



A Voice for the Sacramento Area Homeless Community Since 1997

HOMeward

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—Page 2—

**Homeless
Union Lawsuit**

—Page 3—

**Affordable
Housing
continued**

**Care Court
continued**

—Page 4—

**We Know
What To Do
commentary**

—Page 5—

**2022
Homeless
Count**

—Page 6—

**Homeless &
Parkway
commentary**

Poem

—Page 7—

**SHOC
Summit
Meeting**

Underwriters

—Page 8—

Resources

**About
Homeward**

Care Court is Just Another Tool to Punish the Disabled

by Jonathan

In June the Western Regional Advocacy Project held a meeting with other Grass-roots Homeless Advocate Organizations on California Governor Newsom's proposed Cares Court. This is a summary of the various organizations conclusions about the quality and effectiveness of the proposal.

TLDR

Newsom's CARE Act (SB 1338) weaponizes care (read: conservatorship) against poor and Disabled people, doubles down on racist and classist systems at the expense of community-based treatment programs and real, affordable housing.

Newsom's proposed "CARE Act" (SB 1338) is a cash grab for courts and cops – it represents continued investment into a violent system predicated on white supremacy and classism, giving the police state a shiny new toy that will be used to intimidate and incarcerate poor and Disabled Californians.

Essentially, this legislation substantially expands ways that unhoused people with mental health disabilities can be brought into the system, from expanding parties who can petition to refer someone into the court, to creating a new protocol for mandating and overseeing forced treatment. There is nothing voluntary about CARE courts: at every stage that is allegedly "voluntary," refusal to comply defaults to coercion, ultimately resulting in full-on conservatorship. This legislation does not invest a single dime in expanding or improving community based treatment options, and does not guarantee (nor fund) permanent supportive housing. Most egregiously, this policy continues

a documented pattern of mental health laws being used as weapons to criminalize Black and Brown communities.

Less than two years ago, millions marched across the nation demanding care, not cops, so why are carceral policies like SB 1338 still dominating the legislature? Look no further than the policy's most powerful advocates: Governor Newsom, the Collaborative Court Association, and the Big City Mayors, along with support from local law enforcement groups and business organizations, make up the stakeholder group for creating "CARE" courts. Their political agenda has been well documented and on display daily, where they support and enforce traumatic street sweeps that shuffle people from one place to another. They've made it abundantly clear that they are concerned



Continued Page 3

All People Need Housing They Can Afford

Excerpt from article by the Los Angeles Tenants Union, reprinted in the Autonomous Tenants Union Network Newsletter August 2021. This excerpt explains how the term "Affordable Housing" has been used by the government and real estate developers to block the demand for housing FOR ALL as a human right. Reprinted with Permission from the Autonomous Tenants Union Network.

Writing about the rise of homelessness in the 1980s, progressive social critic Jonathan Kozol cited a HUD deputy assistant secretary in the Reagan administration as saying, "We're getting out of the housing business, Period." This led Kozol to famously conclude, "The cause of homelessness is lack of housing."

Thirty years later, the inaccessibility of housing has dramatically worsened, but not for the lack of development. Today, the U.N. estimates that 60% of all global investments are in real estate and 75% of that number is in housing. In cities around the world, downtown skylines are a forest of construction cranes. Single-family neighborhoods are now dotted with small-lot developments and generic luxury apartment buildings. Investors stealthily convert rent-controlled apartment buildings in historic neighborhoods into boutique hotels and short-term rentals for tech-industry contract workers. And the process of social cleansing follows everywhere nearly the same templates engineered for upzoning, upscaling, and



Continued Page 3

Support the Homeless Union Lawsuit – Save Unhoused Lives

– Oppose November’s “Emergency Shelter and Enforcement Initiative” –

The Sacramento Homeless Union – the local chapter of the National Homeless Union – is calling upon organizations and individuals involved in the survival struggle of the unhoused population to step forward and support their recently filed lawsuit against the City and County. As summer advances, and temperatures rise, homeless lives are at risk. As stated in their recent press release, the Homeless Union urges “the people of Sacramento, the media, the church, elected officials...to join our lawsuit, to help gather the evidence we need, to sign declarations and be prepared to testify to the failures of the City and County to protect those most at risk for heat-related injury and death.”

The Complaint filed in the local federal court charges that the thousands of unsheltered homeless people on our streets and open areas are in great danger because of the extreme heat brought by global warming to our region, turning local cities into “urban heat islands.” Officials have refused to declare a local emergency and have refused to take emergency measures for relief even though the conditions facing unhoused people meet the definition of “extreme peril” under state law. Already, in early in the summer, temperatures have risen up to 102 to 108 degrees in areas around Sacramento.

As documented by the lawsuit, the dangers of extreme heat are exacerbated by the continuing police sweeps forcing unhoused people to leave shaded areas around the city.

“Meanwhile, Sacramento City code enforcement officials and members of the police department’s ‘impact team’ continue to destroy dozens of existing homeless encampments while providing no alternative shelter.

The majority of the visibly homeless reside in encampments shaded by freeway overpasses, trees and vegetation which include homeless-built makeshift habitations with covers that provide some defense against extreme heat.

Consequently, the City’s eviction of the homeless from these locations onto the unprotected streets and sidewalks or sweltering tents atop heat absorbing asphalt surfaces, ‘safeground’ parking lots, is affirmatively increasing the risk to the unhoused.”

The encampments set up by the city (sometimes called “Safe-ground”) generally require people to live in tents in close quarters where the heat retaining asphalt surfaces increase temperatures 30 degrees or more, releasing heat throughout the night. As the lawsuit charges, temperatures inside tents at the city-maintained encampment at Miller Park has approached 120 degrees, and residents are going hours without water to drink.

According Dr. Flojaune Cofer, of Public Health Advocates, the body actually begins to shut down and its functions become compromised when the temperature rises above 105.8, leading to heat stroke and death. As she states, the unhoused population is especially vulnerable to extreme heat, both because unhoused people live outside and because many suffer from chronic health conditions.

The City’s and County’s response – to set up a few cooling sites for limited hours, often closing when the heat is still extreme, and delivering insufficient water – ignores the threat of death, suffering, and injury to our unhoused neighbors.

Despite these conditions, there is a new proposal to vastly expand city-provided camps and to force unhoused people to leave shaded areas where they now live. The City Council has now approved an initiative which will appear on the ballot in November to mandate police “removal” of unhoused people from public land into such city-provided encampments.

The proposed ordinance, called the “Emergency Shelter and Enforcement Act of 2022” will be on the November ballot. It would make public camping illegal if a person rejects the “offer” of an available emergency shelter “space” – that is, a currently nonexistent “space” in a tent somewhere around the city.

There is no funding in the Initiative to build any “emergency shelter space,” and no actual plan to provide housing or shelter for the thousands that will be targeted for displacement from their campsites under the ordinance through a massive, costly deployment of law enforcement and code enforcement personnel, threatening criminal penalties against anyone who fails to immediately comply.

The proposed ordinance is a disaster in the making. The number of unhoused people in Sacramento is now estimated to be between 16,000 and 20,000 on an annual basis. In Phoenix, Arizona, unhoused people have also been rounded up and forced to live in city provided encampments, crowded tents on unsheltered asphalt parking lots. Last summer, as a result, at least 130 homeless people died from heat related causes, 40% of the total number of these deaths.

We must act now to protect our unhoused neighbors from the increasingly brutal and deadly summers that hammer our region, opposing November’s initiative and supporting the Homeless Union lawsuit. Cruel, wasteful, futile, enforcement-based “solutions” only make the crisis worse. *Housing is the only answer.*



People Need Housing

Continued from Page 1

uprooting.

The crisis of housing access is driven by the commodification of housing, which we define as the need to increase real estate investment value through planned scarcity, waste, and monopoly ownership. For all the promises of “opportunity” and “improvement” that accompany gentrification, the result for tenants is rent-gouging and social cleansing.

“Affordable Housing,” while held out as the solution to the affordability crisis caused by real estate speculation, only further accelerates the crisis of displacement...

The history of “Affordable Housing” is part of a decades-long assault on non-capitalist housing alternatives, [and] illuminates where our debates about housing solutions should begin. We need to start the conversation at a different place than that of housing supply, especially when the actual meaning of “Affordable Housing” is predetermined to serve the interests of a for-profit housing system (even in those instances where the “Affordable Housing” developer is part of the nonprofit housing developer industry). The failure of “Affordable Housing” has been carefully detailed...in terms of affordability covenants that expire, AMI income categories that exclude the poor, and the use of “Affordable Housing” to privatize public housing, remove rent controls, and accelerate both real estate speculation and displacement.

To build tenant power, we believe we must articulate a different vision. For that reason, we put forward three challenges to our movement:

1. We challenge the tenant movement to center discussions around public housing in its analysis and demands. Let’s have lively debates about what public housing can mean and be, learning from the past while holding onto what we’re imagining as a movement today.
2. We challenge the tenant movement to reject the slippery language of “Affordable Housing” and to openly demand social housing solutions outside of the market. The commodification of housing is fundamentally incompatible with the human right to housing. There can be no reconciliation of the two.
3. Finally, activists must demand housing solutions that build on the political vision already manifest in the autonomous tenant power movement, pushing for housing that supports local autonomy. L.A. Tenants Union organizes collective struggles at the level of apartment buildings and neighborhoods. Our housing should support neighbors working together to build community.

Since the founding of the L.A. Tenants Union in 2015, members have argued that ours is not a housing movement but a movement of tenants — empowering tenants in the fullness of our lives, not just around housing. Thus, we need a housing system that encourages autonomous collective ownership of public apartment buildings, that channels resources to tenants to build and maintain their own housing as a social context for autonomous collective action at the level of the social, political, cultural, and economic. And we need to see

Continued Page 5

Care Court

Continued from page 1

with the visibility of the people targeted by this legislation, and so the focus of this legislation is to make those people disappear, whether through forcibly institutionalizing them or by driving them away by using this new court system as a threat.

Hundreds of thousands of people call the streets of California home on any given night. But these aren’t the “stakeholders” that the Governor, or the Mayors for that matter, want to hear from. Newsom has an established track record of manipulating and misleading marginalized community members into supporting harmful legislation. We demand that the Newsom administration do more than thinly veiled token engagement — listen to directly impacted people and the groups they’re organizing with in cities like Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, Sacramento. They do not support this harmful policy. House keys not handcuffs, we need care not courts!

Los Angeles — *Services Not Sweeps & Los Angeles Community Action Network*

In Los Angeles, Services Not Sweeps has seen LAPD continually target Unhoused residents in mental health crisis rather than care for them. Being that there’s a disproportionate percentage of Black Angelenos who are Unhoused relative to the number of residents here, CARE Court becomes a new mechanism to target and disappear them into mental health facilities. The County of LA does not have the resources to properly respond to mental health crises, so instituting CARE Court puts vulnerable and precarious lives into the hands of the LAPD, which has a brutal history of targeting and mishandling even simple calls for help in Unhoused communities.

For the Los Angeles Community Action Network: “In Los Angeles, we currently see a slew of increased carceral policies. That includes enhancement, dedicated enforcement of “No Sit, Law or Sleep,” daily property sweeps, and recession-proof budget allocations for sanitation and police. SB1388 is another carceral policy that allows interpretation up in the hands of too many untrained state actors—continuing to increase the cycle of homelessness and incarceration.

Sacramento — *Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee*

At Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, we have long advocated for dignity and self-determination to be integral components of service delivery. Not simply because it’s the right thing to do but because voluntary services are evidenced based as having the most successful outcomes. Creating a new coercive court system instead of investing in voluntary services is a terrifying step for the most powerful people in the state to enact on the rest of us who struggle with mental stability. Court is not an historic mechanism of care, but rather of punishment. We need widespread and significant investment in community based healthcare and into the social determinants of health early in our lives. Housing, community, education, recreation, reducing the stress of poverty, these are the things people actually need and the state should move forward with immediately to alleviate mental health crisis in our state.

Oakland — *Anti-Police Terror Project & Love and Justice in the Streets*

During Mayor Libby Schaaf’s tenure, thousands of lifelong Oaklanders have lost their jobs, their homes, and their lives due to her administration’s failures. A 2019 Alameda County point-in-time count of Oakland’s unhoused population reported an eighty-six percent increase between 2015 and 2019, with nearly 79 percent of these individuals reported to be unhoused due to a lack of affordable housing options. The report estimated that 70 percent of Oakland’s unhoused population is Black, compared to 24 percent of the population. In 2018, the UN Special Rapporteur reported that attempts in Oakland to discourage residents from remaining in informal settlements or encampments by denying access to water, sanitation, health services, and other necessities constitute[d] cruel and unusual punishment and a violation of human rights. A audit of the Schaaf Administration’s interventions was released in 2021; it stated that the city’s efforts were “haphazard,” lacking strategy or policy direction. Oakland is a city in the midst of a housing crisis — we demand that the legislature reject SB 1338 and invest in immediately providing increased access to housing and services.

San Francisco — *Coalition on Homelessness*

The reality for individuals in mental health crisis living on the streets is miles away from the false narrative of treatment resistance behind the formation of a CARE court. In a recent survey of 600 unhoused people we conducted in San Francisco, we found that those who are experiencing mental health challenges wanted treatment but couldn’t obtain it because of barriers to getting care. For those who got treatment, it worked while they got it, but they then found themselves in a revolving door that spit them back to the streets. For people who don’t have the stability of a home, addressing mental health challenges is almost impossible. What no-one living this is asking for is a court process to navigate them into care. In fact, the current proposal from Newsom will mean far less funding for the things that work — treatment and housing but a whole lot of money going to courts, lawyers and judges. We don’t need courts to mandate people into a broken system. We need system fixes that result in diverse treatment and housing options that truly meet individuals needs.

Human Rights Watch

CARE Court promotes a system of involuntary, coerced treatment, enforced by an expanded judicial infrastructure, that will, in practice, simply remove unhoused people with perceived mental health conditions from the public eye without effectively addressing those mental health conditions and without meeting the urgent need for housing. Under international human rights standards, treatment should be based on the will and preferences of the person concerned. Housing or disability status does not rob a person of their legal capacity or right to personal autonomy. The expansive, involuntary CARE Court process denies these rights. We urge the legislature to reject this bill and instead to take a more holistic, rights-respecting approach to address the lack of resources for autonomy-affirming treatment options and affordable housing.

*For More information or to join our campaign contact: Western Regional Advocacy Project
www.wraphome.org*

We Know What To Do – Don't Give Up So Soon

By Paula Lomazzi

We know how to end homelessness. We have created a ten-year plan to end homelessness almost 20 years ago by a community-wide process. We have a couple five-year plans. We have a comprehensive siting plan for 20 sites that the City of Sacramento has identified recently. We have identified many housing options, both expensive and more reasonable, such as:

Housing First – Twenty years ago advocates campaigned, cajoled, and finally convinced government and the community that it is good and effective to provide permanent supportive housing to people living on the streets, without requiring them first to be clean and sober before moving in, without forcing treatment and drug testing, without them having to move after three to nine months. Our Continuum of Care and community, due to national and local advocacy efforts whole-heartedly adopted the concept, resulting in HUD homelessness funding being permanently dedicated almost exclusively to Housing First.

Tiny Houses – Safe Ground and SHOC worked for over a decade with city and county electeds, community partners, service providers, to convince the government and the community that this is a good and reasonably priced option for some unhoused people to transition to and through. Pallet housing, granny housing/flats, storage-container conversions, etc., are all acceptable options now.

Safe Ground and Tent Communities – Again, after decades of work, we convinced the government and the community that this is preferable to nothing and since nothing is the only option available, some portion of the unhoused community would benefit from a stable location with basic hygiene amenities, preferably with self-governance of some kind.

Affordable Housing – No arguments against the lack of and need for more housing affordable to all income levels and especially for extremely low-income households.

What are the gaps? All of the above have not been established on enough sites to make a dent, especially considering the growing homeless population (A 2022 point in time count found 9,278 homeless individuals on that one night, with up to 20,000 estimated over the course of the year). Transitional and Sober Housing has lagged due somewhat to HUD's funding focus on Housing First, but would it really have ended up serving more than a small portion of the need with the historic lack of political will? Drug

and mental health services—always lacking the capacity to treat during a person's time of crisis. Also, there is still an aversion to self-determined survival strategies though hygiene stations and water deliveries have been provided to some encampments over the pandemic.

We have all the tools and great ideas. We have all the nodding heads in agreement about how to end homelessness. So why is there talk about making it more of a crime to live outdoors all of a sudden, after a long pandemic hiatus? The City and County and some community groups are trying to take a short cut towards making homelessness invisible, and at the same time demonizing that visible population.

Martin vs. Boise, a 9th Circuit Court decision said that if there are not enough housing options in a community, you can't make it a crime for a person to be unhoused. Everyone living within our community are community members and you can't force them to leave the community. So, what do you do if you can't make it a crime to live outdoors and you don't want to see people living on your streets in plain view? You welcome them in—inside—by offering them appropriate housing.

There are a few recent legislative efforts to try to circumvent the Boise decision, though.

The county is exploring a way to criminalize living outdoors in certain places, originally termed an infrastructure ban. Like you wouldn't want someone sleeping on the driveway at the fire station, right? The county is just going overboard on that idea, trying to circumvent Boise by naming places and distances from places that you may probably see people currently living in tents, and they just added a desire to include the American River Parkway after a state effort failed (AB 2633). The American River Parkway, where they have been trying to get unhoused people to vacate for decades, if not centuries, with laws against camping already in place and many severe law enforcement sweeps—that effort has resulted only in temporary displacements with a quick return of people, sometimes the same people, living along the river once again, as usual. And most people were displaced from downtown and other visible locations, then hiding from sight in the woods.

A community group organized the “Emergency Homeless Shelter and Enforcement Act” requiring the City of Sacramento to provide housing, or some type of shelter for 60% of the homeless population. After this city obligation

has been met, there would be a criminal penalty to those still living outdoors. The City of Sacramento negotiated to put it on the ballot without requiring the signatures if they changed the City's obligation from 75% to 60% of the homeless population. The housing would be great, no argument there, but the part about penalizing unhoused people is nothing but a showboating statement that unhoused people are to be blamed and scapegoated for the homelessness crisis that we as a community have historically failed to address. There is already an adequate criminalizing law on the city's books that makes it against the law to camp or live outdoors (*Sacramento City Code - 12.52.010*). It just hasn't been used as much lately BECAUSE OF THE MARTIN V BOISE DECISION.

It's plain and simple that if we don't want to see unhoused people in our town, neighborhood, or parkway, we have to get serious as a community to assure there is enough housing built and that services are provided for everyone. It takes a community effort and political will. Meanwhile, our unhoused are suffering the consequences so much more than housed folks—just remember that when you don't get your preferred park bench, you can curse under your breath “That darned City/County/National lack of funding and political will to solve homelessness!” and then write letters and make your voices heard to demand housing for everyone. We have a plan to end homelessness, so just finish the job at hand! Housing ends homelessness--Not hiding the evidence.



Sacramento's 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count

By Joe Smith

The amount of people experiencing homelessness has almost doubled since 2019. For the first time, Sacramento has exceeded San Francisco in the number of people experiencing homelessness.

Instead of happening on schedule in 2021, the Point-in-Time Count (PIT), done every two years, was delayed a year by the COVID-19 pandemic. The PIT is a government-mandated census of all people, sheltered or unsheltered, experiencing homeless and is used to calculate funding by the state and federal governments. The local agency responsible for the PIT is Sacramento Steps Forward. Volunteers and professional outreach workers did the count during the evening over two days last February.

Independent researchers from Sacramento State University analyzed the data and produced the PIT report.

The PIT report says that 9,278 people were experiencing homelessness on the nights of the count. In 2019 there were 5,570. The report also projects that as many as 20,000 people will experience homelessness sometime during 2022, up from 13,000 in 2019.

Let's understand the data a little better:

72% of individuals sleep outdoors, in tents, vehicles, and locations unsuitable for human habitation.

78% of people stated they have been homeless for a year or longer. This mean "chronic homelessness" has increased since 2019, when 52% reported being homeless for more than a year.

59% of people stated they have been homeless for three years or longer, up from 41% in 2019.

Veteran homelessness has decreased 6% since 2019.

Four thousand three hundred fourteen (4,314) people report having a chronic disability.

Most people experiencing homelessness for the

first time say they fell into homelessness before the pandemic started in 2020. Many think that the pandemic would have caused an increase in homelessness but eviction protections and an increase in unemployment benefits most likely delayed this from happening. As more people are subject to evictions now that pandemic protections have expired, more people are likely to become homeless.

Black/African American folks make up 11% of the population of Sacramento County and represent 31% of the homeless population. American Indian/Alaskan Native folks make up 2% of the county population but represent 7% of the homeless population.

Approximately half of all unsheltered adults report having to relocate due to law enforcement. Some were forced to move an average of 4 times during the two months leading up to the PIT count.

It is a common misconception that people experiencing homelessness are "out-of-towners" or new to Sacramento. The PIT indicates that only 5% of people have been new to Sacramento in the last six months.

The number of unhoused families with children has increased. Still, the number of unsheltered families has decreased by 31% due to hotel/motel programs and congregate family shelters.

Transitional youth (age 18 to 24) comprise about 7% of the unhoused population. Approximately half of all unsheltered transitional age youth indicated they had been in the foster care system, 43% fled a violent situation, and 42% reported having a mental or learning disability. Almost one-third of youth identified their sexual orientation as Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual, or another non-heterosexual identity. Many identify their sexual orientation as being a contributor to homelessness.

The report reinforces that Sacramento has an affordable housing crisis. The report makes several recommendations to make any meaningful headway in reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness. These include adding additional non-congregate shelter beds such as hotel/motel rooms,



emergency shelter beds, residential treatment beds for folks with mental health and substance use disorders, and a sharp increase in permanent supportive housing units.

Significant resources are needed to prevent folks from falling into homelessness. These include programs to assist with rehousing, rental payments, deposit assistance, and other emergency intervention services. Additional programs are needed to help find available, affordable units and engage landlords to accept housing vouchers and subsidy programs.

To view the entire report: [www. https://sacramentostepsforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/PIT-Report-2022.pdf](http://www.https://sacramentostepsforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/PIT-Report-2022.pdf)

Housing

Continued from Page 3

social housing as part of all aspects of our lives. "Supportive housing" should be a universal concept integrating medical care, childcare, education, cultural expression, cooperative economic endeavors, environmental justice, food justice, and justice in terms of race, gender, sexuality, class, and immigration justice.

A primary component of the commodification of housing is to alienate our need for accommodations from the fullness of our lives. A radical housing vision rejects that separation and restores to our notion of housing the experience of social life. We propose this is the vision of the future whose seeds already exist in spaces where LATU members organize mutual support and put community into practice through tenants associations and local neighborhood chapters.

Why demand "Affordable Housing," when we could demand the whole city?



Homeward Distributor Mane at downtown park. Artistic Photo Courtesy Paula

I Am At The Table

By Cathleen Williams

I am at the table
 With my fellow activists
 A cold morning in February
 And a young man begins speaking
 Standing at the window
 We didn't see him come in
 He is looking out
 At the whitish sky
 And the big sumac
 And he just starts speaking
 About his hands
 How one finger was almost severed
 Because he picks up

Trash – we don't ask why

And at the same time
 He is speaking urgently
 About mother earth
 How she must be healed
 Urgent, despairing
 Someone asks gently
 Where he is from
 And he says, Missouri
 And then he leaves slowly
 Still speaking
 About his hands
 Cut from the trash
 And about the earth
 And then he is down the stairs
 Out the door

A sacred vulnerability
 A living poem

Both Homeless People and the American River Parkway Need Protection

By Muriel Strand

Recent news coverage of the local Sierra Club chapter's letter to Sacramento City and County staff and elected officials, warning of increased fires that have severely damaged the riverine ecology, has intensified local debate on how to effectively address the growing population of homeless people in Sacramento.

In June, the local Sierra Club chapter organized a panel discussion where both environmental and homeless advocates began an important discussion about the history of homeless people camping along the American River, and the ecological damage within the Parkway.

While much useful information was shared, attendance was minimal. Clearly, more attention and participation from the community are needed, especially given the substantial increase in the homeless population since before Covid, and equally substantial increases in housing costs. This panel discussion was really just the beginning of the community conversation that's needed. If we want government of by and for the people, then people have to cooperate in self-governance.

We heard first from Bob Erlenbusch of the Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness, who described various efforts advocates have made over the years to get the county to provide some basics such as dumpsters. By his account, their efforts have not met with consistent success, nor consistent local government commitment, over the long term. He was followed by Julie Snyder, a Sierra Club member who volunteers for the Inspiring Connections Outdoors project (hikes with low-income youth), and works as a consultant on mental health and homelessness issues.

Next, Roland Brady, a volunteer who focuses on the Steelhead Creek Protected Area of the Parkway for the American River Parkway Foundation, presented an informative slide show. Steelhead Creek is the largest undammed stream in the County,

and thus accessible for salmon and, of course, steelhead trout. Brady is a retired Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences who continues to consult in his field of geology. Crystal Tobias of Friends of Lakes Folsom & Natomas also spoke about her knowledge of, and concern for, the river environment.

Betsy Weiland of Save the American River Association emphasized the unique ecological features of the American River and the Parkway, which are unparalleled statewide at least, especially so near an urban center. Preserving and restoring the biological resilience of that long waterway is like an ecological savings account.

The information shared by Parkway advocates also emphasized the damage caused by the various human artifacts (including clothing, packaging, hazardous material, and poop) that many homeless folks lack the wherewithal to manage. Settling into the river, this debris smothers the riverbed and drives out wild critters of all sizes, including rodents or skunks, into nearby neighborhoods. Every ecological system has a 'tipping point' leading to a slippery slope of deterioration. A lively discussion ensued which was sadly cut short by time constraints. We must continue to learn and confer, to include local elected officials, and to insist on realistic solutions. Local government has the power to act, but they cannot create a consensus for us.

Prehistorically and historically, Native Americans lived in stable relationships within the ecology, rather than designating preserves and wilderness areas where no people are supposed to reside. While it's clear that the current number of homeless campers now living on the Parkway near the river has exceeded the carrying capacity of the area, actual carrying capacity in general also depends on management. We all would be wise to consider where we fit into the planet's carrying capacity. Reconciling ecological and social sustainability may be the only way to both truly end homelessness and protect the American River.



COMMUNITY SUMMIT ON HOUSELESSNESS

**SATURDAY AUGUST 27 9 AM TO 4 PM
SUNDAY AUGUST 28 NOON TO 4 PM**

**WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1300 N ST. SACRAMENTO CA 95814**

On Saturday, August 27th and Sunday, August 28th, the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, and other allied organizations, are sponsoring a "Community Summit on Houselessness" to bring together unhoused people, activists, advocates, and friends for strategic planning.

We will have workshops with local leaders and organizations to build our unity, fighting capacity, and vision with and on behalf of the unhoused community. Join us!

- What are the real causes of homelessness?
- Who are our allies?
- Who is working against unhoused people and promoting false "solutions"?
- Who is driving and funding November's ballot initiative to launch a massive program of displacement and detention of unhoused people? (The Emergency Shelter and Enforcement Plan of 2022). How do we defeat it?
- What do we need to know about current government programs and funding?
- What are we fighting for?
- How can each and every one of us get involved in this struggle for housing, services, and humane survival strategies with and on behalf of our houseless neighbors?

All these issues and more will be the focus of workshops, and keynote speakers, as we come together to plan the Community Summit on Houselessness over the next month.

We need to have homeless folks to talk about what is needed, what they see as important, what intermediate steps are appropriate, what works in mental health services and transitional housing. This is integral to the organizing we want to do.

Through the Community Summit, we will work to increase our understanding, learn from each other, build our movement, and develop together our strategy and action plan.

Contact: 916-801-4672 or 916-862-8649. or [shoc_1 @ yahoo.com](mailto:shoc_1@yahoo.com)

A Special Thank You to all our Underwriters:

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www.sacshoc.org

Resources List

Sacramento Loaves & Fishes.

1351 North C Street - www.sacloaves.org – (916)446-0874
On Campus Programs:
Friendship Park – Day center for homeless adults. Mon-Fri, 7AM-2:45PM
Welcoming Center – Donation drop-off and admin. Mon-Fri, 7AM-3PM
Dining Room – Lunch served. Get tickets and eat lunch in Friendship Park.
Maryhouse – Women & family services. Mon-Fri, 7AM-2PM. (916)446-4961
Mustard Seed School – For children ages 3-15. (916)-447-3626
Men's Wash House – showers and laundry for men. Mon-Fri, 7-11AM, 11:30AM-1:30PM
Anneke's Haven – Kennel for spayed & neutered animals. Mon-Fri, 7AM-2PM, Sat-Sun 8:30AM-1:30PM
Guest Advocate office. Mon-Fri, 8-11AM
Library – Reading room, computers & glasses. Mon-Fri, 7:30-11AM, 11:30AM-1:30PM
Jail Visitation – For individuals in custody or recently released. Mon-Thurs, 8AM-12PM. (916)447-9472
Genesis – Mental health counseling. Mon-Fri, 7:30AM-12PM, 1PM-2:45PM, (916)669-1536
Mercy Clinic – TB tests and General medical assistance. 8-11:30AM
Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic. Mon-Thurs, 8AM-12PM. (916)446-0368
Miscellaneous on campus services; Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, El Hogar Mental Health, DHA, RT, Mercer Clinic for veterinary services, Harm Reduction Services.

River City Food Bank
(916) 446-2627. Food Distribution
Hours: Midtown, 1800 28th Street – Tuesday-Thursday, 10:30am to 1:30pm. Arden Arcade, 2300 Edison Ave - Friday-Saturday, 10:30am to 1:30pm.

Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services:
3333 Third Avenue, (916) 456-1980; 1951 Bell Avenue, (916) 925-3240. Visit website for list of services: www.sacramentofoodbank.org

Food search by zip code: www.sacramentofoodbank.org/find-food

Sacramento Safe Space for Unhomed Youth –
Tuesdays, 9am to noon, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 1430 J Street. Temporary sanctuary for ages 18-30. Breakfast, hygiene items and other supplies when available. For more information: www.engage.us.org

Pilgrimage Program –
Rotating support from congregations in Midtown Sacramento. Overnights temporarily canceled. Clothing, Meals, and mobile showers one or two days a week at:
Bayside Midtown (19th & W) (916) 706-2337;
First United Methodist (21st & J) (916) 446-5025;
St. John's Lutheran (17th & L) (916) 444-0874;
Trinity Episcopal (25th & Capitol) (916) 446-2513;
First Church of Nazarene (28th & S) (916) 452-6171
See @PilgrimageSac on Facebook for the calendar. or call in advance for place and times.

Midtown HART Respite Centers –
Tuesdays: St. John's Lutheran Church, 1701 L Street, 9:30AM-12:30PM.
Fridays: Trinity Cathedral, 2620 Capitol Ave, 9:30AM-12:30PM

Sacramento Self Help Housing
offers housing counseling and lists, and shared and supportive housing. sacselfhelp.org - (916) 341-0593

Tommy Clinkenbeard Legal Clinic
provides free legal services to homeless people relating infractions and misdemeanors in Sacramento County. Also manages court-ordered community service sentences. (916) 446-0368

Legal Services of Northern California:
Helps with cases about Housing, public benefits, including CalWorks, CalFresh (food stamps), Medi-Cal, General Assistance (GA), Social Security, SSI, unemployment insurance benefits (UIB), and state disability insurance (SDI). lsnc.net – (916) 551-2150

Sacramento Tenants Union
– Advocacy support for tenants: sactenantsunion@gmail.com

Department of Human Assistance(welfare)
Mail – use drop boxes outside office, or submit documents online through mybenefitscalwin.org, or mail them to: P.O. Box 487, Sacramento, CA 95812
Apply for Benefits – apply online at www.mybenefitscalwin.org

Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee



<https://sacshoc.org>
(916) 442-2156

SHOC office hours Mondays and Thursdays, 10:30AM-1PM @Friendship Park. SHOC open meetings are temporarily being held online on Tuesdays at 10am. Email shoc_1@yahoo.com for Zoom link.

General Assistance, call (916) 874-3100
EBT – new or replacements, call (877) 328-9677

Harm Reduction Service:
2800 Stockton Blvd. Open from 4-6PM weekdays. Call for outreach schedule or supplies. (916) 456-4849

City of Sacramento:
For general information or questions about Sacramento City's, shelters, safe camping and safe parking facilities, and COVID-19 in Sacramento, please call 211 or 1-800-500-4931 or 916-498-1000. You also can email info@211sacramento.org

City services: 311

Community Resources: 211

Sacramento Covered
(916) 874-9670

Elica Health Centers
(916) 454-2345

WellSpace Health
(916) 737-5555

Sacramento County Health Center
(916) 874-9670

Sacramento County Department of Health Services: www.saccounty.net/COVID-19

National Call Center for Homeless Veterans:
(877) 424-3838
Healthcare & Program Referrals

Welcome to Homeward:

Please help us make a difference!

Homeward Street Journal has been publishing since 1997 as a non-profit project of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee.

The paper's mission is to lessen misunderstandings between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving homeless people a voice in the public forum. Homeward also provides a financial self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate by being a Homeward Distributor.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily of SHOC or Homeward.

Submissions and Editorial Policy

We welcome any participation or contributions: Articles, poems and other writing can be submitted at our office in Friendship Park, or mailed to the address below.

All writing submitted for publication will be edited as necessary, with due respect for the author's intent. The editors will attempt to consult with an author if changes are necessary, however, the paper will go to print with the story as edited if the author is unavailable.

All Letters to the Editor must be signed to be published. If the writer wishes to remain anonymous s/he should so state, but the letter must still be signed.

Poetry and graphics will not be edited, either the paper will publish the submission or not.

In submitting articles to the paper, authors give their permission to print their submissions in accordance with the above stipulations, as well as possible reprinting in INSP member papers, with due byline. Any requests for stories outside the above three will be referred to the author.

Subscriptions are available with a \$20 contribution. Make checks out to SHOC (Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee).

Loaves & Fishes is not affiliated with the Homeward Street Journal in any way. Participants with the paper are not allowed to solicit for donations for L&F, nor make any reference regarding the relationship between Loaves & Fishes and this newspaper whatsoever.

All correspondence can be sent to:
Homeward Street Journal
PO Box 952
Sacramento, CA 95812

The paper may be reached at:
(916) 442-2156

The paper may also be e-mailed at
homeward2@yahoo.com

On the web at:
<https://sacshoc.org/homeward>

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