

DRAFT Press Advisory

Community Urgently Calls on Mayor Breed to Release Funds and Implement a Compassionate Alternative Response to Homelessness NOW

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Press Contacts:

Tyler Kyser, Coalition on Homelessness, tkyser@cohssf.org (480) 416-6448
Sara Shortt, HomeRise, sshortt@HomeRiseSF.org (415) 846-0750
David Elliott Lewis, ideazones@yahoo.com, 415-504-4285

Where: <https://www.facebook.com/events/546307869784107>. Please contact us for the private press & guest speaker link.

When: Thursday, September 30, 2021 at 11AM.

Who: A community coalition to end homelessness in San Francisco, composed of community advocates, local service providers, housing activists, survivors of police violence, and people experiencing homelessness.

On Thursday, community advocates, unhoused community members, and neighborhood-centered service providers are urgently calling on the Mayor to immediately implement a compassionate solution to end the cycle of violence against unhoused individuals at the hands of police. Community members are dismayed that, even though the initiative was funded, implementation is being stalled “for further analysis”, while a community letter sent to the Mayor remains unanswered.

During this event, community service providers, formerly unhoused individuals, and mental health professionals will discuss how the CART model will create opportunities for community care with support from institutional funding, and how urgently it is needed given the current policy response to homelessness.

“DPH BHS already contracts with community-based organizations. This model is deliberately *community based and government funded*. This will ensure cultural competency, building the capacity of Black and Brown led organizations who already have deep trust and relationships within the community,” Jennifer Friedenbach, Executive Director of Coalition on Homelessness.

According to Wes Saver, Policy Manager of GLIDE, “When the CART model was approved and funded by the Board of Supervisors, it wasn’t directly placed into a particular department but remained in unappropriated reserves. As community advocates and members of a progressive

San Francisco, we urge Mayor Breed to consider placing CART in the Behavioral Health sector of the Department of Public Health.”

The CART program proposes a sustainable and innovative approach to supporting unhoused individuals experiencing a crisis using a community-based response network instead of the police.

Vitka Eisen, Executive Director of HealthRight 360, added that, “The CART program proposes that using peers with lived experience who are trained as behavioral health professionals will reduce the harsh and violent response previously practiced by institutional agents such as the police. These individuals would be hired specifically through a community-based organization, independent of City Hall, in order to ensure that the city’s homelessness response is based on best practices. As a community provider, I am confident community providers can be trusted with this mission.”

To learn more about the CART program, view the list of over 73 endorsers, and read the full report, go to [www. CARTSF.org](http://www.CARTSF.org)