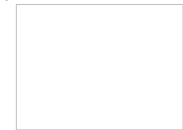


San Francisco Descends Into Hell - Is San Francisco Controlled By Insane Drug Addicts In City Hall

Sat, 10 Sep 2022 10:21:06, newstips66, [category: afghanistan, category: brotopia, category: community-service-programs, category: elon-musk, category: energy-dept-slush-fund, category: facebook-meta, category: google-alphabet, category: hired-assassins, category: housing, category: idea-theft, category: lithium-batteries, category: netflix, category: news-manipulation, category: patents-and-inventions, category: political-bribes, category: repairing_silicon_valley, category: san_francisco_corruption, post_tag: san-francisco-descends-into-hell, category: senator-insider-trading, category: silicon_valley_death, category: sony_pictures, category: stanford_univ_bribes, category: tesla_motors_lies_and_defects, category: web-spying, category: worldnews]

'On my evening walk': San Francisco resident videos homeless drug addicts brawling on sidewalk as he demands officials take action

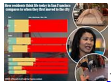
- The wild scene was captured on video by a man identified as J. Terrell, who was on an evening walk in San Francisco's SoMa neighborhood
- Allen, a resident, was 'disgusted' by what he saw and expressed his outrage in a tweet on Thursday night with the video that garnered 2.5K views
- Terrell called out former District Supervisor Matt Haney for 'failing to take action' after he reached out to his office: 'Why?', he asks. 'Is it [not] worth your time?'
- San Francisco is struggling to deal with its perennial drug abuse problem, and the impending closure of its open-air drug treatment center
- On Tuesday, the city's civil leaders unveiled their 'San Francisco Recovers' campaign
- Supervisor Matt Dorsey said their plan was a deliberately 'soft touch,' and emphasized that 'nobody's going to jail'



['Getting Kind Of Fed Up': San Francisco Teetering On The Edge Of A Mass Exodus, Poll Shows](#)

- [Almost Half San Francisco Residents Say They Were Victims Of Crime In Past 5 Years](#)

[Two thirds of San Franciscans say their 'fentanyl-ravaged' city has gone to the dogs because of homelessness, crime and extortionate house prices and a third plan to ESCAPE within three years](#)



The survey paints a bleak portrait of a city famed for its Golden Gate Bridge and colorful 'Painted Ladies' homes being wracked by poor leadership, crime, homelessness and

By [Ruth Bashinsky](#)

A mob of homeless drug addicts were seen brawling on a San Francisco street amid trash and squalid conditions, as city officials make an open call for 'ideas' to fix its open air drug market problem.

The wild scene was captured on video by a man identified as J. Terrell, who was on an evening walk in San Francisco's SoMa neighborhood.

'On my evening walk. SOMA isn't safe. Just happened,' he wrote in part. 'Love the smell of crack and poop. Beautiful San Francisco,' he wrote on [Twitter](#).

The attached footage shows two homeless men - one shirtless - on the ground fighting as a third man is seen whacking the shirtless addict with a broom as the bystanders stand around watching the fracas unfazed by the chaotic event.

The viral video has now garnered more than 2.4 million views.

During the anarchy, a dog is barking incessantly at the pair wrestling on the ground as another person is seen snagging a pair of sneakers and placing them in a plastic bag before walking away.

'Hey cops. Cops,' someone is heard yelling in the background.

The frenzy was disrupted once a man on an electric scooter came racing by pulling up to the pandemonium as the fighting ends.

Each of the men fighting get back on their feet acting as if nothing had happened moments before.



This November, [Proposition C](#) will give [San Francisco](#) voters the opportunity to approve the creation of a new oversight commission for the city's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. This body would join the [more than 100](#) commissions, committees, councils and working groups — supplemented by a city services auditor, a budget and legislative analyst, a city attorney, a district attorney, an ethics commission and a civil grand jury — already tasked with overseeing the delivery of municipal services.

Under the watchful eye of this impressive edifice, San Francisco ought to have the cleanest, most efficient government in the world. Instead, over the last 20 years, [multiple city officials](#) have been indicted on federal corruption charges, the mayor's annual budget has ballooned from \$5 billion to [\\$14 billion](#), and the government's performance [on several key metrics](#) has only gotten worse or remained stagnant. According to [one ranking](#), San Francisco is the second worst-run city in America.

We think there's a better way: municipal services oversight should be centralized in a unified agency that reports to a board of auditors, which would be elected every four years and empowered to summon witnesses, subpoena documents, impound wasteful spending and levy civil penalties.

[Leading audit standards bodies](#), whether in the public or the private sector, [agree](#) that auditor independence is the sine qua non of effective oversight. But, in San Francisco, the entities charged with ensuring that taxpayers get what they pay for are instead beholden to the very departments and agencies they're supposed to oversee. For example, the city services auditor is hired by the city controller, who is appointed by the mayor, while commissioners are appointed by varying combinations of the mayor, the supervisors and other interested parties. The city attorney and district attorney are elected by the voters, but, as political offices, they have other priorities beyond investigating corruption and waste.

San Franciscans deserve the option to vote for oversight officials who answer directly to them, and who are politically incentivized to focus exclusively on clearing up city hall. Creating the agency we propose would align San Francisco with other California counties and U.S. states whose [auditors](#) (or controllers with audit powers) are [elected](#), rather than appointed. It would also professionalize the city's audit function by entrusting it to full-time, qualified civil servants, rather than a patronage network of politically connected activists moonlighting as commissioners. Our current system is the one that put Jon Jacobo, a legislative aide, on the Building Inspection Commission, and Victor Makras, a real estate developer, on the Police Commission. Jacobo [resigned](#) last year after being accused of sexual assault; Makras was [found guilty](#) last month of bank fraud.

Variations of this proposal have been put before the voters and the Board of Supervisors before, in [2016](#) and [2020](#), but were rejected due to cost, politicization and implementation concerns. Our proposal is responsive to those concerns. First, this new agency would supplant, not supplement, the existing oversight commissions in the city, and would be funded by the resultant savings. Is this feasible? Certainly. The budgets of San Francisco's city services auditor, Ethics Commission and Department of Police Accountability alone [combine](#) to equal the entire budget of the California [state auditor](#), or the [audits division](#) of the state controller. To be clear, this isn't about eliminating funds for oversight programs, it's about entrusting them to a body that has the proper expertise and incentives to conduct them effectively. Second, electing a board, each member of which is equally authorized to deploy resources, rather than a single official to lead this agency, alleviates concerns that it would spend four years investigating that one official's political enemies and no one else. Finally, to ensure continuity of oversight, existing commissions could temporarily operate under the authority of the board of auditors during a phase-in period until the new agency is fully provisioned.

Many government employees are competent, conscientious and committed. But, over time, even the most well-meaning public servant can't fight waste and corruption in a system that holds no one accountable. The result is a city that spends \$60,000 on a [lort](#) and \$20,000 on a [trash can](#). The Board of Supervisors is empowered to put a charter amendment on the ballot to create the agency we propose and put an end to this kind of irresponsible spending. Our system is broken — let's live up to our reputation as the City That Knows How and fix it.

A mob of homeless drug addicts are seen brawling on a San Francisco street amid trash and squalid conditions as city officials call for blue sky 'ideas' to fix it open air drug market problem



The footage shows two homeless men - one shirtless - on the ground fighting as a third man is seen whacking the shirtless addict with a broom as the bystanders stand around watching the fracas unfazed by the chaotic event



London Breed, mayor of San Francisco, in an interview with a reporter at her office in City Hall on Thursday, Feb. 24, 2022 in San Francisco, CA. Mayor Breed is the 45th mayor of the City and County of San Francisco

Allen also called out former District Supervisor Matt Haney, 'I've written to your office and you failed to take action' he wrote. 'Why??? 'Is it [not] worth your time?'

San Francisco officials on Tuesday unveiled what they said was a deliberately 'soft touch' scheme to deal with the city's relentless drug crisis - insisting that under their plan 'nobody's going to jail,' but remaining vague on how to end the problem.

With nearly 1,700 fatal overdoses since the start of 2020, San Francisco's drug crisis has resulted in almost double the death toll of the [COVID-19](#) pandemic.

In June, the city's mayor, [London Breed](#), announced that their notorious taxpayer-funded open-air drugs market will close at the end of the year.

Tuesday's plan, named 'San Francisco Recovers,' appeared to be a return to the open-air market system, however.

Their plan promoted 'supervised consumption sites where drug users can safely use substances under medical supervision to prevent accidental overdose deaths.'

They featured a range of other requests for handling the crisis, but instead of mapping a way to achieve them instead requested the 21 city departments and six city commissions come up with ideas for them within 90 days.

Matt Dorsey, a supervisor, said that the goals were deliberately 'soft touch.'



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A homeless man injects fentanyl into his friend's armpit, due to a lack of usable veins, as people walk by near San Francisco's City Hall on Saturday



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A homeless man injects fentanyl into his arm in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco



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Business owners in San Francisco's Castro District are calling on city leaders to provide more beds for the unhoused community, and are threatening civil disobedience, including withholding taxes, if the city doesn't address the growing issues in front of their storefronts

They include electronically-tagging users and having police officers track them down and confiscate their drugs if they wander into known drug-dealing areas.

San Francisco's supervisors want job placement and training instead of imprisonment for those who agree to stop drug dealing, and 'right to recovery' zones near treatment centers, with zero tolerance for possession or dealing.

In addition, they called for supervised drug consumption sites.

'This is a way that nobody's going to jail but we're doing an effective job of interrupting the drug market and drug scenes,' Dorsey said, according to [The San Francisco Standard](#).

Tenderloin Supervisor Dean Preston has called for a hearing to address drug overdose deaths to be held on September 29.

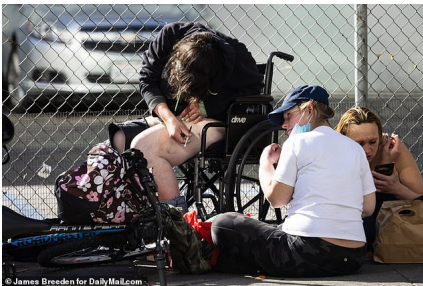
'We are determined to make sure health experts, not politicians, lead the creation and implementation of a long overdue overdose prevention plan,' Preston said.

Their outline came three months after the current scheme, known as the Linkage Center, was denied further funding.



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A homeless drug addict shows bruises and scars on his swollen legs from drug use in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco



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San Francisco has become a drug-abusing Wild West with syringes littering pavements and drug dealers, selling heroin or the deadly opioid fentanyl, easily recognizable dressed in black with matching backpacks. Above: a person in a wheelchair shoots up, just outside the Linkage Center on January 22



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A homeless drug addict is passed out on the street as people walk by near City Hall in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco



A homeless drug addict is passed out on the street in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco, California



Homeless drug addicts lay out used clothes for sale to try to make money in front of closed businesses in the Tenderloin District on Friday

It emerged in June that the facility said to have cost \$19m in taxpayer cash, treated just one in every 1,000 users and failed to cut fatal overdose numbers.

The Linkage Center in the Tenderloin, at the heart of San Francisco's civic center, opened in January and was intended to help the city's large population of homeless people and drug addicts to find help.

But critics say the site, rented at a cost of \$75,000 a month, has failed to curtail the problem in the crime-ridden city, which recently recalled its woke DA Chesa Boudin amid a spike in crimes blamed for a sharp decline in locals' quality of life.

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They note that only 0.1 percent of those using the site were directed to treatment in the first five months, despite the estimated \$19 million spent in running costs.

Between January and April, just 18 of the 23,367 drug users who visited the site were referred for treatment.

Furthermore, the rate of fatal overdoses has not declined in a meaningful way: in January the office of the chief medical examiner reported 49 deaths, and last month there were 45.

And the center even went on to quietly drop the word 'linkage' from its title, because so few of the drug abusers who visited were being linked to any meaningful form of help

[Lunatic progressives who turned San Fran into a fentanyl-ravaged hellhole are now begging for ideas to save the city. But there's a ludicrous catch, reveals DAVID MARCUS - you can't arrest anyone!](#)

MARCUS: San Francisco is sunk in a rancid drug-ravaged pit of human misery and city leaders have no idea how to pull themselves out of it. Here's an idea - quit digging. Mayor London Breed says she's now ready to get serious about the problem, by putting an end to open-air drug markets, where users and dealers go about their crimes in full view of the public without any fear of law enforcement. So, what's the plan to clean-up the city? They don't really have one. City supervisors released a resolution for a vague 'soft-touch' initiative called 'San Francisco Recovers' that's up for a vote on Tuesday. And here's the catch, and it's a doozy: the plan is being touted as, 'a way that nobody's going to jail but we're doing an effective job of interrupting the drug market and drug scenes.' Is this a sick joke?

How San Francisco Makes It Insanely Hard to Build Housing

Written by Sarah Wright

-

[Capital Public Radio: LGBTQ seniors can struggle to find affordable housing. A Sacramento development is trying to help.](#)

By Felicia Alvarez [9-20-22] // "I kind of don't have a life right now," Francesca Dixon said earlier this year. "My world is a 10-foot-by-11-foot room. It would be nice to have my own place."

[Bakersfield.com: City of Bakersfield on a mission to develop more affordable housing](#)

By Steven Mayer [9-19-22] // By the end of a City Council Budget and Finance Committee meeting on Monday, it appeared that Bakersfield could add more than 500 housing units if a trust fund designed to spark new construction works as planned.

[The San Francisco Standard: How San Francisco Makes It Insanely Hard to Build Housing](#)

By Sarah Wright [9-13-22] // Bob Tillman owned a laundromat in San Francisco's Mission District and wanted to replace it with apartments. In a city desperate for new housing, it seemed logical enough. But eight years later...

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

[NCSHA: Report: Filling Funding Gaps — How State Agencies Are Moving to Meet a Growing Threat to Affordable Housing](#)

[9-20-22] // Key themes of this new report: "State agencies' strategies for helping developers close unexpected funding gaps include reducing costs through administrative flexibility, allocating future-year LIHTCs, increasing financing from tax-exempt bonds, using Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (recovery funds), and working with developers to identify project cost savings."

PODCASTS / MULTIMEDIA

[National Housing Conference Webinar: The State of Native Housing: Programs, Policy, and Practices on Tribal Lands](#)

Thursday, Sept. 29, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PDT.

[Fifth & Mission Podcast: Who owns all the housing in the Bay Area?](#)

[9-20-22] // Property ownership and management in the Bay Area have become more corporatized, making it difficult for some tenants to figure out [who exactly is their landlord](#). (30 min.)

LAND USE / PLANNING / REGULATION

[Sacramento Business Journal: Placer County rescinds approvals for Martis Valley West project near Lake Tahoe](#)

By Ben van der Meer [9-19-22] // The future of a plan to develop part of the Martis Valley north of Lake Tahoe is unclear, after a court ruling compelled Placer County supervisors to rescind approvals for the Martis Valley West project on Sept. 13.

[Governing: Berkeley to Vote on \\$650M Housing, Infrastructure, Climate Bond](#)

By Katie Lauer [9-19-22] // The most expensive item on the November ballot will be a general obligation bond measure that could end up being the largest revenue stream in the city's history, increasing property taxes by \$40.91 per every \$100,000 in value.

HOUSING MARKETS / REAL ESTATE

[S.F. Chronicle: One company operates thousands of San Francisco apartments. But who's the landlord?](#)

By L. Hepler, E. Stiefel, & S. Neilson [9-20-22] // In the years since Veritas super-sized its operation, tenants have [repeatedly accused](#) the company and its affiliates of maltreatment, [sparking protests](#) and [in some instances lawsuits](#). The company denies all wrongdoing, and has argued for the lawsuits to be dismissed.

[S.F. Chronicle: These are the secret power players shaping the Bay Area housing market](#)

By S. Neilson, E. Stiefel, J.K. Dineen, & L. Hepler [9-20-22] // California doesn't have hard-and-fast rules on how property owners identify themselves; large corporations, hedge funds and even wealthy families often purchase multiple homes through shell companies or trusts, shielding their names from ownership records. ... We believe this is an unprecedented effort to uncover rental ownership and management networks across all nine counties in the San Francisco Bay region.

[S.F. Chronicle: This map reveals who owns every property in the S.F. Bay Area](#)

By Emma Stiefel and Susie Neilson [9-20-22] // This tool will help you investigate your landlord or anyone else's.

[L.A. Times: The Southern California median home price remained unchanged in August from the previous month as rising mortgage rates made houses even less affordable for many people.](#)

By Andrew Khouri [9-20-22] // Sales of new and existing houses, condos and townhomes dropped 28.3% from a year earlier, while the median cost held steady for the fourth month in a row at \$740,000. Mortgage rates have more than doubled in the last year.

[Reuters: U.S. homebuilding buoyed by multi-family projects; falling permits signal weakness](#)

By Lucia Mutukani [9-20-22] // The report from the Commerce Department on Tuesday showed permits for future homebuilding plunged to levels last seen during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020.

[Business Journals: Housing inventory may not rebound for some time, despite slowing market](#)

By Ashley Fahey [9-19-22] // "I think there are a significant number of homeowners who are locked into very, very low mortgage rates, and we've seen people who are staying put, living in their homes longer, renovating instead of moving," said economist Lisa Sturtevant. See also housing starts in [August's U.S. New Residential Construction Report](#), released today.

HOMELESSNESS

[S.F. Chronicle: S.F. had bold plan to cut chronic homelessness in half in 5 years. The numbers only got worse](#)

By Malory Moench & Kevin Fagan [9-20-22] // "Housing will fix homelessness, not more plans," said Paul Boden, director of the anti-poverty nonprofit Western Regional Advocacy Project.

[Santa Cruz Sentinel: Second wave of Santa Cruz homeless camp closure enforced](#)

By Jessica A. York [9-19-22] // Of the 54 individuals counted last week in "Zone 2," the section being closed yesterday, only 15 accepted offers to move to the city's Overlook tent encampment on leased land at the National Guard Armory in DeLaveaga Park.

[Oakland Auditor: Performance Audit of the City of Oakland's Homelessness Services: Better strategy and data are needed for more effective and accountable service delivery and positive outcomes for Oakland's homeless residents](#)

By Courtney Ruby [9-19-22] // The report reveals the City's had mixed results in placing the homeless into permanent housing and better information is needed to determine whether they remain housed...

[Mercury News: New audit finds critical flaws in Oakland's management of homeless housing](#)

By Marisa Kendall [9-20-22] // Oakland failed to track basic outcome data, according to report.

[San Jose Spotlight: San Jose homeless sweep creates new dangers](#)

By Tran Nguyen [9-20-22] // More than 60 RVs and cars have squeezed into the empty baseball field at the corner of Asbury and Irene streets after the city began clearing the sprawling encampment near the Mineta San Jose International Airport a few weeks ago.

[L.A. Times: Column: At tiny-home villages in Eagle Rock and Highland Park, the report card is mixed](#)

By Steve Lopez [9-17-22] // Providing housing isn't enough for many people who have been surviving without permanent—or any—shelter. They need mental health treatment, drug abuse treatment, and other services.

ECONOMY / EMPLOYMENT

[Washington Post: Worker shortages are fueling America's biggest labor crises](#)

By Abha Bhattarai [9-16-22] // Exhausted workers in education, healthcare and the railroad industry are pushing back after months of staffing shortfalls.

[Next City: The Devaluation of Entire Black Neighborhoods, Not Just Homes](#)

By Oscar Perry Abello [9-20-22] // Black retail spaces across the country are worth an aggregated \$171 billion less than they should be worth, simply because they are located in majority-Black neighborhoods, says a new report. What does that actually mean?

[Axios: Study: Medical debt threatens people's health, housing](#)

By Sabrina Moreno [9-10-22] // Soaring [medical debt](#) is setting U.S. adults up for higher risks of eviction, food insecurity and bad health outcomes regardless of insurance or income, [a new study found](#).

TRANSPORTATION / TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

[Washington Center for Equitable Growth: New research shows that 1 in 4 adults in the United States suffers from transportation insecurity](#)

By Alix Gould-Werth [9-14-22] // Modeled after the [Food Security Index](#), the Transportation Security Index identifies those experiencing transportation insecurity by looking at their symptoms, such as feeling stuck at home because of a lack of access to transportation or arriving early or late somewhere due to transportation scheduling issues.

[CityLab: Traffic Deaths in the US Decline for the First Time Since 2020](#)

By Keith Liang [9-19-22] // "Although it is heartening to see a projected decline in roadway deaths in recent months, the number of people dying on roads in this country remains a crisis," Ann Carlson, NHTSA's acting administrator, said in a statement.

REDEVELOPMENT / INFILL / PRESERVATION

[S.F. Chronicle: S.F. just rejected another plan to turn an empty parking lot into apartments](#)

By J.K. Dineen [9-16-22] // On Thursday, a short-handed Planning Commission rejected the project at 1010 Mission St. after an 11th-hour blitz from a half dozen South of Market nonprofit workers, who argued that the mostly market-rate housing — eight of the 57 condos would be below market rate — would be unaffordable and too small to accommodate local families.

[Los Angeles Daily News: 50-unit affordable housing units will rise up on South LA church's parking lot](#)

By Chris Haire [9-20-22] // Officials broke ground on the project, called Serenity, on Monday morning, Sept. 19.

NATIONAL HOUSING NEWS

[Politico: Success eludes New York's plan to convert hotels into affordable housing](#)

By Janaki Chadha [9-19-22] // After a year and \$200 million committed, New York hasn't created a single apartment, thanks in part to piecemeal policy and a powerful union.

FAIR HOUSING / EVICTION

[Shelterforce: How Tax Assessments in a Supposedly Progressive County Are Reinforcing Racism](#)

By Amanda Abrams [9-16-22] // Buncombe County in North Carolina was one of the first places in the U.S. to support reparations for Black residents. So why is the county not doing a better job of addressing property tax inequities that directly impact residents of color?

[Shelterforce: Press 'Record' to Catch Fair Housing Violators—if You Can](#)

By Fred Freiberg [9-6-22] // Fair housing testers often go undercover to expose discriminatory housing practices, but laws prohibiting recording conversations hamper investigations

ENVIRONMENT / CLIMATE CHANGE / NATURAL DISASTERS

[New York Times: A Key to Controlling Emissions: More Buildings in a City's Unused Spaces](#)

By Peter Wilson [9-19-22] // Constructing more condensed communities in existing neighborhoods has been found to go a long way toward fighting climate change.

The TransAmerica Pyramid peeks out behind wooden walls as workers continue construction on two affordable housing developments. | Jessica Christian/SF Chronicle via Getty Images

Bob Tillman owned a laundromat in San Francisco's Mission District and wanted to replace it with apartments. In a city desperate for new housing, it seemed logical enough.

But eight years later and after countless community meetings, hearings, appeals, studies, a legal challenge and a court settlement—the site of the former laundromat at 2918 Mission St. still sits empty.

Tillman, who owned 10 laundromat businesses in the Bay Area, made out just fine: He bought the laundromat property in 2005 and 2006 for a total of \$1.75 million, and after finally obtaining initial permits, he sold it in 2019 for \$13.5 million to Lawrence Lui of Cresleigh Homes.

But his story, and the continued absence of housing at the site, reveals the massive hurdles developers face in the city and helps to explain why new housing permits this year cratered to about [half of the 10-year average](#).



Bob Tillman stands outside the site of the former laundromat he owned at 2918 Mission St. in San Francisco on Monday, Sept. 12, 2022. | Paul Kuroda for The Standard

San Francisco is on pace to build an anemic 3,000 new units this year, and the lull in construction couldn't come at a worse time. State law demands the city have a plan to build 82,000 new units over the next decade, and state officials led by Attorney General Rob Bonta are now investigating the city's land-use practices and holding up the city as a poster child for housing dysfunction.

Indeed, the city represents an extreme version of a national housing crisis that is especially severe in big coastal cities. Costs are spinning out of control as builders face soaring pricing for materials and labor and a gauntlet of not-in-my-backyard activism, bureaucracy and cutthroat politics.

"It's basically mafia government," Tillman said. "People doing shakedowns of various sorts."

"Nineteen times out of 20, they get away with it," Tillman added. "And the 20th example, which is me, they cut a deal quietly, sweep it under the rug, and keep on doing what they're doing."

Higher Costs, Lower Rents

From the beginning, Tillman realized he would have trouble financing a big housing project. When he first applied for permits in 2014, the estimated average cost of \$700,000 for each of the 75 planned units seemed exorbitant. Today, the per-door cost of housing, a common metric for developers, is closer to \$1 million in the city.

Even in the best of times, San Francisco is an extremely expensive place to build. Space is limited, the land itself is expensive, and the city's high cost of living means higher cost labor, too.

Type of Project Cost by Percent Share

Construction comprises the largest share of project costs in an average multi-floor apartment complex in SF.

CHART: LIZ LINDQVIST • SOURCE: ESTIMATES PROVIDED BY DEVELOPER SOURCE



That makes San Francisco's average building cost—at about \$440 per square foot—the highest in the world, according to [data research group CBRE](#). A combination of rising materials costs, a labor shortage and supply chain disruptions are pushing costs even higher: In the Bay Area, construction bids have [surged 17% over the past year](#), according to consulting group TBD Consultants.

Costs are rising in tandem with an unusual market pullback in the city, with rents still below pre-pandemic levels, [home prices receding](#) and low demand for office space.

"It's really hard to make a project work in San Francisco right now," said Brynn McKiernan, an associate at Emerald Fund, a local developer. "The type 1 construction, the towers, just aren't financially feasible."

But market conditions aren't what's driving many developers away. Instead, it's the city's political climate, which poses a host of challenges that don't exist in friendlier pastures like Oakland and San Jose.



Developer Eric Tao shows a corner condo construction taking place on the sixth floor of 950 Market St., a hotel/condo development, seen on Friday, March 13, 2020, in San Francisco, Calif. | Liz Hafalia/The San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images

Three trends, in fact, worry local builders the most: The city's multitude of fees that layer dollar after dollar onto every new project, its costly labor mandates—both tacit and explicit—and its tortuously slow permitting process. The caper is that even if the years-long permitting process goes well, there is the threat of arbitrary project denial at the [Board of Supervisors](#).

Death by a Thousand Fees

The city's ["inclusionary housing" fee](#) is where Tillman began his long odyssey to try and get permission to build. Unlike many other cities, where new development is allowed without a special process if a project fits zoning and other rules, San Francisco gives much greater power to commissions and politicians to decide on individual projects.

When he began the process in 2013, Tillman sought to build as many housing units on the site as he could, 14.5% of which were required to be below market-rate under the city's so-called inclusionary housing rules. But after doing some legal research, Tillman discovered a loophole: If he used the state's "density bonus" law, he could increase his planned 55 units to 75 without adding additional below market-rate units.

And if his project was fully up to code but still denied—which would likely be illegal under another state law that bars arbitrary housing denials—he could sue all the way to a state judge and set a precedent.

Adopted in 2002 and twice amended since then, the city's inclusionary housing fee now requires developments larger than 10 units to include anywhere from 20% to 33% below market-rate units or pay a hefty fee equivalent to about \$230 per square foot of the building's residential area.

Affordable housing activists say the fee is a lynchpin of efforts to prevent displacement and assure that the city remains a place for everyone. Bad-mouthing by developers, they say, is just that, and affordability requirements remain a point of heated debate.

Jeremy Lu, a development manager at Cresleigh, described the fees as an example of good intentions with unintended consequences. The current inclusionary housing framework can kill projects, he said, because requiring a high percentage of low-rent units can outstrip any profitability.

"If I were a policymaker, it's like saying 'I only get 4 out of 5 votes sent in the mail,'" Lu said. "At some point, it just doesn't make sense."

The inclusionary housing fee is the 800-pound gorilla of San Francisco development fees, but is one of dozens of fees currently on the books. The city charges a [boatload of neighborhood-specific impact fees](#), imposed in areas like [Balboa Park and the Mission District](#), purportedly to help to offset the strain of new developments on existing neighborhoods.

SF Annual Impact Fees for 2022

The city's Development Impact Fees are adjusted annually, effective on January 1st of each year.

GIS INDICATES "GROSS SQUARE FEET" OF PROPERTY.
TABLE L12 LINDOWSTER • SOURCE: SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT



Other fees are imposed citywide, like the \$600 the city charges per bicycle parking space eliminated for new housing and the \$2,302 per tree that cannot be planted. When piled onto a project, the [city's fees](#) can amount to as much as a quarter of a project's total "soft costs"—a term for the costs of architects, consulting, insurance, permit fees and other non-construction costs.

The Controller's Office raises development impact fees every year alongside inflation. And 10 new fees have been added since 2014.

Other rules, like the city's definition of a "high rise" and its building code requirements have evolved over the years to the point where Tillman says his project, if proposed today and therefore beholden to higher fees, would no longer be feasible.

"If someone ... just gave me that lot [today], I don't know that I could afford to build and design a project that would be economically viable," Tillman said. "The city has done everything possible to increase the costs."

Unfriendly Neighbors

Tillman's development plan met stiff resistance from the Mission District group Calle 24, which set in motion multiple appeals that wound up stalling the project for years.

Calle 24 wanted the site to be converted to 100% affordable housing and objected that the laundromat had been a site of activism in the 1970s, sending it to the Historic Preservation Commission for a study. Four months and \$23,000 later, that commission did not find that the site had historic value.

Tensions boiled over at a January 2016 community meeting, when an irascible crowd hurled insults and homophobic remarks over concerns that the housing would displace existing residents. One attendee [reportedly told Tillman](#) that he wished his daughter, who lived in Boston, had been blown up in the recent marathon bombing.

At this point, Tillman says he saw the writing on the wall: There was little chance he'd get his project approved over neighborhood opposition. So he set out to get the project denied at the Board of Supervisors so he could settle out his building rights in court, allowing him to sell the site with entitlements, at a tidy profit, in a neighborhood where few new properties were getting the go-ahead to build new units.

Tillman's housing plan—a 75-unit, eight-story housing project with 14.5% below market-rate units—eventually obtained a [conditional use permit](#) from the [Planning Commission](#) in 2017, three years after it was introduced.

That timeline is far from unusual in San Francisco, where it takes more than two years on average to permit housing projects—an unusually slow pace compared to peer cities, according to a [draft study](#) published last year.

CA Housing Development Average Permitting Timeline

San Francisco reports the highest average number of days to submit, entitle and then permit a housing project in California.

AVERAGES MEASURED FROM JULY 2020 TO DECEMBER 2021.
CHART: LIZ LINDOWSTER • SOURCE: CA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



The longer a project languishes in the city's byzantine permitting process, the more expensive it gets for the eventual builder. Joe Ollá, vice president of business development and marketing at Nibbi Brothers General Contractors, estimated that for every six months of permitting purgatory, overall costs tick up by around 3 to 4%.

"If it gets delayed two years, that can destroy a job," Ollá said. "It's just this kind of never-ending battle to try to catch up to the dollars."

Knowing he was likely headed to court, Tillman refused to jump through the hoops normally required for getting a housing project off the ground in San Francisco. He didn't cater his plans to the neighborhood and political groups and didn't sign a voluntary agreement promising to use union labor.

That's one of the unwritten rules for local builders, and it's a double-edged sword: Those labor agreements tend to yield higher quality work, say builders, but also ratchet up costs.

Perhaps most importantly, not signing a labor agreement can make your project a political non-starter.

By the time he got that far, Tillman knew he was selling and didn't want to tie a buyer up in a labor agreement. It wouldn't have done any good anyway; The so-called "historic laundromat" had become a cause célèbre on both sides of the city's housing debate, with Mission District activists saying it would further gentrify the neighborhood and pro-housing groups countering that building housing at an old laundromat couldn't possibly displace anybody.

"I was going to get opposed by Mission activists whether I had the unions or not," Tillman said.

Sure enough, Calle 24 appealed Tillman's conditional use permit, sending the matter to the Board of Supervisors.

Chilling Effect

San Francisco's system of housing review, which gives both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors discretion over housing approvals, is ripe for abuse.

In San Francisco, anyone—even non-residents—can ask the commission to take a second look at a development. It takes just a few hundred dollars and a claim of historical significance or environmental impact to stall a project.

There are opportunities for public input and appeals at almost every stage of the process. Within two weeks of filing a pre-application for permits, applicants on bigger housing projects must notify everyone who owns property within 300 feet of the project of their initial plans and then hold a community meeting. Some buildings, like Tillman's, require additional notifications before a hearing and can be subject to "postponement" to give the opposition time to organize.

Even once permits are approved, project opponents then have 30 days to appeal the permit to the Board of Supervisors. And that's all just for the entitlement process—opponents have additional opportunities during the building permit phase to send projects to the city's Board of Appeals.

An archival photo of the former laundromat at 2318 Mission St. in January 2016 (top) and a drone photo of the same lot (bottom) which remains empty on Monday, September 12, 2022. A housing development at the site has been delayed. | Michael Macor/The San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images; Paul Kurda for The Standard

The most common weapon of choice for anyone trying to stop a project is the [California Environmental Quality Act \(CEQA\)](#), a state law that requires most housing projects to undergo an environmental review. "Environmental impacts" can be interpreted broadly, and the Board of Supervisors [has been accused of using CEQA as cover to tank projects for political reasons](#). That was the case in the much-publicized delay of 469 Stevenson, a proposed 500-unit development on a downtown parking lot, which led to a state investigation of SF's housing policies.

"That just has a chilling effect," said Jonathan Fearn, a builder with Greystar who sits on the Oakland Planning Commission, of the denial of projects like 469 Stevenson. "Why would I move forward?"

Likewise, the board cited CEQA in denying Tillman's project in 2018, saying it could cast shadows over a nearby playground. Tillman sued, spurring the [planning department](#) to launch an independent "shadow study" and ultimately re-approve his project. That was five years after he first proposed it.

"If you're on the political playing field, they can do anything to you," Tillman said. "But once they turn you down...then you can go into the courts and that's a different playing field. They don't have control over it."



A drone photo of the lot at 2918 Mission St., formerly the site of a laundromat (left) and the former owner of the property Bob Tillman (right) outside the location on Monday September 12, 2022. | Paul Kuroda for The Standard

Greystar, which manages more than two dozen apartment buildings in San Francisco, cleared planning hurdles on its last construction project in the city in 2014 and hasn't done one since, said Feam.

The pullback wasn't calculated, but the South Bay, with its ample tech jobs to support rents—and more importantly, its simplified approach to approving housing compared to San Francisco—has proved a much more reliable market.

Cresleigh Homes, which purchased the 2918 Mission St. site from Tillman in 2019, demolished the old laundromat but still hasn't secured final approval from the city's building department to build beyond a foundation. Lui said it's no surprise that builders decide that San Francisco is not worth the hassle.

"There's a whole ecosystem of would-be builders that go elsewhere," said Lui.

'We Go to Oakland'

Pro-housing groups say the city's "solutions" to the housing crisis are only making matters worse.

Local politicians are [launching a yearlong process](#) to redesign an existing state law to avoid relinquishing their role in project approvals. The Board of Supervisors approved a ["streamlining" ballot measure](#) with affordability and labor requirements so strict it's unlikely to be utilized by developers at all.

Efforts at the state level to tear down barriers to housing may force San Francisco to change its ways, or set the stage for a legal showdown with local policymakers unwilling to cede local control of housing.

But for many of the city's top builders, it's too little, too late. They're already spooked by projects like Tillman's and 469 Stevenson that leave hundreds of units dead in the water for reasons they call arbitrary.

When asked what keeps builders in the city, McKiernan had a simple answer: "We go to Oakland."