

## Connie Chan

Meet the candidates, week 26: “Do you support Mayor London Breed’s “very aggressive” homeless sweeps in recent weeks? Why or why not?”

**San Francisco has conducted aggressive and routine homeless sweeps since 2011, but they have not yielded sustainable results for our city.** The drop in our homeless count during the pandemic was the direct result of providing additional shelter by converting hotels and single room occupancy units into shelters and permanent supportive housing, and measures preventing tenants from being evicted due to lost income. **Instead of building on a strategy that works, we are returning to this failed approach to aggressively push out, cite and even arrest homeless individuals. And we have already seen its shortfalls as tents return the next day and the cycle repeats.**

San Francisco cannot afford to go backwards and repeat past failures — we need to be data and results-driven and utilize all the tested effective tools available to make progress. **Our law enforcement should instead focus on violent crimes while expanding our street crisis response teams to help those who experience homelessness, mental health crises, and drug abuse issues on our streets.** This is also why I supported mental health treatment reform legislation proposed by State Senator Susan Eggman and Governor Gavin Newsom's establishment of CARE Court and the \$6 billion bond on last March's ballot to build statewide mental health infrastructure and facilities. I will continue to advocate for a regional approach to demand state and federal funding and resources for a coordinated public health network, shared tracking system of service availability, and building affordable housing region wide, serving the homeless and those who are at-risk of homelessness in the Bay Area.

Additionally, **this new policy direction seems in contrast to** the priorities and objectives identified in the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing's five-year strategic plan, “Home by the Bay” which prioritizes getting people off the streets and into housing. I requested a daily report from the Department of Emergency Management on the number of encampments cleared, number of shelter beds available, and additional information to provide much needed transparency around the execution of this new policy, and to understand the budgetary cost as well as the human cost of this change in policy.