entry Access Point to apply for the following SFMTA discounts:

 <h4>Parking Tickets</h4> <p>You have 3 options to address parking tickets</p> <p>Option 1: One-time only, free removal of all open parking tickets on one vehicle</p> <p>Option 2: One-time only, receive social services instead of paying parking tickets</p> <p>Option 3: Remove late penalties on one vehicle’s parking tickets anytime</p>	 <h4>Towing Costs</h4> <p>One-time, free removal of all towing costs</p>	 <h4>Boot Costs</h4> <p>One-time, free removal of all boot costs</p>
	 <h4>Fare Evasion Tickets</h4> <p>Dismiss your fare evasion tickets anytime</p>	 <h4>Free Muni</h4> <p>Ride Muni for free with the Access Pass</p>

1 STEP ONE - Determine if you are eligible for SFMTA’s discounts

You are eligible for SFMTA’s discounts if:

- You are currently experiencing homelessness in San Francisco.**
- AND**
- You have worked with a Coordinated Entry Access Point in the last 6 months.**

Coordinated Entry Access Points help people experiencing homelessness. Staff will discuss how to get connected to SFMTA’s discounts.

Please call or visit a Coordinated Entry Access Point to confirm your eligibility. Contact information for the Coordinated Entry Access Points is on the back of this flyer.

2 STEP TWO - Apply for SFMTA’s discounts

You can apply for these discounts online, in-person, or by mail. To apply in-person, visit SFMTA’s Customer Service Center at 11 Van Ness Avenue (open M - F from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

If your vehicle was towed, go to AutoReturn at 450 7th Street (open 24/7).

To learn more and apply, go to sfmta.com/IncomeDiscounts or call 311.

If you are not experiencing homelessness but have a low income, you may be eligible for other SFMTA discounts. Learn more by calling 311 or go to sfmta.com/IncomeDiscounts

COORDINATED ENTRY ACCESS POINT PHONE NUMBERS AND LOCATIONS

Coordinated Entry Access Points help people experiencing homelessness. Coordinated Entry Access Point staff will discuss how to get connected to the SFMTA’s discounts. Please call or visit one of the Coordinated Entry Access Points below to confirm your eligibility. Please note: Coordinated Entry Access Points are closed on the weekends.

SINGLE ADULTS CONTACT:

Episcopal Community Services
123 10th Street (at Mission)
415-487-3300 x7000

Transgender Gender Variant Intersex (TGI) Justice Project
1349 Mission St (entrance at Grace St.)
628-240-9006

Saint Vincent de Paul Society
525 5th Street (at Bryant)
415-597-7960

United Council of Human Services
2111 Jennings Street (at Van Dyke)
415-487-3300 x7000

Swords to Plowshares (Swords)
1060 Howard St. (at Russ)
415-727-VETS (8387)

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN CONTACT:

Bayview Access Point
1641 LaSalle Avenue
415-430-6320

Central City Access Point
37 Grove Street
415-644-0504

Mission Access Point
2871 Mission Street
415-972-1281

YOUTH 27 OR UNDER CONTACT:

Huckleberry Youth Programs
555 Cole Street
415-386-9398

3rd Street Youth Center and Clinic
1728 Bancroft Ave
415-713-4782

Larkin Street Engagement and Community Center
134 Golden Gate Ave
415-673-0911 x352
The SF LGBT Center
1800 Market Street
415-865-5612

EARLY SF HOMELESS NUMBERS DOWN — SHELTER-IN-PLACE HOTELS, PROP. C CITED

BY TJ JOHNSTON

San Francisco got a sneak peek last month of the results from its 2022 homeless point-in-time count, which showed a drop in some kinds of homelessness. Advocates say directing public money into certain programs played a key role.

The count indicated a significant drop in the number of unsheltered homeless people and chronically homeless people, as well as a large bump in the number of people staying in shelters and transitional housing.

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing noted a 15% decrease in people living unsheltered from its last homeless count in 2019. The department usually conducts the federally mandated census of unhoused people every two years, but the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the latest count back from January 2021 to February 2022.

In raw numbers, the number of homeless people tallied in the count went from 5,180 three years ago to 4,397 this year.

“This decrease corresponds with a significant increase in shelter and housing resources,” according to the

Homelessness Department, which also reported an 18% increase in its sheltered population.

But the department omitted the source of this greater investment. The year before the 2019 count, San Francisco voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition C, which taxes wealthy corporations to fund permanent housing, eviction prevention, and medical and behavioral health services for unhoused people—and advocates say it's already bearing fruit. Since taking effect, Prop. C raised about \$300 million per year. Jennifer Friedenbach, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness, which publishes Street Sheet, said the additional funding will result in a further reduction of homelessness numbers.

“These numbers are the very start of fulfilling Prop. C’s promise, as over the next year, over 3,000 households will have the opportunity to move off the streets,” she said.

Another important intervention was the shelter-in-place (SIP) hotel program, which opened 2,000 rooms for supportive housing during the

pandemic. In 2020, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the emergency use of hotels, despite Mayor London Breed's opposition. According to Homelessness Department figures, almost 3,800 people have stayed in SIP hotels since April 2020.

Friedenbach also lauded the SIP hotel program for improving the quality of life for its participants.

“With the addition of the SIP hotel rooms and the 1,000 Prop. C-funded shelter beds, far fewer individuals were forced to sleep on the streets, and these interventions led to improved health outcomes, reduced drug use and increased stability,” she said.

Mayor Breed also applauded the improved numbers, even though she had opposed Prop. C in 2018 and resisted opening the hotels in 2020.

"We have a lot of work to do in this City, but this is good progress," she tweeted.

The count is usually performed on a single night in January, but the City postponed this year's count from January 27 to February 23 after the

originally scheduled count in 2021
was suspended.

Typically, City employees and volunteers from nonprofits fan out on the streets and perform a spot-check on unsheltered people. At the same time, the City tallies unhoused folk in shelters and other transitional facilities, then reports the total to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

By the time of San Francisco's count in late February, 16 of the 30 SIP hotels were still operating; the City had already closed the other 14, and most of those residents transferred to other SIPs.

Unlike San Francisco, some other Bay Area counties had substantial increases in their homelessness rates. Alameda, Contra Costa and San Mateo counties saw double-digit rises in their point-in-time counts.

The full results of the point-in-time count are expected to be released in July. ■

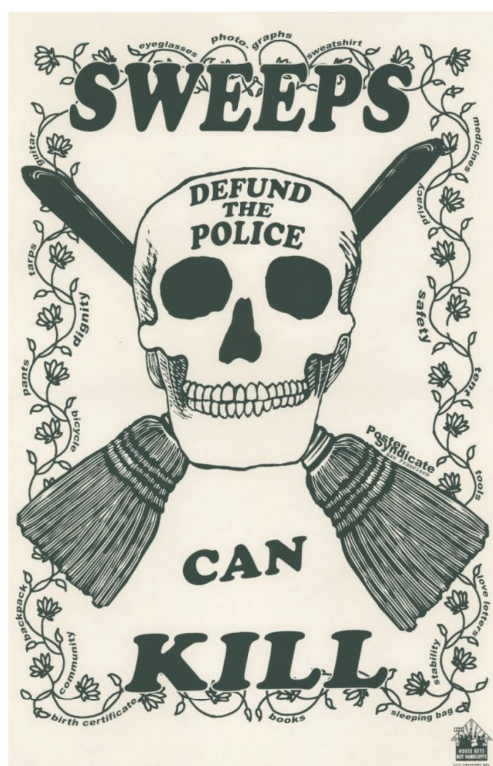
TJ Johnston is the Interim Editor of Street Sheet.

Join the Coalition on Homelessness

At the Harvey Milk Memorial Library
Wednesday, June 15, 12-2 PM

Attend our Human Rights Workgroup Meeting and **take action** to fight the human rights violations of people experiencing homelessness.

Food will be provided



STREET SPEAK PODCAST



www.streetsheet.org
/street-speak-podcast/

DEMONSTRATORS DEMAND: GET CART ROLLING!

PHOTOS BY KENNETH MADRIGAL



RALLY TO GET CART ROLLING!

MAY 25TH @ NOON ON THE STEPS OF CITY HALL
1 Dr. Carlton Goodlett Place



JOIN US IN SAYING **NO** TO THE
POLICING OF OUR UNHOUSED
NEIGHBORS AND **YES** TO CENTERING
CARE, NOT CRIMINALIZATION



On May 25, 2022 community members heard speakers and made protest to demand immediate funding for the Compassionate Alternative Response Team (CART). If implemented CART would move the city away from sending police to respond to homelessness by changing the dispatch protocol and crafting a new team modeled after alternative programs in other cities who provide support and services to those in crisis on the streets. In 2021, the Board of Supervisors expressed unanimous support for CART and funded CART at \$3.2M from last year's budget cycle yet those funds have remained on reserve for a whole year. With adequate funding from this years' budget and this board's full support, we can get CART rolling so that community advocates working with our unhoused neighbors have the resources to provide a humane, dignified and compassionate response. CART must be implemented by Mayor Breed and allow for leaders of CART to utilize these funds to begin educating, counseling and providing a safe space for the unhoused community in San Francisco. ■

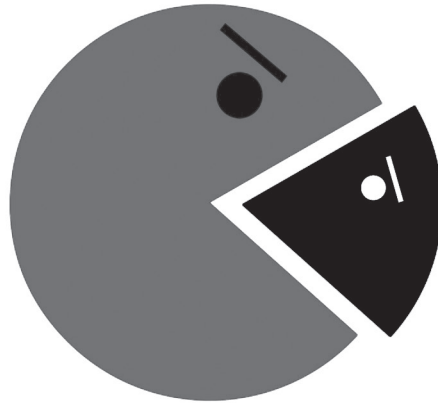
DO THE RICH SEE INEQUALITY AS A ZERO-SUM GAME?

BY JEANNE KUANG AT CALMATTERS

A UC Berkeley study finds that, although efforts to reduce inequality are popular, many of the rich or people in “advantaged groups” resist equity policies, believing they’ll be harmed.

“THE MISPERCEPTION THAT EQUALITY IS HARMFUL IS STUBBORNLY PERSISTENT, RESISTING BOTH REASON AND INCENTIVIZATION.”

— UC BERKELEY RESEARCHERS



“EVEN WHEN ADVANTAGED GROUP MEMBERS ARE PRESENTED WITH TWO AVAILABLE OPTIONS FOR ACHIEVING EQUALITY... THEY STUBBORNLY VIEW EITHER OPTION AS A SACRIFICE.”

— UC BERKELEY RESEARCHERS

California has one of the highest levels of income inequality in the nation, and nearly six out of 10 California adults polled said they believe the government should do more to reduce the gaps between rich and poor.

But when presented with proposed policies to boost resources for disadvantaged groups, even liberals show reluctance to reduce inequality after all, according to a new study co-authored by researchers from UC Berkeley and released last week.

The researchers found that people who have social or economic advantages tend to believe they’ll be harmed by policies that reduce inequality — even when those policies don’t reduce their own access to resources.

That’s because they believe inequality is a zero-sum game, the researchers wrote, so much so that the “advantaged group” in the study experiments sometimes selected “lose-lose” policies that would have reduced their own access to resources just to maintain the disparity among groups.

“The misperception that equality is harmful is stubbornly persistent, resisting both reason and incentivization,” the researchers wrote.

They said it’s a possible explanation for why even California liberals push back on policies that would reduce inequality.

That pushback came in various situations measured in the study — in tests involving white homebuyers compared to Latino ones, or job seekers without disabilities compared to job

seekers with a disability.

For instance, in one scenario, white non-Hispanic Americans in the study were told that white homebuyers have received far more in home loans than Latino homebuyers. They were then presented with hypothetical policy proposals for banks to increase, decrease, or maintain loans to Latino homebuyers — and they were told that the amount being loaned to white homebuyers would not change.

The white participants responded that they believed increasing loans for Latino homebuyers would decrease their own access to loans, and reducing loans to Latino homebuyers or maintaining the status quo would boost their own access to loans.

The study raises challenges for policymakers seeking to reduce inequality in California, where social programs already are heavily funded by revenues from the rich. Under its progressive tax system, nearly half of California’s income tax revenue comes from the state’s top 1% of earners.

Relative advantages

Derek Brown, a Berkeley doctoral student and co-author of the study, said contributing taxes can be seen as an individual act. But when it comes to the overall distribution of resources, privileged or advantaged groups view how they’re doing in comparison to other groups, he said.

“People are really cued into relative advantages,” he said, “so much so that they might even misconstrue changes to their relative position to another person or another group as a loss in an absolute sense.”

Relative advantages can have a potent effect on the public’s support for programs designed to benefit minorities or disadvantaged groups.

A 2018 Stanford study found that when white participants were told white Americans’ incomes had stagnated in relation to Black and Latino peers, they were more likely to withdraw support from social welfare programs that they were told would benefit minorities than from programs they were told would benefit whites.

Last week’s Berkeley study examined the failed 2020 California ballot measure Proposition 16, which would have lifted the ban on affirmative action in public employment or public university seats. Researchers found that the beliefs of whites and Asians that Prop. 16 would reduce their own access to opportunities was a strong predictor that they would vote against it even when controlling for other ideological beliefs, including political orientation.

The Berkeley study also found that privileged groups continue to believe they’ll be put at a disadvantage when inequality is reduced, even when they are explicitly told that a proposed policy would increase the size of the pie for all.

In one experiment, a diverse group of participants were told they were on a team that had received far more monetary bonuses than another team, but they were told to devise a way to more equally distribute the bonuses. They rejected one proposal to receive five more bonuses while the other team received 50, in favor of a proposal

to cut five of their own bonuses while withholding 50 from the other team.

“Even when advantaged group members are presented with two available options for achieving equality — either lifting up those at the bottom (at no cost) or dragging down those at the top — they stubbornly view either option as a sacrifice,” the researchers wrote. “So long as the interests of the advantaged group are held in higher consideration than the well-being of the disadvantaged, our studies suggest that existing levels of intergroup inequality are unlikely to be effectively addressed.”

Dowell Myers, a professor of public policy at the University of Southern California put it another way.

“The conclusion is that people are not rational,” he said.

Reducing inequality “calls for some counter-education about what the benefits are ... It’s always easier with a new program than with an old program. With old programs, people are entrenched, and they’re defending their turf.”

The Berkeley researchers did not identify a way to overcome the perceptions, calling that a “critical step for further research.”

“Hopefully for policymakers who actually seek to promote equality ... that has to be justification,” Brown said. “And we just have to do whatever we can to make sure that goal is ultimately achieved.”

This article is part of the California Divide project, a collaboration among newsrooms examining income inequality and economic survival in California.

CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO CUTBACKS COULD HARM THE COMMUNITY. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

By JUSTICE TAYLOR

City College of San Francisco has already laid off 38 faculty members with more staff cutbacks to come while reducing classes and student resources. Instructors and staff have already taken a pay-cut to encourage class maintenance, while the boards have increased their personal pay. Students and staff are demanding transparent and open statements from the board: why are classes and teachers being cut during a California budget surplus?

City College is facing another round of class and service cuts under the stance of budget reform. There are 300 staff layoffs proposed in several departments including English as a Second Language (ESL), Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, and Engineering & Technology.

The elected Board of Trustees and new chancellor David Martin argue

that layoffs are needed to balance the college's budget for the future of the college. Staff and student activists say the college has not adequately sought available funding. Possible sources, they say, include federal COVID-19 emergency funding and California's \$29 billion budget surplus. During last year's City budget negotiations, teachers took a pay cut to avoid further class cuts and layoffs, despite a voter-approved parcel tax aimed at maintaining staffing levels through the 2031-2032 fiscal year.

The layoffs could reduce further student enrollment and cause teachers to lose income which could result in more homeless San Franciscans. The downsizing and restructuring of the college could change its status from a community college to a junior college focused on transferring its students to a

four-year university as part of the State chancellor's "Vision of success" program.

Currently, the college has programs for older adults, homeless students, ESL students and lifelong learning class options. In the 2013-2014 academic year, the college was hit with—and successfully appealed—a major public accreditation audit that delivered a blow to the college's reputation and its enrollment figures.

Laura Cohen, a student and campus employee, works to help the students and staff fight back against the cuts.

"[They are] taking away staff in order to maintain this budget, which, by the way, is not the only budget. It's just the one that they've (the board) convinced themselves is the only way to go," she said.

The college's staff union came up

with a budget proposal to minimize class cuts. I reached out to The Homeless At-Risk Transitional Students (HARTS) Program to see how they would be affected by the cuts. They have not yet responded.

City College currently serves a diverse population: low-income and homeless students; Black and indigenous people of color; immigrants and older adults throughout San Francisco. They also serve San Francisco's homeless population by helping them develop skills and keep them housed with financial aid money.

Members of the community can support City College by learning about the current Board of Trustees, attending the trustees' meetings in real life or virtually, and voting in board elections. ■

AFTER PERMANENT HOUSING ADDED, SHELTER PLAN MOVES FORWARD

By TJ JOHNSTON

Supervisor Rafael Mandelman's shelter legislation is going to the full Board of Supervisors after the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee approved it on a 3-0 vote on May 26.

After several amendments through two committee meetings in May, one thing is for sure: Mandelman's "Place for All Ordinance" is now a different animal from the legislation he introduced two months before with its primary focus on shelter softened as it moves to the full board on June 7.

Originally, Mandelman proposed his Shelter Expansion Program calling for 2,000 shelter beds for San Franciscans living outside. This number now amounts to 4,397, according to the City's most recent point-in-time count.

That was until Supervisor Connie Chan rebranded the program as the Shelter and Permanent Housing Expansion Program when she sat in at the panel's May 12 meeting. At that meeting the committee approved amendments from Supervisors Myrna Melgar, Ahsha Safai and

Chan. Those substantive changes required the committee to revisit and vote on the ordinance two weeks later.

Now, permanent supportive housing units, safe sleep sites, and safe overnight parking must be added to the mix. Melgar, who later agreed to send the proposal to the board, also added a requirement that the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing institute a telephone registration system for people seeking shelter no later than July 1, 2023.

Before the pandemic, unhoused people seeking a placement in the shelter system were able to call the 311 service to get on the reservation waitlist for 90-day beds and accept whatever beds were available in a shelter of their choice. In March 2020, the City shut down the 311 waitlist and hasn't reopened it.

Jennifer Friedenbach, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness, commented at the May 12 meeting that the original version of the legislation never accounted for how unhoused people

could access shelter on their own.

"Don't say that you're for shelter when you don't have a way for people who want shelter to get that shelter," she said.

Chan added a mandate for the City to list properties that it could use for shelter and housing no later than three months after the ordinance's passage.

The Coalition on Homelessness, which publishes Street Sheet, led advocates and unhoused people in opposing the original version, but supported the amendments.

Before Mandelman relented to the changes, he noted the Coalition's resistance in the May 12 hearing, maintaining that the visibility of tents and other improvised shelters in public space is unacceptable.

"Encampments are not OK," he said. "The Coalition is not our friend in this effort. It is our opponent."

Across the country, other cities have been enacting bans on encampments on streets and other public outdoor spaces after building shelters

and other transitional housing to comply with *Martin v. Boise*. This 2018 federal court ruling deemed that cities must offer shelter before penalizing acts related to homelessness. Human rights organizer Carlos Wadkins of the Coalition told the panel on May 12 that the legislation is just a pretext for more encampment sweeps.

"It's ever so telling that Rafael Mandelman referenced *Martin v. Boise*," he said. "It's not a plan to end homelessness—it's a plan to work around *Martin v. Boise*."

Before the May 26 vote, Yolanda Catzalco, a formerly unhoused person, told the panel not to authorize more sweeps should the legislation pass. She also addressed the ordinance's lack of a funding mechanism, which might require diverting Proposition C funds to pay for it.

"Please, no sweeps," she said. "Please [have] supportive housing for the homeless, and [do] not take any money away from Prop. C." ■

“Does a tent afford privacy? I can do whatever I want within the four walls, but in this situation it feels like you’re an endangered species. Like you’re being hunted really slowly and silently. You never know when they’re going to come and uproot you. I’m used to it, but at the same time I’m not. It doesn’t feel like a hundred percent home, it just feels like it’s for now.”

“In here I can escape everything that’s going on outside. It keeps me from getting into trouble. Having it helps keep me grounded. I try to be routine with things, like I clean a lot. I find things to decorate, to make things easier. But at the same time, in the back of my head, it’s always like for how long will I be able to do this before the city comes in and tells us we have to move and then takes all our stuff. It’s like happiness but for a very, very temporary period.”

“I’ve been granted housing, but it hasn’t been finalized yet. I haven’t even seen the place. I don’t know if it will resolve some the issues that are for me, medical. For example, I must have a restroom because of an underlining medical condition. I don’t know if the city is going to be willing to work with me on it. It’s scary having something dangled in front of you but if you file a grievance of any kind, they might just say fuck you and walk away from you. Then you’re out on the street because of something that you can’t naturally control. It’s really depressing and demoralizing.”

“The way I understand it you’re meant to stay in one of these temporary SRO units for a year before you can move on to better housing. A lot of these places don’t



Name: James Jefferson, 39 Date: 17 June 2021 Place: Florida near Treat Homeless: 12-13 years

allow quests. Or you can only have quests from a certain period of time. They give you a number of nights that you can have people stay over, it doesn’t feel normal. It feels like you’re in this “nanny state”. I feel like rights are being taken away.”

“I’m primarily looking for a place that has a restroom. I don’t cook, so a

kitchen isn’t necessarily something that I am looking for. If it’s a part of the deal, then great. But my expectation is to have privacy and a restroom. That’s it, that’s all I want.”

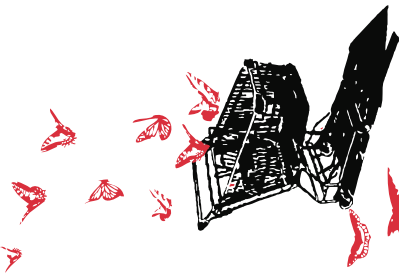
[Where do you go (bathroom) now?]
“A lot of different places. On the lowest of the low I would say bottles, buckets. Moving up it would be a porta-potty,

if they were available. If they’re not, then I do what I need to do outside. It’s kind of like a whatever it takes situation. You don’t control when you have to go, so it just depends on the urgency of the situation, whenever it arises. And usually it’s at a time when there is no public restroom available. After 8 o’clock when things start to die down, I get creative.”

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



VOTE BEFORE OR ON JUNE 7, 2022!