



August 16, 2022

The Honorable Samuel K. Feng
Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco
400 McAllister Street, Room 008
San Francisco, CA 94102-4512

Dear Judge Feng,

In accordance with Penal Code 933 and 933.05, the following is in response to the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury Report, *A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing*. We would like to thank the members of the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury for their interest in the City's work to prevent and end homelessness. It is important for the City to maintain accountability and reflect on lessons learned to strengthen our response, engage the community, and improve outcomes.

We agree with the Jury's findings that accessible data, strategic planning, and community engagement are necessary. Because we think significant progress has been made in the last two years, we are happy to report that many of the recommendations are implemented or in the process of being implemented. We also acknowledge that there is more to do and we believe that coordinated, transparent, and inclusive processes will drive our success. That said, I do not believe that additional bureaucracy will end homelessness for San Franciscans. Only housing can.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Civil Grand Jury report findings and recommendations. Moving forward, the actionable findings and recommendations will be incorporated into the City-wide strategic planning process on homelessness, currently underway.

A detailed response from the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing is attached.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "London Breed".

London N. Breed
Mayor

2021-22 CIVIL GRAND JURY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND RESPONSES TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Title [Publication Date]	F#	Finding	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Finding Response (Agree/ Disagree)	Finding Response Text
A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	F1	The PIT data do not capture the total number of homeless people living in San Francisco over the course of a year. Use of this metric results in an inaccurate determination of the actual size of the population of homeless people in the city, which is key information for HSH's strategic planning and program design.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Disagree partially	<p>While we agree that the Point in Time (PIT) Count does not capture the full experience of homelessness in any community, it is a federal requirement and provides a good year-over-year comparison of homelessness in our community. Because the methodology remains relatively consistent over time the PIT count is helpful for identifying trends in our community and important comparisons to other communities.</p> <p>The Civil Grand Jury report is inaccurate when it states that "Use of this metric results in an inaccurate determination of the actual size of the population of homeless people in the city, which is key information for HSH's strategic planning and program design." This is only one set of data that is used in our strategic planning and data modeling process which will also include administrative data including ONE System/HMIS and other administrative data.</p>
A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	F2	Key data and metrics about homelessness are not easily accessible on the HSH website. Data is scattered across numerous dashboards and websites.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Agree	<p>We have determined that HSH alone cannot resolve complex issues connected to aging. For example, laws regarding service provision and other health and income needs need to be addressed to fully support the aging population in San Francisco.</p> <p>However, we recognize the needs of older adults as unique to the general adult population experiencing homelessness. San Francisco has 867 units of site-based Permanent Supportive Housing that are dedicated to older adults. More than sixty percent (488) of these units are in senior-only buildings and the remaining are scattered throughout the portfolio. Additionally, given the priorities of HSH's Coordinated Entry system and the demographics of the City's homeless population, seniors and persons with disabilities are likely occupying many of the thousands of Site-Based PSH units not specifically designated for them.</p> <p>It is also important to note that during the pandemic, we prioritized people experiencing homelessness with COVID vulnerabilities for placement into Shelter in Place (SIP) Hotels and then into permanent housing. Because age is a significant risk factor, the SIP population was older than the overall homeless population. 31% of SIP guests were age 60 + while only 18% of San Francisco residents are 60+. HSH has more than just permanent supportive housing as a tool for ending homelessness for older adults, including F4e could do more to call out the specific service needs of older adults and design programs centering on their unique needs. As part of HSH's 2022 strategic planning process, we will be looking at the needs of several "special populations" including older adults, and outlining strategies to address homelessness with service and housing support to meet the specific needs of older adults within the community.</p>

2021-22 CIVIL GRAND JURY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND RESPONSES TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Title [Publication Date]	F#	Finding	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Finding Response (Agree/ Disagree)	Finding Response Text
<p>A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]</p>	<p>F3</p>	<p>Engaging City residents neighboring those sites where HSH plans to locate new shelters, drop-in centers, navigation centers, or safe sleeping sites early on in the development and siting process could promote more community acceptance and endorsement of establishing those facilities, a prerequisite for all development, especially projects serving homeless people.</p>	<p>Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]</p>	<p>Disagree partially</p>	<p>We agree that earlier engagement with the community in advance of opening a new shelter or housing project could be helpful in ensuring that the project moves forward with community support. However, there are more important factors than timing.</p> <p>HSH has opened dozens of shelter and housing projects over the past few years with mixed levels of acceptance and support from the community. The timing of the engagement is not the most predictive factor of acceptance. Support tends to vary by the population that will be served, program model, neighborhood characteristics, support of the District Supervisor, and benefits that can be provided to the community. These factors tend to be more important than the timing of the engagement.</p> <p>In the last year alone, HSH has conducted over a dozen community processes to engage neighbors on proposed shelter and housing projects. HSH provides information on all of their proposed projects on their website: https://hsh.sfgov.org/get-involved/notices/</p> <p>In the FY 2022-23 budget, we funded a new staff position to lead community engagement and help build relationships with community members and organizations well in advance of any project proposal.</p> <p>The Department continues to abide by all required community notification and engagement steps as outlined in the Citizen’s Right to Know Act as a minimum guide to their engagement activities.</p>

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A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	F5	Despite compelling data showing that homelessness poses special challenges for older adults, HSH has failed to recognize older adults as a unique sub-population in its work to date.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Disagree partially	<p>We have determined that HSH alone cannot resolve complex issues connected to aging. For example, laws regarding service provision and other health and income needs need to be addressed to fully support the aging population in San Francisco.</p> <p>However, we recognize the needs of older adults as unique to the general adult population experiencing homelessness. San Francisco has 867 units of site-based Permanent Supportive Housing that are dedicated to older adults. More than sixty percent (488) of these units are in senior-only buildings and the remaining are scattered throughout the portfolio. Additionally, given the priorities of HSH's Coordinated Entry system and the demographics of the City's homeless population, seniors and persons with disabilities are likely occupying many of the thousands of Site-Based PSH units not specifically designated for them.</p> <p>It is also important to note that during the pandemic, we prioritized people experiencing homelessness with COVID vulnerabilities for placement into Shelter in Place (SIP) Hotels and then into permanent housing. Because age is a significant risk factor, the SIP population was older than the overall homeless population. 31% of SIP guests were age 60 + while only 18% of San Francisco residents are 60+. HSH has more than just permanent supportive housing as a tool for ending homelessness for older adults, including long and short-term rental subsidies. As part of the SIP winddown and housing process, HSH implemented a Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool program for older adults.</p> <p>That said, we could do more to call out the specific service needs of older adults and design programs centering on their unique needs. As part of HSH's 2022 strategic planning process, we will be looking at the needs of several "special populations" including older adults, and outlining strategies to address homelessness with service and housing support to meet the specific needs of older adults within the community.</p>

Report Title [Publication Date]	R# [for F#]	Recommendation	Respondent Assigned by CGJ [Response Due Date]	Recommendation Response (Implementation)	Recommendation Response Text
A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	R1 [for F1]	The jury recommends that by December 15, 2022, the Department (HSH) develop strategies and methods, including using other existing data sets to better quantify and profile the population of people who are homeless.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Has been implemented	<p>HSH's ONE system already provides critical data beyond the Point in Time (PIT) Count and can provide data about people accessing services across the homeless response system. HSH currently uses this data to inform program and system design work. Their administrative data showcases how many people access homeless services over the course of a year. Additionally, they have an estimated "inflow rate" that also helps the community understand the number of people who experience homelessness annually.</p> <p>This data, along with PIT Count data, will be used as part of the Department's 2022 strategic planning process to do critical systems modeling. This tool utilizes various inputs, including data on existing shelter and housing inventory, population size, utilization rates, and assumptions about future inflow and the number of people that will be assisted to exit homelessness in order to provide a model for how to size shelter and housing capacity needed to serve the community. This system modeling is a part of the Department's strategic planning work and will be released in early 2023.</p>
A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	R2 [for F2]	The jury recommends that by March 15, 2023, the Department create a user-friendly portal and navigation system.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Has been implemented	We agree that the data has not been easily accessible in the past. The Department has launched a public dashboarding project and published a data hub on its website to ease access to their data and make it more accessible to the community. HSH is also in the process of integrating relevant data from the City website onto their website. HSH will continue to roll out new dashboards to meet the needs of the community and accurately report on the work of the homeless response system.
A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	R3 [for F3]	The jury recommends that HSH both communicate and collaborate with residents in those San Francisco neighborhoods where it intends to establish facilities serving the unhoused. HSH should expand its staff and administrative capacities focused on community outreach and engagement to meet this recommendation.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Has been implemented	The Department engages in a robust community process for every new program that it opens which includes public noticing, public meetings, meeting with diverse neighborhood stakeholders, and often includes the formation of an ongoing working group to support the neighborhood as programs are opened. The number of new projects opening has expanded greatly and HSH's capacity to expand the community engagement work has not kept pace. In the FY 2022-23 budget, we have allocated another position to lead community engagement for the department. This additional capacity is expected to help build strong neighborhood-based relationships and trust with the community that will improve the ability to site homeless services with the support of the community.

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A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	R5a [for F5]	The jury recommends that by September 30, 2022, the Department incorporate age-specific information into its baseline dataset of homeless demographic characteristics from the PIT, identifying that portion of the population that is over 50 years of age in particular.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Has been implemented	HSH includes age information in its baseline demographic data in the PIT Count as well as the demographic datasets that are now available in the data HUB on HSH’s website. It is also important to note that HSH collects age information during the housing assessment of people experiencing homelessness. This information is used in program design and data reporting – not solely in the PIT count. That said, HSH will be incorporating the specific needs of older adults into their strategic planning process. This plan is expected to be available in early 2023.
A Progress Report about the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [June 30, 2022]	R5b [for F5]	The jury recommends that, beyond simply portraying data accurately, by September 30, 2022, the Department declaratively include older adults, as a separate and unique group, as part of its ongoing agenda and scope of work.	Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing [August 29, 2022]	Has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future	HSH is in the process of creating a new strategic plan that will guide the work of the department and the homelessness response system over the next five years. This plan includes recommendations and solutions for meeting the needs of high-acuity populations, including older adults. This planning work is currently underway, and the new strategic plan is expected to be available in early 2023. The Department has also recently created a dedicated position within the housing team to focus on supportive housing for older adults.