

January 15, 2021

Honorable London Breed  
Mayor of San Francisco  
1 Dr. Carlton Goodlett Place, room 200  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mayor Breed,

We are a group of service providers, people with lived experience with homelessness and community stakeholders who came together after the plan to close the SIP hotels was announced in October. We were concerned that this announcement was made before there was an adequate housing plan to ensure those in SIP hotels did not return to the streets, and that residents of the hotels were not properly informed about their fates, knowing only that the hotels would close. Over 100 organizations wrote to you with our concerns in a [sign on letter](#) at the time, but did not receive a response. Our goal was then and continues to be that before the city closes down SIP hotels, a realistic, well resourced and compassionate plan is created that:

- Collaborates with service providers and residents.
- Plans for re-assignment of workers.
- Involves input of the residents.
- Is COVID safe, including testing of residents and staff before moving
- Ensures that residents are housed and their needs met with true long term stability.
- Track and publicly report housing and placement outcomes for all SIP Hotel residents.
- Is data informed with strong community oversight.
- Equitably meets the needs of unhoused people outside of hotels, including underserved neighborhoods and families.
- Ensure Shelter Grievance Due Process is back in place.

Since we have formed, we worked on legislation to meet many of our goals, the city has gone back to the drawing board and created a much more realistic plan, and the closures were delayed.

However, we are concerned with recent communication from both the [Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing](#), and [yourself](#) regarding the SIP hotel closure, which seemed to deviate from agreements we believed were reached.

The city has the responsibility to care for all unhoused people

We were concerned that these communications seemed to abdicate responsibility for unhoused people outside the SIP hotels. A recent DSHS member stated that “Due to the temporary need to prioritize people exiting SIP Hotels for housing placement, people experiencing homelessness in San Francisco who are Housing Referral Status and who are living in settings outside of the SIP Hotels will experience delays in referral to Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing”.

Central to our work on this issue, has been the idea of ensuring equity for those outside of SIP hotels. There are several hundred people who are document ready and waiting for housing outside of the SIP hotels, and several hundred more who are at the top of the Coordinated Entry list considered “housing referral status”.

We supported the Prop C Our City Our Home Oversight committee recommendations to fund subsidies for non SIP residents of the Bayview, prioritizing African Americans, and subsidies for homeless families outside of SIP hotels. This was done to ensure some equity out on the streets. The statement that there will be “acute delays.. “for San Francisco Housing Referral Status adults without children who did not serve in the US Military.” who currently live on the streets indicates that you will not be rapidly implementing these initiatives, which is greatly concerning and also disturbing.

Vulnerable People Should Get Housing

In addition, the communication from HSH contradicts previous agreements that those with medical vulnerabilities, and those over the age of 60 who are not “housing referral” status will still be offered housing out of the SIP hotels. We would appreciate clarification on this critical point.

Permanent Solutions is what we have been pushing for

In the communications, there was an indication that the SIP hotel effort has led to a shift in resources going to temporary solutions, instead of permanent solutions. We just wanted to clarify that we are committed to permanent solutions, and that is what we have been fighting for since we came together. We also want to note that the San Francisco portion of the costs are a quite cost effective investment and have proven cheaper than some of the other temporary housing efforts the city has engaged in, such as Safe Sleeping Villages and Navigation Centers, especially now that there will be 100% FEMA reimbursement.

In sum, Mayor Breed, we were delighted when you committed back in spring of 2020 to house 7,000 unhoused people in hotel rooms, and we were also gratified that you committed to housing each and every one of the 2,500 people housing in hotels declaring no one would be sent back to the streets. Many of us were a part of this historic moment and realize what a monumental effort it was. The SIP hotels have proven to be a wonderful opportunity to do housing navigation work as folks are stabilized and easy to find. We agree with your commitment to house everyone in the SIP hotels, and have been working hard to make sure this commitment is realized.

The main reason cited for closing the hotels was uncertainty that FEMA would continue, and now that FEMA funding is guaranteed throughout the duration of the pandemic at 100% reimbursement rate, this great news allows the city to move forward in a much more careful way to ensure all hotel residents land on their feet -- in housing and stabilized.

Thank you for your consideration and your compassion. Working together we can solve homelessness. We really can do it.

Sincerely,

3rd St. Youth Center & Clinic  
ABD/Skywatchers  
Advancing Justice-ALC  
Alliance for Social and Economic Justice San  
Francisco Living Wage Coalition  
Bethany United Methodist Church  
Code Tenderloin  
Community Housing Partnership  
Compass Family Services  
Delivering Innovation in Supportive Housing  
End Hep C SF  
Episcopal Community Services (ECS)  
The Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist  
Faith in Action - Bay Area  
Faithful Fools  
Five Keys Schools and Programs  
GLIDE  
Homeless Prenatal Program  
Hospitality House  
La Casa de Las Madres  
Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights of the SF Bay Area  
The LGBT Center  
Mary Elizabeth Inn  
Mission Neighborhood Resource Center/Mission Neighborhood Health Center  
San Francisco Living Wage Coalition  
St. Anthonys  
St. Ignatius Parish  
Senior and Disability Action  
SF Aids Foundation  
SF Coalition on Homelessness  
SF Hepatitis C Task Force  
SF Safehouse  
Shanti Project  
Simply the Basics

SteppingStone Health  
St Vincent De Paul  
Older Women's League (OWL)  
Or Shalom Jewish Community  
PODER  
The Kitchen SF  
The Women's Building  
Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP)  
YWAM San Francisco

The Episcopal Church of Saint John the Evangelist

St. James Episcopal Church

St. Mary and St. Martha Lutheran Church

St. John's Presbyterian Church SF

First Mennonite Church of San Francisco

Rabbi Jessica Kate Meyer of The Kitchen

Rev. Angela Brown, JD Minister: Community Engagement, Advocacy, and Justice, United Methodist Church

**Individuals:**

Brian Edwards, Shelter Monitoring Committee

David Elliott Lewis (lived experience with homelessness)

James Loyce, LHCB