

# SAN ANTONIO NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY ACTION

**11:00 AM - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2022**

Intersection of  
**East 15th Street & 17th Avenue**



We're meeting the candidates for  
Oakland Mayor and Alameda County  
Supervisor to discuss how they will  
work with us to address:

- \*sex-trafficking and gun violence.
- \*housing for the unhoused.
- \*San Antonio Park.

Candidates for Alameda County Supervisor, District 3



Lena Tam



Rebecca Kaplan



Sheng Thao



Loren Taylor



Ignacio De La Fuente

Candidates for Oakland Mayor

*The October 1st Safety Action is organized by The San Antonio Neighborhood Coalition, a growing multiracial and multilingual coalition of residents, merchants, renters, homeowners, families, schools, and community and faith organizations working together to improve the health and safety of our neighborhood. Our founding members include EBAYC, Trybe, San Antonio Family Resource Center Parent Action Research Team, Garfield Elementary School, Friends of San Antonio Park, Community School for Creative Education, and St. Anthony's Mary Help of Christians Parish.*

**THIS IS A NON-PARTISAN EVENT. NO CAMPAIGN MATERIALS WILL BE ALLOWED AT THE EVENT.**



St. Anthony's Mary Help of Christians Parish



# **OCTOBER 1, 2022 SAFETY ACTION**

## **San Antonio Neighborhood Coalition**

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11:00am: Opening – Leonor Godinez

11:05am: Testimonies – Hector Cruz, Emely Rodriguez, and Ricardo Roque

11:15am: Research Report – Liz Sullivan and Yolanda Monroe

11:25am: Encampments – Marisela De Anda

11:50am: Sex-Trafficking and Gun Violence – Gianna Tran

12:15pm: San Antonio Park – Mira Manickam-Shirley

12:30pm: Closing – Andrew Park

12:40pm: Announcements –

Sarai Smith-Mazariegos, Founding Executive Director of S.H.A.D.E.

Valeria Ochoa, Faith In Action East Bay

# **San Antonio Neighborhood Coalition**

We are the San Antonio Neighborhood Coalition, a growing multi-racial and multilingual coalition of residents, merchants, renters, homeowners, families, schools and community and faith organizations, working together for the health and safety of our neighborhood.

Today, we are here with candidates for Oakland Mayor and Alameda County Board of Supervisors to let them know about the health and safety challenges we face every day related to homeless encampments, sex-trafficking, and gun violence. We will share our ideas for solutions to these problems. And if elected, we want to learn from the candidates how they will work with us on these solutions.

## **What We Have Learned**

Over the past year, members of the San Antonio Neighborhood Safety Coalition have listened to more than 800 residents of the San Antonio neighborhood. We know that neighborhood safety is an asset that promotes well-being for children, youth, adults and seniors. We have examined crime data for our neighborhood, and we have met with public officials to understand the policies and resources that might improve safety in the San Antonio neighborhood.

When the Parent Action Research Team listened to 60 families with young children from the San Antonio neighborhood, we heard that children are traumatized by witnessing violence including shootings; assaults; and hit and run accidents. Parents feel that their children's innocence is being stolen by exposure to prostitution and child sex trafficking. Most parents keep their children inside due to safety concerns.

When Trybe teamed up with the Possibility Lab at the Goldman School of Public Policy to hold focus groups with 250 adults and 60 youth, we discovered that there is a strong association between perceptions of neighborhood safety and well-being and indicators of social capital such as a sense of agency, social cohesion and spatial mobility.

The Faith in Action Local Organizing Committee of St Anthony's/Mary Help of Christians church surveyed 69 parishioners and we learned that crime is their major concern. Grandparents have become more isolated because parents won't let grandchildren visit them due to the prostitution, child sex trafficking and violence in the neighborhood.

When EBAYC knocked on doors on E 15th Street we learned that residents feel the City of Oakland has given up. Word has spread among sex traffickers that "anything goes" in our neighborhood, and every day their actions become more brazen and more violent. There are no consequences for breaking the law here.

The Friends of San Antonio Park listened to more than 340 residents and asked them about their vision for the park. We learned that people want a library/community center to be built in San Antonio Park that will become a hub for resilience, wellness, recreation activities and connection that will spread out into our neighborhood.

When we studied crime data for our neighborhood we learned:

- The homeless encampment on East 12th Street has been a haven for criminal activity and has been the site of multiple homicides, including a father connected to our Family Resource Center.
- Beat 19x is the most violent beat in the city, and violent crime has increased more rapidly in the San Antonio District during the pandemic than in any other neighborhood of Oakland.
- The violence here is not “home grown” turf wars between street gangs and drug dealers. Criminals from outside Oakland are attracted to the San Antonio neighborhood by the sex market. At least 50% of the shootings in the San Antonio neighborhood can be linked to prostitution and child sex trafficking and the perpetrators are from other cities.
- The sex market makes the neighborhood more dangerous for women and girls who are harassed by johns and by traffickers. In 2020 and 2021, there were sharp increases in killings and shootings of women, so much so that Oakland hospital staff have “stated that they have never seen [as large] an increase in female identified victims being treated in the emergency department for gunshot wounds —ever.”[1] In Beat 19x, which is the main police beat in the San Antonio neighborhood, there were 114 shootings, the most of any police beat in Oakland by far. Only one other beat in Deep East Oakland was even close with 102. And in 2022, it is even worse, where over a third of the 104 homicides thus far have occurred in Police Area 3. This area has been known as a better part of the Oakland Flatlands, where you can still safely raise your kids affordably, close to the Lake, with institutions like St. Anthony’s, EBAYC, Eastside Arts Alliance, along with decent schools and shops, where immigrants and people of color could open and operate businesses. And now, Area 3 is the most violent section in the whole city!

We know that there are City, County and Community resources that can be used to address the issues that our neighborhood faces: the unhoused, sex trafficking, and our neglected San Antonio Park.

Alameda County’s Measure W will soon make hundreds of millions of dollars available every year for providing services and shelter to the unhoused. That money must not be used for business as usual in the county. It must be dedicated to services and shelter for the unhoused as voters were promised.

The City has allocated resources for the unhoused that have not been used due to poor planning, implementation and oversight. Only one third of the outreach worker positions allocated for the unhoused have been filled. The money is sitting there for 3x as many outreach workers to serve the unhoused as what we currently have.

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[1] <https://oaklandside.org/2021/12/23/2021-oakland-deadliest-year-since-2006-homicides-shootings-gun-violence/>

In addition to the unfilled homeless outreach worker positions, there are 150 vacant positions in the Department of Public Works—positions that could be used to keep the encampments and neighborhood streets clean.

The Friends of San Antonio Park has invested hundreds of hours of volunteer time, talent and in kind services to help activate the park and increase safety for children and families. The City has squandered the resource of community engagement and good will offered by the Friends of San Antonio Park. The City project team for the San Antonio Park Master Plan chooses to collaborate only with “clients” who are department heads in the city bureaucracy, not with the community.

We know that county, city and community resources exist to address the issues we face. What is lacking is will. Political will.

Oakland has been identified since the early 2000s as a hub for the exploitation of under-aged girls. Sex trafficking in Oakland is centered **here, in the San Antonio neighborhood, where we sit**, on what is called the “Blade.” On the same weekend that Dentist Lili Wu was killed 12 blocks from here, a woman who was being trafficked for sex was murdered right here, on 17th Avenue. There was a well-deserved outcry over the murder of Dr Wu, and we all saw her photo and heard her tragic story. But how many of us know the name of the young woman who was murdered here that same weekend? The people who live nearby heard her cry out for help, they heard the gunshots...but to the world, she is nameless and faceless...as if she doesn’t matter...as if this neighborhood doesn’t matter. Well we are not **willing** to be nameless and faceless anymore. The women who are being trafficked here matter. The unhoused matter. Our park matters. The people who live and work and go to school in the San Antonio neighborhood matter.

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## What We Believe

1. Homelessness and the existence of encampments cannot be accepted as normal or not fixable. The status quo is completely unacceptable for both housed and unhoused residents. The urgency of finding solutions cannot be overstated.
2. The City and County have to be responsible for maintaining a safe and sanitary environment for those living in encampments, as well as for nearby residents and businesses, while seeking and implementing longer term solutions.
3. For us, a successful City/County collaboration on homelessness would result in the elimination of the encampments, with all encampment residents transitioned into permanent housing that meets their needs.

## **What We Want**

1. Property Managers assigned to encampments to ensure hygiene supports, such as showers and toilets, are provided; trash and waste are removed; harm reduction supplies are available; and encampment boundaries are enforced.
2. Fund 100 Case Managers to provide intensive outreach, case management, and resource navigation to encampment residents. Each Case Manager works intensively to form durable and reliable relationships with 10 unhoused individuals. The goal is to remove barriers to housing and placing the individual in appropriate housing.
3. Prioritize the creation of transitional housing options such as mobile homes/mobile home parks, repurposed motels/hotels, and “tiny” homes.
4. Joint City/County performance management system to regularly and publicly report and account for the use of public funds resulting in the elimination of encampments, and the successful transition of encampment residents transitioned into permanent housing that meets their needs.

## **What We Believe**

1. The City of Oakland and Alameda County must establish street prostitution as a top public safety priority. Street prostitution and child sex trafficking in the San Antonio neighborhood is serious, dangerous, and demoralizing. Gun shootings, assaults on women, sexual exploitation of minors, public nudity, public sex acts, increased car traffic and traffic jams all caused by the street sex trade are completely unacceptable. Women and girls in our neighborhood are especially harmed and made unsafe by this constant 24/7 activity. We are subjected to harassment by customers and traffickers alike.
2. AND while this activity must stop, we recognize that the women and girls selling sex in our neighborhood are being trafficked and exploited. They must not be further victimized or criminalized.

## **What We Want**

1. Close East 15th Street to non-resident car traffic and place street signage in multiple languages throughout the East 15th Street corridor to deter “buyers”.
2. Deploy regular and on-going OPD patrols at all hours to target “buyers in their cars” by properly citing them for moving violations, expired registration tags, and other vehicle regulations along the East 15th Street and International Boulevard corridors.
3. Increase investments for gender-based violence interventions, including the creation of Safety Zones, street outreach and case management, education and training, and Town Nights.

4. Establish human-trafficking as a top public safety priority in Oakland and Alameda County, and work with impacted neighborhoods and communities to develop, invest, and implement a comprehensive strategy to disrupt and reduce human-trafficking as an organized criminal enterprise.

## **What We Believe**

San Antonio Park is the oldest and biggest park in Oakland. The Park is central to our neighborhood, but it has not received any major public investment in the last several decades.

Last year, Friends of San Antonio Park, with the support of Oakland City Council President Nikki Fortunato Bas, engaged over 340 neighbors in a community visioning process, as part of the San Antonio Park Master Planning process. Our goal was to ensure that neighborhood residents, particularly long-term residents, youth, and families attending the surrounding schools, had a major voice in determining the future of their park.

The community shaped a vision of a safe, vibrant, and activated San Antonio Park, which can act as a safe haven for residents of all ages, and a hub for programs and services, from which positive change can radiate to the rest of the neighborhood. By transforming San Antonio Park, we can transform our neighborhood.

## **What We Want**

1. Build a Public Library and Community Resource Center in San Antonio Park. A feasibility study to construct this Library and Community Center is included in the proposed San Antonio Park Master Plan, and a budget for the feasibility study will be available if Measure U passes in November.
2. Ensure that critical community priorities, including a playground renovation, improved lighting, additional bathrooms, improved signage, and improved ADA accessibility are completed in the next 2 years.
3. Create formal multi-year agreements with trusted anchor neighborhood organizations to provide diverse programming in the Park, including early childhood development, programs for children, youth, and elderly, food distribution, community gardens, peace ambassadors, and sports and cultural events.
4. Create formal multi-year agreements with the Friends of San Antonio Park to establish and implement Park Stewardship standards, roles, and accountability.