

**A
TEN
POINT
PROGRAM
TO
IMMEDIATELY
ADDRESS
HOMELESS
PROGRAMS**

Wednesday - June 18, 2003

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Coalition on Homelessness, San Francisco

10 POINT PLAN TO IMMEDIATELY ADDRESS HOMELESS PROGRAMS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

- We know how to solve homelessness, and it is going to take a true commitment from the state and federal government. Elected officials and voters must work to make sure that happens. However, here are some steps our local officials can take to immediately address homelessness using local resources.

HOUSING

Point One: FILL ALL VACANT GOVERNMENT OWNED UNITS

- Hire homeless people to transform all government owned vacant buildings into housing for homeless people. The San Francisco Housing Authority has over 500 vacant public housing units, alone. Other government bodies with vacant building and land include the City of San Francisco, CalTrans, San Francisco Port Authority, San Francisco Unified School District and the Federal Government.

Point Two: SCATTERED SITE HOUSING MODEL

- Expand the successful "Scattered Site," model of Shelter Plus Care Master-leasing currently administered by Catholic Charities.

Point Three: MASTER LEASE OVERSIGHT

- Continue the City's Master Lease program, but with an community oversight body to work with providers to prevent displacement, ensure open access to homeless people and expand the amount of neighborhood based and culturally competent providers.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Point Four: WAGES PROGRAM.

- WAGES would open the door for workfare workers to gain the experience necessary to land public sector employment. Rather than performing tasks for a welfare grant, WAGES would put workfare and CalWORKs workers on a path to self-sufficiency by moving them into civil service.

TREATMENT

Point Five: 24 HOUR PSYCHIATRIC CRISIS CENTER

- Open a voluntary psychiatric crisis drop-in center to serve people with mental illnesses after hours.

Point Six: METHADONE MAINTENCE

- Methadone is a proven effective medical treatment; this proposal is to add 100 slots for uninsured homeless individuals.

Point Seven: MediCAL/SSI Advocacy

- MediCal/SSI advocacy for 150 individuals at mental health clinics.

HOMELESS PREVENTION**Point Eight: HOMELESS PREVENTION EFFORT**

- Assisting individuals with back rent is an effective tool to maintain people in their rent control apartments, and thus preventing homelessness. This is a cost effective and humane intervention.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY**Point Nine: CITY-WIDE HOMELESS COORDINATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING**

- Restructure the Mayor's Office on Homelessness and the Local Homeless Coordinating Board. In its place, create an Independent Office with at least one full time staff person. This Office's responsibility would be staff person for the Local Board. The staff person would assist the Local Board with the implementation of the Continuum of Care plan.

Point Ten: SHELTER MONITORING COMMITTEE

- Develop a system-wide monitoring committee to make unannounced visits to shelters and drop-in centers. This Committee would be made up of 21 members composed in equal numbers of consumers, line staff, other service-providing staff, and advocates.

FINANCING

- These immediate steps could be paid for by stopping the prosecution of homeless people for sleeping and camping under 647(j). There are also saving from both Administrative Accountability and MediCal/ SSI advocacy. In addition the People's Budget Collaborative has identified savings and revenues totaling over \$500,000,000, far more then the cost of above items.

INTRODUCTION

In November of 2002, voters passed Proposition N, a piece of legislation that slashes homeless adult public assistance checks by 85%. Voters were promised that homeless people would get a whole host of new services such as substance abuse treatment, and housing in its place. The General Assistance portion of the initiative was overturned in court over seven months later. The Board of Supervisors is now considering identical legislation to fully implement the initiative.

A recent report issued from the Budget Analyst found what we have been saying all along. Proposition N will not work, does not fulfill campaign promises, and will in fact potentially displace 610 disabled and working homeless people out of shelter.

While proponents spent over a million dollars to pass the initiative, their clear goal was to launch the proposition's author into the Mayor's office. They conducted extensive research and found that voters were extremely concerned with the homeless issue and were incensed with the lack of responsiveness from city hall. It was in this vacuum that Proposition N was born.

During this time, the Coalition on Homelessness, along with homeless people and community members had been actively seeking solutions to homelessness, developing proposals and bringing them forward. The City, meanwhile, developed the Continuum of Care, the five-year needs assessment required by the Federal Government. Coalition on Homelessness participated on the drafting of this plan along with hundreds of homeless people, service providers and community members. The Board of Supervisors supported the Continuum of Care, and many of the recommendations contained in the document have already been implemented.

While the Continuum of Care, along with countless Coalition on Homelessness proposals contain carefully crafted solutions to homelessness, there are literally hundreds of recommendations. They don't fit into sexy sound bites, nor are they necessarily issues that will launch a political career. They will however, make a real difference in the lives of homeless people, as they come directly from homeless people themselves and service providers.

This report, entitled "A Ten Point Program to Immediately Address Homeless Programs" contains some relatively simple steps the City can immediately take to address homelessness. They should not be viewed as comprehensive solutions to homelessness. They are an offering to the city during this time that homelessness is being hotly debated. They are positive steps City Hall can take to address homelessness without hurting homeless people.

We have long known how to solve homelessness, and we know why homelessness exists. Proposition N is one of a long line of policy decisions that have directly led to homeless people out on the streets and institutionalized in jails and shelters. Massive federal housing cuts, changes to income assistance programs, decimation of the mental health system, and gentrification have coalesced to create the homeless crisis. It is going to take a true commitment from the state and federal government to fix what they have broken. Elected officials and voters must work to make sure that happens. At the same time the local government must make sure its homeless programs are effective, accountable and responsive. They must also redirect the endless resources that have gone towards criminalizing homeless people to fill in some of the gaping holes in the array of safety net programs we offer homeless people.

We offer this Ten Point Program to Immediately Address Homeless Programs.

HOUSING

FILL VACANT UNITS

HISTORY

The Coalition on Homelessness initiated legislation at the Board of Supervisors last year that required the city to identify and report on all vacant buildings that were city owned. The legislation would then require that this legislation be turned into housing for homeless people if feasible. The legislation passed and the first report back to the Board of Supervisors on these sites is due to come out next week.

In December 2002, the Coalition on Homelessness held a press conference at Sunnydale Housing Projects to draw attention to the hundreds of vacant public housing units that had been sitting empty for over a year. We have also met with the Housing Authority officials and attending public hearings. We are trying to ensure homeless families get priority for the housing units, and that a greater number of housing units are set aside for extremely low income and low income families.

There have also been numerous demonstrations at government owned housing, such as housing at the Presidio and a large building owned by San Francisco Unified School District.

Brief Description

Hire homeless people to transform all government owned vacant buildings into housing for homeless people. The San Francisco Housing Authority has over 500 vacant public housing units, alone. Other government bodies with vacant building and land include the City of San Francisco, CalTrans, San Francisco Port Authority, San Francisco Unified School District and the Federal Government.

SCATTERED SITE HOUSING

BACKGROUND

San Francisco's housing crisis for poor people will continue long past the "dot-com" boom that created it. As land for developing housing becomes increasingly rare in San Francisco, and the existing housing stock is transferred to renters who can afford luxury prices, a scattered site strategy is an effective tool. It puts low-income homeless families in market rate apartments with a subsidy, that allows them to only pay 30% of their income in rent.

This model is currently utilized effectively by Catholic Charities in their Shelter Plus Care program. They aggressively create relationships with landlords to garner their units for homeless families. These families are able to leave homelessness, and receive services from Catholic Charities to allow them to maintain housing.

Recommendation

Expand the successful "Scattered Site," model of Shelter Plus Care master-leasing currently administered by Catholic Charities.

MASTER LEASE OVERSITE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Background

Master leasing is a program that the Department of Human Services and Department of Public undertakes to lease blocks of rooms at Single Room Occupancy Hotels and lease those rooms to homeless people. The City often invests in rehabilitating the hotel, ensures tenancy, and offers a subsidy to the new residents. The advantage of this model is improved conditions, rent stabilization, and tenant rights. Often times hotel owners practice "musical rooms" where residents are asked to move every 27 days so that they do not get tenant rights. The disadvantage of this model is that the lease is for a set period of time and landlords are making a great profit from the public interest. In addition, when leased on a massive scale, master leasing causes displacement of those individuals who do not qualify for the program. There are fewer housing options for these individuals as more and more hotels are available to only to a subset of the homeless population.

The Proposition N campaign promised voters 1000 new units of housing would be made available to CAAP recipients. Through the Master-Lease program about 231 will be brought on line (160 of which are occupied). These units are welcome, but do not meet the depth of need, nor do they live up to the campaign promises. As these are current units, and not new housing, community members fear that displacement will occur.

There have been numerous negative experiences with master lease units that cause community members to be concerned. When Department of Human Services first introduced this concept at the Mission Hotel, the management of the hotel evicted many of its guests to make room for DHS clients. In addition, the recent leasing of the Royan Hotel in the Mission was poorly handled and long time residents of that hotel complained of the lack of inclusion in the changeover.

Recommendation

In the absence of new federal funding to house homeless people, Master-Leasing will remain one of the few viable vehicles for new housing. Continue the City's Master Lease program, but with a community oversight body to work with providers to prevent displacement, ensure equal access among homeless people and expand the amount of neighborhood based and culturally competent providers.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

WORKING AND GAINING EMPLOYMENT SECURITY (WAGES)

Funding History: Last year, this program provided a limited number of jobs to Workfare and Cal Works participants by providing the necessary experience to obtain public sector employment. Program participants were very successful, but the number of jobs must be increased to the 850 jobs promised.

Amount Requested: \$12,461,000 annualized

Department: Department of Human Resources [DHS]

Brief Description: Developed by workfare and CalWORKs workers through 35 work site meetings, in consultation with public sector union leaders, City department heads, and members of San Francisco's Board of Supervisors, WAGES would open the door for no-wage workers to gain the experience necessary to land public sector employment. Rather than performing tasks for a welfare grant, WAGES would put workfare and CalWORKs workers on a path to self-sufficiency.

The proposal was initially developed by workfare workers and through meetings of People Organized to Win Employment Rights (POWER) membership. Within the past year, CalWORKs "community service" workers working with POWER have supported their inclusion into the proposal.

The citywide program would:

- Create 300 full-time and 100 part-time temporary positions, proportionately distributed throughout the City agencies currently employing workfare workers.
- Hire 400 CalWORKs and workfare workers as city employees after they completed three months of workfare or community service. Positions would be temporary and last two years.
- Provide all benefits of a regular civil service position for the duration of the program.
- Provide all necessary on-the-job experiences upon completion of the program to meet the minimum qualifications for the job classification in which they were employed.
- Reserve at least 30% of new hires into affected job classifications for WAGES graduates.

Number of People Served: 850 workers

Target Population: Workfare and CalWORKs workers

TREATMENT

24 HOUR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Amount Requested: \$1,100,000* annualized

Department: Department of Public Health [DPH]

Brief Description: This would fund a new or existing consumer friendly drop-in center or service provider to serve people with mental illnesses after hours. Services would be accessible both in person at the center and by telephone. Peer and medical crisis intervention would be provided to individuals with mental health crisis. Program would include job and job retention training.

Number of People Served: 30 at any one time/ 400 per year

Target Population: Homeless mentally ill people, including those who are difficult to serve and using substances.

Statement of Need: There are no after hours psychiatric services in San Francisco, with the exception of Psychiatric Emergency Services at San Francisco General Hospital. Individuals who experience psychiatric crisis after hours are dealt with by the police, and, when necessary, taken to the hospital. This is counter-therapeutic, and often leads to permanent distrust of psychiatric services on the part of the consumer. A large proportion of homeless people with mental illnesses requested 24-hour services in the report "Locked Out" by the Coalition on Homelessness. People using programs also need stability and fulfillment of employment, but face obstacles in securing and retaining employment.

Expected Fiscal Savings: After hours crisis services would lead to a decreased reliance on San Francisco Psychiatric Emergency Services. After hours services would prevent psychiatric episodes from escalating in most cases, avoiding the need for expensive hospitalization.

**Rough estimate only. A task force is needed to flesh out actual cost and design.*

Funding History:

Supervisors funded Job Training \$100,000 (FY01-02).

Supervisors funded 24 hr Mental Health Services \$100,000 (FY01-02).

Methadone Maintenance For 100 Indigent Individuals.

Cost: Annualized: \$550,000

Number of people served: 100 at any one time

Target Population: Specially vulnerable, out of care, uninsured homeless people in combination with at least one of following; acute health issues, mental illness, unable to access care, no other support, undocumented. 50 clients would be self-referrals with the remaining 50 coming from direct access from outreach.

Brief Description:

Methadone is a proven effective medical treatment. These slots new treatment slots would be easily accessible (low threshold) and require no co-pay for participation in the program. Methadone treatment would be homeless friendly, include family preservation, peer support and dual diagnosis components. In addition, services would be truly harm reduction based in the sense that clients would have the highest level of self determination with regards to dosing levels as allowed by federal regulations. DPH baseline budget has 31 additional slots via Mobile Methadone (\$150,000), and 42 additional clients in the contingency plan (\$200,000).

Justification:

There are over 500 people currently waiting for free methadone treatment in San Francisco - waits for free methadone often extend over a year. It is estimated that there are approximately 15,000 heroin users, and 17,000 injection drug users in San Francisco, and we continue to have among the highest rate of overdoses in the country. High purity levels of heroin and cheap costs have converged to form what couldn't be described as anything but a heroin epidemic.

An investment in methadone will directly save emergency room costs around overdoses, AIDS, Hepatitis, treatment of abscesses and other harms associated with continuing to use heroin. Medical Examiner reports in San Francisco show that 150 unintentional poisoning deaths occurred in San Francisco, almost all of that are from heroin overdoses or heroin in combination with other drug overdoses.

Heroin overdoses alone or in combination with other drugs has been the leading cause of death of homeless people for the last years that the data has been collected.

Capacity

We surveyed Methadone Maintenance programs to see if they had the capacity to add clients if funding existed to pay for those additional slots. Here are the results:

BART Geary	could add 20 - 30 without a problem
BART Market	no response yet
BVHP	no response yet, have 200 on wait list
Westside	no response yet
Ward 93	could add 35 - 40 possible, but would need an additional counselor
	They have 250 -300 on wait list
Fort Help	They could add 20 -30 without a problem

This adds to potentially room for 100 more slots in the existing system with having talked to only half the programs.

San Francisco is currently adding methadone maintenance slots through OBOAT (physician prescribed methadone) and the methadone van. Both of these programs, however, will only be available to "stabilized clients", or in other words those clients already on methadone. It will not be available to the many people who are on the waiting list for methadone already.

Cost Savings:

Cost savings related to Methadone are well documented nationally, and here in San Francisco. Conservative estimates are that \$40,000,000 is spent annually at San Francisco General Hospital on heroin related medical conditions. Soft tissue infections, a common complication of heroin injection, accounts for \$9.9 million annually from 1996 - 2000. Of that approximately \$5.1 million were uninsured per fiscal year. The number of Soft tissue infections at the Emergency Department increased from 1,292 to 2,619.

MediCAL/SSI Advocacy

Amount Requested: \$261,913 Annualized

Department: Department of Public Health

Brief Description:

This should be a consumer led effort, which includes follow-up. A current organization that already serves individuals with mental health issues would be ideal. Services would be located on-site at mental health clinics. Legal strategies to get people on SSI, such as presumptive eligibility, would be utilized.

Number of People Served: 150

Target Population: Mental health consumers including homeless people and GA recipients of various ethnicity's and communities throughout San Francisco.

Statement of Need:

Additional SSI advocacy is needed as there are thousands of individuals in San Francisco who should qualify for disability benefits and MediCal, but because of the difficult application process and arduous documentation requirements, cannot get it without legal assistance. When homeless people have benefits they qualify for a whole host of health care options.

Expected Fiscal Savings:

With an estimated 60% success rate, this would save the city:

- \$621,000 in GA costs
- \$765,000 in MediCal costs
- Total in direct city savings: \$1,386,000.

Expected Outcomes: At least 90 additional people will receive disability benefits and MediCal.

PREVENTION

Homelessness Prevention

Amount Requested: \$525,000 for the Rental Assistance Disbursement Component of the Eviction Defense Collaborative (RADCo) and \$1.5 million for other rental assistance

Department: Department of Human Services

Funding History: RADCo was added back into the City's budget for FY 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002. The additional \$1.5 million request has never been funded.

Brief Description: Some 5,000 evictions for nonpayment of rent occur in San Francisco every year. Rental assistance is a proven way of ensuring that tenants with short-term financial difficulties maintain stable housing. The People's Budget is proposing to continue and expand the rental assistance program in order to more adequately meet the needs of low-income San Franciscans. The existing rental assistance program, RADCo, is a one-time loan offered to San Francisco tenants who have resided in their homes for at least one year. This program has been very successful in helping to maintain the long-term housing of individuals and families faced with family emergencies, unemployment, and other temporary financial setbacks. In addition to refunding RADCo, we propose to expand the City's rental assistance budget in order to assist tenants who may need more than one-time assistance with back rent or may not meet the current length of tenancy requirement.

Number of People Served: 375 households are assisted by RADCo at its current level of funding. We anticipate that further funding for additional rental assistance in the amount of \$1.5 million would be a more sufficient response to the huge need of low-income San Francisco renters.

Target Population: Individuals and families at risk for eviction:

Statement of Need: Tenants in affordable units who need to request help more than once or who need some ongoing assistance for a limited period of time in order to get the resources to be able to pay the ongoing rent in the future would be eligible for this program. The existing program is quite strict, only assisting tenants who are able to demonstrate an ability to pay the ongoing rent. Tenants with longer-term financial difficulties are not eligible for assistance under the existing program, but would be eligible under the proposed expansion. This gives San Franciscans some assurance of continuing to have a roof over their heads while they try to solve their current financial difficulties. Eviction and displacement only multiply the problems tenants face; this program serves to help solve those problems and aid tenants to

remain in housing that is familiar and affordable. When long-term tenants lose their housing, the City loses a unit of affordable housing as well as suffering a drain on the resources of its citizens.

Expected Fiscal Savings: Rental assistance enables low-income tenants to avoid becoming homeless. By helping preserve an individual's housing, the City saves roughly \$9,755 per year in shelter costs. Homeless individuals are also more susceptible to sickness and disease. Consequently increased homelessness results in a greater demand on the City's healthcare resources. Additionally, when tenants avert eviction, overall productivity is sustained, and affordable housing is preserved.

Expected Outcomes: Through RADCo, 375 households will maintain their housing. If this proposal is fully funded, over 1,500 households will remain permanently housed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

CITY-WIDE HOMELESS COORDINATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Way It Is Now:

a) The Mayor's Office on Homelessness:

The Office of the Budget Analyst recently released a report on the cost of Direct Services Provided to the Homeless Population that reads "The Mayor's Office on Homelessness does not provide or oversee any direct services or fund any capital improvement projects for the homeless". According to this same report, the City spends \$403,584 on this office for four full time staff salaries and benefits.

Background:

The Mayor's Office on Homelessness was originally charged with coordinating services city wide and placed under the Mayor to ensure his authority over it. Since Mayor Art Agnos's administration, however, the Mayor's Homeless Coordinator has repeatedly been co-opted into a political arm of the Mayor, carrying out politically driven policies, working on political campaigns, and performing public relations duties for the Mayor.

Currently three of the four staff for the Office are paid for by the Department of Human Services; one is paid by the Mayor's Office of Community Development.

Staff include the Mayor's Homeless Coordinator, a staff position that was originally an outreach position, a staff person designated for the Local Homeless Coordinating Board, and an Administrative Assistant. Nominal supervision is provided by the Mayor's Office itself. The Mayor's Office on Homelessness has been entirely ineffective and unable to account for its time. There has been tremendous turnover in the Director's position, despite the exorbitant salary paid, which is now at \$104,327 annually plus mandatory fringe benefits.

b) The Local Homeless Coordinating Board:

The Local Homeless Coordinating Board is the legislative body charged with reviewing homeless policy and programs, and with advising the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor on how to address homelessness. The Board has 34 members but its staff of one comes from the Mayor's Office on Homelessness (see above). The efforts of the Board have been stymied by the over representation of Mayoral appointees, and at times sabotaged by the one staff member from the Mayor's Office on Homelessness. [Mara: this may be much too explicit] However, the Board has successfully overseen the McKinney process, which decides where federal funding should be allocated, and the

Board has recently completed a new five-year Continuum of Care plan (see page 1) with significantly more input from concerned communities than the previous plan.

OUR PROPOSAL

- Eliminate the Mayor's Office on Homelessness. In its place, create an Independent Office with at least one full time staff person. This Office's responsibility would be to provide the staff person for the Local Board. The staff person would assist the Local Board with the implementation of the Continuum of Care plan, with setting up and staffing the three Monitoring Committees detailed later in this report, and with staffing the McKinney process. The Local Board would, in turn, be charged with the hiring and firing of the individual in charge of the new Independent Office.
- Change the make up of the Local Board to include federal and state representatives, as well as the current local department representatives. It is important that federal and state governments be involved if we are to create permanent solutions to homelessness. Two-thirds of the remaining community seats would be held mainly by homeless or formerly homeless individuals (90%). 10% of the community seats would be for homeless service providers. 40% of the community seats would be for families and 60% for single adults. In addition, community seats would be representative of poor neighborhoods throughout the city and reflect the City's homeless population young and old, immigrants and veterans, gay and transgender, disabled, victims of domestic violence, members of the diverse racial and ethnic groups.
- Televisе the Local Board meetings on a public access station.

EMERGENCY & TRANSITIONAL SHELTER MONITORING COMMITTEES

The Way It Is Now:

Monitoring committees are not new ideas. Every city-wide document regarding homeless policy has reiterated a need for monitoring homeless programs. Even the New York City shelter system has a built in mechanism for community groups to gather information from their clients. The overarching goal of the monitoring committees is to document valuable, accurate information that can help guide the development of homeless policies and programs in San Francisco. A significant part of this goal is to make homeless programs recognize and address the barriers that prevent homeless individuals and families from exiting homelessness.

OUR PROPOSALS

- **System-wide Shelter Monitoring Committee:** Develop a system-wide monitoring committee to make unannounced visits to shelters and drop-in centers. This Committee would be made up of 21 members composed in equal numbers of consumers, line staff, other service-providing staff, and advocates. Only those Committee members who earn less than \$25,000 per year will receive compensation paid for by the City for their time on the committee; all others will be volunteers. DPH and DHS representative (Program monitors) will be non-voting attendees and will not participate in the teams going out to the shelters. This Committee will need designated staff. The Local Board will determine how this Committee will be staffed.
- Assign teams of three people to conduct three to four visits to each shelter per year, more with cause. The Monitoring Committee will establish a minimum threshold for the number of complaints which determine cause for action, and identify the ways by which complaints can be made; these ways should be as broad as possible. The staff of the Committee will have the responsibility to dispatch monitoring teams if cause is determined.
- A timely standardized report will be made in writing and presented face to face to shelter management. The reports will be submitted for quarterly meetings. Both the contract manager and the site manager will respond to the report. Reports will remain confidential until the parties involved have signed off. Staff names will be omitted from reports sent to Committee as well as complainant's name, unless the complainant has given permission. Any retaliation stemming from reports or complaints will be reviewed immediately by the Committee and the relevant department.
- The Monitoring Committee will be formed by open nomination process - and named by the Local Board. The full Monitoring Committee will meet on a quarterly basis and any unresolved issues will be taken to the Local Board. The Committee will develop a standardized list of what will be looked at, a list which should be made available to shelters before visits are made. The

monitoring committee may receive pertinent information related to a shelter from alternative sources, as needed. Monitors will visit the shelters and drop-in centers no later than two weeks before quarterly meetings to allow time for response to reports.

- **Monitor Committee** members will be trained how to interview, monitor and document complaints in a way that is sensitive to both clients and shelters. A significant part of the training will focus on how to deal with personnel/union issues, particularly around confidentiality, how to protect client confidentiality, and what to do if someone one is retaliated against after he or she has made a complaint. The responsibilities of the Committee will include the monitoring of city-funded shelters and drop-in centers for single adults, families and youth. In addition, the Committee will look into expanding its scope to include interfaith, winter, and non-city funded shelters as well as transitional housing. An evaluation of the Monitoring Committee by an outside body will be conducted after 90 days of operation. [Mara: what does this last sentence mean? What body? Only once, after 3months?]
- **Civil Rights and Diversity Monitoring Committees.** Begin implementation of the civil rights and diversity committees as described in the Continuum of Care plan, recently passed as the City's five year homeless plan

HOW WE CAN PAY FOR IT:

- This recommendation in combination with the savings from increased MediCal/SSI advocacy, and reduction at Mayor's Office on Homelessness will pay for the 10 Point Plan. In addition, the People's Budget Collaborative has identified over \$500,000,000 in savings and revenues that could be used to address homelessness.

REMOVAL OF FUNDING FOR THE SFPD ISSUING AND THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S PROSECUTION OF PENAL CODE 647(j)

Total Recommended Savings: To be determined

Departments: San Francisco Police Department and the District Attorney's Office

Brief Description: Penal Code 647(j) or Illegal Lodging is used by the police department to arrest and harass homeless people forced to live on the streets. Homeless people with personal property from a sleeping bag to card board protection are being issued misdemeanor citations for essentially living on public property.

The SFPD has recently increased their issuance of 647(j) PC citations and the District Attorney has begun prosecuting these citations. We are now using even more city resources to criminalize homeless people. The increase is so dramatic that during the month of February, 2002, of all new misdemeanor cases, 8.6% were 647(j) charges!

Issuing more 647(j) PC tickets increase the workloads of police officers, district attorneys, public defenders, sheriffs and judges without any significant achievement. It does harass homeless people but does not help solve homelessness. This exercise diverts needed funding away from solving homelessness.

Prosecution on 647(j) PC tickets waste city resources on trials if the individual is found not guilty and a possible imprisonment of homeless people if found guilty. A better use of city resources would be to house homeless individuals. Building affordable housing makes more sense in the long run as it will provide an exit to homelessness.

647(j) PC tickets make it harder for homeless people to help themselves. These tickets prevent homeless peoples from seeking employment or housing during

the time they spend in court. In many cases these tickets burden homeless people with a criminal record because they are arrested for the "crime" of being too poor to afford housing.

Our conclusion is that issuing 647(j) citation may garner votes for politicians. However, in the long-run, such a policy is costly and damages our society by violating basic human rights.

Our recommendation is to stop the issuing of citations and prosecution of 647(j) PC tickets and to redirect the funding from the San Francisco Police Department and District Attorney's Office toward permanent exits to homelessness as mentioned elsewhere in this report.