

## Let's End Street Homelessness in San Francisco.

To do this, we will combine three innovative concepts:

1. The city of Reno's shelter-first strategy.
2. Brownstone's sleeping pod office conversion technique.
3. Modern architecture's "vertical village" concept.

The result is a **new kind of shelter that creates space for all of San Francisco's unsheltered homeless population inside a vacant office building.** In total, the plan should cost roughly \$46 million per year, saving the city \$200 million compared to the current methods of shelter.



### Background

As of February 2024, the latest Point In Time count showed **4,500 people living on the streets of San Francisco.** The majority of those people are located in the city's downtown core, which creates an unescapable blight at a time when the city needs businesses and workers to return in the wake of the post-pandemic exodus.

Meanwhile, it seems we have hit the limit on homelessness funding in California. For years, the state relied on taxing wealthy individuals and businesses to support homeless services. But since the pandemic, many have left for tax-friendly states, shrinking California's tax base. This likely explains the failure of recent wealth tax efforts, and **the Governor's proposed cuts to Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding** in this year's budget.

## Fortunately, there is hope.

The city of Reno showed that it is possible to reduce unsheltered homelessness quickly by taking a **shelter-first approach**. In 2021, Reno used COVID relief funds to construct a shelter with 600 beds. The result, as Figure A shows, is that **Reno reduced its street homelessness by nearly 50% in one year**.

Figure A: Reno Cut Street Homelessness In Half By Building Mass Shelter



Source: Washoe County Website

Unlike Reno, San Francisco doesn't have large open lots to construct new shelters, so **replicating Reno's strategy will require a method that works within the existing built environment**. As you can see below, Reno's open bunk bed strategy requires a lot of wasted space between beds, since bunk beds cannot be placed next to each other for very good reasons.



## A New Kind of Shelter

Our company, **Brownstone Shared Housing**, has already demonstrated the blueprint for **converting vacant office space to mass shelter**. Brownstone manufactures sleeping pods designed for long term stays. Our pods allow more people to share a home without sacrificing comfort or privacy. We first gained international media attention three years ago for renting a three bedroom home in Palo Alto near Stanford to 14 people. In 2023, we made headlines again when **we converted an abandoned office building in downtown San Francisco into housing for 30 entrepreneurs**. Currently, 37% of office buildings in San Francisco are vacant.



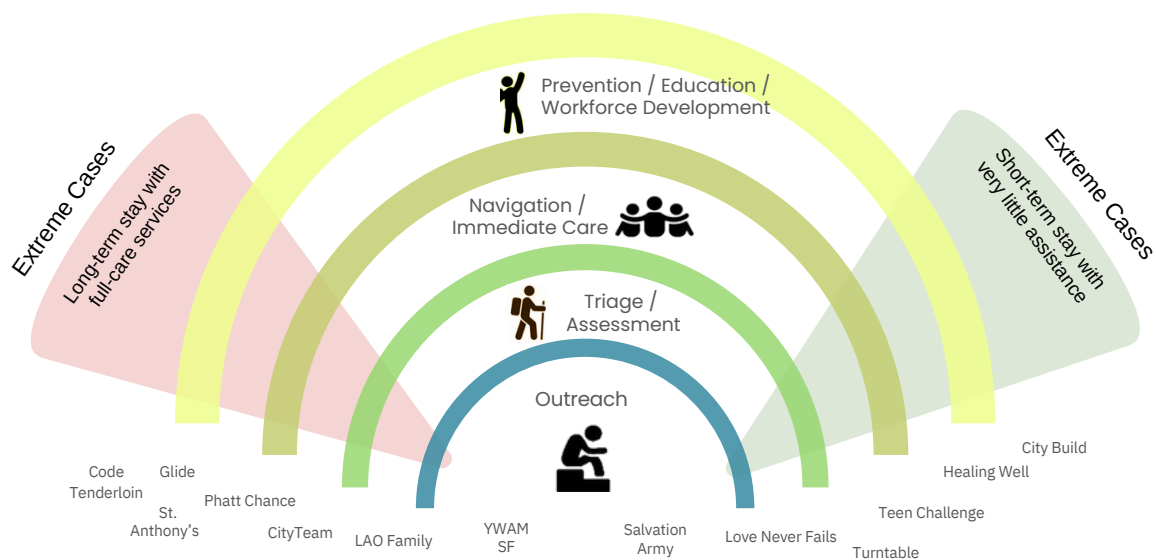
*Brownstone's pods allow us to maintain the comfort, privacy, and dignity of individuals sleeping in the same area.*

## Community living zones based on need

Because the transitional shelter will oversee all 4,500 individuals, we will want to create community living zones of approximately 50 to 100 individuals per group based on need. Zones will be separated by the four walls of a room. For example, we would dedicate a few zones to those addicted to drugs, a few to those coming out of abusive relationships, a few to those who are in recovery. Exact zones will be determined after further population research and updated on an as-needed basis. Depending on the zone, communities could expect to receive anywhere between full service support staff and monitoring to a more hands-off approach - each method tailored to the needs of that group.

**Not only would we provide a shelter-first approach, but we will partner with already existing regional operators to provide comprehensive support under one roof as a holistic approach to SF's humanitarian crisis.**

## A Comprehensive Services Center



*Our goal is to transition someone coming from unsheltered homelessness to a more stable home.*

*Ultimately, we will show each person hospitality and encourage them on their journey of self-growth so they can integrate into society.*

## What if SF organizations could work together...

Collaborative efforts among San Francisco's community assistance programs and nonprofit organizations could significantly enhance support for the homeless. By pooling resources and expertise, these entities can create a more integrated and efficient system of care, offering a continuum of services from immediate relief to long-term solutions.

## Our Plan

The recently vacant Twitter headquarters building is perfect for the transitional shelter. It is located in the civic center – the epicenter of homelessness in San Francisco, and at 800,000 square feet, it has plenty of space to accommodate every unsheltered homeless person in San Francisco.

- First, we would take over the lease of the Twitter building at 1355 Market Street, and furnish it with enough sleeping pods and furniture to **accommodate everyone currently on the street**.
- In tandem, we would **partner with existing homeless service providers** to provide them space to operate in the building. Picture a department store-like space for meeting people's needs.
- Finally, once the space is operational, **the city will be able to sweep the streets** and compel ones who are homeless to either seek help in our shelter or leave the city.



*1355 Market St, San Francisco*

Here's an **initial list of services** we hope to see the navigation center provide:

---

1. Housing Assistance
2. Healthcare Services
3. Employment Support
4. Financial Services and Financial Literacy Training
5. Food and Nutrition
6. Legal Assistance
7. Family and Child Support Services
8. Transportation Assistance
9. Case Management and Social Work
10. Community and Social Support
11. Technology Access
12. Crisis Intervention Services
13. Culturally-Sensitive Multilingual Services
14. Education and Literacy Programs

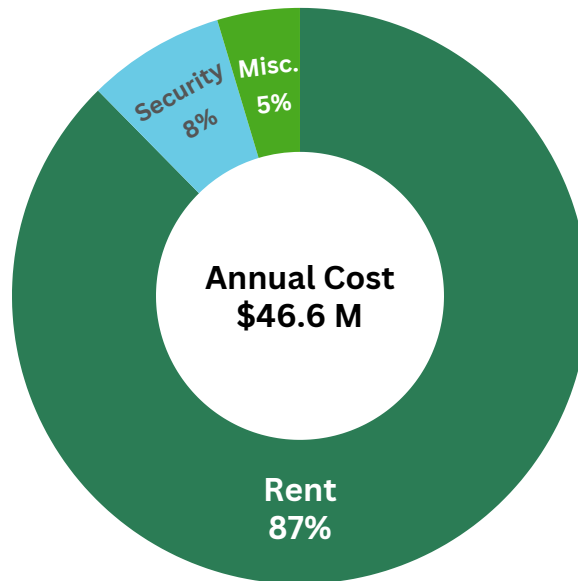
## **A Vertical Village**

The vertical village is a new architectural concept where instead of buildings being used for one function, such as residential or office, they contain a continuum of services that the building occupants can use. **Imagine if the 24 hour clinic was on floor 3 of your building, instead of on the outskirts of town where real estate is cheaper?** That's the concept we want to bring to our homelessness center in mid-market. All of the services above in one place, easily accessible to the people who need them.

## Cost Breakdown

**The majority of the ongoing cost will come from renting the building.** Service providers will need to find their own resources such as grants or government contracts to serve the shelter population. The rest of the cost would come from staffing to process everyone and ensure building safety. We seek a combination of state and local funds to complete the project.

**Figure B: It Will Cost Only \$46 Million Per Year to End Street Homelessness in SF**



*Numbers do not include operator costs. Those are accounted for by the operators. Each operator is in charge of securing funding for providing its service.*

## Call to Action

**It is within our reach to end unsheltered homelessness in San Francisco.** And if it works here, we will take this solution to other major cities across the state. Brownstone X can provide the beds and expertise to make this project a reality. **We just need the funding, political will, and partnerships** to fulfill our vision.

**Let's end street homelessness together <3**

## Meet the Commission

