



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
YOUTH COMMISSION
BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES
FY 2024 - 2025 | 2025 - 2026



March 2024 - Youth Commission Budget & Policy Priorities

This page intentionally left blank.

SAN FRANCISCO YOUTH COMMISSION, Room 345
1 DR CARLTON B GOODLETT PLACE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-4532

WWW.SFGOV.ORG/YC
YOUTHCOM@SFGOV.ORG
(415) 554-6446

Table of Contents

Introduction

- 1** Letter from Youth Commission Chair
- 2** Youth Commission Structure
- 3** Commissioner Introductions
- 5** Budget Executive Summary

Transformative Justice Committee

- 20** Reducing Weapon Access
- 24** Fentanyl Overdose Reduction
- 29** Improving Language Access and Immigrant Services
- 36** Bayview Environmental Effects
- 41** Food Insecurity

Conclusion

- 77** Contact Us and Get Involved

Civic Engagement and Education Committee

- 6** Vote16
- 9** Voter Preregistration
- 12** School Safety
- 17** Sexual Assault and Harassment Amongst Youth

Housing, Recreation, and Transit Committee

- 47** Free Muni For All Youth
- 49** Improving Quality of Life on Transit
Expand Access to Recreational Spaces
- 52** Addressing Vision Zero
- 57** Address San Francisco's Housing
Availability and Affordability Crisis
Support for Unhoused Youths and
Transitional-Aged Youths
- 67** Protective Infrastructure Against
Climate Change
- 73** Climate Change

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Since the beginning of the San Francisco Youth Commission in 1996, every term has started the same way: with the Mayor swearing in all the new and returning Commissioners. Typically this happens in City Hall with families and friends gathered to watch the ceremony—but my first swearing-in was different. Instead of City Hall’s ornate surroundings, we were on a video conference call. We took our oath in our homes, never having physically met the fellow Commissioners we would serve with for the next year.

It was fitting for the time and for the unique circumstances we found ourselves in as we began our work as advocates for youth. We adapted just like so many other San Franciscans, and our advocacy became increasingly important as our city began its recovery and the major impacts of the pandemic on young people became clearer.

We’ve come a long way since then. Today we are regularly meeting in person, back in City Hall. The 2023 Youth Commission swearing-in took place on the Mayor’s Balcony surrounded by the Commissioners’ friends and family. But we have also recognized that this wasn’t the same as before. We have recognized that this is a new normal for our city and its youth. This understanding has helped guide us in our work to address the needs of young San Franciscans.

We present these Budget and Policy Priorities at a time of great choice and change for the City and County of San Francisco. The COVID pandemic has had lasting impacts on our city, from enlarging pre-existing challenges like the homelessness crisis to presenting new challenges like economic changes leading to empty offices downtown. Our communities are still recovering, but we also know our best days are ahead. 2024 is the year of building the future of San Francisco, and for that it is essential we center the next generations of city residents and leaders. That is the purpose of this report.

I am immensely proud to have been a part of the Youth Commission, a group of dedicated and effective young San Franciscans appointed by the Mayor and Supervisors to advise our leaders on the issues impacting youth. This report is just one example of our collective work to represent the diversity of needs and voices of young San Franciscans.

Our report addresses issues ranging from school safety concerns to food insecurity for families. It is thanks to the hard work and dedication of all Commissioners that made this report possible. The Chairs of Issue-Based Committees, Valentina Alioto-Pier, Imaan Ansari, and Linda Ye, each deserve recognition for their coordination of their committees. Our Communications and Outreach Officers, Téa Lonné Amir and Kelly Wu, both deserve appreciation for their work to engage youth from all backgrounds and communities in our city. Our Legislative Affairs Officers, Jason Fong and Allister Adair, both deserve gratitude for their organizing of the report and research support. The Commission’s Vice-Chair, Gabbie Listana, deserves my personal thanks for their support throughout the process of creating this report.

Finally, and most importantly, I’d like to thank our Youth Commission staff, Alondra Esquivel Garcia, Joy Zhan, and Joshua Rudy Ochoa, for their support throughout the drafting, editing, debating, and adoption of these priorities. Their dedication and drive are what make our advocacy possible.

It is with pride in our work and great optimism for our city that we present the Youth Commission’s Fiscal Years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Budget and Policy Priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ewan Barker Plummer". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Ewan Barker Plummer
Chair of the San Francisco Youth Commission

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

San Francisco Youth Commission



FULL YOUTH COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair - Ewan Barker Plummer (Mayoral)
Vice Chair - Gabbie Listana (D6)
Legislative Affairs Officer - Jason Fong (D7)
Legislative Affairs Officer - Allister Adair (D2)
Communications and Outreach Officer - Téa Lonné Amir (Mayoral)
Communications and Outreach Officer - Kelly Wu (D3)



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chair - Valentina Alioto-Pier (Mayoral)
Vice Chair - Isabella T. Perez (Mayoral)
Members - Ewan Barker Plummer (Mayoral)
Joselyn Marroquin (Mayoral)



HOUSING, RECREATION, TRANSIT COMMITTEE

Chair - Imaan Ansari (D11)
Vice Chair - Jason Fong (D7)
Members - Allister Adair (D2)
Aryelle Lampkins (Mayoral)
Chloe Wong (D1)
Helen Cisneros (D5)



TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Chair - Linda Ye (D4)
Vice Chair - Skylar Dang (D9)
Members - Gabbie Listana (D6)
Kelly Wu (D3)
Téa Lonné Amir (Mayoral)
Galia Stack Lozano (D8)
Adrianna Faagau-Noa (D10)



LGBTQ+ TASK FORCE

Chair - Galicia Stack Lozano (D8)
Vice Chair - Valentina Alioto-Pier (Mayoral)
Members - Ewan Barker Plummer (Mayoral)
Gabbie Listana (D6)
Oz Rafer (Non-Voting)
Cole Tao (Non-Voting)



JOSHUA RUDY OCHOA
Community Partnership Specialist



ALONDRA ESQUIVEL GARCIA
Director



JOY CHAOYING ZHAN
Youth Development Specialist



MI TANG
Intern

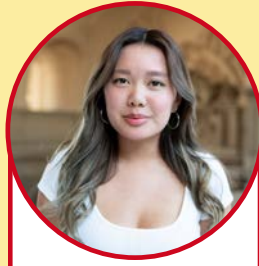
2023 - 2024 DISTRICT-WIDE YOUTH COMMISSIONERS



Chloe Wong
District 1



Allister Adair
District 2
Legislative Affairs
Officer



Kelly Wu
District 3
Communications and
Outreach Officer



Linda Ye
District 4



Helen Cisneros
District 5



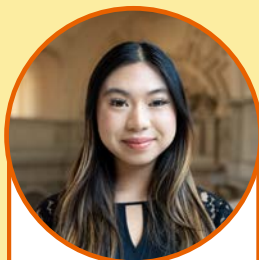
Gabbie Listana
District 6
Vice Chair of the
Commission



Jason Fong
District 7
Legislative Affairs
Officer



**Galicia Stack
Lozano**
District 8



Skylar Dang
District 9



**Adrianna
Faagau-Noa**
District 10



Imaan Ansari
District 11



2023 - 2024 CITYWIDE YOUTH

COMMISSIONERS



Ewan Barker Plummer
Citywide
Chair of the Commission



Valentina Alioto-Pier
Citywide



Isabella T. Perez
Citywide



Aryelle Lampkins
Citywide



Téa Lonné Amir
Citywide
Communications and Outreach
Officer



Joselyn Marroquin
Citywide



Budget and Policy Executive Summary

On Monday, March 4, 2024, the San Francisco Youth Commission unanimously passed their 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Budget and Policies Priorities. The San Francisco Youth Commission will be presenting its Budget and Policies Priorities Report on March 27, 2024 to the Board of Supervisors' Budget and Appropriations Committee.

The San Francisco Youth Commission will focus on advocacy and outreach with the following actions:

- Hosting a Youth Budget Community Forum on February 21, 2024 at the SF Public Library
- Presenting at SFUSD Schools and CBO's
- Requesting CBO's and City Departments to provide Budget Presentations to the Youth Commission
- Support budget request from CBO's and City Departments

2024-2025 and 2025-2026 Budget and Policy Priorities:

Civic Engagement and Education Committee

1. Provide Oversight and Needed Investment in School Safety
2. Increase Voter Preregistration Efforts
3. Expand the Voting Age to 16 in San Francisco Elections
4. Address Sexual Assault and Harassment in Schools

Housing, Recreation, and Transit Committee

5. Expand Access to Youth-Centered Recreation Spaces
6. Address Vision Zero
7. Address San Francisco's Housing Availability and Affordability Crisis
8. Support Youth and Transitional-Aged Youth Experiencing Homelessness
9. Improve Quality of Life on Transit
10. Improve Climate Resilience
11. Make Free Muni for All Youth Permanent

Transformative Justice Committee

12. Reduce Youth Weapon Access
13. Implement Fentanyl Overdose Reduction in San Francisco
14. Improve Language Access Support for San Francisco Residents
15. Address Food and Nutritional Insecurity
16. Take Drastic Action in Addressing the Environmental Effects in Bayview Hunters Point

EXPAND THE VOTING AGE TO 16 IN SAN FRANCISCO ELECTIONS

The Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to place a charter amendment to expand the voting age to 16 in San Francisco elections on the November 2024 ballot.

Background

The Youth Commission believes that expanding the voting age to 16 and 17-year-olds in San Francisco municipal elections will increase overall youth civic engagement and provide needed representation in our democracy.

In 2015, the Youth Commission embarked on a mission to expand the voting age to 16 through a charter amendment. The initiative has been on the ballot twice before, once in 2016 and the second time in 2020. Both years had strong support from the Board of Supervisors along with many other elected officials. In 2016, as Proposition F, Vote16 lost by 2.1% of the vote. In 2020, as Proposition G, Vote16 lost by a smaller margin at 0.80% of the vote.¹ The Youth Commission still believes that Vote16 is a priority for the future of San Francisco. We are optimistic about the promising future of Vote16 in 2024.

Responsibilities

At 16 and 17 years old, teens hold many societal responsibilities. By 16, teens can work up to 46 hours a week and are taxed for the income they earn.² Additionally, every time a 16 or 17-year-old purchases a product, they pay local sales taxes. This creates a form of taxation without representation for 16 and 17-year-olds.

In California, teens can be tried as adults in court beginning at age 16, being held responsible as adults in court but unable to vote in elections which often determine criminal justice policy.³ Furthermore, 16 and 17-year-olds in California are deemed responsible enough to hold several government licenses, including for driving, hunting, flying aircraft, operating drones, piloting boats, driving motorcycles, and food handling.⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸

¹ “Yes on G Earns 49.2% and Looks to the Future.” 2020. Vote 16 SF.

² “What are California limitations on the hours that minors are allowed to work?” 2020. SHRM.

³ “Proposition 57.” n.d. California Courts. Accessed February 8, 2024.

⁴ “License Requirements - California DMV.” n.d. California DMV. Accessed February 15, 2024.

⁵ “Boating laws rules and license requirements.” n.d. California State Parks. Accessed February 15, 2024.

⁶ “California Food Handlers Card Requirements.” n.d. Food Handlers Card Help . Accessed February 15, 2024.

⁷ “Provisional Licensing - California DMV.” n.d. California DMV. Accessed February 15, 2024.

⁸ Rupprecht, Jonathan. n.d. “- Drone Law and Drone Attorney Assistance.” - Drone Law and Drone Attorney Assistance. Accessed February 15, 2024.

Access to resources

16 and 17-year-olds have access to more resources than ever before, using them to form informed opinions on city matters, and are prepared to use them to vote. High School students in San Francisco are required to complete an American government and civics class, informing them on political systems and the legislative process, while simultaneously providing a space for educated discourse amongst peers and teachers.⁹ These conversations in classrooms throughout San Francisco provide a safe foundation for 16 and 17-year-olds to inform themselves on city issues and engage in thoughtful discussions. Additionally, with such easy access to teachers or librarians, 16 and 17-year-olds can easily ask for clarification or background on electoral matters, something that is out of reach for adults starting around age 18.

Further, today's 16 and 17-year-olds have the unique experience of growing up with modern technology, allowing them access to a vast amount of resources while being adept at identifying online misinformation and bias. ¹⁰ It is with these resources that 16 and 17-year-olds can easily access the tools necessary to effectively participate in city government.

Overall Voter Turnout

Studies have shown that voting is a habitual action. Once someone casts their first vote they are more likely to continue voting in later life, and an individual who votes in the first election they are eligible for is likely to continue voting consistently, while someone who doesn't will take several years to pick up the habit.¹¹ Expanding the voting age to 16 and 17 years old increases the likelihood that voting will become a habit. The earlier someone starts voting, the more likely they are to be a lifelong voter, increasing overall voter turnout.

Additionally, 18 is a year of transition for young adults. 18-year-olds are transitioning into adulthood, beginning college, moving out, and/or entering the workforce. This allows for optional new responsibilities, like voting, to be forgotten and deprioritized. Granting 16 and 17-year-olds the right to vote allows for voting to become a strong habit before this major life transition and build a voting habit. This will help increase voter turnout in future elections.

Future of City

San Francisco is at a decision point. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn, San Franciscans are redetermining their future. The choices made today, on

⁹ "State Minimum High School Graduation Requirements - High School (CA Dept of Education)." 2023. California Department of Education.

¹⁰ Janna, Anderson, and Lee Rainie. 2012. "Main findings: Teens, technology, and human potential in 2020." Pew Research Center.

¹¹ Alexander, Coppock, and Donald P. Green. "Is Voting Habit Forming? New Evidence from Experiments and Regression Discontinuities." *American Journal of Political Science* 60, no. 4 (2016): 1044–62.

issues ranging from public transit and housing to public safety and crime, will determine the future city today's teens will inherit. Those same youth should have a voice and a vote on the policies and leaders that will shape the San Francisco of tomorrow. Let's give it to them by expanding our democracy to include them.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Place a charter amendment on the ballot to expand the voting age in San Francisco to 16 years of age** – allow voters the option to expand the voting age in municipal, school district, and community college district elections on the November 2024 election ballot.

INCREASE VOTER PREREGISTRATION EFFORTS

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to increase outreach and information about preregistration opportunities to students and schools, the City and County of San Francisco to conduct further research on the effectiveness of current outreach efforts and ways to increase voter preregistration, the development of a comprehensive plan to implement the goals outlined in Board of Education Resolution 162- 23A3, and continue funding the Department of Election's Youth Voter Outreach.

Background

Since the 2020 election, voter turnout rates of people from the age of 18-24 have steadily declined.¹ With 9.6% of the population in San Francisco being people aged 18-24 only about half of them are registered to vote.²³ Thus, the youth voice is underrepresented during the election cycles.

The Youth Commission of San Francisco has made past statements on the importance of voter awareness among youth across San Francisco. A continued effort must be made to give San Francisco youth the resources and opportunities that would be helpful to learn about their civic duties with pre-registering or registering to vote.

In Schools

In San Francisco, school classes and clubs are a helpful resource for students to be engaged with and informed on their civic duties. By implementing Board of Education Resolution 162-23A3, a Resolution encouraging students to exercise their voting rights, San Francisco public schools can rebuild their school systems to teach voting processes, rights, and pre-registration.⁴⁵ Every SFUSD High School American Democracy class that implements the changes will be required to provide students with pre-registration forms. Although this Resolution was passed, there is no information on how many and in which schools this policy was enacted. In addition, most students who take American Democracy classes in San Francisco are seniors. To build habitual voting, classes like American Democracy, and other resources must be offered to all High School students.

In addition to available classes, educators also have a huge influence on student voter participation. According to one study found that 64% of respondents were encouraged to vote by a teacher in high school, while only 50% of them said that they were taught

¹ Catherine Allen and Bay City News, "Bay Area's Young Voters Are Registering at Lower Rates. Organizers Are Combating This Ahead of 2024 Election," SFGate, September 6, 2023.

² County, "Report of Registration as of July 16, 2021," July 16, 2021.

³ "San Francisco, California Population 2024." n.d. World Population Review. Accessed February 15, 2024.

⁴ "Schools to Teach Voting Process & Rights, and Offer Voter Pre-registration to Students | SFUSD," April 14, 2016.

⁵ Sandra Lee Fewer et al., "Resolution No. 162-23A3 Encouraging Students to Exercise Their Voting Rights," April 12, 2016, accessed February 29, 2024.

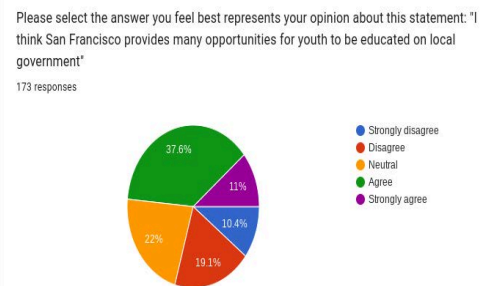
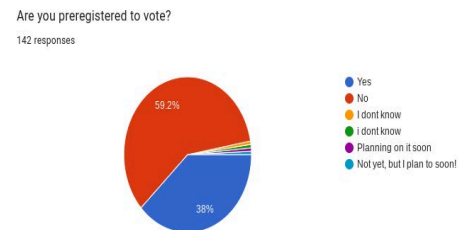
how to register to vote.⁶ In the same study, they also analyzed the attitudes of young people towards voting. They found that 26% of those who were not encouraged to vote in high school, had negative feelings about voting, versus 12% of young adults who were encouraged to vote in high school. Furthermore, 25% of people who were not encouraged to vote in high school responded that they did not know enough to vote versus 15% of respondents who were encouraged to vote. These staggering statistics show that students who learn and are encouraged to vote by educators, are more likely to have positive attitudes towards voting, and are more likely to continue to vote.

Department of Elections Workshops

Although Voting Pre-registration forms are available online and in person through the Department of Elections, there are also workshops youths can attend to get the information needed. The San Francisco Government voter outreach team hosts many of these workshops, which can be found on their outreach event calendar.⁷ The outreach team does presentations not only on pre-registration, but also on other topics such as voting options, language services and translated materials, accessible services and tools, ranked-choice voting, and poll worker service. It’s also possible to host resource tables at individual sites. These events can help youths, especially those with language barriers, to get in-person help with voter registration and overall voting awareness.

In addition, in a 2023 Youth Commission Civic Engagement Survey, it was found that when students answered “no” or “neutral” when asked if they felt prepared to vote in a local election, 45.1% of respondents responded that more outreach in schools would make them feel more prepared to vote. Furthermore, 39.3% of respondents answered that more youth voter engagement events would prepare them for voting. Moreover, when asked if students felt that San Francisco provides many opportunities for youth to be educated about local government, it was found that 19.1% of students disagreed, with 22% of students remaining neutral.

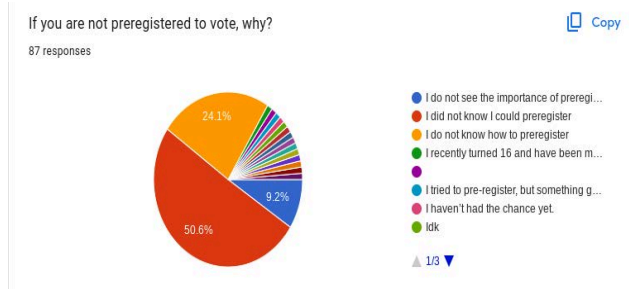
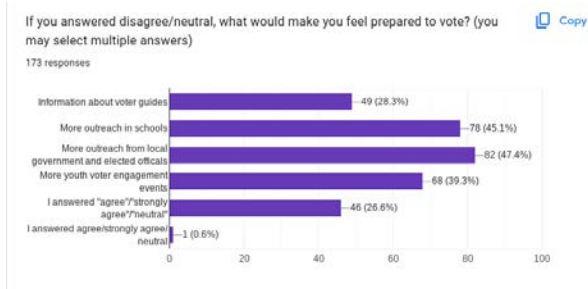
Finally, when asked if students were pre-registered to vote, 59.2% of students responded that they were not. When asked why they were not pre-registered, 50.6% of students responded that they did not know they could pre-register and 24.1% of students responded that 24.1%



⁶ Sarah Andes et al., “Youth Who Learned About Voting in High School More Likely to Become Informed and Engaged Voters,” Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, August 31, 2020.

⁷ “Voter Outreach | San Francisco”

responded that they did not know how to pre-register. These statistics show that students in our district do not feel ready to vote because of a lack of accessible resources in their schools, and not knowing available opportunities to learn about voting in general.



Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Offer more in-school opportunities for students to learn about voter pre-registration** - including working with the San Francisco Unified School District to dedicate extra time on how to register to vote and be informed on what is on the ballot during class.
2. **Continue funding the Department of Election's Youth Voter Outreach program** - This includes High School Voter Education Week, Student Poll Worker Opportunities, Preregistration Outreach, and Department of Elections Tours.

PROVIDE OVERSIGHT AND NEEDED INVESTMENT IN SCHOOL SAFETY

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to provide oversight of and investment in school safety infrastructure improvements, review safety policies and procedures, and improve violence prevention services.

Background

Students, educators, staff, and other community members involved with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) have repeatedly expressed concerns regarding the safety policies in place at school sites across San Francisco. The San Francisco Youth Commission has consistently advocated for increased investment and quicker implementation of school safety infrastructure and policies, including in our 2022-2023 Budget and Policy Priorities.¹

Most recently a coalition of youth leaders and community advocates published an open letter to school district leaders in December 2023 expressing concern for “lacking safety policies, procedures, and infrastructure currently in place at school campuses across the city.”² In January 2024, SFUSD students organized a walkout with clear demands for safety improvements, including updating school district policies for real-time crisis communication, installation of interior door locksets at all school sites by the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, implementation and advertisement of the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System on all school campuses, and more.

Safety Infrastructure

A key component of creating safe learning environments for students, educators, and staff is physical safety infrastructure. This includes both infrastructure which is in place to be utilized in the case of an emergency, such as interior door locksets, as well as infrastructure which is always in use to maintain safety, such as locked and monitored exterior doors.

For many years there have been concerns around the maintenance and type of door locks in SFUSD schools. Interior door locksets, more commonly referred to as “Columbine locks”, are standard door locks which can be locked from the outside or inside of a room. In the case of an active threat, this allows someone to secure a door from either side to save time and not put themselves in harm's way.

Public safety experts have repeatedly recommended schools implement interior door locksets. The final report from the Sandy Hook Shooting Advisory Commission includes

¹ 2022-2023 Budget and Policy Priorities Report. San Francisco Youth Commission, 47-52.

² Joaquin Palomino. 2023. “S.F. advocates demand reforms after students bring guns to schools.” San Francisco Chronicle.

doors lockable from the inside as their first recommendation.³ The initial report from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission recognizes that teachers in the Parkland shooting were often unable to lock their doors since they did not want to exit their classrooms into the hallway, as well as inadequate Public Announcement systems did not fully cover the building and were difficult to use from classrooms.⁴

According to Superintendent Matt Wayne, 25% of SFUSD school sites do not have updated, well-functioning Public Announcement systems. Current broken and outdated systems, which often also lack full coverage of school sites, have led to incidents where lockdowns were called but students and educators were left unaware.⁵

On May 15, 2023, following multiple concerning school safety incidents locally and nationally, the Youth Commission held a hearing “to discuss and understand the current status of school safety policies, procedures, and infrastructure at San Francisco Unified School District school sites” at which both SFUSD and the San Francisco Police Department presented.⁶ This hearing showed that, at the time, SFUSD planned for all school sites to have security locksets installed by December 2023, that approximately 25% of school sites needed Public Announcement system modernization, and that assessment of working conditions for systems was ongoing across the District.

Following the aforementioned student protests in early 2024, the Youth Commission’s Civic Engagement and Education Committee held a joint hearing with the Board of Supervisors’s Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee “to evaluate the lockdown and other safety procedures of the San Francisco Unified School District” on February 1, 2024. This hearing showed that the previous timeline for security lockset installation at all SFUSD school sites had not been met and that the new goal was for completion by summer 2024. The presentation from SFUSD further reported that currently, approximately 30 school sites are in need of Public Announcement system updates and that only funding has been allocated for the 6 high schools in need of Public Announcement system modernization, with those planned to be completed by fall 2024.⁷

³ FINAL REPORT OF THE SANDY HOOK ADVISORY COMMISSION. Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 32-33.

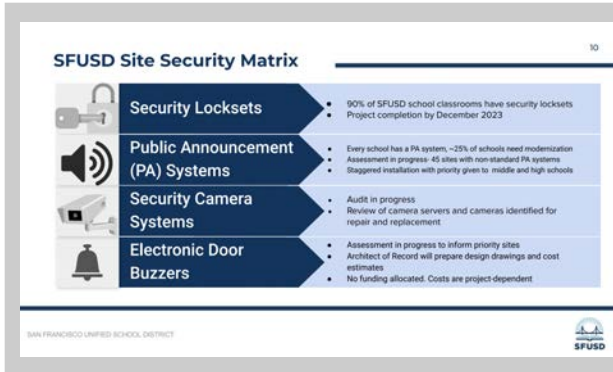
⁴ Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission. 2019. “Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission Report”, 45-48. Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

⁵ Jill Tucker. 2024. “S.F. students demand district do more to prevent gun violence.” San Francisco Chronicle.

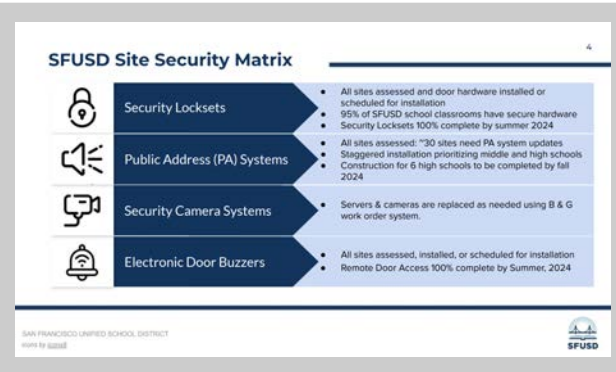
⁶ May 15, 2023 Full Youth Commission Meeting Agenda. San Francisco Youth Commission.

⁷ City and County of San Francisco - File #: 240030.

May 2023 Hearing
(slide 10 of SFUSD presentation)



February 2024 Hearing
(slide 4 of SFUSD presentation)



Timelines for the implementation of safety infrastructure have been pushed multiple times, and funding for these urgent repairs and installations (particularly Public Announcement systems) is largely dependent on the passage of a 2024 November bond measure from SFUSD, creating greater delays for these projects and the possibility that the bond will not pass.

Safety Procedures

Students have also expressed concerns about the current policies and implementation of safety procedures. At a February 1, 2024, joint hearing between the Board of Supervisors Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee and the Youth Commission’s Civic Engagement and Education Committee student public commenters expressed that lockdown drills had not taken place at their schools for at least three years. Further concerns around the lack of awareness of SFUSD’s Say Something Anonymous Reporting System and lax security presence have also been shared with the Youth Commission.⁸

There is mixed evidence for the effectiveness of lockdown drills in schools, with concerns for negative physiological impacts being weighed with the need for preparedness and awareness of procedures in the case of a violent threat.⁹ The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has emphasized the need for practice drills in preparation for possible emergencies and the US Department of Education maintains that lockdown drills are a critical component of school safety preparedness.¹⁰ Everytown for Gun Safety has published best practice recommendations for lockdown drills.¹¹

⁸ San Francisco Unified School District. 2023. “Say Something Anonymous Reporting System.”
⁹ Jaclyn Schildkraut, Amanda B. Nickerson, and Richard Louv. 2022. “Should We or Shouldn’t We? Arguments for and Against Lockdown Drills.” The MIT Press Reader.
¹⁰ Federal Emergency Management Agency. “EMI | National Standard Exercise Curriculum | HSEEP.” FEMA Training.
¹¹ Everytown for Gun Safety. “Minimizing the Trauma of School Shooter Drills.” Everytown Research.

At the start of the 2022-2023 academic year, SFUSD launched the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System for middle and high school students. This system, created by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, has been utilized by schools across the country and has been effective in preventing school violence as well as youth self-harm. While the system has shown success, many students are unaware of its existence and have not been taught how to access it.

Violence Prevention

The best strategy to keep schools and community spaces safe is to prevent and interrupt potential violence before it starts. The City and County of San Francisco funds multiple violence prevention programs for youth and young adults and recently announced an expanded partnership with SFUSD.¹² This included an expansion of the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families's (DCYF) School Violence Interrupter Program, an expansion of the Human Rights Commission's Dream Keeper Initiative with the goal of preventing violence in schools, and more.

Key to violence prevention in schools is ensuring adequate mental health support for students. The Youth Commission has previously called for increased investment in school Wellness Centers, which have faced severe staffing shortages.¹³ This has made wait times for students in need of mental health services long and made time with mental health professionals limited.

Another central component of violence prevention is reducing access to weapons, particularly in the home. Most perpetrators of school shootings use weapons obtained at their homes or the homes of a close family member, making these weapons inaccessible to youth an essential part of preventing school violence.¹⁴ Both the San Francisco Police Code and the California Penal Code require firearm owners to securely store weapons so that minors cannot access them.¹⁵ The Youth Commission has previously called for safe firearm storage information to be shared with school families annually and to follow best practices of sending home a physical letter requiring a signature acknowledging these legal responsibilities ([RESOLUTION NO. 2022-AL-06]). While SFUSD has included this information in some email/online newsletters, they have not implemented a District-wide policy of physical letters informing caregivers of their legal responsibilities.

¹² San Francisco Unified School District. 2023. "City and School District Leaders Join to Respond to Series of Violent Incidents Involving Youth." SFUSD.

¹³ 2022-2023 Budget and Policy Priorities Report. San Francisco Youth Commission, 53-54.

¹⁴ Patrick Carter. 2021. "Most school shooters get guns from home – and more weapons are there since the pandemic." Michigan Medicine.

¹⁵ Part 6. Control of Deadly Weapons, Title 4: Firearms, Division 4: Storage of Firearms and Chapter 2: Criminal Storage of Firearm. California Penal Code; SEC. 4512, San Francisco Police Code

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

Safety Infrastructure

- 1. Provide needed oversight of SFUSD school safety infrastructure upgrades** – take needed action(s) to ensure safety infrastructure improvements, including but not limited to full installation of interior door locksets and replacement of inadequate/ineffective public announcement systems.
- 2. Explore funding options for SFUSD school safety infrastructure upgrades** – current plans rely heavily on the passage of a new General Obligation Bond in November 2024; work with SFUSD to determine funding gaps for safety infrastructure installation and determine funding sources, with source options including direct grants or loans from the City and County of San Francisco, State of California, and/or United States Federal Government.

Safety Procedures

- 3. Ensure students, educators, and staff are prepared and trained for emergency situations including lockdowns** – take needed action(s) to ensure schools are prepared for emergency situations, including lockdowns and lockouts, while following best trauma-informed practices.
- 4. Create a public awareness campaign for the Say Something system in collaboration with SFUSD, and explore expanding the system to independent schools and youth-serving programs** – work with the school district, particularly ensuring input from students and educators at a range of school sites, to improve awareness of the Say Something system.

Violence Prevention

- 5. Improve Wellness Center wait times** – explore options to improve Wellness Center wait times and limited services through improved recruitment of mental health care professionals working in schools.
- 6. Support and encourage schools to share safe firearm storage information** – take any necessary actions to encourage and support San Francisco schools, including SFUSD, to send home physical copies of and generally promote safe firearm storage, in line with best practices recommended by gun violence prevention advocates and organizations.

ADDRESS SEXUAL ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to address the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment cases in schools.

Sexual assault and harassment have continued to severely impact schools across San Francisco. Within six months in 2022, more than 50 lawsuits were filed against school districts across San Francisco and the larger Bay Area.¹ Over the past 7 years, more than 19 employees of the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) accused of sexual misconduct were allowed to resign to avoid termination. The City must make necessary changes to address this systemic issue that continues to impact and harm San Francisco youth.

Regarding SFUSD, recent reporting shows allegations that an SFUSD athletic director at George Washington High School has been accused of sexual abuse, and despite law enforcement being contacted and an active lawsuit, he was permitted to “quietly resign” and obtain similar employment elsewhere.² A California Public Records Act Request showed that only 5 out of 24 Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaints within the SFUSD were investigated in 2022. The lack of action and investigation further demonstrates the flaws of the reporting system and the lack of accountability throughout SFUSD.

Another report from the U.S Department of Education covers a recent investigation of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music regarding the Conservatory’s failed attempt at responding to a student’s allegations and providing the necessary support, therefore not abiding by the Department of Education’s Title IX grievance procedures.³ The Conservatory has failed to comply with Title IX regulations on multiple occasions and is just now being penalized for overlooking the complaints of its students.

Efforts to address the aforementioned issues began in 2005 when the Youth Commission, in collaboration with the SFUSD Student Advisory Council, produced a report on sexual assault and harassment in San Francisco schools entitled “Youth Commission Report on Sexual Assault and Harassment in San Francisco Schools,” which showed the primary factor preventing students from receiving needed resources and support is disconnection between service providers and San Francisco students.⁴ This report entailed a survey conducted by the Youth Commission, the Youth

¹ Sophia Bollag, “These 51 Bay Area Schools Face Sexual Abuse Lawsuits: Here Are the Details of Each Case,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 24, 2024.

² Cynthia Dizikes, “New Sexual Assault Accusation Is Made Against SFUSD Athletic Director, Who Was Allowed to Quietly Resign,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 15, 2022.

³ “U.S. Department of Education’s Office For Civil Rights Announces Resolution of Sexual Harassment Investigation of San Francisco Conservatory of Music | U.S. Department of Education,” n.d.

⁴ Peter Lauterborn et al., “San Francisco Youth Commission Report on Sexual Assault and Harassment in San Francisco Schools,” *San Francisco Youth Commission*, April 2005.

Leadership Institute, and the Student Advisory Council which surveyed 6,000 high school students. The survey concluded that 48.4% of students are affected by sexual harassment on or off campus, exemplifying the urgent importance of this issue.

In April 2016, the Board of Supervisors passed, and then-Mayor Lee signed, legislation ([FILE NO. 150944, ORDINANCE NO. 89-16]) sponsored by then-Supervisor Jane Kim to create the Safer Schools Sexual Assault Task Force.⁵ The Task Force recommended there be an established and ongoing Task Force to coordinate sexual assault prevention and response on campus and in the broader community. Secondly, the Task Force recommended fully implementing state and federal laws reflecting years of work to prevent sexual assault on campus and respond effectively when it occurs. But, despite specific recommendations to city institutions, and resolutions by previous Youth Commissions, the issue of sexual assault and harassment runs rampant in San Francisco schools, affecting youth citywide.

In 2021, hundreds of students from more than eight San Francisco high schools walked out of class to protest SFUSD's inadequate handling of sexual assault and harassment reports. However, this problem is experienced by students beyond the SFUSD. Today students from parochial schools across San Francisco are demanding the Archdiocese release the list of religious



leaders accused of involvement in the sexual harassment cases that lie at the center of their decision to declare bankruptcy in August of 2023.⁶ While institutions like the Archdiocese are only now beginning to be investigated on the matter of sexual assault and harassment, these issues have long been present and repeat year after year. With 30,000 students attending parochial schools in San Francisco, the City must not ignore the prevalence of these cases that accompany those within the SFUSD. City services must be accessible to all San Francisco youth.

⁵ Safer Schools Sexual Assault Task Force, "Safer Schools Sexual Assault Task Force: Report and Recommendations," *City and County of San Francisco Department on the Status of Women*, December 2017.

⁶ Sophia Bollag, "Hundreds of Alleged Sex Abuse Victims in Limbo as S.F. Archdiocese Declares Bankruptcy," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 22, 2023.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Evaluate the effectiveness of the current background checking system in SFUSD** - even with the current checks in place, faculty can find employment at other institutions despite having criminal allegations on their record. In being able to “quietly resign,” teachers can escape these allegations as in the case of George Washington’s athletic director. In 2018, the state of New Jersey passed the “Pass the Trash” law to address this very issue.⁷ This law requires a school to examine the employment history of each prospective hire, assessing whether the candidate has any substantiated allegations of sexual assault or harassment in the past 20 years. Something similar should be done in San Francisco to prohibit this cycle of having teachers with criminal accusations move from one school to the next.
2. **Standardize more training and curriculum on sexual harassment and assault** - as of now, schools have significant leeway on how to structure their respective health education courses that cover these issues. As a result, many schools ineffectively and insufficiently address topics like consent and recognition of sexual harassment and assault. Furthermore, SFUSD must ensure faculty members are adequately prepared to identify these cases and provide support to the victim(s) involved.
3. **Support the work being done in the Title IX Student Advisory Group** - when the Title IX Advisory Group reconvenes next school year, we urge the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor’s office, and city departments to work with students and faculty alike to address and prevent gender-based violence amongst SFUSD students.

⁷ David Nash, “The ‘Pass The Trash’ Law – What Does It Mean For School Districts?,” NJPSA and FEA, December 13, 2023.

REDUCE YOUTH WEAPON ACCESS

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to support violence prevention efforts toward reducing weapon access for youth in San Francisco.

Background

In San Francisco, owners of handguns must obey the following law in accordance with SEC.4512 of the San Francisco Police Code: “Handgun owners can keep their weapons at home but must keep them locked in safes or disabled by trigger locks when not using them”.¹ Despite this measure, it has been proven to not be enough as break-ins have allowed individuals to steal these so-called “locked and safe guns,” and take them to use or sell on the street. Additionally, youth who reside in residences with firearms are more likely to be able to access these weapons. 1 in 3 homes with children have guns, many of which are left unlocked or loaded.² Over the past 5 years, shootings in San Francisco have increased by 74% with 158 people killed with firearms.³

Following significant advocacy from local gun violence prevention groups, the San Francisco Unified School District released a letter via District email newsletter titled “Letter about Gun Safety to families” in August of 2023 including information to increase awareness of gun safety and stopping school shootings. This included information for safe storage of firearms to keep them out of the hands of children by storing guns securely by locking the weapon in a gun safe unloaded and having the ammunition locked separately; asking about the presence of unsecured guns in other homes of neighbors, families, and play dates; and recognizing the risk factors and warning signs of depression and suicide.⁴ While this was an important step in raising awareness, it did not address the requests of local gun violence prevention groups who urged the District to follow the best practices of the Be SMART Program, including sending home physical letters informing parents/guardians of their legal obligation to protect kids.⁵ The Youth Commission has previously urged all San Francisco schools to send home safe firearm storage information (RESOLUTION NO. 2022-AL-06).

On December 8th, 2023, two students at George Washington High School and one student at Galileo Academy of Science and Technology were found to have brought guns onto the campus.⁶ These cases were only the ones that had been caught. Community

¹ San Francisco Police Code, SEC. 4512.

² Judy Schaechter. (2023, September). Guns in the Home: How to keep kids safe. HealthyChildren.org (American Academy of Pediatrics).

³ Sydney Johnson. (2023, June 13). San Francisco considers banning guns in more public places after recent shootings. KQED.

⁴ Letter about Gun Safety to families | SFUSD. (2023, August 16).

⁵ Be SMART | Secure gun storage. (2023, March 8). Be SMART.

⁶ Megan Fan Munce. (2023, December 8). S.F. police: Three students brought guns to two high schools Friday. San Francisco Chronicle.

organizers point out there are weapons on school campuses brought by students every day.

Between March 2022 and April 2023, of 100 student conflicts on and off San Francisco school campuses 31 involved guns.⁷ For youth, weapons have been proven to be easy to access. The United States has more civilian-owned guns per capita than any country in the world, with 120.5 guns per 100 residents.⁸ Many youth in possession of a weapon list protection as their primary reason leading to questions over why youth feel unsafe in their current environments and would need a weapon to issue that kind of protection. Factors including social media and mental health have been used to justify the lack of safety students feel in their environments.

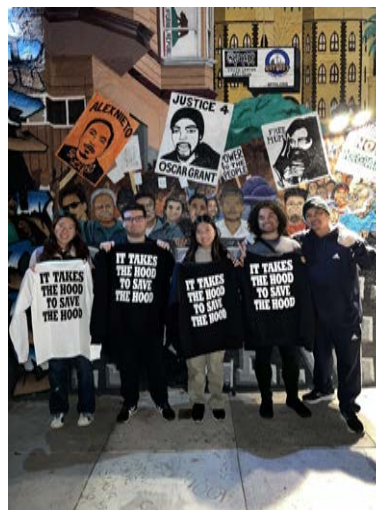
In November 2023, the Youth Commission organized a listening session for Districts 9 and 11 on the Student Success Fund, a measure approved by voters in November 2022 that would ensure funding for schools towards improving academic success, and social and emotional wellness for students. At this listening session, students requested more mental health services amongst other requests.



Youth Commission Involvement

In January 2022, the San Francisco Youth Commission unanimously passed RESOLUTION NO. 2022-AL-06, which called on all San Francisco schools to send information annually on safe firearm storage to students' families.

In January 2024, the Youth Commission took a tour of United Playaz, a San Francisco-based violence prevention and youth development organization located in the heart of South of Market (SoMa). On this tour, Commissioners visited different facilities of the organization and spoke with United Playaz founder, Rudy Corpuz Jr. Founded in 1994, United Playaz offers a range of services, including, but not limited to, in-school aid, afterschool programs, case-management, and workforce training. The organization offers a 7 out of 10 success rate among guiding at-risk youth. A former SoMa gang member himself at the age of 12, Rudy recalls the significance of being able to access weapons, saying, “When we would



⁷ Ida Mojada. (2023, May 8). Youth violence rocks San Francisco. Where does the city go from here? The San Francisco Standard.

⁸ Brad Bushman, & Dan Romer. (2023, January 12). How does a child become a shooter? Research suggests easy access to guns and exposure to screen violence increase the risk. The Conversation.

break into homes, we looked for three things: money, jewelry, and guns.” He then explained that the guns would be used to commit additional crimes.

In 2014, United Playaz instituted an annual Gun Buyback Program with the goal of reducing the number of weapons on the streets. In exchange for payment, people can turn in a handgun for \$100 and an assault rifle for \$200, no questions asked. The guns are then melted down and the parts are used for jewelry and other products that help finance later gun buy-backs. Since its implementation, the program has yielded over 2500 weapons. When Commissioners asked about the impact of the gun buybacks, Rudy affirmed “One gun off the streets can save a lot of people” as he pointed towards a mural commemorating victims of gun violence.

Conclusion

It is necessary to combat youth violence and the accessibility of weapons in the city of San Francisco. Current efforts have been proven to not be enough as we have seen weapons brought onto educational facilities, hindering the ability for students to feel safe at their schools. Students have been calling for more mental health resources and support, and it is important that these calls are not ignored. In order to support the safety and mental well-being of youth, we must raise awareness towards gun violence, provide countermeasures to reduce youth violence, and take weapons off the streets and out of the hands of the youth of San Francisco.

Recommendation:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

- 1) **Continue to fund City Departments and Community-Based Organizations (CBO)’s that support youth and provide youth violence prevention and development** - the Youth Commission supports continued funding and support for City Departments, CBOs, and programs such as the Department of Children, Youth, and their Families; United Playaz; Peace Parks; and more; who provide a comprehensive range of services to prepare vulnerable youth for healthy living in a safe, nurturing, and collaborative environment.
- 2) **Partner with Gun Buy-Backs and Weapon Trade-In event organizers** - to stop gun violence by providing a place for people to turn in weapons for payment, with no questions asked, and get guns off the streets and out of our communities.
- 3) **Ensure that families receive information regarding safe firearm storage annually** - that provides the importance of secure gun storage and the

legal obligations of families to protect minors from accessing irresponsibly stored guns to keep youth and our communities safe.

- 4) **Ensure that youth are able to easily access mental health resources and help** - by investing and pushing SFUSD to strengthen access to existing resources such as mindfulness, community schools, restorative practices, peer resource programs, and therapy.

IMPLEMENT FENTANYL OVERDOSE REDUCTION IN SAN FRANCISCO

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to implement fentanyl overdose reduction by supporting efforts to provide affordable or free Narcan and drug testing strips.

Background

Criminal drug networks are mass-producing fake pills and selling them as real prescription medication, which has killed countless unsuspecting individuals across the United States. This crisis is particularly pertinent in San Francisco, especially in the Tenderloin, which has become ground zero for the open-air drug market and is home to the most children per capita out of any area in the city.¹ These counterfeit pills resemble prescription opioids such as oxycodone (Oxycontin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), alprazolam (Xanax), and stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall). They often contain dangerous levels of fentanyl and are easy to find on social media and online marketplaces, making them accessible to anyone with a smartphone, including teens and young adults.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50 times more potent than heroin, easier to find, and has risen to become the deadliest drug threat in the United States. While opioids such as fentanyl can result in pleasurable feelings and a state of euphoria in patients, they can also cause nausea and constipation, and in higher doses, they can cause one to experience an opioid overdose in which they stop breathing. Illegally manufactured fentanyl is found in heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and counterfeit pills. As a result, many people may not know they're ingesting fentanyl, leading to accidental poisoning. Between 2019 and 2022, the monthly percentage of fentanyl-related overdose deaths increased across 21 jurisdictions in the United States by over 200%.²

The San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) issued a health alert on March 17, 2022, in response to a series of overdoses, both fatal and nonfatal, among people inadvertently exposed to fentanyl while using cocaine. In 2021, 84% of teen drug overdoses found fentanyl in the substance. Fentanyl overdose deaths among youth have tripled from 2019 to 2021.³

¹ Trust for Public Land. (2023, June 29). Safe to play in San Francisco's Tenderloin.

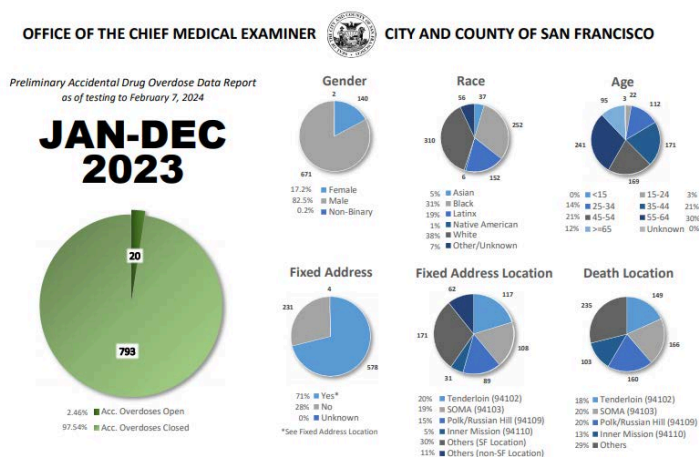
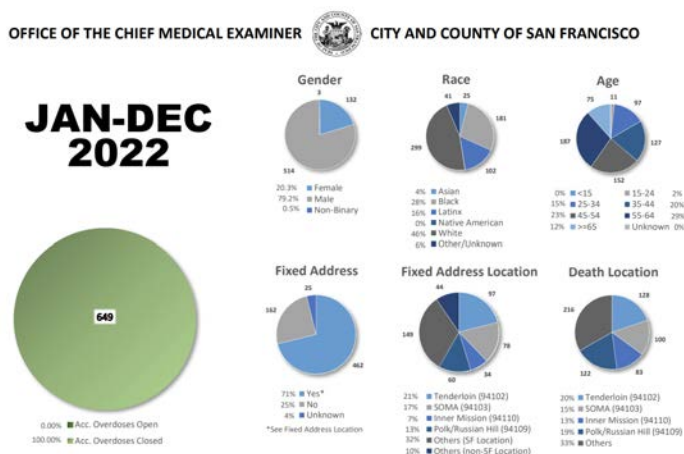
² Mbabazi Kariisa, Julie O'Donnell, Sagar Kuma, Christine L. Mattson, Bruce A. Goldberger, 2023. Illicitly Manufactured Fentanyl-Involved Overdose Deaths with Detected Xylazine - United States, January 2019-June 2022. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 72, 721-727. 10.15585/mmwr.mm7226a4

³ Elissa Nadworny, and Lee V. Gaines. As More Teens Overdose on Fentanyl, Schools Face a Drug Crisis Unlike Any Other. NPR. (2023, August 30).

Just last year in 2023, San Francisco experienced its deadliest year for drug overdoses with 752 overdose fatalities, surpassing the previous record of 726 deaths set in 2020.⁴ Between 2022 and 2023, the number of accidental drug overdoses between the ages of 15-24 doubled from 11 to 22 accidental drug overdoses.⁵ Alarming, city officials estimate that over 80% of these cases involved fentanyl, which has underscored the severity of the crisis.

Alongside this rise in fentanyl-related deaths, there's been a notable increase in seizures due to “tranq-dope,” which is a combination of fentanyl with xylazine, a veterinary anesthetic that is not meant for human use.⁶ The US Centers for Disease Control and the US Drug Enforcement Administration have both highlighted this combination to be a serious public health concern. Scientific and mainstream publications have also documented its deadly impact. The White House has recognized the danger posed by fentanyl-xylazine mixes, declaring it an emerging threat to the nation.⁷

Currently, the San Francisco Unified School District provides a Substance Use Education program that starts as early as elementary school and continues through high school. However, this program is primarily focused on Tobacco prevention. While it does offer resources on other substances, SFUSD’s current health education does not thoroughly cover substance use or proper usage of preventative measures such as drug testing strips or Narcan.



⁴ 2023 is SF’s deadliest year ever for drug overdoses; solution to crisis may be in wastewater. (2023, December 15). ABC7 San Francisco.

⁵ Report on 2023 accidental overdose deaths. (2024). City & County of San Francisco.

⁶ DEA Reports Widespread Threat of Fentanyl Mixed with Xylazine. (2022).

⁷ What you should know about Xylazine | Drug overdose | CDC Injury Center.

History of Narcan

As fentanyl-related overdoses grew in San Francisco, authorities recognized the urgent need for effective interventions to prevent fatalities. Naloxone, typically sold under the brand name “Narcan,” emerged as a critical tool in this effort. Originally developed in the 1960s, Naloxone can rapidly reverse the effects of opioid overdose, including those caused by fentanyl. Historically, it has been used only by trained clinical professionals for the reversal of opioid overdose in emergency or inpatient settings.⁸ It is administered with the help of another individual as a nasal spray and quickly allows for normal breathing in cases of opioid overdose. It is a safe medication and is not known to cause harm when administered in typical doses.⁹ Naloxone has no effect at standard doses in patients not on opioids and non-opioid dependent patients, in doses up to 1 mg/kg.¹⁰ At higher doses, patients only experienced behavioral symptoms such as dizziness, paresthesias, sweating, yawning, nausea, inertia, and diminished cognitive performance and did not experience very serious side effects.¹¹

Naloxone is very effective. The efficacy of reversal following naloxone administration by laypersons has been reported at 75–100%. In general take-home Naloxone programs are considered effective for reducing opioid overdose deaths.¹²

Narcan Access in San Francisco

San Francisco has implemented various initiatives to increase access to life-saving Naloxone. These efforts included training programs for first responders, healthcare professionals, and community members, such as Project FRIEND (First Responder Increased Education and Naloxone Distribution), on how to recognize and respond to opioid overdoses effectively. The trained team has since assembled an advisory committee made up of stakeholders and experts who have worked with local and state health agencies to create existing protocols, training curricula, and a Naloxone-distribution data collection system.¹³ Additionally, the city has expanded distribution channels for Naloxone, making it available in pharmacies, harm reduction centers, and outreach programs. As of September 2023, all Bay Area Walgreens and CVS

⁸ Rebecca McDonald, & John Strang. (2016). Are take-home naloxone programmes effective? Systematic review utilizing application of the Bradford Hill criteria. *Addiction*, 111(7), 1177–1187. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.13326>

⁹ Jasinski DR, Martin WR, Haertzen CA. The human pharmacology and abuse potential of N-allylnoroxymorphone (naloxone). *J Pharmacol Exp Ther* 1967; 157: 420–426.

¹⁰ Borrás MC, Becerra L, Ploghaus A, et al. fMRI measurement of CNS responses to naloxone infusion and subsequent mild noxious thermal stimuli in healthy volunteers. *J Neurophysiol* 2004; 91: 2723–2733.

¹¹ Cohen MR, Cohen RM, Pickar D, et al. Behavioural effects after high dose naloxone administration to normal volunteers. *Lancet* 1981; 2: 1110.

¹² Rebecca McDonald, & John Strang. (2016). Are take-home naloxone programmes effective? Systematic review utilizing application of the Bradford Hill criteria. *Addiction*, 111(7), 1177–1187. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.13326>

¹³ Kathy T. LeSaint, Juan Carlos C. Montoy, Eric C. Silverman, Maria C. Raven, Samuel L. Schow, Phillip O. Coffin, John F. Brown, & Mary P. Mercer. (2022). Implementation of a Leave-behind Naloxone Program in San Francisco: A One-year Experience. *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine*.

pharmacies carry Naloxone with no prescription necessary. Naloxone is also covered by Medi-Cal, Medicare, and other medical insurance companies in the United States.¹⁴

Drug Testing Strips

Fentanyl test strips (FTS) are a low-cost method of helping prevent drug overdoses and reduce harm. FTS are small strips of paper that can detect the presence of fentanyl in all different kinds of drugs and drug forms (pills, powder, and injectables). Originally developed for urinalysis, FTS has been shown to be effective at detecting the presence of fentanyl and fentanyl-analogs in drug samples prior to ingestion.¹⁵

Most FTS are between 96% to nearly 100% accurate in detecting the presence of even small amounts of fentanyl. However, it's possible to test a portion that does not contain fentanyl while the rest contains a potentially lethal amount, known as the “chocolate chip cookie effect.” An FTS will detect fentanyl within 5 minutes of testing, allowing the user to be informed right away of the contents of the substance.¹⁶



Individual FTS cost about \$1 each. FTS has a shelf life of two years from the manufacturer’s date. There is also no evidence that test strips increase drug use.¹⁷

Youth Commission Involvement

The 2022-2023 Youth Commission Budget and Policy Priorities urged the implementation and funding of Naloxone programs in all San Francisco schools to expand harm-reduction measures.

Commissioners have been speaking with public school students of San Francisco to learn of the varying experiences with Naloxone education in schools. Some students point out that though schools are able to provide Naloxone, there are instances in which schools will only allow Naloxone to be used on campus when overdoses are more likely to occur off-campus, and many students remain hesitant to use and carry Narcan for fear that “it is a drug” rather than a life-saving device. Commissioners have also inquired with the Office of Overdose Prevention in the DPH to learn that the DPH is working with the San Francisco Unified School District to ensure that school nurses have Naloxone. DPH has also been funding youth-specific programs that provide overdose

¹⁴ Sarah Holtz, Maryann Jones Thompson, & David Sjostedt. (2023, November 17). San Francisco is experiencing a record number of drug overdoses. Here’s how to reverse one. The San Francisco Standard.

¹⁵ Fentanyl and fentanyl test strips Frequently asked questions (FAQs). California Department of Public Health.

¹⁶ Fentanyl Test Strips: a Harm Reduction Strategy. CDC.

¹⁷ Laura López González. (2023, September 27). Can a simple fentanyl test curb San Francisco’s overdose crisis? UC San Francisco.

prevention education and Naloxone, but did not specify which youth programs these were and what the overdose prevention education entailed.

Conclusion

We reaffirm the urgency and importance of harm reduction as emphasized by the 2022-2023 Youth Commission's Budget and Policy Priorities Report (Priority #12). With the increase in accidental drug overdoses in San Francisco especially among teens, it is only imperative that more preventative measures are taken such as ensuring that every student can access a comprehensive drug education and tools such as FTS and Naloxone that may save many young lives.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

- 1) **Encourage the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to reform the health educational curriculum** - to include better comprehensive drug education about drug usage and its risks, including the proper and effective use of Narcan and drug testing strips.
- 2) **Establish and encourage widespread access to Narcan and drug testing strips and proper usage in public and independent schools across the city** - to do the same in hopes of preventing opioid overdoses and promoting safer drug use practices among students.
- 3) **Collaborate with community organizations specializing in drug education to engage youth through social media and other platforms** - to foster open dialogue and greater awareness about the dangers of fentanyl and fake prescription medication.

IMPROVE LANGUAGE ACCESS SUPPORT FOR SAN FRANCISCO RESIDENTS

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to support the improvement of language accessibility throughout the city of San Francisco by providing funding for the Office of Engagement and Immigrant Action, English as a Second Language (ESL), and foreign language classes, and additional translation resources.

Background

The United States has a long history of immigration, with immigrants making up about 26% of the population. California alone is home to almost 11 million immigrants, a quarter of the immigrant population in the United States.¹ 1 in 3 San Francisco residents is an immigrant, making San Francisco one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse cities in the country.

In San Francisco, a safe-haven city, 34.1% of residents are immigrants.² Out of the immigrant population in San Francisco, 10%, or 27,831, are students, 48.5% speak English less than “very well”, and 38% are unemployed or not in the labor force. Within that, 18.1% of them are “limited English proficient” speakers, meaning their primary language is not English and their ability to speak English is significantly limited.³ Their native languages range from Spanish, Russian, Tagalog, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, and many more. Despite this large population, accessibility to basic foreign language services such as translators, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and more are quite limited. Not only do immigrants make up more than one-third of the population in San Francisco, but San Francisco has the 4th largest immigrant population in the United States, meaning that it is our responsibility to serve, support, uplift, and accommodate our immigrant communities.⁴

Foreign Language Classes

ESL and foreign language classes have proven to be useful for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) speakers but are often difficult to access. ESL and foreign language classes are especially important in a city like San Francisco as there are approximately 109 unique languages spoken in the city.

Foreign language classes in San Francisco have been at risk of receiving budget cuts or being cut entirely. For example, in 2021 the Cantonese program at City College was at

¹ Cesar Alesi Perez, Marisol Cuellar Mejia, and Hans Johnson. Immigrants in California. Public Policy Institute of California. Public Policy Institute of California. (2023, January 24).

² Language Access. OCEIA.

³ Language Access. OCEIA.

⁴ Cities with the largest immigrant populations.

risk of facing elimination from the college’s provided classes. This was due to a lack of enrollment due to the Cantonese classes not offering certificates upon completion. Cantonese is the language most commonly spoken by the Chinese community in San Francisco. According to City College Trustee Alan Wong, “Saving the Cantonese program is not only about protecting Chinese culture, language, and history. It is also about the very practical need to ensure that our very large Cantonese-speaking Chinese community has access to public safety, health care, and social services”.⁵ Furthermore, Self-Help for the Elderly, a local non-profit highly active with Asian American monolingual and LEP seniors, President and CEO Anni Chung said, “Helping the younger generation become bilingual will close the communication gaps our seniors face”. Fortunately, City College Trustee Alan Wong and 20 Asian American community organizations were able to spearhead a proposal to save the Cantonese program at City College that passed in January of 2022.



The Longfellow Elementary Tagalog program provides another example of foreign language classes at risk. In 2022, the Tagalog program was at risk of severe downsizing by combining the Kindergarten and 1st Grade classes, essentially cutting the number of spots in the program in half, which would not have been able to accommodate the large Filipino American population at Longfellow. Furthermore, only two elementary schools provide Tagalog instruction in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), Bessie Carmichael and Longfellow, and with the downsizing of the Tagalog program at Longfellow access to Tagalog instruction for youth would also dwindle. According to Nikki Santiago, an SFUSD parent, immigrant, and community organizer, “This program has really helped my child blossom into the person that she is. She used to be very, very reserved and now she’s not just a proud American, but she’s a proud Filipino”.⁶ Additionally, Longfellow Elementary alumnus Matthew James Mingoa shared, "I learned a lot about my history and culture from all the after-school programs and from WLES".⁷ This program not only teaches about Filipino history, culture, and language but also helps connect Filipino students to their roots and their immigrant families. Through the mobilizing from parents, the cap on the program was lifted, creating more spots for more students to have access to this life-changing program.



⁵ Cantonese language classes in jeopardy at CCSF. (2021, December 23). San Francisco Examiner.

⁶ Julia McEvoy. (2022, July 1). SF Filipino Community mobilizes to preserve Unique Elementary School Language Program. KQED.

⁷ Filipino Education Program in SF Marks 10 Years of Inspiring Youth. (2022, December 15). ABS-CBN News.

Balboa High School, an SFUSD school located in the Excelsior District, is one of the very few high schools in the country to provide a Filipino world language program. The program provides Filipino 1-3, which all students can enroll in while fulfilling the SFUSD world language A-G requirements. According to a Balboa student who is enrolled in the program, this program teaches students about different dialects of the Philippines, but with Tagalog being the most common, most of the material is taught in Tagalog. Students in this program also participate in field trips that dive into Filipino culture and history, such as going into the SOMA District to learn about historical Filipino landmarks and figures. At the end of the year, the program traditionally holds a Kamayan, a gathering of people eating that is a popular hand-in-hand celebration in the Philippines, to bring all of the classes together. Many Balboa students have expressed their gratitude for this program and wish to have it offered in other schools as well.

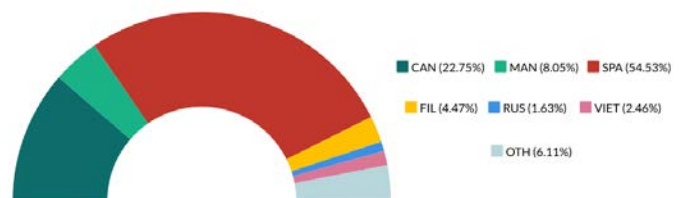
Language Access for City Services

The Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) has worked diligently to ensure language accessibility throughout City departments. Their efforts include the following:

- Intentionally operating in neighborhoods with large populations of immigrants
- Providing learning opportunities through the San Francisco Fellows program and community ambassadorships
- Ensuring that city information, programs, and essential information are accessible, especially to LEP individuals
- Conducts annual training toward language access

OCEIA has emphasized that rising staff turnover rates are impacting the capacity of City departments to prioritize language access initiatives. Regrettably, only a limited number of organizations currently possess the resources to provide language access

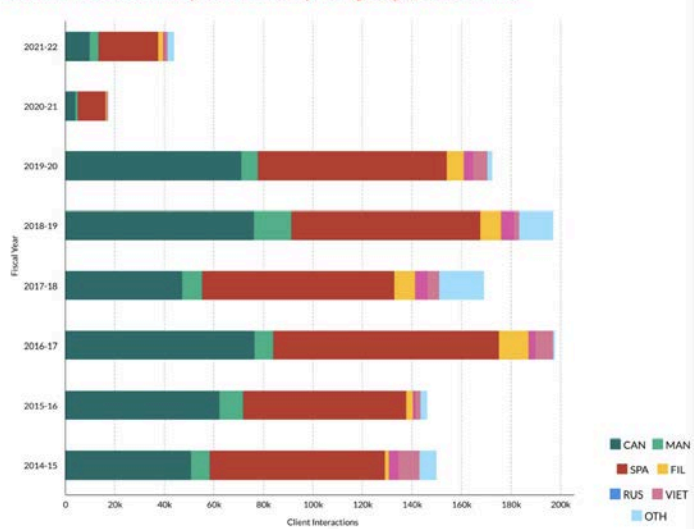
Total In-Person Interpretations by Language, FY 2021-2022



services to non-English native speakers. Additionally, OCEIA’s language interpretation services mainly focus on San Francisco’s threshold languages (over 10,000 speakers): Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino, as those are the required languages for interpretation/translated materials in all city departments. OCEIA’s work also focuses on a few other commonly spoken languages in the city with 5,000 to 10,000 speakers, otherwise known as emerging languages, such as Vietnamese, Russian, and Arabic. Although all these languages should be prioritized by city departments, many of them do not have the capacity to provide in-person interpretation, especially for many of the

emerging languages, even though they saw the highest increase in in-person translations. Post-pandemic, in-person interpretations have dropped significantly and have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. This is especially bad for many emerging languages that saw high increases in in-person translation FY 2021-2022 such as Russian increasing by 480% while Vietnamese also increasing by 301%. This shows the demand for in-person interpretation, especially in non-threshold languages which city departments are encouraged, but not required to provide interpretation services. The lack of prioritization of emerging languages also shows through the lack of translated materials and telephonic interpretation.

Total In-Person Interpretations by Language, Over Time



Another issue the 2023 Language Access Compliance Summary report noted was that over the past fiscal year, many language access complaints noted that telephonic messaging from City Departments was not the most accessible, with most of the automated messages solely being provided in English. Furthermore, if a City Department did provide an extension to a phone line with a translated version of the automated message, most of the time it was nonoperational. Additionally,

much of the digital content (such as websites) does not have translated versions of it, and if they do it's solely in the three threshold languages (Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino), reducing the accessibility of digital resources to many other language speakers.

Additionally, by prioritizing threshold languages and in most cases, emerging languages, many languages are unrepresented in city-provided translation services. For example, many native Latin American languages which are predominantly spoken by newly arriving immigrants from Latin America often don't have translation support services. This often causes families to rely on children for interpretation services even though they themselves are also just beginning to learn English. To combat this issue, OCEIA provides funding to local organizations (such as Asociacion Mayab which mainly works with Maya immigrants) to provide interpretation services to their communities as well as promoting services such as Language Line, encouraging City departments to use them.

Language Line

Language Line Solutions, a translation services company, provides translation services that allow City departments to immediately access both real-time video and audio interpretations. They claim to offer over 380 languages and dialects, including many of the more underrepresented languages in the city such as Arabic, Vietnamese, and Russian.⁸ This can help mitigate the issue of not having in-person translators for certain less-spoken languages in the city.

When Commissioners met with OCEIA, OCEIA's Executive Director Jorge Rivas and Policy and Civic Engagement Officer Chloe Noonan both noted that although OCEIA encourages departments to work with Language Line to provide interpretation services in languages which they may not have an interpreter, many city employees are unaware of this resource. Language Line and overall broader access to interpretation and translation services for the 100+ languages spoken in San Francisco is essential for many San Franciscans to gain access to City services, highlighting the need to promote and advocate for its utilization.

Youth Commission Involvement

On January 3rd, 2022, City College Trustee Alan Wong presented to the Youth Commission and requested that we support a Resolution to save the Cantonese classes at City College and to write a letter of support. All Youth Commissioners present at that meeting voted to support this Resolution.

During the 2021-2022 term, Commissioners Asfaw, Santos, Listana, Shaw, Catubig, Foley, and Pimentel established the Transformative Justice & Immigration Workgroup. One of the main priorities of this Workgroup was immigration support and services. To educate themselves more on this topic, Commissioners reached out to many organizations in San Francisco that worked with undocumented immigrants to hear more about the challenges they experienced. On February 28th, 2022, the Transformative Justice and Immigration Workgroup heard a presentation from La Raza, an organization that provides legal services to undocumented immigrants to educate themselves more on the issues they face.

On December 15, 2023, Commissioners Ye and Listana met with OCEIA's Executive Director Jorge Rivas and Policy and Civic Engagement Officer Chloe Noonan. During the discussion, Commissioners learned that despite the implementation of dedicated liaisons for language access within City departments, there has been high staff turnover and many City departments are not prioritizing language access. These liaisons require mandatory training with OCEIA, in addition to internal training within City

⁸ LanguageLine Solutions. (2022). LanguageLine Language List.

departments. For native and less-spoken languages, OCEIA encourages City departments to turn to work with language service vendors and a broad network of translators via Language Line.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

- 1) **Provide increased financial support for ESL and foreign language programs in both SFUSD and CCSF** - to better address the educational and linguistic needs of San Francisco's immigrant communities.
- 2) **Lower the threshold of the number of people required to speak a language to receive required translation services from 10,000 people to 6,000 people** - suggested by the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs to be more inclusive of other languages and reaffirm the importance of language-accessible services for native speakers, especially languages that are considered "emerging languages" yet don't have access to equitable interpretation services and translated materials.
- 3) **Expand translation and interpretation training and services across city departments** - to ensure equitable communication with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) residents and promote greater inclusivity in government services.
- 4) **Strengthen outreach initiatives to educate city residents about places to report language access issues** - empowering them to advocate for fair language access.
- 5) **Provide additional funding to the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) to conduct comprehensive translation and interpretation training for city staff** - to promote better language access for immigrant communities.
- 6) **Provide additional funding to the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) to promote funding for more local organizations that provide language and immigration services to underserved communities** - to promote better language access for immigrant communities.

- 7) **Conduct additional outreach within City Departments to spread awareness for and further encourage the utilization of Language Line** - to increase language access to city services, especially for less commonly spoken languages in San Francisco.

- 8) **Prioritize the remote accessibility of Departmental information and services in other languages by updating both telephonic messages and digital content and increasing the number of languages in which translated material is provided** - to increase the accessibility of translated material for those who are Limited English Proficiency speakers.

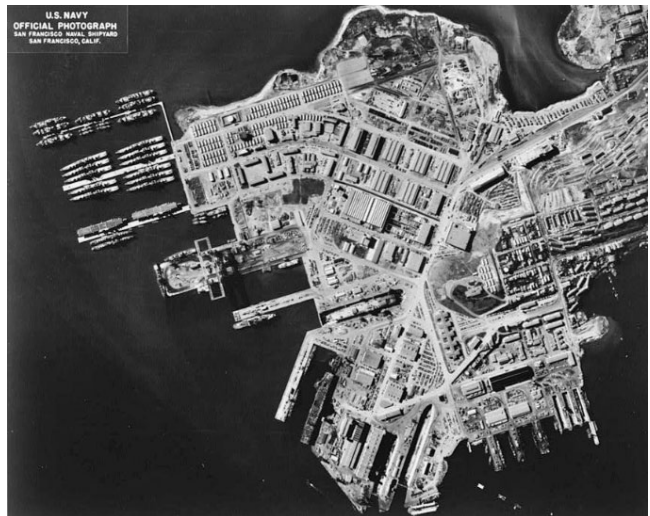
TAKE DRASTIC ACTION IN ADDRESSING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS IN BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to stay accountable in addressing the community and health effects caused by environmental damages such as contamination of the land and water of the Shipyard as well as worse health outcomes in Bayview Hunters Point.

Background

San Francisco's Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood has a rich and complex history, deeply intertwined with immigration, military presence, and environmental concerns. Originally a predominantly immigrant neighborhood, the Bayview has undergone significant transformations due to its proximity to the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard.

In 1946, the United States conducted Operation Crossroads, which were atomic bomb tests in the Pacific that went wrong, leaving the Navy with dozens of vessels contaminated by radioactive fallout. In order to decontaminate the vessels, they were sent to a laboratory at the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard that developed a technique for decontamination. This led the laboratory at the Shipyard to become the Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory, which was the site for extensive radiological experimentation and research as well as a hub for the disposal of radioactive waste. The



United States Navy's occupation and operation of the Hunters Point Shipyard, combined with its subsequent closure in 1974, has left behind a legacy of environmental contamination, directly impacting the communities that now live there. This has made it the most polluted Superfund site in San Francisco. In 1989, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) listed the site on the National Priorities List (NPL) due to hazardous waste and pollution.¹

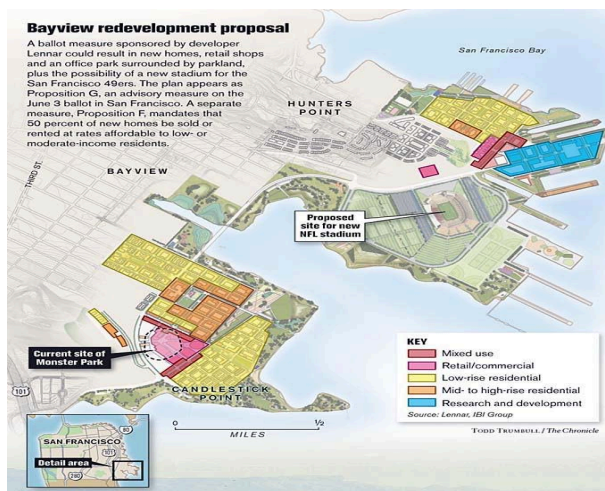
On June 14th, 2022, the San Francisco Civil Grand Jury released a report on the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard and the environmental impacts, both on the area of the former Shipyard and on the residents of Bayview-Hunters Point. In this report, they cited a 2018

¹ "CAMP LEJEUNE MILITARY RES. (USNAVY) ONSLOW COUNTY, NC," United States Environmental Protection Agency, n.d. Accessed 7 Feb. 2024.

Bayview-Hunters Point Community Assessment from the San Francisco Department of Public Health which found that residents of the Bayview-Hunters Point are significantly more at risk of health and environmental crisis than other neighborhoods. According to this assessment, 27% of the neighborhood is situated within a quarter-mile of a contamination risk. Bayview-Hunters Point residents also have worse health outcomes, higher maternal deaths, twice the rate of breast cancer, and three times more “preventable hospitalizations” than other San Franciscans.²

In response to growing concerns about the contamination left behind by the Shipyard, San Francisco residents mobilized and demanded action. In 2000 and 2001, Proposition P was passed which declared the City's commitment to clean the former Hunters Point Naval Shipyard site of toxic contamination to be suitable for residential living. However, the actual execution of this policy has faced numerous challenges, including the discovery of radioactive materials during routine testing in December 2023 which has complicated cleanup efforts and raised doubts about the feasibility of residential development on the site.³ During the 2022-2023 term, the San Francisco Youth Commission wrote a Budget Policy Priority regarding the environmental damage in Bayview-Hunters Point and the need for urgent action.⁴

Moreover, the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood has grappled with systemic issues such as redlining, which began in 1937 and has had disproportionately effects on Black and Brown residents.⁵ Redlining has single-handedly exacerbated economic disparities and perpetuated cycles of poverty. Studies have found that racially segregated neighborhoods from redlining are less likely to have access to such green spaces and are more likely to experience noise pollution, poorer air quality, and lower incomes.⁶ This has underscored the intersection of environmental justice and socio-economic challenges faced by Bayview-Hunters Point residents.



Despite these challenges, San Francisco has since pursued plans to redevelop the Hunters Point Shipyard and Bayview neighborhood, envisioning a new community filled with a mix of

² City and County of San Francisco Civil Grand Jury 2021-2022, “Buried Problems and a Buried Process: The Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in a Time of Climate Change.”

³ Ezra David Romero, “Radioactive Objects Found at San Francisco’s Hunters Point Naval Shipyard Raise New Concerns | KQED,” KQED, December 7, 2023.

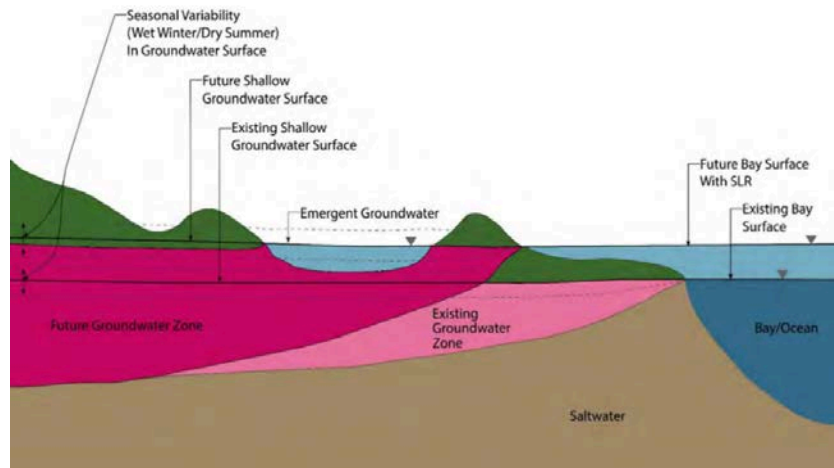
⁴ 2022-2023 Budget and Policy Priorities Report. San Francisco Youth Commission, 20-22.

⁵ Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, “Bayview Hunters Point — Anti-Eviction Mapping Project,” Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, n.d.

⁶ Nardone A, Rudolph KE, Morello-Frosch R, Casey JA. Redlines and Greenspace: The Relationship between Historical Redlining and 2010 Greenspace across the United States. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2021 Jan;129(1):17006. doi: 10.1289/EHP7495. Epub 2021 Jan 27. PMID: 33502254; PMCID: PMC7839347.

industrial, residential, and cultural buildings. The plans included the building of more than 12,000 homes, 300 acres of parkland, and millions of square feet of school, retail, and office space.⁷ These aspirations to revitalize the area have since faced criticism, particularly regarding the safety and suitability of building thousands of homes on a highly contaminated site that has not been properly cleaned up.

Furthermore, there are large concerns surrounding the impact of rising groundwater, as the land on which the Shipyard was built was constructed from a nearby hill that had been pulverized and dumped into the water. This allows water to easily seep into the ground underwater flooding, which is impossible to prevent using typical preventative measures such as sea walls. These floodwaters could be poisoned with toxic metals and volatile



organic compounds as the parcels that the City wants to clean up contain toxic contaminants that have leaked into the water below. Additionally, new buildings that are built on this land are at risk of losing structural integrity and flooding due to an increased likelihood of the land going through liquefaction in the case of an earthquake. According to the 2022 Grand Civil Jury Report, “These serious risks have not been accounted for by the Navy in designing its remedies. They have not been accounted for, either, by the other Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) signatories”. The Civil Grand Jury report provided a general overview of the Naval Shipyard at Hunters Point. It included its findings and recommendations on how the City can contain and remedy the solution for short and long-term benefits.⁸

In October 2022, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed RESOLUTION No. 437-22 [Board Response - Civil Grand Jury Report - Buried Problems and a Buried Process: The Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in a Time of Climate Change] in response to the Jury’s report.⁹ Although the Resolution passed, there were limits on the findings and recommendations from the Civil Grand Jury that the Board of Supervisors supported. They only agreed to respond to recommendations R2, R3, F4, F5, and F6. They explicitly denied responding to R7, stating: “By March 1st, 2023, the Hunters Point Shipyard Cleanup Oversight Committee should prepare a report on its recommended requests for the Federal Facility Agreement signatories based on the groundwater study recommended in R1, and

⁷ J.K. Dineen, “Bayview Residents Blast SF Officials over Shipyard Cleanup.” San Francisco Chronicle.

⁸ City and County of San Francisco Civil Grand Jury 2021-2022, “Buried Problems and a Buried Process: The Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in a Time of Climate Change.”

⁹ File No. 220721 RESOLUTION No. 437-22. (2022, October 6).

¹⁰ “Investigate contaminated soil at Bayview Hunters Point Naval Shipyard.” San Francisco Chronicle.

deliver that report to the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, and the Department of Public Health.”¹¹ The reason for not addressing this recommendation was unclear, however, they stated that they would create a short-term task force. Nevertheless, R1, R4, R5 and F1, F2, and F3 which focused on the reality of the harms caused by the Naval Shipyard, and went into depth on why thorough research is needed were not mentioned in the resolution. The entirety of the report must be adopted so beneficial change can happen.

The Bayview-Hunters Point community is pushing for many other environmental and social initiatives and the Naval Shipyard is only the beginning of their concerns. Multiple community organizations are doing extensive work within the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood to address environmental and health concerns, including the Marie Harrison Community Foundation and the Marin City Clinic. The Marie Harrison Community Foundation has worked with other community partners such as Greenaction to hold the City accountable for its lackluster efforts to fully clean up and revitalize the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard. For instance, on Saturday, February 12, 2022, the Marie Harrison Community Foundation gathered over 50 families from the community to rally at City Hall to demand a full cleanup of the toxic Hunters Point Shipyard.¹² Secondly, the Marin City Clinic’s Bayview-Hunters Point location aims to provide accessible healthcare services for low-income families, especially African American families.¹³ By providing them additional funding, they will be able to further combat many of the health issues caused by the contamination of the shipyard.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

- 1) **Allocate resources to accelerate the cleanup efforts in the Bayview** – focusing on the removal of toxic contaminants and the establishment of robust monitoring systems to mitigate health risks for its residents.
- 2) **Accept and implement the entirety of the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury report (including R1, R4, R5, R7, F1, F2, and F3)** - adequate environmental changes can be made for the benefit of all Bayview Hunters Point residents.
- 3) **Allocate resources to look into the effects of rising groundwater on cleanup and revitalization efforts** - ensuring that future residents of the shipyard and current residents of the neighborhood do not face future health and environmental effects due to dormant contaminants rising to the surface

¹¹ File No. 220721 RESOLUTION No. 437-22. (2022, October 6).

¹² Tom Molanphy. “Environmental Justice – Marie Harrison Community Foundation.” Marie Harrison Community Foundation.

¹³ “Health Equity – Marin City Clinic.” Marin City Health and Wellness Center.

- 4) **Allocate funding and resources to support the Marie Harrison Community Foundation** - in its efforts to address contamination issues and advocate for the well-being of residents in the Bayview community.
- 5) **Extend support to the Marin City Clinic Bayview Hunters Point location** - to enhance accessibility to health care services for low-income families in the Bayview, mitigating health risks associated with its contamination.

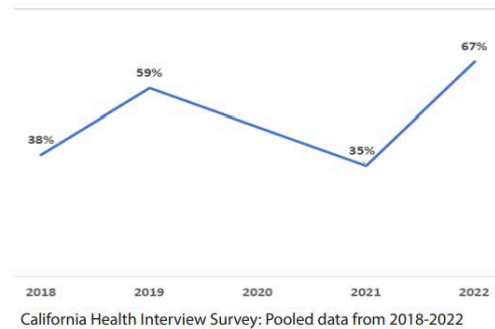
ADDRESS FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL INSECURITY

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to provide increased funding to programs meant to combat food and nutritional insecurity, especially in low-income and communities of color to mitigate the health, developmental, and psychological effects for youth.

Background

Food insecurity and lack of access to nutritional foods are some of San Francisco's leading social determinants of poor health outcomes, especially among low-income communities and predominantly communities of color. According to the 2022 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), food insecurity increased by 32% in low-income residents with household incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the highest since the survey started collecting food security data in 2001.¹ Additionally, according to the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment Report published by the San Francisco Health Improvement Project, 50% of low-income residents in San Francisco reported being food insecure. The 2022 CHIS also reported that two-thirds (67%) of adults in San Francisco below 200% of the federal poverty line are food insecure.² This is in stark contrast to the overall national percentages of households that are food insecure, with only 12.5% of households being food insecure. Food insecurity is associated with an increased risk for multiple chronic health conditions such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, mental health disorders, and other chronic conditions.³

Figure 3: Percent of Food Insecurity Among San Francisco Residents Below 200% FPL, 2018-2022



Food insecurity disproportionately affects youth, who face the brunt of detrimental health impacts caused by food insecurity. According to the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment Report published by the San Francisco Health Improvement Project, 50% of San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) students qualify for free or reduced lunches in schools, with schools often being the main source of nutritious meals for many students.⁴ Not only do young people often lack access to regular meals due to not being able to afford food, but they also lack access to nutritional food with 2 in 3 youth not eating 5 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables daily. Furthermore, food

¹ "2023 San Francisco Biennial Food Security and Equity Report," *San Francisco Department of Public Health*, 2023.

² "2023 San Francisco Biennial Food Security and Equity Report"

³ Shannon N. Zenk, Lawrence A. Tabak, and Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, "Food Accessibility, Insecurity and Health Outcomes," National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, 2022.

⁴ "San Francisco Community Health Needs Assessment 2019," *San Francisco Health Improvement Partnership*, 2019.

security programs meant to serve youth do not effectively serve their needs. For example, 70% of eligible students do not participate in the Summer Lunch Program, cutting off access to yet another secure, free meal that they may otherwise not have had access to. Additionally, according to the San Francisco Food Security Task Force’s 2023 San Francisco Biennial Food Security and Equity Report, 39% to 83% of city-funded program participants experienced food insecurity.⁵ According to Feeding America, childhood food insecurity can lead to not only adverse health effects such as a higher risk of having conditions such as anemia and asthma, but also poorer academic performance and behavioral issues.⁶

Bayview-Hunters Point

The Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood had the largest amount of African American/Black people living in a San Francisco neighborhood, with around 10,558 African American/Black residents.⁷ Bayview-Hunters Point is also one of the neighborhoods most

impacted by food insecurity and lack of access to nutritional food in San Francisco. Healthy, nutritional food is often an unaffordable expense for many in the neighborhood, as the poverty level in the 94124 ZIP code is the 6th highest in the city at 18%. Additionally, according to the Food Security Task Force’s Biennial Food Security & Equity Report, Bayview/Hunters Point also has the largest gap between its median household income and the self-sufficiency standard, with the gap being -\$76,167 (\$42,591 vs. \$112,125 for a household of 4). This causes families to turn to cheaper, often healthier options for food such as corner stores, gas stations, and fast food.



This classifies the Bayview-Hunters Point as a food desert, which according to the USDA is “a low-income tract with at least 500 people, or 33 percent of the population, living more than 1 mile (urban areas)...from the nearest supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store”.⁸ There are only two existing large-scale grocers in Bayview-Hunters

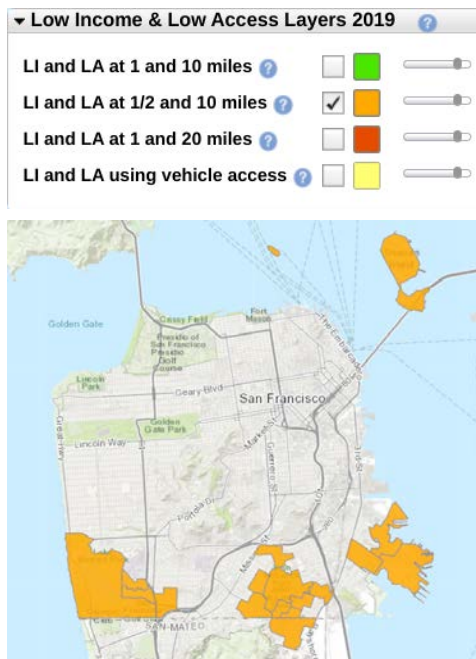
⁵ “2023 San Francisco Biennial Food Security and Equity Report”

⁶ “Child Hunger in America.” n.d. Feeding America.

⁷ Jiyun Tsai. (2022, December 8). One in three homes in this San Francisco neighborhood lives below the poverty line. The San Francisco Standard.

⁸ “USDA ERS - Documentation,” n.d.

Point (Grocery Outlet and Foods Co.), which are not only inaccessible to many families, but neither of these stores meets the nutritional needs of the community, especially when it comes to offering fresh produce and a range of options for ingredients.⁹ If residents want to access healthier grocery options, they have to drive significant distances as there aren't many options for reliable public transportation in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood, which not only increases costs but also makes this highly inaccessible to youth who cannot drive.¹⁰



The lack of affordable and nutritional food in Bayview-Hunters Point has caused adverse health effects, especially for the African American/Black population. According to the Food Security Task Force's 2023 Biennial Food Security & Equity Report,¹¹ the 94124 ZIP code had one of the highest rates of diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease hospitalizations in San Francisco. Furthermore, African American/Black residents experienced the greatest diet-related disease burden and had the shortest life expectancies. This issue especially impacts youth, as Gina Frommer, CEO of the San Francisco Children's Council, stated, "We see kids coming into centers hungry. Children that are hungry do not learn. Children that are hungry are angry". Young people in Bayview-Hunters Point not only

have to worry about when their next meal will be coming but also have to worry about their studies, often hampering their education in the process.

Some community alternatives to combating food insecurity without relying on large-scale grocers, which often do not want to conduct business in the neighborhood due to profitability concerns, have popped up. Some examples of this include the Florence Fang Community Farm's Bayview Black Organic Farmers Program, Bayview Community Co-Op, and Southeast Community Center Farmers' Market. These community alternatives have not only brought fresh, affordable produce to the neighborhood, but have also supported the local community through teaching sustainable agricultural practices, supporting Black-owned businesses, accepting EBT, providing cooking classes, and more. However, these community alternatives

⁹ Carly Graf, "San Francisco's Bayview district struggles to emerge from food desert," *San Francisco Examiner*, November 17, 2021.

¹⁰ "USDA ERS - Go to the Atlas," n.d.

¹¹ Kaela Plank et al., "Biennial Food Security & Equity Report: Presentation of Select Data," *San Francisco Department of Public Health*, October 4, 2023.

unfortunately lack the scale and funding to serve the whole neighborhood, and the lasting effects of the lack of nutritional and overall food security demonstrate this need.

The Tenderloin

The Tenderloin neighborhood's population consists of a majority of low-income people of color who have limited access to resources and government support. This is in part due to the perception that this neighborhood is seen as crime-ridden and dangerous, which is often exacerbated by being overlooked by government resources. According to the Food Security Taskforce's 2023 Biennial Food Security & Equity Report, the Tenderloin has some of the highest rates of poverty in San Francisco (19%), forcing



many residents to rely on corner stores and fast food restaurants to eat. This has caused the Tenderloin, ZIP code 94102, to have some of the highest rates of diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease hospitalizations in the city, which is double the average. This is a result of poverty, lack of affordable and nutritious food, and the Tenderloin being a food desert. Additionally, the Tenderloin has no full-scale grocery stores, which means that if families could

afford fresh produce they would have to travel outside the neighborhood to purchase it, creating even more costs. For example, according to the Food Access/Security Landscape in SF Presentation by the San Francisco Department of Public Health, one way many residents from the Tenderloin access fresh produce is the Civic Center/Heart of The City Farmers Market, with 50% of attendees being from the Tenderloin/SOMA areas.^{12 13}

Organizations such as St. Anthony's and the People's Garden in the Tenderloin offer nutritious and affordable/free options to battle the food deserts. St. Anthony's offers daily hot meals 7 days a week, serving over 1,000 guests daily. Their meals are nutritious, delicious, and free. The People's Garden was built in 2010 to build a more equitable food system. This community-driven and run garden grows fresh produce to help provide more access to nutritious food. However, similarly to the community alternatives established in the Bayview, they alone cannot serve the entire needs of the Tenderloin, especially for families.¹⁴



¹² Paula Jones PhD, MA, "Food Access/Security Landscape in SF: Presentation to the SDDTAC Meeting," *Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee*, November 16, 2022.

¹³ "Heart of the City Farmers' Market," *Time Out San Francisco*, September 12, 2014.

¹⁴ "Volunteer | St. Anthony's." n.d. St. Anthony Foundation.

Shelters

An often overlooked aspect when it comes to food and nutrition is shelter services. Many shelters that are meant to support families in the city are financially supported by the City. However, when it comes to meals, many shelters receive varying amounts of funding, causing many families and children, especially those from predominantly low-income communities of color, to not have access to nutritional meals.

For example, the Buena Vista Horace-Mann Community School also serves as a temporary family shelter when not in session. One of the resources they provide is free breakfast and dinner for all families staying there. Although the shelter expected to get \$3.00 per meal, the meals are costing the shelter \$3.50 each. Additionally, the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing only provides funding for \$1.50 per meal, creating a deficit for the shelter to have to navigate. This funding issue directly impacts the shelter's ability to provide high-quality nutritious meals. In addition, they received no funding for snacks for children staying at the shelter. Without access to nutritional meals and snacks, many children face developmental and educational issues.

Youth Commission Involvement

On November 16th, 2023, the San Francisco Youth Commission held a Listening Session for SFUSD students from Districts 9 and 11 to hear their thoughts on what the Student Success Fund, passed by voters in November 2022, should be spent on. Many students at the Listening Session mentioned better food options for lunches, especially when it comes to a wider variety of culturally conscious food options. For example, Mission Local reported that at the listening session, “Henry [a student] said he wanted burritos at lunch. Brean and Alan, also Spanish-speaking students at San Francisco International High School, and Morales [their translator], agreed.”¹⁵

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

- 1. Provide additional funding and support to community and neighborhood initiatives** - that combat food insecurity such as community gardens, farmer's markets, food pantries, and more.
- 2. Increase outreach and funding for city-funded food support programs** – such as CalFresh (especially for immigrants) and EBT.

¹⁵ Junyao Yang, “Students Ask SFUSD to Spend New Funds on Tutors, Arts, Better School Food,” *Mission Local*, November 21, 2023.

3. **Create a Centralized Food Policy Office in City Government** – suggested by the Food Security Task Force in order to coordinate food objectives and programs within and among City Departments along with track laws and regulations’ impact on combating food and nutritional insecurity.
4. **Provide additional funding to the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Housing Support** - to support family shelters by investing in meals for families.
5. **Provide more nutritious and culturally relevant food options in SFUSD schools** – using the Student Success Fund to provide students with not only nutritional food, but also culturally conscious meals based on the population of the school.
6. **Invest in neighborhoods most impacted by food and nutritional insecurity** - by ensuring DPH completes the biennial Food Security & Equity Report in order to understand the individual needs of each neighborhood and invest in neighborhood-specific community initiatives.

MAKE FREE MUNI FOR ALL YOUTH PERMANENT

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to continue the promotion and funding of the Free Muni for All Youth program by including it as a baseline in the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency budget.

Background

The Youth Commission has consistently advocated for Free Muni For Youth (FMFY). This advocacy began in 2010 with RESOLUTION NO. 1011-AL041 calling on the SFMTA and San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to implement the Youth Lifeline Fast Pass. Further Resolutions called for the expansion of the program to 18-year-olds and later to expand the program to all youth.

The FMFY program was created in 2013 as a pilot program that allowed low to moderate-income youth aged 5-17 to ride for free. The program was partially funded with a grant from Google. The implementation was a partial response to SFUSD school bus cuts. The means-tested pilot program became permanent in 2015.¹ In April 2020, the program was expanded to 18-year-olds and students enrolled in Special Education and English Learner programs through age 22.²

The 2019-2020 Youth Commission passed RESOLUTION NO. 1920-AL-144, where they highlighted that the Free Muni for Low and Moderate-Income Youth program suffered from a complex application process and was not widely known, especially to people with limited English proficiency and who did not have easy access to the SFMTA offices at 1 South Van Ness Avenue. Youth Commissioners proposed the current Free Muni for All Youth (FMFAY) Program in the resolution. The new program reduced the administrative burden on SFMTA to process applications, verify eligibility, and issue Clipper cards.

During the 2020-2021 budget advocacy season and forward, Youth Commissioners met with SFMTA budget staff and urged them to fund the 1-year pilot program. Additionally, Youth Commissioners included the FMFAY program in RESOLUTION NO. 1819-AL-03, on Omnibus Preliminary Budget Priorities. On August 15, 2021, Muni, with \$2 Million in funding included in Mayor Breed's Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 and FY 2022-2023 budget proposal, launched the 1-year pilot FMFAY program until August 14, 2022. On April 19, 2022, the SFMTA Board of Directors voted to approve their FY 2023-2024 budget which included \$4.1 Million to continue the FMFAY program until June 2024.³

¹ Google to Fund San Francisco's Free Muni for Youth Program | KQED. (2014, February 27). *KQED*.

² Stephen Chun. (2021, July 12). Young people to ride Muni for free. SFMTA.

³ SFMTA Consolidated Budget for Fiscal Years 2023 & 2024. SFMTA.

The implementation of FMFAY has dramatically increased program accessibility compared to the previous means-tested program. SFUSD’s most recent travel tally survey found that 60% of SFUSD 9th graders use Muni on any given day.⁴ The new program is succeeding in reaching youth who didn’t previously have a Free Muni Clipper Card—61% of youth utilizing the FMFAY program did not participate in the means-tested FMFY program.⁵

The FMFAY program is critical in removing the financial burden of fares for families. The easy and equitable access to public transportation that the FMFAY program provides is essential for San Francisco’s young people to access school, extracurricular activities, jobs, and other opportunities.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Continue the Free Muni for All Youth program** - Provide funding and include it in all future SFMTA baseline budgets.
2. **Continue to promote and collect data on the success of the Free Muni for All Youth program** - especially through communications at the beginning of the school year and to see how many youths in the city are utilizing the program.

⁴ 2019-20 SFUSD Travel Tally Data K, 5th, 6th, 9th. (2020, March 20). SFUSD.

⁵ Report for Free Muni for Youth.

IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE ON TRANSIT

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to allocate resources and funding to expand the school tripper program and to maintain and increase safety measures and reliability on Muni.

Background

The Muni transit system in San Francisco is relied upon by a large portion of youth in the city, as a means of transportation to go to school and recreational activities. The Youth Commission strongly believes that it is critical to maintain it in the best possible condition to guarantee people's safety and timely arrival to their destinations.

School Tripper Program

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's (SFMTA) School Tripper Program currently consists of 20 special bus trips that run along regular Muni routes but originate as an empty bus at a school along the route to reduce crowding and pass-ups throughout the line.¹ The trips are mandated by the Federal Transportation Administration to be open to the public; however, the buses primarily serve students from the schools they originate at. These 20 trips currently serve 15 public middle and high schools. Approximately 50,000 students attend SFUSD schools, and approximately half of enrolled students use Muni for their daily commute.²

The Youth Commission has discovered that while the program limits the distribution of the trippers to more schools that could benefit from them more, it does not prioritize schools with high pass-up rates. Balboa High School has an enrollment of 1,260 students and is located near the terminus of some of Muni's most frequent lines, including the J Church, K Ingleside, M Ocean View, 8 Bayshore, and 49 Van Ness, and still receives 2 school trippers. Meanwhile, Lowell High School, San Francisco's largest public high school, has an enrollment of 2,668 students. The only line serving the school with a frequency of less than 20 minutes is the 29 Sunset, with the 28 19th Avenue and M Ocean View half a mile away. Lowell does not receive any school trippers despite requests from the Lowell administration and students dating back to at least 2017. Lowell serves as one of the more well-documented problems with the school tripper program and Muni service to schools in general, as there are other schools, with fewer lines and/or lines that may run frequently but are often crowded, which don't receive school trippers. The Youth Commission has concerns regarding the fairness and efficacy behind the current distribution of the SFMTA School Tripper services.

¹ Muni routes to city schools. SFMTA.

² Mayor London Breed and city officials highlight pedestrian traffic safety for first day of school. (2023, August 15). City and County of San Francisco.

Safety On Transit

The Youth Commission advocates for expanding the current measures put in place to decrease violent incidents on Muni. According to SFPD from data cited by Muni, the number of incidents reported decreased during the pandemic but has since had a significant increase. As of April 2023, it has been reported that there have been at least 188 incidents, including at least 63 larcenies, 29 robberies, and 17 assaults.³ Incidents, such as the one involving a juvenile who was arrested in connection with a stabbing on a Muni bus and sent a second youth to the hospital in critical condition, prompted SFMTA to launch a safety equity initiative in late 2023 focusing on gender based and sexual harassment on public transportation with hopes of combatting harassment and violence and empowering Muni customers.⁴ By prioritizing safety from a gender and racial equity lens, SFMTA aims to build diverse, intersectional community partnerships to better understand Muni riders' experiences and develop solutions to address harassment when using Muni.⁵ In addition to engaging a broad range of women, girls, and gender-expansive people to build specific safety campaigns and initiatives, this effort also aims to involve and educate men and boys to be allies and help prevent harassment and violence.

Frequency and Reliability Of Muni on High Traffic Routes

The Youth Commission urges the increase of reliability of Muni especially on high traffic routes, as youth across the city rely on Muni. The implementation of transit-only lanes on the side and middle of streets has been proven to reduce travel time.⁶ Transit lanes



Diagram showing a bus approaching an intersection **without** transit lanes vs. **with** transit lanes. It only takes one or two cars to prevent a bus from catching a green light.

protect buses from getting delayed by traffic and coloring the lanes red has been shown to improve compliance by as much as 50%.⁷ Transit-only lanes also help buses get to the front of an intersection, which means they can take advantage of transit signal priority and spend less time stuck at red lights. In 2021, the first phase of a transit only lane project was completed on Geary St and Stanyan St. SFMTA reports that reliability was improved by 38% after the transit-only lane implementation.⁸ Other streets in the city, which are a part of high-traffic routes, would also benefit from this policy.

³ Muni launches effort to promote safety after nearly 190 reported incidents this year. (2023, June 21). ABC7 San Francisco.

⁴ Update: Teen injured in stabbing on SF Muni bus recovering; 12-year-old boy arrested. (2023, March 14). CBS News Bay Area.

⁵ Safety Equity Initiative. SFMTA.

⁶ Mark Sawchuk. (2023, July 31). 'Transit first' policy and a better bus system, again, by parking spots on Geary. The Frisc.

⁷ Extending transit and safety benefits to the western Geary corridor. SFMTA.

⁸ Mark Sawchuk. (2023, July 31). 'Transit first' policy and a better bus stymied, again, by parking spots on Geary. The Frisc.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Urge the SFMTA to expand the school tripper program** - using clear metrics such as student body size, proximity to existing high frequency and high capacity transit service, and route overcrowding and pass-ups when determining how to allocate new and existing school tripper resources.
2. **Increase safety on Muni** - allocate funding to expanding the current safety measures
3. **Increase the frequency and reliability of Muni** - expand the Transit-Only Lane project to decrease travel and wait times

EXPAND ACCESS TO YOUTH-CENTERED RECREATIONAL SPACES

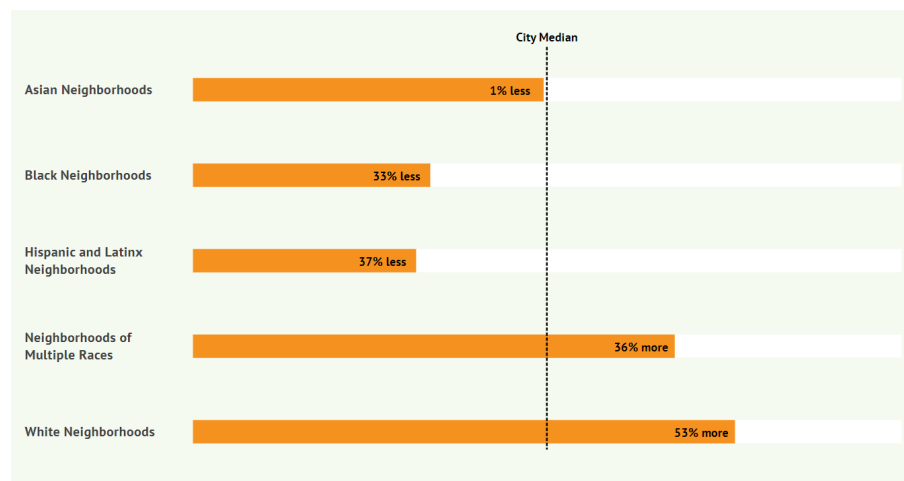
The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to work to improve local public parks, increase funding and expansion of programs at the Main Library Mix and local libraries, maintain the existing Slow Streets program, and the exploration and expansion of new car-free spaces.

Background

The Youth Commission is driven to ensure that all youth in San Francisco have equitable access to well-maintained recreational spaces and are receiving the full and equal benefits of the city's Slow Streets, car-free spaces, public parks, and public resources.

Public Parks

The Youth Commission strongly supports improving and ensuring that all neighborhoods in the city have equitable access to well-maintained and funded parks. According to the Trust for Public Land's ParkScore Index, 100% of city residents are within a half-mile radius of a park, but equity is lacking.¹ Residents in neighborhoods



with high concentrations of Black, Hispanic, Asian American, and other people of color have access to 35% less park space per person than the city's average, and 56% less than residents in neighborhoods with high concentrations of white people.

Residents living in lower-income neighborhoods have access to 55% less nearby park space than those in higher-income neighborhoods. In order to achieve equitable access to parks, more funding should be allocated to improving local parks, especially in equity zones, low-income neighborhoods, and neighborhoods with a larger population of communities of color. To further close the equity gap, outreach should be conducted in collaboration with local community organizations in equity-priority neighborhoods to promote the use of larger parks, such as Golden Gate Park, Stern Grove, and John

¹ 2023 ParkScore Index: San Francisco, CA. (2021). Trust for Public Land.

McLaren Park. This is to ensure that all youth in the city are aware of the opportunities for recreation in the park and how they can take advantage of them. This can be done by spreading awareness about the transit options to get to the parks.²

Public Spaces

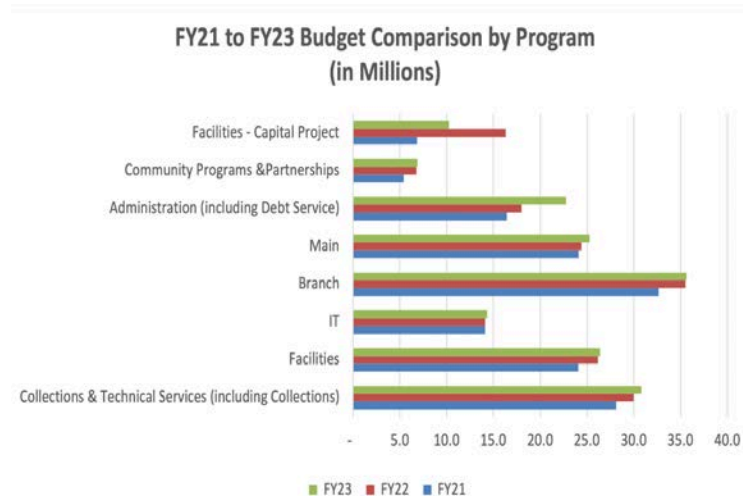
The Youth Commission firmly supports expanding and improving public youth-centered spaces. The Mix at the San Francisco Main Library has historically provided youth with unique opportunities by providing multiple ways for youth to engage within the program space. The Mix is different from most library programs as it provides hands-on

experience with activities such as social and writing groups, sewing, music recording and production lessons, 3D printing, and computer access rather than just paper books. These resources, especially lessons and groups, are incredibly valuable for youth to connect and socialize with others. The Youth Commission believes that expanding programs such as these at local libraries, especially those in low-equity areas, would increase accessibility to resources

for San Francisco youth. This can be done by allocating more funding to community programs and branches, as well as conducting outreach to the local youth to make sure their needs are being met. Further, expanding The Mix’s youth program hours to later in the day would allow more youth in the city, who may live farther away from the Main Library, to attend these programs.³

Slow Streets

In 2022, the Youth Commission passed RESOLUTION NO. 2223-AL-035 urging officials to approve a citywide network of permanent Slow Streets. In December 2022, the SFMTA Board approved the permanent Slow Streets program. The Youth Commission believes in maintaining and supporting improvements to the program. According to SFMTA’s 2023 evaluation of the Slow Streets Program, of the sixteen permanent Slow Streets that were evaluated, only three (23rd Avenue, Sanchez Street, and Shotwell Street) meet the Board-adopted volume and speed targets for Slow Streets.⁴ The remaining 13 Slow Streets require volume management tools, speed management tools, or both to better meet the adopted targets for low-traffic streets.



² 2023 Park Score Ranking. (2023) Trust for Public Land.

³ Budget information: Fiscal Year 2024-2025. (n.d.). San Francisco Public Library.

⁴ 2023 Slow Streets Evaluation. (2023). SFMTA.

Funding and support should be given to SFMTA's efforts to improve the program, as Slow Streets encourages recreational activities, biking, and walking. Slow Streets give way to community-building recreational activities, such as the Slow Streets Mural Program, which engages community members by putting art on the pavement. Current Slow Streets not only need to be improved and maintained, but the Youth Commission believes other Slow Street possibilities should be explored and funded to further expand the program. While Slow Streets are incredibly beneficial in some areas, residents of certain neighborhoods have negative experiences with the program, after becoming frustrated with the halt in the flow of traffic. The Youth Commission believes that Slow Streets that have resulted in substantial negative feedback should be re-evaluated and more local community outreach should be conducted for potential Slow Streets to ensure the needs of every community are being recognized and met.

Car-Free Spaces

The Youth Commission recognizes the success of Car-Free JFK and believes in investing in transit lines that provide access to the park, as well as considering making other streets in the city car-free. In the November 2022 Election, Proposition J, which permanently kept JFK Drive car-free, passed with 63% of voters approving the proposition.⁵ Making JFK Drive car-free was a major step toward increasing pedestrian and cyclist safety in San Francisco, especially as JFK Drive was on the City's High Injury Network.⁶ This also created recreational opportunities for residents, including youth, and there have been 36% more daily park trips of walking, biking, rolling, and strolling on JFK Drive since before the closure.

The closure of JFK Drive to cars has resulted in a reduction in parking, thus it is critical to make Muni service to the park, such as the 44 O'Shaughnessy line, more efficient, robust, and reliable. In 2022, the Youth Commission passed RESOLUTION No. 2223-AL-09, highlighting concerns about the Muni 44 O'Shaughnessy line. The line provides public transit access to Golden Gate Park from the Bayview and Excelsior districts which have previously highlighted concerns about accessing Golden Gate Park since JFK has become car-free. It is heavily impacted by private vehicle traffic congestion and illegal parking near and in Golden Gate Park which causes increased travel times and contributes to declines in service reliability including bus bunching and service gaps (at times as many as 4 buses have bunched within a 2 block segment of the route).⁷ The Youth Commission recognizes the importance of the recreational and safe transportation opportunities that Car-Free JFK provides for people, especially youth. The Youth Commission believes in investing in and improving the 44 O'Shaughnessy

⁵ November 8, 2022 Final Election Results. Department of Elections, City and County of San Francisco.

⁶ Golden Gate Park Traffic Safety Project. SFMTA.

⁷ Cliff Bargar. (2022, July 3). "Heartbreaking to see two successive @SFMTA_Muni 44 buses stuck in traffic on MLK. Can't believe people want to bring this back to JFK and 8th Ave." X (Previously Twitter).

line in order to create more opportunities for Southeast San Francisco communities to access JFK Drive and other Golden Gate Park attractions.

After seeing the success of a Car-Free JFK, the Youth Commission believes in exploring other options for pedestrianized streets in the city. In 2024, the Youth Commission passed RESOLUTION NO. 2324-AL-06, supporting the removal of the center bikeway on Valencia Street and the construction of curbside-protected bikeways. Valencia Street is a prominent location for frequent vehicle-related injuries in the city, as three pedestrians have been killed since 2020.⁸ Unsafe turning, misuse of the bike lane, double parking, and speeding cause many collisions to occur, discouraging people from walking or biking, thus harming local businesses and recreational activities. A pedestrianized Valencia Street, where people can walk and bike safely, with only vehicles permitted for commercial deliveries and local residents, would greatly benefit the city. According to SFMTA's evaluation of the center bikeway project, the number of bikers has gone down 53% since the implementation.⁹ A pedestrianized Valencia Street would bring cyclists and pedestrians back, cause fewer vehicle-related deaths and injuries, and result in an environmentally friendly, economically thriving Valencia Street. The Youth Commission believes that a plan to fully create pedestrianized Valencia St. should be explored, funded, and developed, with the opinions of local businesses and the public in mind.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Support and fund efforts of the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department to improve and promote the use of local parks and playgrounds** - especially parks and playgrounds in equity zones.
2. **Expand Program Hours at the Mix at the Main Library** - invest funding and resources to expand the Mix at San Francisco Public Library's program hours and the programs in local libraries in order to make opportunities to attend more accessible.
3. **Maintain the Slow Streets program** - Provide funding and support for the SFMTA to fully implement, maintain, and expand permanent Slow Streets program infrastructure.

⁸ Ricardo Olea. (2023, May 8). 2017-2022 San Francisco Traffic Crashes Report. SFMTA.

⁹ Valencia Bikeway improvements. SFMTA.

4. **Expand car free space** - urge and provide funding to city agencies to conduct outreach and explore making other pedestrianized streets, specifically Valencia Street.

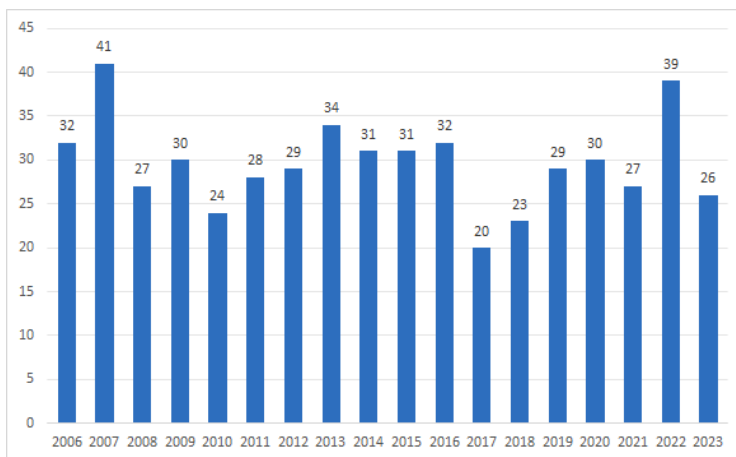
5. **Address transit delay in Golden Gate Park and the Inner Sunset** - Direct the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department to develop a plan to reduce delays for public transit on 9th Avenue from Judah Street to MLK Drive and MLK Drive from 9th Avenue to Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive including increased parking enforcement, parking and loading changes, turn restrictions, and restricting private vehicle access to 9th Avenue from Judah Street to Lincoln Way.

ADDRESS VISION ZERO

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to refine our Vision Zero strategies, including adjusting speed limits, exploring additional quick-build projects, embracing technology, and rethinking urban planning.

Background/Current Policies and Actions

San Francisco's Vision Zero initiative, launched in 2014 with the ambitious goal of eliminating traffic deaths by 2024, has faced significant challenges despite nearly a decade of effort and substantial investment. The city has struggled to achieve its



objectives, with the number of traffic fatalities remaining relatively stagnant over the past ten years. 25 deaths were recorded in 2023, just six fewer than in 2014 (pictured on the left).¹ This lack of progress can be attributed to various factors, including the slow implementation of street changes despite ample funding, bureaucratic processes, and resource constraints. Severe

injury crashes have increased by 33%, averaging 242 annually between 2014 and 2022. Too many people have died on our streets, and too many families and youth struggle with the loss of loved ones or the challenges of lifelong severe injuries.² While the initiative has raised awareness and allowed for the development of effective strategies using lessons learned since 2014 to reduce traffic deaths, the city's inability to significantly reduce fatalities underscores a failure of political will and effective execution.

San Francisco has implemented a comprehensive set of policies and actions under the Vision Zero framework to address these challenges. These initiatives encompass a multidisciplinary approach involving infrastructure improvements, public education, law enforcement, and policy changes. Legislation to reduce speed limits is proven to lessen fatalities. As a leading factor of fatal and severe crashes, speed matters: if a person were to be hit by a vehicle traveling 20mph there is a 90% chance of survival; however, if a person is hit by a vehicle traveling at 40mph, the survival rate drops to 40%. The identification of the High Injury Network, comprising 12% of city streets

¹ How are we doing? (2024, February 7). Vision Zero SF.

² Action Strategy. (2022, June 1). Vision Zero SF.

where 68% of severe and fatal collisions occur, has enabled targeted safety measures to be implemented in critical areas.³

Additionally, the city has introduced Quick-Build Projects since 2019, which expedite safety improvements using adaptable solutions such as paint and signage. However, some “Quick-Build” projects have taken as long as 2 years to complete. A proposal to improve less than a half mile of bikeways and pedestrian safety along Bayshore Boulevard started in October 2021 but did not conclude construction until September 2023.⁴

Every year in San Francisco, about 30 people lose their lives, and over 500 more are severely injured while traveling on city streets. These deaths and injuries are unacceptable and preventable. Over 1.3 million people globally are killed annually making traffic deaths the leading cause of premature mortality for people under the age of 30.⁵

Increased integration of self-driving vehicles onto San Francisco streets will offer significant potential to improve road safety. Government data identifies driver behavior or error as a factor in 94% of crashes.⁶ By minimizing the margin for human error, autonomous vehicles stand as pivotal tools in the endeavor to lower traffic-related fatalities. These vehicles, through rigorous and extensive testing, continuously gather data that refine their operational efficiency. Equipped with sophisticated technologies such as cameras, radar, ultrasonic, and LIDAR sensors, self-driving cars possess the capability to perceive potential collisions and respond with a speed unattainable by human reflexes.⁷ Embracing and facilitating the advancement of autonomous driving technology represents a strategic move towards leveraging this transformative innovation for public safety.

Vision Zero is essential because it represents a commitment to prioritizing human life over convenience or expedience. Traffic fatalities and severe injuries not only cause immeasurable pain and suffering to victims and their families but also have far-reaching social and economic impacts on communities. In 2020, seniors accounted for approximately 25% of pedestrian deaths, and people experiencing homelessness were killed in 20% of fatal crashes despite being only 15% and 1% of the city’s population respectively. Youth, in particular, have a stake in the success of Vision Zero initiatives. They are often among the most vulnerable road users, whether as pedestrians, cyclists, or novice drivers. Ensuring safe streets not only protects their lives but also promotes

³ Action Strategy. (2022, June 1). Vision Zero SF.

⁴ Noah Baustin. (2023, December 20). San Francisco set out to eliminate traffic deaths by 2024. Why has it failed? The San Francisco Standard.

⁵ Action Strategy. (2022, June 1). Vision Zero SF.

⁶ Coalition for Future Mobility. (2024, February 29) Benefits of Self-Driving Vehicles.

⁷ US Department of Transportation, NHTSA. (2024, March 2) Automated Vehicles for Safety.

their physical and mental well-being, allowing them to engage more freely in active transportation and outdoor activities.⁸

Despite setbacks, San Francisco must remain steadfast in its commitment to Vision Zero. The City has missed its 2024 goal, making it essential to continue ongoing efforts to focus on enhancing street infrastructure, bolstering enforcement measures, and promoting sustainable transportation options to mitigate traffic-related injuries and fatalities. Zero traffic fatalities is an ambitious goal but with a sustained commitment, innovative approaches, and collaborative action it is possible to achieve safer streets for all.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

Short Term

1. **Create a new action plan** - set a new deadline and develop a new plan with specific measurable goals to help regroup and move forward on Vision Zero. Add incentives for improvements and consequences for stagnation to this new plan to encourage progress.
2. **Reduce speed limits** - urge SFMTA to pass legislation to reduce speed limits, especially in high-risk areas, which will significantly reduce the number of traffic fatalities. This may not be the most popular solution but it is extremely effective at saving lives. This initiative can be supported with speed enforcement cameras and with collaboration between SFMTA and SFPD.
3. **More Quick-Builds, less bureaucracy** - the cost of improving the rest of the high-injury network could be as little as \$4 Million if the City does the cheapest possible quick builds or as much as \$331 million. There is much improvement that can be made to enhance our infrastructure.
4. **Implement a citywide No Turn On Red policy** - implement a city-wide No Turn on Red policy to reduce the risk of injuries drastically. The Youth Commission (Resolution NO. 2324-AL-07) and Board of Supervisors (Resolution NO. 481-23) both passed resolutions in 2023 calling for a No Turn On Red policy in San Francisco.

⁸ Action Strategy. (2022, June 1). Vision Zero SF.

Long Term

1. **Harness self-driving technology** - adapt policy and infrastructure to facilitate the integration of self-driving vehicles into transportation in San Francisco, which could have many positive effects. Establishing designated lanes or zones for autonomous vehicles, implementing infrastructure upgrades to support vehicle-to-infrastructure communication, and adapting traffic signals and signage to accommodate autonomous driving capabilities are all possible actions to help mobilize critical developing technology.
2. **Consider a congestion pricing program** - Encourage the CTA to resume its study within the next year and identify an effective congestion pricing model for San Francisco, aiming for implementation in high-traffic or downtown areas within three years. Cordon Area Congestion Pricing, renowned globally for its numerous benefits, stands out as a tested and proven strategy for regulating vehicle density in urban zones. It also has many benefits that extend beyond significantly improving road safety to achieve Vision Zero.
3. **Build closer together** - if people lived closer to their jobs, schools, grocery stores, etc. there would be less of a risk of traffic fatalities as individuals are forced to travel shorter distances. Work with the San Francisco Planning Department to rework zoning policies, housing codes, or the planning code to foster dense, mixed-use neighborhoods that minimize commuting needs. This could create a profound positive impact on Vision Zero's progress.

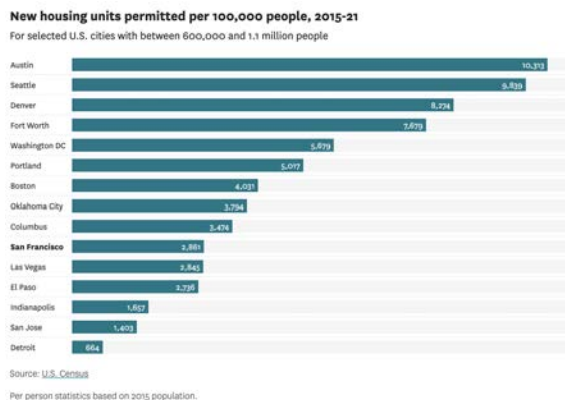
ADDRESS SAN FRANCISCO'S HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY CRISIS

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to address the City's acute housing shortage and become a more inviting and affordable home for young San Franciscans by exploring additional modifications to the Planning Code to facilitate expedited development, setting annual development targets on its journey toward meeting its 2022 Housing Element goal of building 82,000 new units by 2031, eliminate obstructive discretionary review procedures, and consider policies that will ensure enough affordable units are developed alongside market-rate ones.

Background

San Francisco has long been a magnet for bright and ambitious young people hailing from across the globe. At the same time, it has served as a lifelong home for those born and raised in the city. Unfortunately, San Francisco's persistent housing shortage threatens its status as a prosperous economic hub and inviting place to live. While the city, largely at the behest of the state government, has set ambitious targets to increase its housing stock and alleviate the crisis, reaching those goals is far from guaranteed.¹ Ultimately, failure to take decisive action will dampen the city's prospects for becoming a more vibrant, prosperous, and welcoming environment for youth.

Ever since its rapid rise to prominence during the Gold Rush, San Francisco has had a long history of steep, oftentimes unaffordable housing prices.² Its location on a coastal peninsula made the sprawling expansion seen in many other American cities impractical, leaving a finite amount of land within city limits for housing which was mostly exhausted long ago. As of 2010, an outright majority of San Francisco's homes were over 70 years old, very unusual in the western United States and reflective of the city's constrained geography.³ Since then, growth in the housing stock has been sluggish, with only 3,500 units per year built between 2015 and 2021. In that same period, San Francisco ranked 10th out of 15 cities with similar populations in new units permitted per 100,000 residents, with Austin and



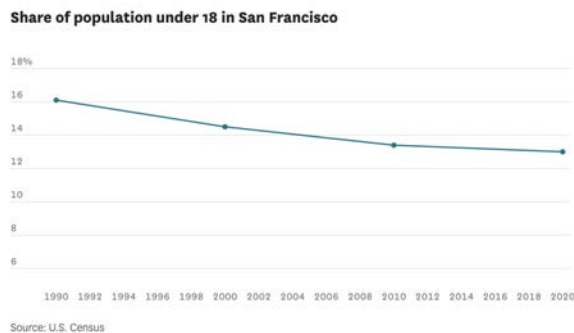
¹ 2022 Housing Element, San Francisco General Plan. San Francisco Planning Department.

² Amy Copperman. (2023, January 30). Has the cost of living in the Bay Area always been this high? SFGate.

³ Matt O'Brien. (2010, October 6). Census: Berkeley, San Francisco and Oakland have oldest housing stock in the West. The Mercury News.

Seattle more than three times as many units per capita.⁴ Moreover, San Francisco’s job creation outstripped housing production by a 6.8 to 1 ratio between 2010 and 2015.⁵ This mismatch has created an unaffordable housing environment for low and middle-income San Franciscans.

Families and young adults have been particularly affected by the housing shortage. With only 13 percent of its population under 18, San Francisco is the most childless major American city.⁶ This is primarily because the housing shortage makes raising a family in an adequately-sized apartment or house impractical and unaffordable for many. Former Supervisor Norman Yee summed up the challenge in a 2017 policy briefing, where he



wrote “San Francisco must reverse the trend and attract more families to live in San Francisco. When we lose our families, we lose part of what makes San Francisco a strong, vibrant community.”⁷ Indeed, the housing shortage is responsible for the city’s relatively small youth population, as families with children choose to live elsewhere.

In addition, the aforementioned discrepancy between jobs and housing leaves many workers, including those who work for the city itself, unable to find affordable options within city limits. As of 2022, 58% of public workers live outside of San Francisco, a figure that has only increased over the decades.⁸ At best, this forces many people to embark on lengthy commutes, oftentimes by car. At worst, it drives people away from the San Francisco Bay Area entirely, including young people who are seeking to settle down but need access to more affordable options.

Current City Policies and Goals

San Francisco’s restrictive zoning laws are a direct cause of its current housing shortage, and altering city policy is a necessary first step toward a more affordable and accessible housing market. While San Francisco is the second-densest American city, its zoning regulations are not conducive to tightly-packed urban development. Current policy traces its roots back to 1921 when available land was far more widespread and the city’s social priorities were significantly different. In the October 2022 zoning code, 38% of total land and nearly two-thirds of all residential areas were outlined strictly for

⁴ Building Permits Study (BPS), United States Census. (2020). United States Government.

⁵ Adriana Rezal & Erin Caughey. (2022, June 29). The San Francisco Housing Crisis. San Francisco Chronicle.

⁶ Share of population under 18 in San Francisco, United States Census. (2020). United States Government.

⁷ Susie Neilson. (2022, May 24). San Francisco is the most childless major city in the U.S. These maps show which neighborhoods have the fewest kids. San Francisco Chronicle.

⁸ Residency. (2022, July 1). Department of Human Resources, City and County of San Francisco.

single-family homes.⁹ This longstanding legal preference for single-family homes created an artificial cap on the city’s total housing stock, with multi-family homes only allowed in certain residential neighborhoods and apartment buildings primarily confined to pockets on the city’s eastern side.

Recognizing the crisis, San Francisco has taken multiple important first steps in recent years, but these changes have not gone far enough. More importantly, legal changes must be followed up with actual development and construction. California Senate Bill 9 (SB9) went into effect in 2022, and it allows property owners to more easily convert their single-family homes into multi-family ones. In addition, San Francisco followed up with legislation allowing fourplexes to be built on most residential lots and sixplexes on corner lots.¹⁰ While research concluded that SB9 alone could facilitate the construction of up to 8,500 new units in San Francisco, the worry is that developers will not take advantage of the new policy.¹¹ In the first year of implementation, only 30 projects related to SB9 were proposed in San Francisco. Much of this sluggish developer uptake is due to high construction costs, elevated interest rates, and other adverse economic conditions. However, the positive impact of SB9 and the City’s subsequent fourplex and sixplex policy is already demonstrated by the admittedly limited number of current projects and the promise that an increasingly favorable local and national economy will spur more timely development.

In addition, San Francisco committed to an ambitious target of constructing 82,069 units between 2023 and 2031 (approximately 10,000 per year), including 46,598 affordable units, and has taken steps to make this goal attainable.¹² In February 2023, Mayor London Breed introduced an Executive Directive that detailed the roadmap toward reaching that target. This Directive stated that “San Francisco needs to fundamentally change how we approve and build housing. The causes of this shortage are broad, and they include blatant obstructionism and well-intentioned but ill-advised laws that have choked housing production.”¹³ In addition, Breed’s directive called for the abolition of conditional use authorization and for all departments involved in approving new developments to cut their approval timeline in half. Despite the Directive, city departments have not yet proven measurably faster in their approval speed and the conditional use process continues to divert valuable time and resources away from housing development.

Mayor Breed’s directive also called for changes to the Planning Code to permit taller and denser buildings along many westside thoroughfares and transit corridors. Although

⁹ Sriharsha Devulapalli. (2023, January 9). This map shows the parts of S.F. zoned for single-family homes. San Francisco Chronicle.

¹⁰ Sriharsha Devulapalli. (2023, January 9). This map shows the parts of S.F. zoned for single-family homes. San Francisco Chronicle.

¹¹ Estimated new homes per 1,000 residents made possible by SB 9 in the Bay Area. (2021). UC Berkeley Tenner Center.

¹² Housing Element Update 2022. San Francisco Planning Department.

¹³ London N. Breed. (2023, February 7). Executive Directive 2023-01: Housing for All. Office of the Mayor of San Francisco.

uptake from the Board of Supervisors was slow, the state regulator conducted an audit of the city's existing housing policies in the fall and mandated that immediate changes be implemented. If not, the state would impose the 'builder's remedy' on San Francisco, meaning that nearly all housing projects would receive automatic approval. The Board missed its first deadline of November 24, 2023, but ultimately passed the amendments in December by a 9-2 vote.¹⁴ After an extensive process stretching across multiple meetings, the Youth Commission formally supported the ordinance at its December 4th meeting.¹⁵ The changes will allow apartment buildings to reach 85, 140, or even 240 feet tall along Geary Boulevard, 19th Avenue, Sunset Boulevard, and other major roads. This will hopefully facilitate the construction of thousands of new apartments on San Francisco's western side, providing an opportunity for more individuals and families to move in.

On the other hand, it remains to be seen how these changes will translate into the construction of more affordable housing units. Supervisor Rafael Mandelman amended the final version of the ordinance to prohibit demolishing and replacing rent-controlled units with market-rate ones. Despite this, Supervisor Dean Preston noted "I'm deeply concerned that since passing our housing element, nearly every effort that has been commenced by the mayor has been focused on meeting market-rate housing goals and little to nothing on reaching our state housing goals for affordable housing."¹⁶ By passing these changes, the Board took the first step toward its ultimate 82,000-unit target, but developers will likely opt to construct market-rate housing where possible out of profitability concerns.

Another crucial aspect of the recent Planning Code amendments relates to the city's discretionary review policy. The discretionary review has been a stubborn roadblock to developers and housing advocates since it was implemented in 1954, and it gives individual residents inordinate power to slow down or entirely block developments. When a housing project is in its planning stages, any neighbor can initiate a legal battle and ultimately an additional Planning Commission hearing by simply paying a \$700 filing fee. On average, the process takes at least nine months to complete, and developers are not allowed to proceed when the review is pending.¹⁷ Between 2015 and 2023, residents filed 910 discretionary review requests, primarily in San Francisco's wealthier areas such as the Marina, Pacific Heights, and Noe Valley.¹⁸ Common claims against new developments include shadows, construction noises, and privacy worries. While it is natural that neighbors may not appreciate all that comes with housing

¹⁴ J.K. Dineen. (2023, December 12). State approves SF housing ordinance, avoiding potential penalties for the city. San Francisco Chronicle. Chronicle, December 12, 2023

¹⁵ December 4, 2023 Full Youth Commission Meeting Agenda. San Francisco Youth Commission.

¹⁶ Alito Toledo. (2023, December 5). S.F. passes crucial housing reforms. Will it be enough to satisfy the state? San Francisco Chronicle.

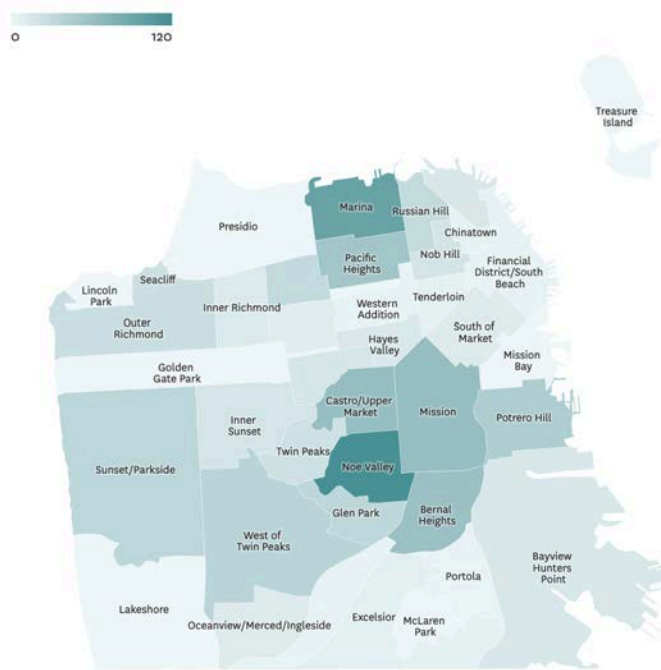
¹⁷ Christian Leonard. (2024, February 1). Is this S.F. policy a NIMBY weapon or way to block 'monster homes'? One neighborhood is at the center of the debate. San Francisco Chronicle.

¹⁸ SF Planning Permitting Data, DataSF. (2023) City and County of San Francisco.

development in their own backyard, the discretionary review process allows their individual concerns to obstruct developments and get in the way of crucial citywide economic and societal progress.

Publicly initiated discretionary reviews by S.F. neighborhood, 2015-23

By location of project being appealed



Because of the recent Planning Code amendments, developers will not be required to notify neighbors of upcoming projects when they are in the planning phase, although there are exceptions for certain lower-income neighborhoods and for demolitions of a rental property.¹⁹ In many cases, this will prevent neighbors from initiating the process before the filing deadline passes. However, this will not entirely eliminate discretionary review, and many projects will likely still be affected by the process. To create more substantive and lasting change, the city could eliminate the policy altogether due to its shaky legal foundations. Analyzing the

discretionary review process, UC Davis professor Chris Elmendorf wrote “If I am right that (discretionary review) is more lore than law, it follows that the Board of Supervisors could enact an ordinance making the approval of any class of development permits ministerial.”²⁰ Simply put, this change would put the entire process in the hands of city agencies, eliminating the subjective criteria and appeals to emotion found in legal battles between developer and neighbor.²¹ This would benefit the city in several important ways. First, far fewer projects will be stymied altogether. Second, developers will be less wary of building in San Francisco and facing the risk of a drawn-out, costly legal battle that they do not encounter in most other municipalities. Third, the Planning Commission will no longer need to devote hundreds of hours to hearing neighbor complaints, freeing up time to address more substantive and impactful issues.

As the housing shortage has worsened in recent years, the political will to address the problem has increased and the city is now taking meaningful action. Nevertheless,

¹⁹ Christian Leonard. (2024, February 1). Is this S.F. policy a NIMBY weapon or way to block ‘monster homes’? One neighborhood is at the center of the debate. San Francisco Chronicle.

²⁰ Christopher S. Elmendorf. (2023). Lawyering Cities into Housing Shortages: The Curious Case of Discretionary Review Under the San Francisco City Charter. NYU Environmental Law Journal, Vol. 32, No. 3, 2024.

²¹ Noah Arroyo. (2023, March 25). Could major hurdle to more housing projects in San Francisco be easily changed? San Francisco Chronicle.

recent aspirations and legislation must be followed up with further measures, including but not limited to those listed below. The city must strike a balance between prioritizing development and affordability to ensure that citizens from all socioeconomic backgrounds, especially youth and families, can benefit from a growing housing stock and continue living in San Francisco. Ultimately, this issue will have an immense impact on the city's young population in the coming years and decades, and more housing will make San Francisco a more accessible home for youth.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

- 1. Establish specific and concrete annual building targets** – starting in 2024 outlining how many total and affordable units should be constructed. This will help the City stay on target for its long-term goal of building 82,000 new units and 46,000 new affordable units by 2031. If totals are not met in any given year, the City should explore what steps must be taken to rectify the trajectory of development, including aggressively and immediately implementing the following suggestions.
- 2. Explore additional amendments to the Planning Code** – the amendments passed in December 2023 represent important progress, but those changes alone are likely not enough to yield the housing necessary to achieve the city's goals. Therefore, the City and County of San Francisco should continue to increase height limits, decrease setback requirements, and take other measures outlined in the recent amendments to a further degree.
- 3. Eliminate Discretionary Review** – pass an ordinance to eliminate discretionary review altogether. The policy does not exist in most other cities, was based on shaky legal ground, and, most importantly, serves as a major obstruction to new housing development. For these reasons, the city should have the sole power to approve or reject proposals and their decisions should be based on objective criteria instead of how much community outcry a project elicits.
- 4. Consider policies to promote affordable housing development** – explore options to ensure that an adequate proportion of its new housing units are affordable. Possible solutions include placing a Charter amendment on the ballot that would increase the percentage of units that developers must allocate to below-market-rate units up from the current 12% or increasing subsidies for affordable housing in lower-resourced neighborhoods.

SUPPORT YOUTH AND TRANSITIONAL-AGED YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to further increase its efforts to address the homeless crisis in San Francisco, particularly among Youth under the age of 25.

Background

As of 2024, San Francisco's handling of the homelessness crisis reflects a journey marked by both significant challenges and achievements. This crisis—deeply rooted in historical and systemic factors—did not develop overnight. Instead, it's steadily worsened over decades, leading to the current situation of a persistent and complex issue, characterized by a significant number of individuals and families without stable housing, and a particularly acute crisis amongst youth in our city today.

In 1985, a period in which homelessness and displacement were on the rise due to the recent recession, the Reagan Administration made substantial cutbacks in public and supportive housing programs, such as Section 8, shifting the responsibility of addressing homelessness and housing crises to local jurisdictions.¹ San Francisco's response at the time focused on providing temporary housing and food to those in need. However, they underestimated the severity and longevity of the homelessness crisis, expecting it to subside with the end of the recession. As a result, the city did not address it with the urgency necessary to prevent potential exacerbation and this inaction contributed to a deterioration of the crisis.²

Several of San Francisco's mayors have prioritized addressing homelessness, implementing various policies and initiatives. However, despite these efforts the crisis has persisted, compounded by a lack of affordable housing and broader socio-economic issues.

The homelessness situation in San Francisco has seen significant fluctuations over the years. For instance, in 2007, the unhoused population was recorded at 5,703, but by 2019, this number escalated to 9,784.³ The visible increase in homelessness has not only affected those living on the streets and in shelters, but has also impacted the city's economic and social fabric. The presence of a larger unhoused population in many areas of San Francisco has decreased foot traffic and negatively affected the livelihoods of residents and local businesses.⁴ This has brought national attention to the city's

¹ Multifamily Housing - Section 8 Background Information. U.S. Department of Housing And Urban Development (HUD)

² TIMELINE: The frustrating political history of homelessness in San Francisco | KQED. (2017, June 26).

³ History of how many people are homeless in the Bay Area. (2019, August 13). ABC7 San Francisco.

⁴ Alan Greenblatt (2023, January 31). Can a city thrive when its downtown is empty? Governing Magazine.

homelessness crisis, often overshadowing its efforts to address the issue and creating a negative reputation.⁵

The COVID-19 pandemic presented unique challenges to San Francisco's unhoused population, as shelter-in-place orders were impractical for those without shelter. In response, the city launched the Alternative Shelter Program, providing emergency shelter to 9,093 individuals during the pandemic's peak.⁶ This program, although temporary, demonstrated the city's capacity to provide safety to its unhoused population through decisive action.

Unhoused youth, in particular, has been a growing concern in San Francisco. A 2022 Point-in-Time survey by Applied Service Research revealed that 1,073 individuals under the age of 25 were experiencing homelessness, with 84% unsheltered (the 2022 Point-in-Time survey is the most recent, with 2024's report not yet being completed at the time of publishing).⁷ The causes of youth homelessness are diverse, including job loss, family conflicts, substance abuse, and mental health issues.

Furthermore, when measuring the scope and impact of the homelessness crisis among youth in San Francisco, it is clear that certain populations suffer disproportionately when compared to the population at large. Among the 1,073 youth experiencing homelessness, 38% identified as LGBTQ+.⁸ Sadly, this is often caused by families disowning their children after they become aware of their child's sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

LGBTQ+ youth, and transgender/nonbinary youth in particular, are uniquely affected by mental health crises, with a Trever Project report finding that 44% of LGBTQ+ youth and 54% of transgender and nonbinary youth in California seriously consider suicide. Therefore, many of these Youth experiencing homelessness are in desperate need of mental health services.⁹

This need is further emphasized by data from LYRIC, a San Francisco-based organization that primarily serves LGBTQ+ youth. Among the 600+ young people enrolled in LYRIC's programs, 56% are either homeless or living in unstable housing conditions while also coming from low-income backgrounds.¹⁰

⁵ Michelle Robertson. (2021, November 1). 'Somewhere between "The Wire" and "Squid Game"': San Francisco has a major image problem. SFGate.

⁶ COVID-19 Alternative Shelter program. San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing.

⁷ San Francisco Youth Homeless Count and Survey - 2022 Comprehensive Report. San Francisco Department of Housing and Supportive Housing. Applied Survey Research.

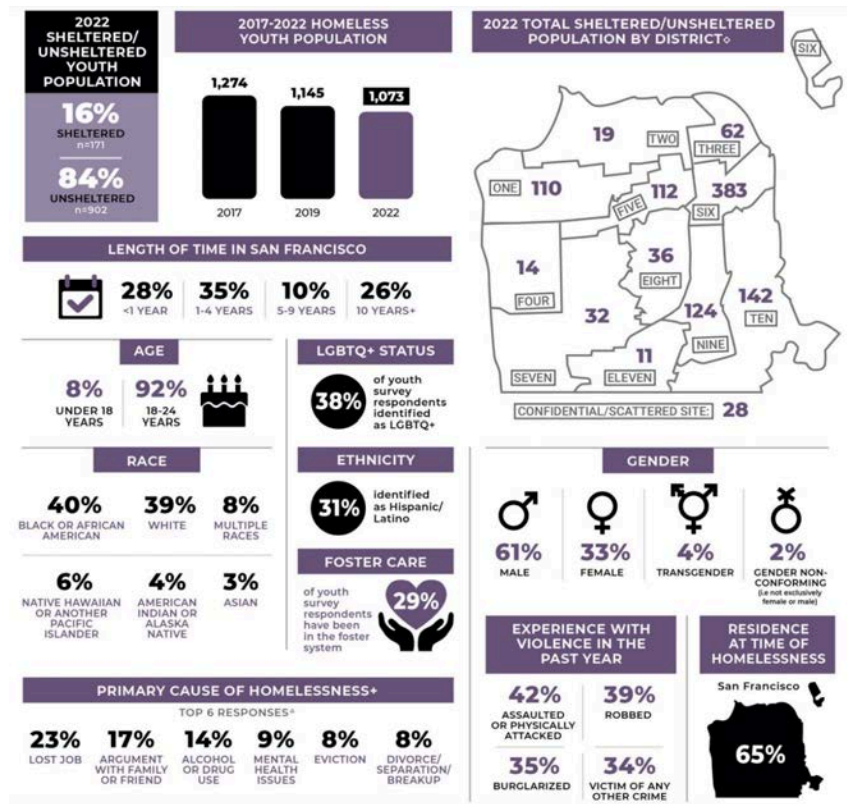
⁸ San Francisco Youth Homeless Count and Survey - 2022 Comprehensive Report. San Francisco Department of Housing and Supportive Housing. Applied Survey Research.

⁹ Megan Rose Dickey. (2022, December 6). LGBTQ youth are facing a mental health crisis in California. Axios San Francisco.

¹⁰ Carolyn Jones. (2018, January 1). Young, gay and living on the street: LGBT youth face increased odds of homelessness. EdSource.

Additionally, information from Larkin Street Youth Services notes that almost half of the youth experiencing homelessness in the city identify as LGBTQ+. Many of them grapple with intersecting challenges such as stigma, family rejection, racism, and discrimination—factors which often significantly exacerbate the complexity of their situation.¹¹

However, these hardships extend beyond the immediate need for shelter. They are also at a heightened risk of facing assault, trauma, depression, and suicide. For LGBTQ+ youth, these risks are further intensified by discrimination and the lack of supportive networks, which significantly complicates their path to stability and safety.¹²



In light of this, it becomes clear that San Francisco, mirroring trends in other urban areas, faces quite a distinct challenge with its LGBTQ+ youth homelessness. Addressing this issue calls for not only recognizing their disproportionate representation in the homeless population but also developing and implementing targeted solutions and comprehensive supportive services tailored to their unique needs and challenges.

In addition, youth of color are even more overrepresented in San Francisco’s homeless population experiencing homelessness than adults. In particular, 40% of youth experiencing homelessness in San Francisco are Black, which dwarfs Black people’s 6% share of the general population.¹³ Given these statistics, all efforts to combat the homelessness crisis among Youth must be expressly aimed at assisting those who are most affected by the crisis.

¹¹ Youth Homelessness in San Francisco. Larkin Street Youth Services.

¹² LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness. National Network for Youth.

¹³ San Francisco Youth Homeless Count and Survey - 2022 Comprehensive Report. San Francisco Department of Housing and Supportive Housing. Applied Survey Research.

Current Efforts

San Francisco's current efforts¹⁴ show a decline in homelessness, with a 3.5% decrease in total homelessness since 2019 and a 15% reduction in unsheltered homelessness.¹⁵ The city has actively worked to increase the number of people exiting homelessness, with a 70% increase in individuals aided by city programs since 2018.

In preparation for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference, the city was able to highlight its ability to swiftly mobilize resources and manage homelessness effectively in specific circumstances. The city's response to the conference, which included increasing shelter capacity and clearing key areas of encampments, demonstrated significant adequacy for action under pressure.¹⁶ However, these measures, primarily driven by the need to present the city positively, contrast with the sustained efforts required for long-term homelessness solutions.¹⁷

Although there is a pressing need to clean the streets and address homelessness urgently, actions like street sweeping and forced clearing of the unhoused population can be counterproductive. Such actions can exacerbate the vulnerabilities of the unhoused. Forced removals often lead to the loss or destruction of personal belongings, thus disrupting the lives of those already facing significant hardships.¹⁸ These approaches also overlook the root causes of homelessness, like lack of affordable housing and mental health support. Instead of offering sustainable solutions, these sweeps can perpetuate a cycle of displacement and instability, leading to an exponentially worse homelessness crisis.

Innovative solutions that do not lead to displacement are therefore crucial for a sustainable and effective approach to homelessness. An example of such is the development of Navigation Centers, specifically for serving Transitional Age Youth (TAY). The Lower Polk TAY Navigation Center at 700 Hyde Street—the first of its kind for Youth experiencing homelessness in San Francisco—offers a comprehensive array of services and a supportive environment tailored to the needs of young unhoused individuals.¹⁹ This includes medical and mental health services, workforce development support, and connections to paid career training opportunities, provided in a safe and healthy environment. This approach is indicative of the city's commitment to finding humane and effective solutions to homelessness, particularly for its Youth and TAY populations, without generating displacement.

¹⁴ San Francisco delivers significant increase in helping people exit homelessness | San Francisco. (2023, December 12). City and County of San Francisco.

¹⁵ Point-in-Time Counts. San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing.

¹⁶ David Sjostedt. (2023, December 12). *Here's how many homeless encampments San Francisco cleared before APEC*. The San Francisco Standard.

¹⁷ David Sjostedt. (2023, November 2). San Francisco to open hundreds of homeless shelter beds as winter, APEC approach. The San Francisco Standard.

¹⁸ Gilare Zada. (2023, August 23). SF officials clash in Ninth Circuit over ban on homeless sweeps. Mission Local.

¹⁹ San Francisco to open new 75-Bed Navigation Center for Transitional Age Youth | Office of the Mayor. (2021, February 3).

Conclusion

San Francisco's journey in addressing homelessness, particularly among Youth and TAY (Transitional Age Youth), has been significantly influenced by the advocacy of the San Francisco Youth Commission. Since 2012, the Commission has dedicated a section of its Budget and Policy Priorities to this cause, leading to tangible progress such as the establishment of the Navigation Center at 700 Hyde Street and the Castro Youth Housing Initiative.²⁰ Additionally, the city has shown its capacity to address homelessness, as evidenced during the APEC conference and the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is a clear need for more consistent, long-term strategies backed by sustained political will and resource allocation. By building on the foundation laid by past Commissions and addressing the immediate needs of Youth and TAY experiencing homelessness, San Francisco can continue to make strides toward a sustainable and humane resolution of this crisis. The dedication to innovative solutions and comprehensive strategies that respect the dignity and autonomy of all unhoused individuals, especially vulnerable youths, is crucial in tackling this complex issue.

Furthermore, in light of San Francisco's commitment to addressing Youth and TAY homelessness, it's also important to acknowledge our current financial challenges these upcoming fiscal years. Despite the tight budget constraints and the current deficit, addressing the homelessness crisis in San Francisco remains a critical priority. Homelessness, particularly among young people, presents challenges that require dedicated and steadfast attention. It's imperative that we prioritize this issue, not only because it impacts the most vulnerable among us, but also because the essence of San Francisco is defined by its residents. Protecting and improving the livelihoods of our residents is not just a responsibility, but a necessity to maintain the integrity and spirit of our community.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

1. **Implement long-term solutions to homelessness without displacement** - explore a variety of long-term solutions to address homelessness, especially for Youth and transitional-aged youth, including solutions such as a comprehensive housing framework ensuring legal housing access for vulnerable populations. To maximize effectiveness, the City should collaborate with nonprofits and organizations experienced in working with unhoused youth.

²⁰ Budget and Policy Priorities Reports. San Francisco Youth Commission.

2. **Researching the efficacy of navigation centers for youth and Transitional Age Youth** - to increase the impact of the City's Navigation Centers (specifically the one dedicated to serving Transitional Age Youth on 700 Hyde St), further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of these centers. This research should include—but is not limited to—an assessment of current practices and identification of areas for improvement, such as enhancing on-site services and pathways to long-term housing. The findings should guide the allocation of more city funding to these centers, ensuring they are equipped to meet the complex needs of young residents and align with San Francisco's broader strategy for reducing Youth homelessness.

3. **Target support for LGBTQ+ and minority youth** - design specialized programs at Navigation Centers and Transitional/Supportive Housing Sites for LGBTQ+ and minority youth, providing safe, inclusive, and culturally competent environments. These programs should integrate comprehensive services, including mental health counseling, education, and job training. We recommend that the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors allocate funding to the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing for these initiatives, in collaboration with the Human Services Agency and the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, to ensure a holistic support system for our LGBTQ+ and minority youth.

IMPROVE CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the City and County of San Francisco to amend the Climate Action Plan to include defensive measures against climate change, routinely check street trees for falling risk, and invest in climate resilience.

Background:

In recent years, the world has witnessed an alarming increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, serving as stark reminders of the profound impact of climate change on our planet.¹ From devastating hurricanes battering coastal communities to unprecedented wildfires raging across vast landscapes, the toll of these disasters is not merely measured in numbers but in shattered homes, fractured lives, and profound grief. Additionally, prolonged droughts have parched fertile lands, decimated crops, and strained water resources to their limits, further exacerbating the challenges faced by communities grappling with climate-induced catastrophes.

Burning fossil fuels has caused global temperatures to rise and weather to become more extreme. Today, global climate change is directly affecting San Francisco and other California communities, with higher temperatures, more extreme heat waves, more extreme storms with heavier rainfall and flooding, sea level rise, severe droughts, and poorer air quality.² These conditions have left California susceptible to catastrophic wildfires, directly threatening homes, businesses, and protected areas, and blanketing the city, state, and many other parts of the nation with hazardous smoke.

Climate change has both direct and indirect consequences. Direct consequences lead to health and economic challenges such as heat stroke, injuries from extreme storms, and respiratory illness from poor air quality.³ Indirect downstream consequences include food insecurity caused by poor agricultural output, income and property loss, housing and job insecurity due to drought, flooding, and wildfires, and increased rates of anxiety and depression because of these disruptive consequences of climate change.⁴ According to a study published in the National Institute of Health's Library of Medicine, "Increased frequency of disasters with climate change can lead to posttraumatic stress disorder, adjustment disorder, and depression. Changes in climate and global warming may require population[s] to migrate, which can lead to acculturation stress. It can also lead to increased rates of physical illnesses, which secondarily would be associated with

¹ Extreme Weather. (September 5, 2023). NASA Climate Change and Global Warming.

² Climate Action Plan. (December 7, 2021). San Francisco Department of the Environment.

³ Climate Action Plan. (December 7, 2021). San Francisco Department of the Environment.

⁴ Climate Action Plan. (December 7, 2021). San Francisco Department of the Environment.

psychological distress.”⁵ These impacts extend far beyond the immediate damage caused by extreme weather events, shaping the very fabric of society and threatening the well-being of youth across the globe. As we grapple with the uncertainty of future emissions and the climate's response, it becomes increasingly clear that urgent action is needed to mitigate the impacts of climate change and safeguard the future of our planet for generations to come. Young people will inherit a world profoundly impacted by climate change, bearing the brunt of decisions made by all generations that preceded us.

Climate Action Plan:

San Francisco's Climate Action Plan encompasses several key sectors, each vital for the city's transition to a sustainable and resilient future. These sectors include Energy Supply, Building Operations, Transportation and Land Use, Housing, Responsible Production and Consumption, Healthy Ecosystems, and Water Supply.

The Energy Supply sector focuses on transitioning away from fossil fuels to 100% renewable electricity for buildings and vehicles. Key strategies include expanding renewable electricity capacity, preparing for changes in electricity demand, and providing equitable rates and programs for low-income households.

Building Operations aims to eliminate emissions from all buildings by 2040 through electrification and the use of 100% renewable electricity. Strategies include electrifying existing buildings, providing education and financial incentives, and creating a diverse and skilled workforce.

The Transportation and Land Use sector seeks to support low-carbon travel options and reduce car reliance. Goals include making 80% of all trips low-carbon by 2030 and ensuring all new registered private vehicles are electric by 2040. Strategies involve improving transit efficiency, building active transportation networks, and transitioning to zero-emissions vehicles.

Housing initiatives prioritize creating more housing for all income levels, with an emphasis on maximum affordability and retaining existing housing. Strategies include expanding housing and stabilization programs, preserving existing housing, and building housing near transit corridors.

⁵ Mental Health Effects of Climate Change. (January 19, 2015). Indian journal of occupational and environmental medicine.

Responsible Production and Consumption focus on reducing solid waste generation and waste sent to landfills by 2030. Strategies include addressing the life-cycle impacts of buildings, reducing food waste, and embracing plant-rich diets.

Healthy Ecosystems aim to sequester emissions and support biodiversity through nature-based solutions. Strategies include restoring natural lands, expanding urban forestry, and implementing regenerative agriculture practices.

Water Supply initiatives focus on diversifying water supply options, improving the use of new water sources, and maintaining a gravity-driven water-delivery system. Strategies include investing in supply augmentation programs, continuing water conservation efforts, and exploring new ways to reduce water use and develop new supplies.

Together, these sectors form a comprehensive approach to addressing climate change, promoting sustainability, and building resilience in San Francisco. By implementing these strategies, the city can work towards a more equitable, climate-resilient, and sustainable future for all residents.

The current San Francisco Climate Action Plan (CAP) contains nothing on defensive measures that the city should implement to protect young people, adults, and seniors from worsening weather and living conditions. The plan focuses on cutting carbon emissions. Although achieving net zero emissions by 2040 and reducing greenhouse gasses and fossil fuels is important, it is only one side of the equation; It is critical also to improve infrastructure to deal with more frequent extreme weather and other side effects that come with rising global temperatures. Just because San Francisco reaches net zero emissions by 2040 does not mean climate change is over. Global warming is global. The world must collectively take action and San Francisco should prepare, bolster, and enhance its infrastructure to protect this city for youth and generations to come.

Recommendations:

The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to:

Short Term

1. **Rework climate action plan** - add a new section to the Plan that includes defensive measures and addresses unmet needs. This is necessary to establish measurable goals and progress toward better protecting San Francisco.
2. **Routinely check all trees** - in light of many atmospheric rivers and with infinitely more to come, many trees have become compromised and we must reduce the risk of falling trees to prevent damage and loss of life. Developing a strategy between San Francisco Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department may be necessary to monitor at-risk trees. The Parks and Recreation Department does have an Urban Forestry unit that manages trees however they don't have enough funding to adequately address them all. It costs millions of dollars to excavate fallen trees thus making it more fiscally responsible to be proactive than to react.

Long Term

1. **Invest in resilience** - installing more and better storm drain infrastructure in all areas, improving warning and emergency alert systems, and gradually implementing porous asphalt during road improvements. It is also imperative to fund projects to protect San Francisco's coastlines via sea wall technology to control rising levels. These improvements are critical functions that the city must put into practice.

Get Involved with the Youth Commission!

If you are ever curious as to what the role of a Youth Commission could be like, please feel free to contact any of our Youth Commissioners at youthcom@sfgov.org.

You can learn more about our issue-based committees and campaigns as well, we have Civic Engagement and Education Committee, Transformative Justice Committee, Housing, Recreation, Transit Committee, and LGBTQ+ Task Force.

Please see our website for more details and stay connected with our office via social media @SFYouthCom or email at youthcom@sfgov.org.

We are located in City Hall, Room 345, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102-4532.



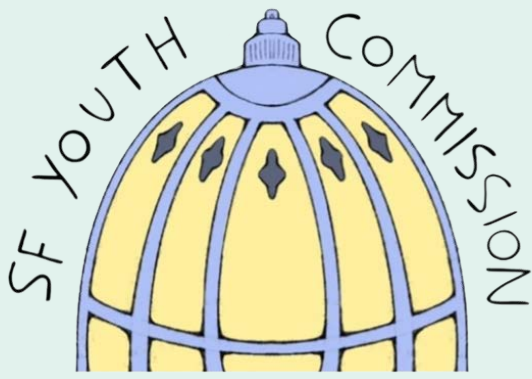
*Back Row (Left to Right): Galicia Stack Lozano, Isabella T. Perez, Adrianna Faagau-Noa, Kelly Wu, Skylar Dang, Téa Lonné Amir, Allister Adair, Valentina Alioto-Pier, Jason Fong
Front Row (Left to Right): Aryelle Lampkins, Helen Cisneros, Gabbie Listana, Ewan Barker Plummer, Imaan Ansari, Linda Ye, Chloe Wong, Joselyn Marroquin*

March 2024 - Youth Commission Budget & Policy Priorities

This page intentionally left blank.

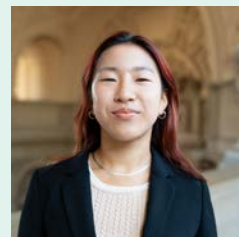
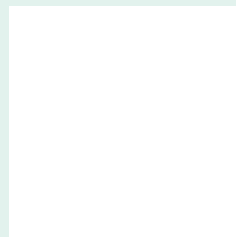
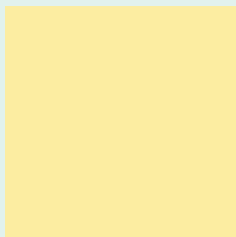
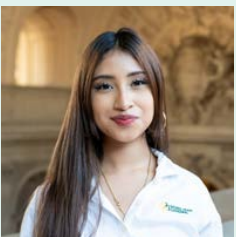
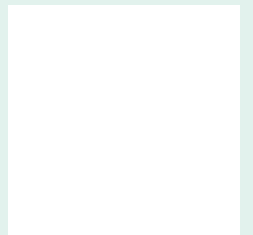
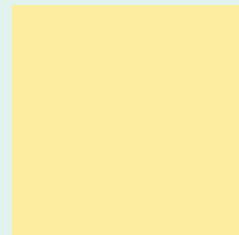
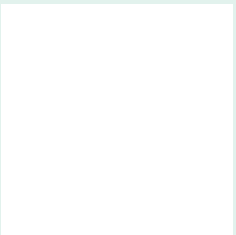
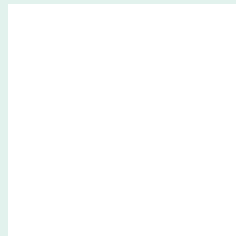
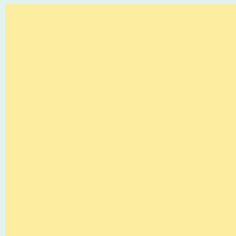
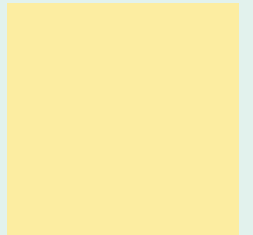
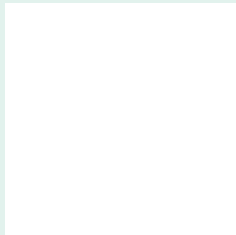
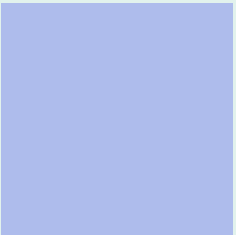
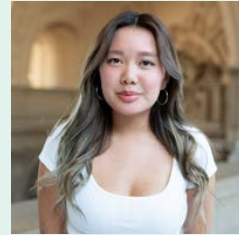
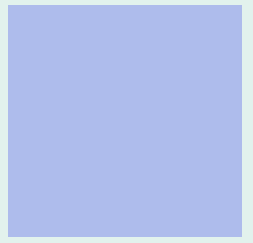
SAN FRANCISCO YOUTH COMMISSION, Room 345
1 DR CARLTON B GOODLETT PLACE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-4532

WWW.SFGOV.ORG/YC
YOUTHCOM@SFGOV.ORG
(415) 554-6446



San Francisco Youth Commission

1 Dr. Carlton B Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4532
www.sfgov.org/yc
youthcom@sfgov.org
(415) 554-6446



Budget and Policy Priorities
FY 2024 - 2025 | FY 2025 - 2026