



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Northern  
California

## 2024 Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

### Candidate Response: **Dylan Hirsch-Shell**

#### 1. WHAT WILL YOU DO TO ENSURE THAT SAN FRANCISCO FOLLOWS ITS OWN POLICY TO OFFER APPROPRIATE SHELTER TO UNHOUSED INDIVIDUALS PRIOR TO CITING OR ARRESTING PEOPLE?

I believe that criminalizing homelessness is inhumane and counterproductive. We must prioritize housing and services, not punishment. To ensure San Francisco follows its policy of offering shelter before enforcement, I will:

\* Establish a Real-Time Shelter Booking System: Develop a system for unhoused individuals to easily access and reserve available shelter beds, enabling outreach workers to connect people with shelter before enforcement actions.

\* Increase Shelter Capacity: Aggressively expand the availability of safe and appropriate shelter options, including utilizing underutilized public spaces and exploring innovative shelter models like tiny homes and safe sleeping villages.

\* Increase Transparency and Accountability: Require the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) to publicly report on shelter availability and offers made to unhoused individuals, ensuring transparency and accountability.

#### 2. HOW WILL YOU INCREASE EMERGENCY SHELTER AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN SAN FRANCISCO?

I am committed to a multi-pronged approach to address the housing crisis:

\* Emergency Shelters: Rapidly expand the city's emergency shelter capacity by utilizing existing city-owned properties, exploring innovative shelter models, and partnering with non-profit organizations.

\* Universal Social Housing: Invest in building tens of thousands of units of Universal Social Housing, creating truly affordable homes for people of all income levels. This will

stabilize the housing market, reduce reliance on temporary solutions, and create a pathway to housing security for all San Franciscans.

\* Streamline Permitting: Reform the city's lengthy and unpredictable permitting process to encourage the construction of new housing, both affordable and market-rate. This includes implementing a system of "by-right" permitting for projects that meet clear and objective criteria.

### **3. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE ROLE OF ALTERNATIVE TO INCARCERATION AS A FORM OF ACCOUNTABILITY WHEN A PERSON IS ARRESTED?**

I believe that incarceration should be a last resort, reserved for individuals who pose a serious threat to public safety. Alternatives to incarceration, such as restorative justice programs, community service, and treatment for addiction and mental health issues, can be far more effective in promoting accountability, reducing recidivism, and addressing the root causes of crime. I will prioritize funding and expanding these programs to create a more just and equitable criminal justice system.

### **4. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM (SUCH AS CART) AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO POLICE CALLS TO RESPOND TO PEOPLE WHO ARE UNHOUSED, STRUGGLING WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE, OR IN MENTAL HEALTH CRISES THROUGH THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT? PLEASE EXPLAIN.**

I strongly support establishing a robust CART (Crisis Assistance Response Team) program in San Francisco. We currently have the Street Crisis Response Team (SCRT), but it needs to be improved and expanded. Not every crisis on our streets requires a police response. By dispatching trained mental health professionals, social workers, and peer support specialists to these situations, we can de-escalate crises, connect individuals with appropriate services, and reduce unnecessary police interactions, particularly for vulnerable populations. This will also free up law enforcement resources to focus on situations that require their expertise.

### **5. SAN FRANCISCO MEASURE E SHIFTED CERTAIN POLICYMAKING AND OVERSIGHT POWERS RELATED TO POLICING AND SURVEILLANCE FROM THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE POLICE COMMISSION TO THE SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT. WHAT SAFEGUARDS, OVERSIGHT OR**

## REVISIONS WOULD YOU SUPPORT TO PROVIDE PROTECTIONS FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE IN SAN FRANCISCO?

I opposed Measure E because it eroded crucial checks and balances on police power, undermined transparency, and increased the risk of civil liberties violations. To protect the rights of all San Franciscans, I will advocate for: 1) Restoring Independent Oversight: Returning policymaking authority to the Police Commission and ensuring its independence from the Mayor's office; 2) Strengthening Transparency and Accountability: Requiring greater transparency in police operations, including the use of surveillance technologies, and implementing robust mechanisms for public input and oversight; and 3) Protecting Privacy and Due Process: Ensuring that any use of surveillance technologies complies with constitutional protections for privacy and due process and that residents have access to redress if their rights are violated. I am committed to building a San Francisco where public safety and civil liberties are not in conflict but are mutually reinforcing principles that create a more just and equitable city for everyone.