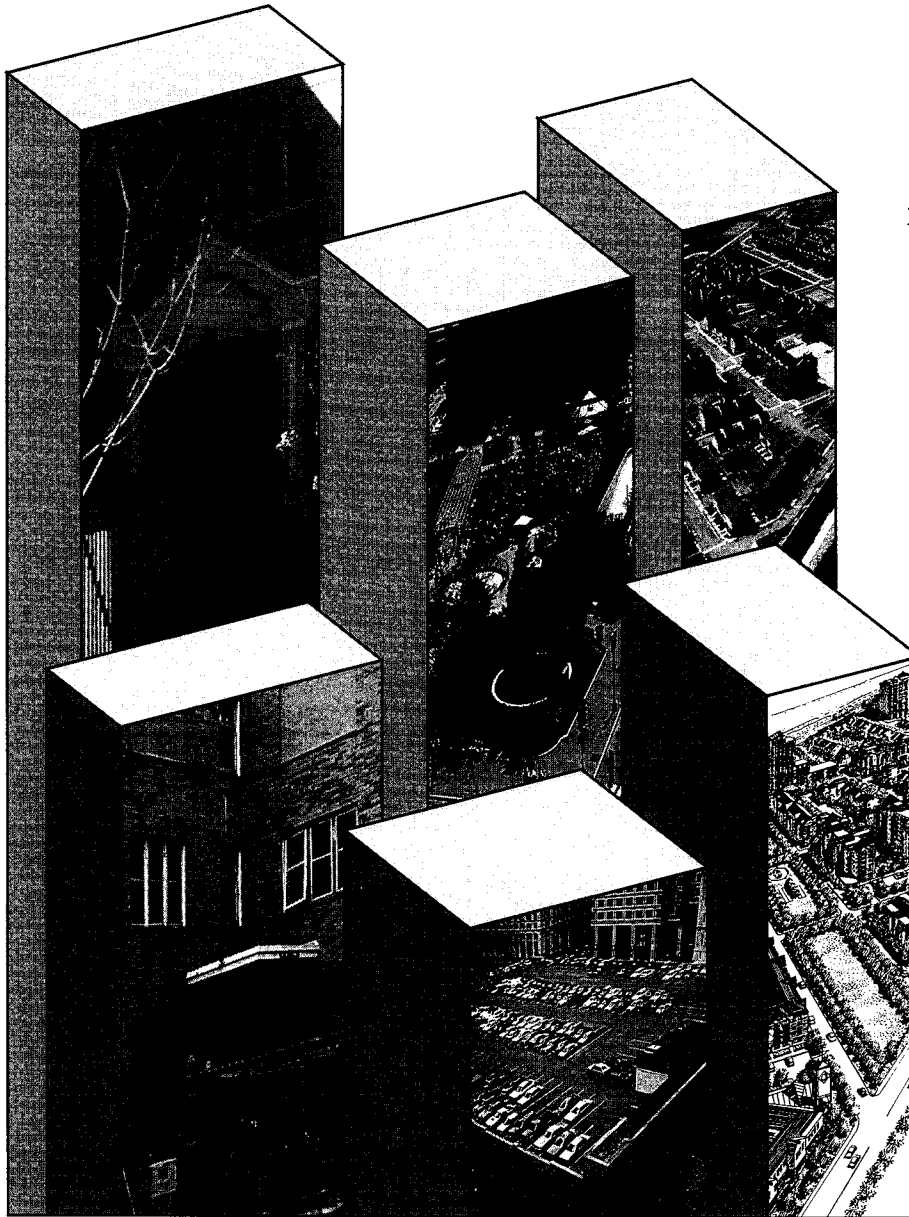


This is an excerpt from:

1993
Rudy Bruner Award
for Excellence in the Urban Environment

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES: RE-CREATING URBAN EXCELLENCE

Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener



Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 93-074827

ISBN: 0-9633713-1-2

© 1993 by the Bruner Foundation

560 Broadway

New York, NY 10012

(212) 334-9844

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.



BEYOND HOMELESSNESS San Francisco, California

SUMMARY OF SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Initial Reasons For Including Beyond Homelessness as a Finalist

- Homelessness is a focal issue for cities. As affordable housing stocks have shrunk, the economy worsened, and mental health services been reduced, homelessness has gotten increasingly worse.
- The Beyond Homelessness project appears to offer a comprehensive approach to dealing with homelessness. It starts with outreach and then provides drop-in shelters, transitional and permanent housing opportunities.
- The projects provide services for the homeless, not just shelter.
- Several projects appear to be very well designed.

Selection Committee Concerns and Questions

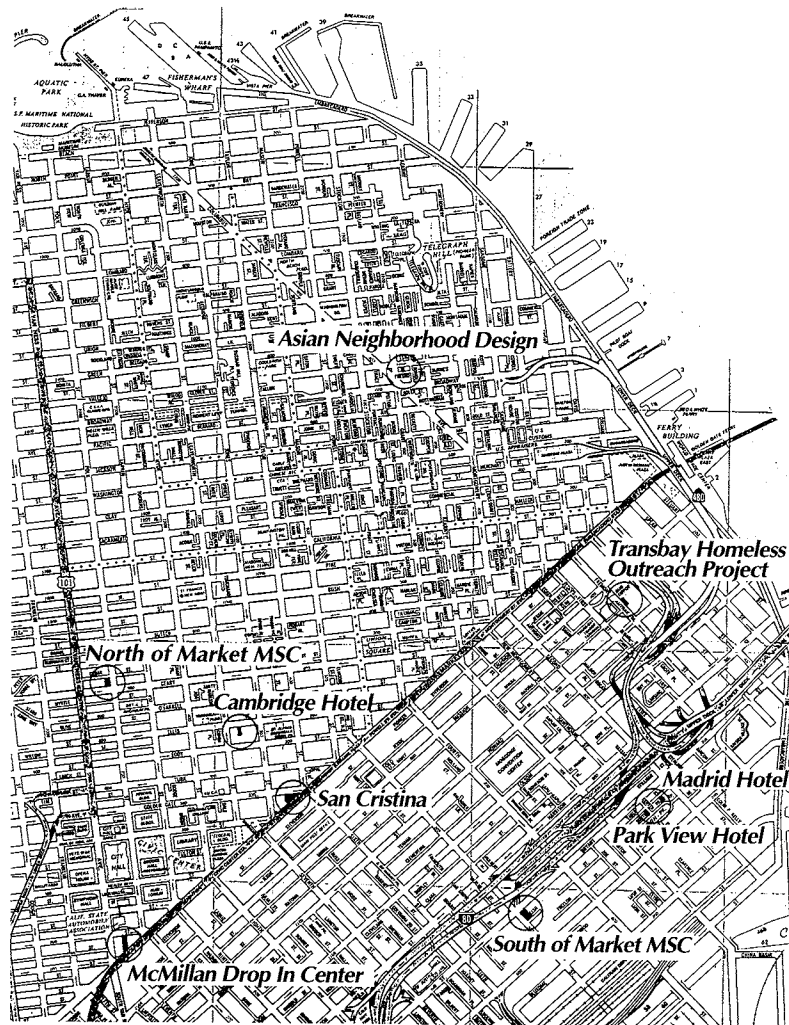
- Is there a system in place for dealing with homelessness? Does the system work; that is, do participants move on to participate in programs, get jobs and live in more stable housing?
- How is the project perceived? By residents (e.g., do they feel safe; do they feel it is "theirs"?) What about by other homeless people on the street? By neighbors (residents and businesses)? By policy makers?

- Who was involved in the planning and design process (homeless persons, residents, service providers, policy boards)?
- What is the status of employment programs? Since they are so important to breaking the cycle of homelessness, are they in place yet? What do or will they consist of?
- Several historic buildings have been renovated for specific projects. Why is there a focus on reuse of historical buildings? Why were they selected (intention, circumstance, or cost)? Some have been adaptively reused (why, versus new construction)? Were buildings listed as landmarks on local, state or national registers?
- Who provides services at the projects? Are they offered by the project sponsors or contracted out?
- What is the source of referrals for residents (walk in; agencies)? Are there qualifications or requirements, expectations, or behavioral contracts with clients?

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

What It Is

- A set of projects that deal with many aspects of homelessness and the transition to affordable housing.



Who Made Submission

- Asian Neighborhood Design (A.N.D.) — a community design center and community development corporation which served as the architect (not developer) on these projects.

Major Goals

- To provide a comprehensive system of shelter, food, services and housing for homeless people.
- To provide opportunities for those homeless who wish to progress through stages of assistance (from drop-in, to shelter, to structured programs) to achieve stability and structure in their lives, culminating in jobs and permanent housing.
- To reduce the numbers of homeless persons dying on the streets (this goal applies especially to the outreach, drop-in and multi-service centers).

Accomplishments

The following projects have been completed and are operational (projects are in San Francisco unless noted):

- Transbay Homeless Outreach Project. A storefront at the bus terminal which serves as a base for outreach and place for homeless people to drop in for assistance.
- McMillan Drop-in Center. A center where homeless people can drop in for temporary respite (rest, sleep, shower).
- North of Market and South of Market Multi-Service Centers. Rather large centers with a wide variety of services including drop-in day lounge, meals, showers, laundry, several types of beds (drop-in, lottery, long term, health recovery), case workers, classes, counseling, and health clinics.
- Cambridge Hotel. Transitional housing with on-site social services.
- Madrid Hotel. Permanent housing for the formerly homeless.
- Park View Hotel. Permanent housing for the formerly homeless.
- U.A. Homes (Berkeley). Permanent housing for the formerly homeless.

Two projects are under construction or planned:

- San Christina. Permanent housing for the formerly homeless. Completion expected 1993.
- Stark Hotel (Berkeley). Permanent housing for the formerly homeless. Completion date is uncertain as funding is stalled.

Issues That Could Affect Selection As Winner

- Do these projects represent a comprehensive and coordinated approach to homelessness — or are they a collection of unrelated projects?
- Are they really contributing to dealing with homelessness?
- The overall approach was started by the previous mayoral administration. Is it being continued by the current one?
- Is this submission diminished by the fact that San Francisco's homeless problem is so large and systemic that no project or set of projects could claim success in dealing with it?

PROCESS**Chronology**

- 1973. Asian Neighborhood Design formed as a community design center; 1981: became known as a community development corporation; 1984: opened their cabinet shop; 1987: began their furniture business.
- 1986. Park View and Madrid Hotels renovated as permanent low cost housing.
- 1989. Mayor Art Agnos makes homelessness a major policy emphasis. The "Beyond Shelter" plan is published and many projects (including most of those that are submitted for the RBA) are initiated.
- July 1990. Mayor Agnos orders the homeless out of their encampment at the Civic Center.
- 1991. South of Market Multi-Service Center is completed.
- 1992. North of Market Multi-Service Center, Transbay Homeless Outreach Project, and U.A. Homes are completed.
- 1993. McMillan Drop-In Center is completed. San Christina transitional housing is scheduled to be completed.

Key Participants

(people we interviewed are indicated with an asterisk*. Other people we met at the facilities are listed with the descriptions of each project.)

- Asian Neighborhood Design (A.N.D.). Maurice Lim Miller*, Executive Director; Harry Ja Wong*, Principal Architect. A.N.D. is a community design center and community development corporation, but served as the architect on these projects which were sponsored by the city and other community developers and social service agencies. In addition to the submitted projects, we visited their cabinet shop which manufactures furniture for special housing projects (e.g., shelters and SROs), and offers quality jobs and training for mostly at-risk youth (over 700 so far), as well as a ten unit residential/business "incubator" for families moving out of subsidized housing. Overall, A.N.D. has renovated more than 2,000 low income housing units and 400 community service centers.
- Mayor's Office of Community Development. Jon Pon*, Program Manager.
- S.F. Homeless Task Force. Bryan Boyd*, Director; Harry "Hooks" Swets*, staff. Homeless advocacy and service provider led by formerly and currently homeless persons.
- Chemical Awareness and Treatment Services (CATS). Cynthia Belon*, Executive Director. Client for and operator of McMillan Drop-in Center. Barry Malton*, director of the drop-in center. Jerry McIver*, director of the Mobil Assistance Patrol.
- Chinese Community Housing Corporation. Gordon Chin, Executive Director; Susan Wong*, Project Manager. Client for and operator of Cambridge Hotel.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background: Homelessness in San Francisco

San Francisco has experienced many of the factors which have contributed to homelessness in other cities: shrinking stock of low cost housing (partially a result of city-sponsored redevelopment south of Market Street and on the other edges of the financial district and the conversion of residential hotels and SROs to tourist hotels and other uses), shrinking resources for mental health and drug and alcohol abuse services, and growing unemployment. In addition, with its benign climate and generally free and easy lifestyle, San Francisco is a magnet for homeless people in northern California and from other states. While such estimates are notoriously unreliable, 6,000 homeless people were counted in San Francisco in the 1990 census. It has been suggested that as many as 12,000 may be homeless at any given time with up to 24,000 per year experiencing homelessness at some time. As a result, there are many people hanging out and sleeping on the streets in and around the downtown area.

The Politics of Homelessness

San Francisco's commitment to addressing the homeless issue was galvanized around publicity concerning the number of deaths of homeless people:

"S.F. Homeless Deaths Put at 138" - San Francisco Chronicle (for 1992). In 1990, there were 113

deaths and in 1991, there were 109.

This level of death was politically unacceptable and, combined with other social and humanitarian concerns, helped create the political will to develop a more comprehensive approach. The former mayor, Art Agnos, was highly committed to dealing with the homeless problem and made it a priority of his administration. They developed the "Beyond Shelter" program described in the next section. Agnos' actions are in contrast with the previous mayor, whose policies were reported to have been in conflict with community housing organization interests and may have contributed to the loss of affordable housing.

Certainly, some of the politics around developing shelters and housing have to do with getting the homeless off the streets and out of the faces of tourists, shoppers, and office workers. The homeless had been encamped on the plaza at Civic Center (in effect, right under the mayor's nose) for about two years before the new shelters described below were opened — allowing the mayor to clear the area and still maintain a good conscience.

However, Agnos may have made fighting homelessness too much of a personal crusade, perhaps to the exclusion of building an adequately broad and institutionalized base of support. While the current mayor, Frank Jordan, has continued the program, it appears to lack the prior level of support or commitment.

The "Beyond Shelter" Plan and Program

This section outlines key parts of the Beyond Shelter plan (from "Beyond Shelter: A Homeless Plan for San Francisco; Implementation Plan for 1989-1990 Fiscal Year," August 1989). Each of the points below is expanded in the plan with a range of specific action items. Taken together, the plan is an integrated, comprehensive and systematic approach to dealing with homelessness. Many of its components do appear to have been implemented. Elements that relate directly to the projects in this submission are italicized and the projects mentioned in parentheses.

- Prevent additional people from becoming homeless
- assist people in maintaining current housing
- preserve existing low-cost housing.
- Create new permanent affordable housing opportunities
- Assist people to locate and maintain housing
- Acquire and rehabilitate low-cost housing (transitional and permanent housing projects).
- Stabilize income through job training and links to entitlement programs
- Assist homeless people in gaining access to entitlement programs (job finding services offered at outreach and multi-service centers)

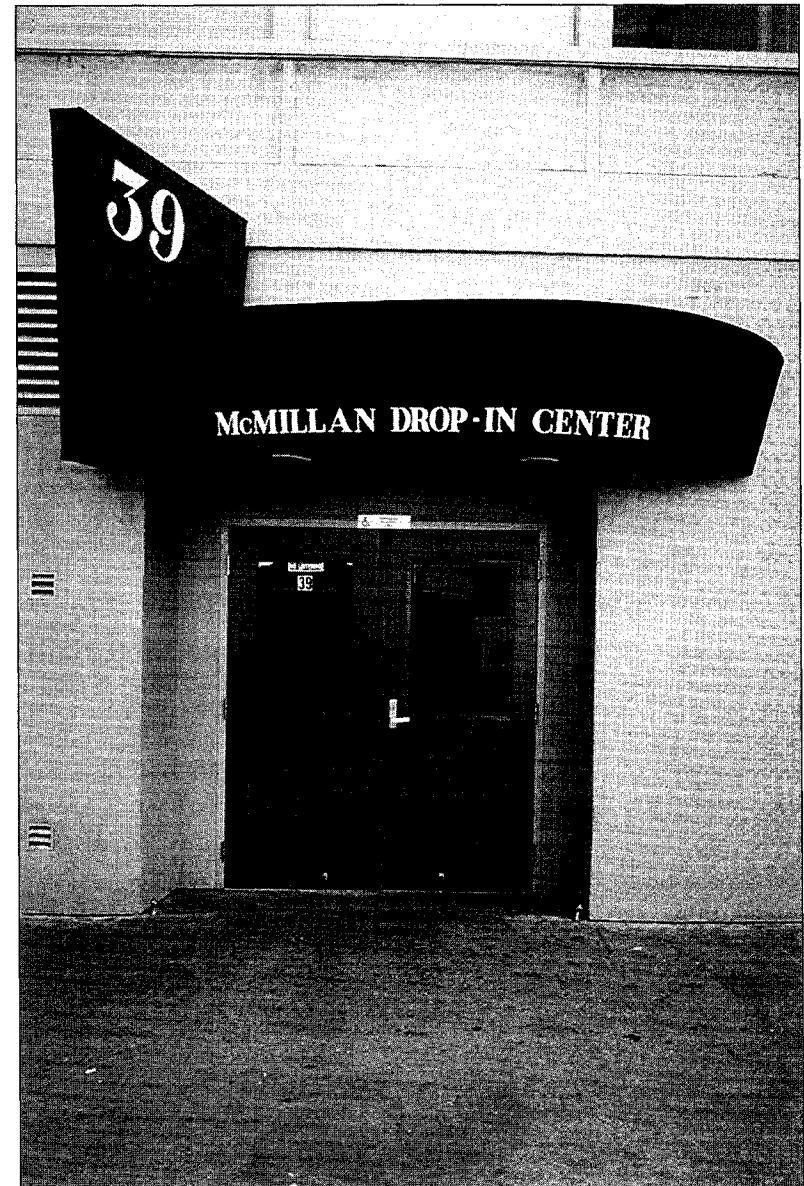
- Assist homeless people to stabilize income by securing employment (job finding services offered at multi-service centers).
- Provide health and social support services
- Provide supported residences to help people acquire the capacity to live more independently (shelters at multi-service centers and transitional housing)
- Provide a continuum of mental health and substance abuse services (services offered at drop-in and multi-service centers)
- Support health care outreach to homeless people (services offered at multi-service centers)
- Support efforts to provide childcare and education to homeless people (services offered at multi-service centers).
- Maintain an integrated temporary emergency system
- Provide emergency shelter and points of entry into the social service support system (drop-in center).

SUBMITTED PROJECTS

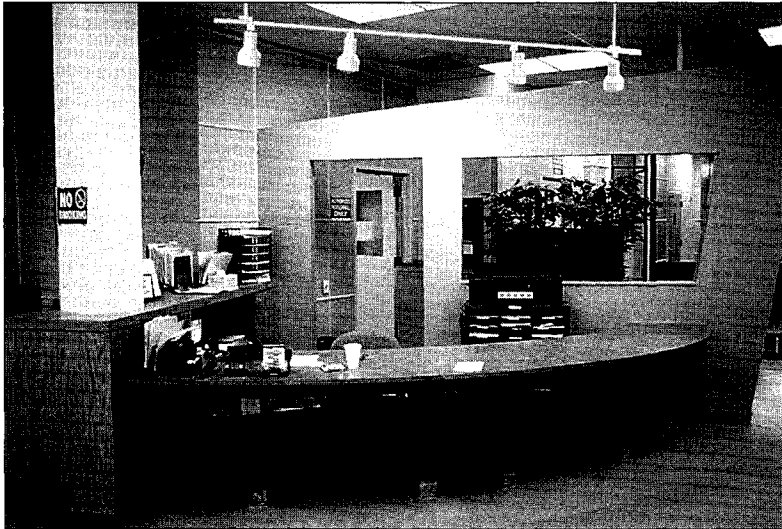
Transbay Homeless Outreach Project

We spoke with Mary Kate Conner, the project director and Buck, a formerly homeless person who is now an outreach worker. Located under an overpass at the Greyhound bus terminal where many homeless people used to hang out and sleep, this 1,100 square foot storefront serves as a base for outreach and a place for homeless people to drop in for assistance. One reason that many homeless are near here is that they are allowed access to waiting areas in the bus terminal (though they are periodically moved along). According to the project director, most of the homeless in the bus terminal are African-American men with cocaine addictions. Many are so emotionally disturbed that they cannot stand to wait in line to get into a shelter (or act too bizarrely to be admitted). The project seeks to treat them with respect and try to respond to their needs.

Services include primarily counseling, benefits assistance, and referral with an emphasis on serving the mentally disabled and those



McMillan Drop in Center ASIAN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN



McMillan Drop in Center

ASIAN NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

with dual diagnoses (mental plus substance abuse) as well as distribution of clothing and hygiene items. The project saw 2,142 clients (not an unduplicated count) in their first 12 months of operation. Facilities include a reception area, a few offices for outreach counselors, storage rooms for clothing and other items given to the homeless, and a room from which they are dispensed.

The project is funded as a three year demonstration (until September 1994) with a U.S. Department of Transportation grant related to traveler's aid services. Ms. Conner felt that A.N.D. had worked with them very thoroughly to understand and provide for their needs, especially for private counseling and storage. While the center is architecturally utilitarian, it does appear to meet its defined needs.

They reported that many homeless persons feel that the terminal is safer (in terms both of protection from bodily harm and of belongings) than the shelters which are often crowded (they specifically included the ones that are reported on here). Another factor that keeps many homeless out of the shelters is said to be the fact that some of them cannot abide the rules and requirements of the shel-

ters and prefer the freedom of the streets or the terminal. However, having to remain protective of one's belongings and being moved along periodically prevents them from getting undisturbed sleep, so that extreme tiredness is a common condition.

A success story for the outreach project was reported to be "Dorothy," 69 years old, on the streets for 20 years, diagnosed as schizophrenic with multiple personalities. She had no identification (and thus no official identity), didn't sleep, used to be found screaming and wailing, and could barely be talked to. The program worked with her gradually over two years, got her identification, social security entitlements and permanent housing. While she still refuses mental health treatment, she is more lucid, her physical health has improved, and she has her freedom.

The director had an interesting perspective on the center's level of effectiveness. While she felt that the center is providing much needed services which are somewhat effective for its clients, it has not been able to effect an overall reduction in the number of mentally ill homeless. She feels that this is because the poor economy has increased the number of clientele while the reduction in housing, substance abuse, and mental health services (she maintained that California had gone from fourth to fiftieth in spending on mental health) has greatly limited their referral options. And, as other informants told us, further cuts were expected later in the year.

McMillan Drop-in Center

We spoke with Cynthia Belon, Executive Director of CATS (Chemical Awareness and Treatment Services which also operates other services in the same building) and Barry Malton, director of the center. This center has a capacity of fifty, with 28 beds and 22 chairs. Here, homeless people who are mostly substance abusers can drop in for temporary respite, including rest or sleep and use of a shower. There are almost no screening limitations for sobriety, cleanliness, or "normal" behavior; however, it is not allowed to threaten, fight, scream or use illegal substances while in the facility. Even if they are asked to leave for these reasons, they are allowed to return, unlike some shelters which may ban clients for extended periods of time. The center is open and can be accessed 24 hours per day, so people come in at all times (this is also unlike the other centers and shelters which limit hours of access). Staff reported that they had been full for sleeping when the weather was colder, but

now were seeing fewer clients. (We, however, observed a sign saying “closed/ full” on the door during one of our visits.)

During two daytime visits, we saw a few people sleeping and observed the staff deal very effectively with a badly bruised, intoxicated woman of middle age who was initially afraid to rest in bed until paramedics came to care for her. Most users are said to be regulars and are known to the staff. Referrals are only made at the request of clients, they are not a focus of the program, which is mainly a safety net when people need to get off the street for a short period.

The center is located off of Market Street in an area frequented by homeless people. When we visited, the largest part of the center had just opened and the balance was still under construction — a month or two from completion — but far enough along for us to get a very good sense of how it would work. It was being phased intentionally, so that it could remain in operation during construction.

The center’s layout provides careful zoning of functions, with separate sleeping areas for males, females and transsexuals (responding to a need that some cities might not have). There are quiet sitting areas that allow men and women to be separate. This ability to separate by gender is a theme we observed at other centers, where the issue is the ability of a woman to feel safe from being approached or bothered by a man who may have abused or exploited her on the streets. Lighting is soft and indirect to allow for sleeping while still providing enough visibility for security. Beds were designed by A.N.D. and provide some storage and a degree of privacy. The center also provides showers which are heavily used by people who (judging from the frequency of cleaning) needed them badly.

The project was designed collaboratively with city hall, homeless groups, and substance abuse professionals. A.N.D. was felt to have worked well with this complex group and to have come up with a good and sensitive design. The design is very atypical of public or institutional facilities, featuring very strong, modern (or post-modern) colors and shapes, especially in the lounge areas (see photos). Staff and clients are mainly very positive about the design, saying that it “looks great” and meets the goal of being non-institutional. By our observation, however, detailing raises some concerns for this

clientele who may stumble or be disoriented. Some corners expose the points of very sharp metal decorative grids which could injure a client who bumped into them, and columns are shaped so that they get wider at the top, possibly intruding a bit into circulation ways.

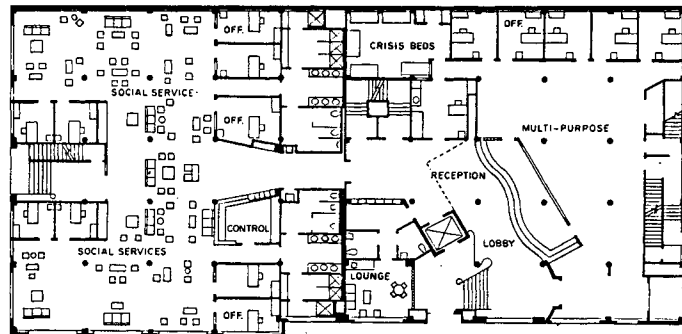
CATS leases this building and renovated the center using \$750,000 in Community Development Block Grant money from the city. Its yearly operating budget of \$400,000 pays for 2 administrative staff, plus a supervisor and 3 staff per shift. It sees about 5,000 clients per month (not an unduplicated count).

There was significant neighborhood resistance to this project, but it was overcome by a program of participation. A neighborhood advisory committee was formed with the resistant businesses on it. Some neighbors feared that the center would attract large numbers of homeless who would mill about on the street. It was pointed out that this was not a shelter where people stand in line to get in at opening time. Also, it was agreed that if people were transported here from elsewhere, when they left they would also be offered the option of being transported back to where they came from. Exterior lighting was increased so that it would be less comfortable to hang around on the street at night. The participation strategy was effective and the neighborhood advisory group continues to meet and address more general issues such as overall neighborhood safety. They are also trying to put pressure on the local delis not to sell liquor on credit to intoxicated people.

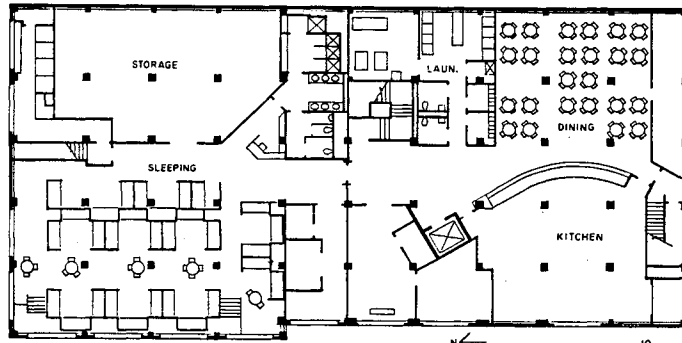
North of Market Multi-Service Center

Located in the Tenderloin district, the center is operated by Episcopal Community Services. This center offers a wide variety of services including:

- drop-in day lounge (95 capacity; at night some clients are allowed to sleep on the floor in this area)
- toilets and showers
- laundries for commercial and client use
- mail boxes
- shelter beds (total of 225), with separate areas for:
 - lottery (up to 100 beds)



FIRST FLOOR



South of Market Multi-Service Center

- longer term case management (partly a “clean and sober” program) (up to 100 beds)
- health recovery for homeless who have been released from the hospital (25 beds)
- meals (2 per day for general shelter population; 3 for health recovery; snacks for drop-ins)
- case workers
- classes
- counseling
- health clinic (which operates four medical clinics and five mental health and substance abuse clinics per week).

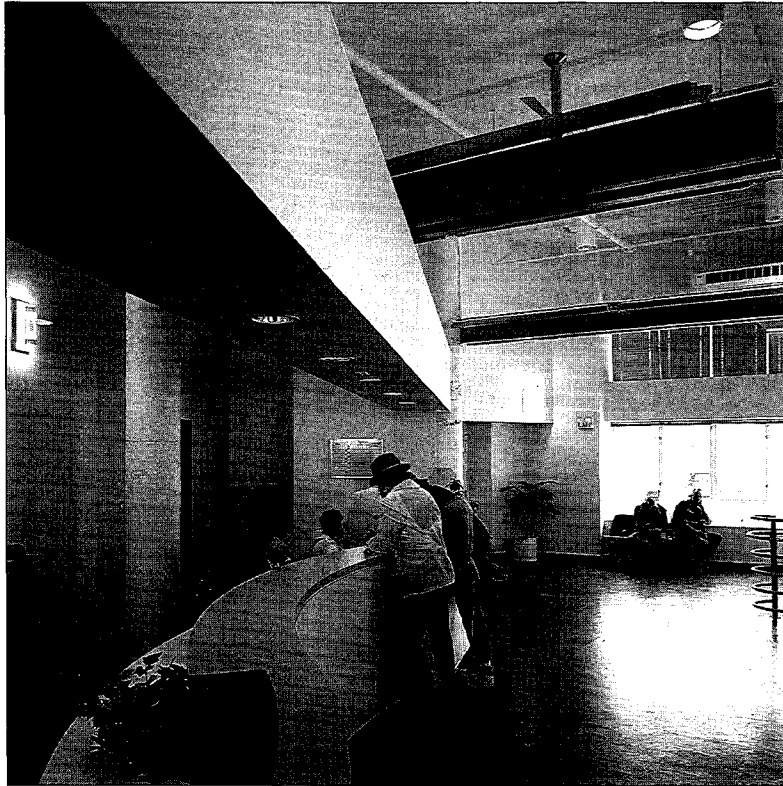


MARK CITRET WITH PERMISSION OF A.N.D.

South of Market Multi-Service Center

We visited North of Market on the fifteenth of the month and found the day area to be rather empty. It turns out that, on the first and fifteenth, some clients get their benefit checks, cash them and buy drugs or alcohol (this observation was confirmed at several locations and by several service providers). One man we interviewed said that he was a recovering addict in a treatment program and purposely stayed inside those days to avoid the temptation of seeing his ex-friends getting high. While we were glad he had a place to avoid temptation, we found the notion of welfare benefits being used this way by clients of the facilities to be distressing.

The shelter operates by a set of explicit rules, some of which are obviously necessary to maintain order and safety while others seem rather arbitrary (e.g., a ban on “public display of affection — kissing or fondling”). To qualify for a long term (up to six months) assigned bed, a client must agree to participate in case management and make a degree of progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals such as regular attendance at a substance abuse or education program. Generally, residents (other than those in the health recovery area or a few others on bed rest) have to vacate the shelter area by 8 a.m. each morning. They may leave their belongings (either locked



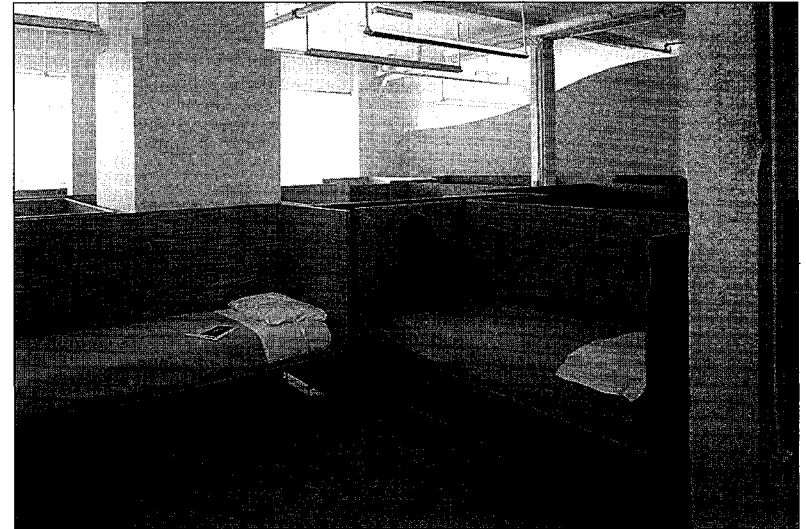
MARK CITRET WITH PERMISSION OF A.N.D.

South of Market Multi-Service Center

in the drawer beneath the bed or piled on top). Clients may go down to the day lounge, though most go out.

A room with a tile floor and drain, intended to be a kennel, was provided but has never been used as such due to operational problems. The idea was that some homeless people will not come to a shelter because it requires them to leave their pets behind. However, it was pointed out that having one's pet two or three floors away from where one is sleeping would also be unacceptable to most homeless pet owners. It is unclear who's idea the kennel was.

The building is of some historical significance. It was a Pierce-Arrow showroom built in 1913. The architect was John Galen



MARK CITRET WITH PERMISSION OF A.N.D.

South of Market Multi-Service Center: bed enclosures with locked storage

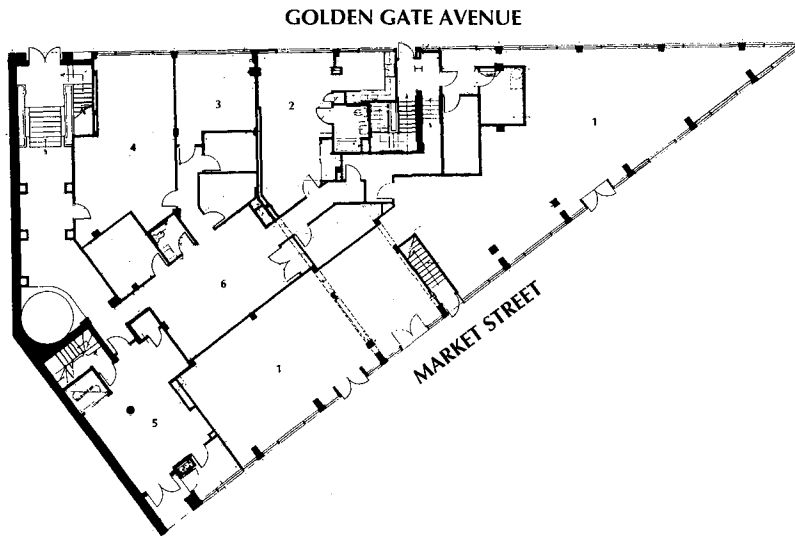
Howard. It has been given a "B" rating on the city Landmarks Board's scale as being of historic merit, but is not registered. Minor changes to the exterior of the building still had to be approved by the Board.

Clients in the day lounge area reported appreciation for the services, safety, cleanliness, and quality of the food. As one said, "we are homeless; what can we expect?"

South of Market Multi-Service Center

The center is operated by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. We met Bill Shoman, the building and food service manager and Richard Bright, the director. It is very similar in program to the North of Market Center, but has fewer beds (158, none of which are for medical recovery) and a larger day lounge. Its building has no historic architectural significance.

When we visited South of Market, it was raining. The weather apparently made a great deal of difference in the level of use, as the day area (with room for about 150) was crowded with people. It was noisy and filled with smoke. Perhaps it is used more inten-

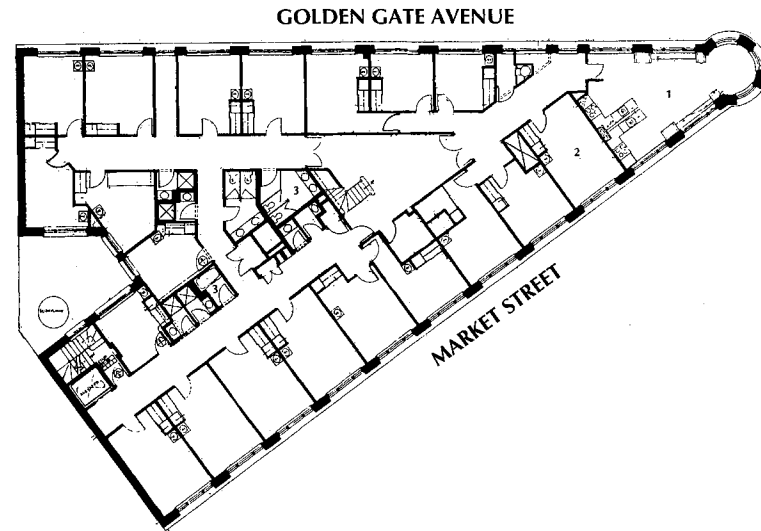


The San Christina: 1st floor plan

sively or managed differently, but it was in much worse condition than North of Market. The director stated that they had turned away 63 people in December (this averages two per day, but may have been more concentrated on cold nights) and felt that they could utilize double their current capacity.

This program is being evaluated by Jim Buick, who is finding that clients do feel safe there. (We made an effort to contact Mr. Buick but were not able to connect.)

The director complained about the choice of some materials. The linoleum, for example, even though it is very heavy duty, is staining from intensive use. The flat wall paint, which is used in some areas, should have been semi-gloss. He was also concerned about the sleeping cubicles — which were said to be expensive and falling apart (the later is an exaggeration, though they were certainly showing signs of wear and abuse) — and complained about blind spots where clients smoked crack. Otherwise, he found the facility “beautiful and spacious.” He tended not to blame A.N.D. for some of the problems, as he thought that the Department of Social Services had been a poor initial client. He did work effectively with A.N.D. to



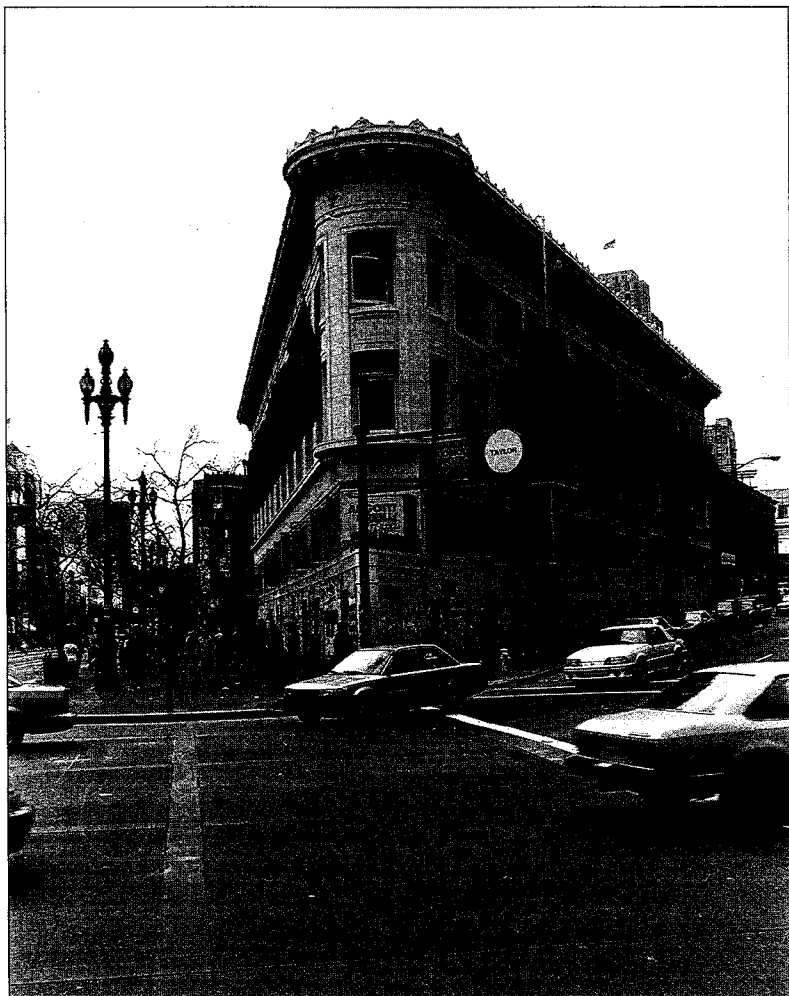
The San Christina: 3rd - 4th floor plans

make many modifications to the design after his agency was contracted to operate the facility.

Cambridge Hotel

Located in the Tenderloin district, the 60 room hotel is operated by the Chinese Community Housing Corporation (though it serves mostly non-Asian clients). It provides transitional housing for the homeless with on-site social services operated by Hospitality House. The accommodations consist of a furnished private bedroom/sitting room and bathroom with a shared kitchen on every other floor. Residents can stay for two to three years, with a typical time of about 18 months.

Participation in programs such as job development, education, and case management is a requirement for residents. It is also required that residents remain “clean and sober,” but this is reported to be a problem for some. About 70% of residents receive general assistance while about 30 to 50% are working. One staff felt that it was too easy to stay here and do nothing; that there was a lack of motivation for self improvement; that not enough of the residents move on. Fernando Robinson, a case manager, however, felt that the suc-



SIMEON BRUNER

The San Christina

cess rate was reasonably good. He thought that as many as 50% were working at least part time and that as many as 15 residents (or 25%) per year make progress on their case plans and move on to permanent housing.

The renovation consisted of general refurbishment and creation of shared spaces such as kitchens and lounges. Susan Wong, the project manager from Chinese Community Housing Corporation, found A.N.D. to have been client-focussed, great to work with, and have done a great job for them. "They really listen," she said.

Permanent Housing Projects

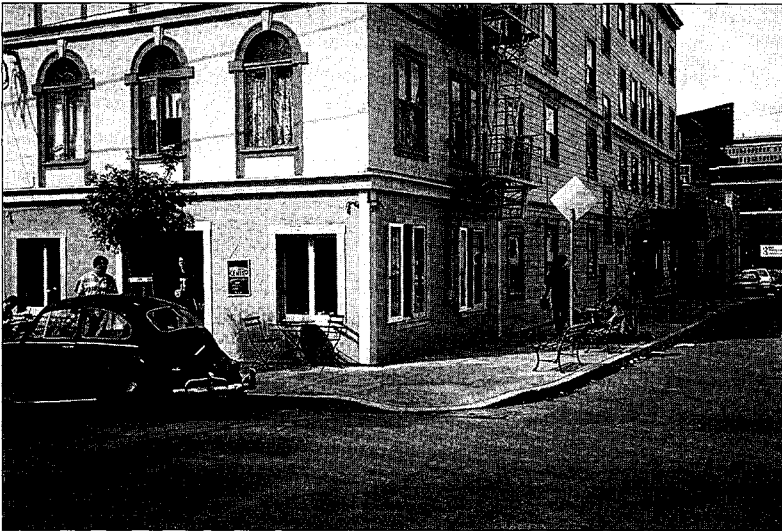
Several of the projects provide permanent housing for the formerly homeless.

Madrid Hotel and Park View Hotel. These are both completed projects located very close to one another and facing a park in the South of Market area. One has 43 units, the other 41. Each has a communal kitchen and commercial space on the ground floor, occupied in both cases by a restaurant and other functions. These projects were single room occupancy (SRO) hotels that have been converted to permanent housing.

San Christina. This project is located on Market Street and is undergoing major renovation, with completion expected late in 1993. The building is a historic Classical Revival flatiron structure dating from the post-1906 earthquake reconstruction period (built in 1913; architect unknown). Like the North of Market Multi-service Center, it has been given a "B" rating on the city Landmarks Board's scale as being of historic merit, but is not registered. However, A.N.D. is using the historic building code to allow them to retain features (such as an interior wrought iron staircase) which otherwise probably would have had to have been removed. Similarly the building department did not require a full seismic upgrading, but allowed equivalent protection.

The building was used as offices and is being converted into 58 single occupancy rooms with communal kitchens at the "prow" of the flatiron. Educational programs and commercial space will be located on the ground floor.

U.A. Homes (Berkeley). A member of our team attempted to visit this project, but was not successful in gaining admittance due to a scheduling mixup (we later visited the lobby, but did not see the units). The building had been a residence hotel and was closed after the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. It has been seismically strengthened with exterior steel braces and retrofitted as 75 low



Park View Hotel. Note commercial use on ground floor.

income single room occupancy units. On-site counseling services, employment, literacy, and substance abuse programs are offered. The executive director is involved in the arts and brings volunteers in to offer programs to residents in dance, poetry, drawing and creative writing.

Stark Hotel (Berkeley). We did not visit this project which has been designed but whose uncertain funding has stalled construction.

In-Depth Evaluations are Needed

Many of these projects are prototypical, that is, they lack established models or guidelines for their design. To date, other than what research may have been done at the South of Market Multi-Service Center, no post occupancy evaluations have been prepared on these projects. Such evaluations would be very beneficial in terms of identifying aspects of design and operations which are working well (and could be replicated in other projects) and those that should be changed.

Homeless Projects Not Designed by A.N.D.

There are many other services and facilities for the homeless in San Francisco which are not part of the submission, though they were part of the mayor's Beyond Shelter plan. For example, there are (or were plans for) the following non-A.N.D. transitional housing projects (some of which are on hold):

- For homeless families to be run by the Salvation Army.
- For homeless women and children to be run by St. Vincent de Paul.
- For homeless youth to be run by the Catholic Charities and Hospitality House.
- For homeless mentally disabled people to be run by a consortium of public agencies.

Needs Not Addressed by the Plan

There are about 6,000 homeless people in San Francisco. Clearly, the 400+ shelter beds and 500 units of special housing which are being created through the Beyond Shelter plan will not suffice to meet the need.

The Role of Asian Neighborhood Design

A.N.D. provided architectural services for these projects. They worked with a wide variety of clients, including often diverse bodies representing many interests. In all cases where we interviewed people who had worked directly with A.N.D, they were praised as being attentive and responsive to client needs. A.N.D. was seen as having a long term commitment to designing supportive settings for disadvantaged and special needs users. In some of the projects, design was very important to successful operation. This is especially true of the drop-in and multi-service centers, which have high volumes of users and many — often conflicting — operational and design objectives (for example to provide privacy as well as surveillance or be non-institutional yet very durable).

Construction Costs

Hard construction costs for the projects are as follow:

PROJECT	COST
Transbay Homeless Outreach	\$ 20,000
McMillan Drop-in Center	376,000
North of Market Multi-Service Center	2,300,000
South of Market Multi-Service Center	3,900,000
Cambridge Hotel	722,000
Madrid Hotel	820,000
Park View Hotel	690,000
U.A. Homes	2,100,000
San Christina (bid)	2,100,000
Stark Hotel (bid)	950,000
Total Cost:	\$ 13,978,000

Financing

The financing for these projects came from many sources. Approximately \$12 million for transitional and permanent housing came from a state housing grant. About \$6 million in city tax abatement funds were added to this. Some projects were renovated using FEMA funds for seismic strengthening following the 1989 earthquake. Others used Red Cross emergency assistance for people made homeless by the earthquake.

The Cambridge Hotel serves as a case study. The total (hard and soft) cost was slightly over \$4 million or \$67,000 per unit, broken down approximately as follows:

PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Construction and fees:	\$ 978,000
Building acquisition:	2,300,000
Financing charges (points):	21,000
Interim financing and syndication costs:	336,000
General development costs:	380,000
Total Cost:	\$ 4,015,000

The sources of financing and what they paid for are complex. A State of California CHRP loan paid part of construction, fees, carrying charges, development and syndication costs. A city grant partially using CDBG money contributed toward acquisition. A foundation donated part of the construction money. Equitable Life Insurance put up a ten year permanent loan for a small part of the cost, which coincided with the project's 10 year HUD Section 8 commitment to rent subsidies. And FEMA paid a small amount toward construction.

THEMES AND LESSONS**Approach Homelessness In a Systematic Way**

Homelessness is the outcome of a system which involves conditions embracing poverty, unemployment, poor physical and/or mental health, substance abuse, the need for social services, the housing supply, and many other factors. Each homeless person needs to be given opportunities to address the set of conditions that have lead him or her to be without a home. The person may enter the system of services at one of many points and may be ready to make use of services at a given time which he or she was not ready to use before. Thus, the Beyond Shelter program seeks to offer a comprehensive and coordinated set of services from outreach, to transportation, to drop-in centers, to shelters, to structured shelter programs with social services, to transitional housing, to jobs, to permanent housing. This systematic approach may have a higher likelihood of success than a fragmented or partial set of solutions.

Get All the Agencies Which Serve the Homeless Working Together; Involve Private as Well as Public Providers

These projects are better than many others because they have been developed as partnerships between city development agencies and the public and private non-profit service providers who operate them. There has been a high degree of cooperation and collaboration in defining need and evolving the programs that are offered. The natural skepticism and competition among agencies has been overcome to a significant extent, probably through the leadership provided by the ex-mayor.

Good Design Can Contribute to Effective Services

Design is certainly not the most important issue in dealing with homelessness. But, as these projects show, many aspects of design can contribute to a facility's effectiveness in carrying out its mission to combat some aspect of homelessness. In the drop-in and multi-service centers, where functions are very demanding, design is crucial to security, safety, cleanliness, privacy, functional support, and providing an uplifting image. These projects are rather consistent in providing models of how design can be effective in supporting complex missions.

Don't Expect to Solve a Problem This Complex and Pervasive

Homelessness is so pervasive and intractable a problem that it is not reasonable to expect it to be eliminated by a set of projects, however well thought out and integrated. They may not provide enough to meet demand, but these projects make support available that was not before and provide new opportunities for homeless people who are prepared to make changes for themselves.

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS...

...BY ITS GOALS

To go beyond traditional shelters in providing an integrated system of options and services for the homeless.

The Beyond Shelter program does go beyond traditional shelters in providing a wide variety of outreach, drop-in and shelter settings with many services available if the homeless wish to use them. It also provides some avenues out of homelessness and into permanent jobs and housing.

To reduce the number of homeless people dying on the streets.

While facilities and services are now becoming available that were not before (including drop-in centers and a mobile patrol), it is too early to tell whether they will actually reduce the numbers of homeless dying on the streets (which has increased each year from 1990 to 1992). Factors beyond the control of the system (such as an increase in the number of homeless due to a deteriorating economy

and the possibility of very cold weather) make this a difficult evaluative test, however laudable the goal.

...BY SELECTION COMMITTEE CONCERNS

What contribution does this submission make to solving the homeless problem? Do participants graduate and move on to participate in programs, get jobs and live in more stable housing?

The projects in this submission make significant contributions to dealing with homelessness, offering services and opportunities at many levels — from survival and respite to recovery and reintegration. Some participants do take advantage of these opportunities to deal with substance abuse problems, gain employment, and move into permanent housing. It is also clear that there is greater demand than these projects can meet.

What is the nature and status of employment programs?

Some employment training and jobs programs are operational. Most of the projects that were submitted employ the homeless or formerly homeless as their staff in a variety of positions including outreach, food preparation, clerical, janitorial, and even management. All programs can refer clients to job training through GAIN (federal workfare program). The multi-service centers train case management residents in their kitchens. Some of the transitional housing projects have commercial space or restaurants which provide employment to residents. A.N.D. operates a cabinet and furniture business which employs 50 and has trained over 700 mostly at-risk youth (not necessarily homeless).

How is the project perceived (by residents, homeless people on the street, neighbors, policy makers)?

Homeless people who make use of the facilities are generally quite satisfied with them and pleased to have the services available. Some homeless people on the streets find the shelters too rigid — and avoid them. "You're in prison from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.," said one homeless advocate who criticized the system for providing the least for those who need the most. Neighbors of the centers and shelters have generally been satisfied that, by design and operations, homeless people are not milling around on the sidewalks and that the

problems they feared have not materialized. Policy makers recognize and regret that there are not and will not be enough resources in the next few years to make much of a further dent in the problem.

Why were historical buildings selected for several projects? Were they listed as landmarks? Have they been renovated sympathetically?

It appears that it has generally been circumstantial that historic buildings were selected. Often, they were available and affordable, perhaps being too deteriorated to restore privately. The most interesting historically are the North of Market Multi-Service Center (the Pierce Arrow showroom) and the San Christina. While recognized locally as of some historic merit, none of the buildings are listed on historic registers. However, given low budgets, they have been renovated with care and attention to their historic character.

Who was involved in the planning and design process (homeless persons, residents, service providers, policy board)?

The Beyond Shelter program was developed by Mayor Agnos' administration and involved all city development, planning, housing, health and social service agencies as well as social welfare and homeless advocates and private service providers. The submitted projects varied greatly in who was involved. Generally, A.N.D. worked for either the city or a community development corporation. On city projects, there would have been a client board which included various agencies and the service provider who would contract to operate the facility. At least one project, the McMillan Drop-In Center, involved both a homeless advocate (Bryan Boyd) and a neighborhood advisory group.

...BY OTHER CONCERNS

How Does This Program Compare to What Other Cities Are Doing?

We have not researched homeless programs in other cities or states. However, we have seen that New York and New Jersey, for instance, have "right to shelter" laws and programs which guarantee the homeless a bed. While these may be more humane in reducing the numbers of homeless dying on the streets (in these state's more

extreme climates), they do not necessarily provide more comprehensive overall services. One of the other finalists, New Community Corporation, operates a highly serviced transitional living facility (see that chapter).

How Key a Player Is Asian Neighborhood Design?

A.N.D. has been the favored designer for the majority of San Francisco's projects addressing homelessness. They earned this role by their reputation for designs sensitive to the needs of special user groups. However, they were not instrumental in developing the "Beyond Shelter" plan and were not the developers or operators of the facilities.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee was impressed by the attempts of the various agencies associated with this project to address one of the most critical and pervasive urban issues in a broad and comprehensive manner. They saw this project as displaying "an intelligent philosophy and an intelligent use of the city infrastructure". They praised the goal of the project which was not just to care for the homeless but to decrease homelessness. The effort demonstrated that quality housing could be created "even for the homeless", rather than the too common approach of providing the least for those who need the most. The Selection Committee appreciated the way the design group acted as a catalyst for change. and they admired the integration of social services with housing as well as the inclusion of job opportunities.

The Selection Committee also recognized that homelessness is an intractable problem, in size, scope, and difficulty. Homelessness reflects problems with the housing stock, economy, provision of mental health services, and so forth. These problems are not just local, but regional, statewide and even national — and no local program can be expected to be completely effective in dealing with them on its own. In San Francisco, the number of homeless has actually increased, in spite of the efforts of this program, which has improved conditions and provided routes to permanent housing for many formerly homeless. However, at the end of the discussion, the Selection Committee was unsure how much this program had

succeeded in making San Francisco a better place (the authors, however, believe it has provided options for many homeless persons which were not available before).

For More Information...

Harry Ja Wong
Principal Architect / Program Director
Asian Neighborhood Design
461 Bush Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94108
Phone: (415) 982-2959