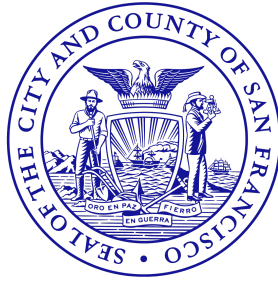


City and County
of San Francisco



Board of Supervisors
Member, District 6

MATT DORSEY

麥德誠

NEWS RELEASE

Dorsey urges Embarcadero Navigation Center's conversion to a drug-free, recovery-focused pilot

City's recent push to expand recovery-inclusive homeless services ought to include one of the City's large congregate shelters, District 6 Supervisor argues

SAN FRANCISCO (May 20, 2025) — Supervisor Matt Dorsey today formally requested that two of the city departments tasked by Mayor Daniel Lurie with implementing behavioral health innovations consider the Embarcadero Navigation Center for a near-term conversion into a drug-free, recovery-oriented pilot program for homeless adults in San Francisco.

Dorsey's letter of inquiry, submitted today, asks San Francisco's Department of Public Health and Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing to estimate the resources, staffing and time necessary to convert the 200-bed congregate shelter into a drug-free recovery-focused pilot, which may be based on the RESTORE or similar program model that allows Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), requires periodic drug testing, and prohibits the use of illicit drugs. RESTORE, an acronym for "Rapid Engagement Shelter and Treatment for Opioid Recovery," was successfully implemented in a non-congregate homeless shelter last month.

"At a moment when San Francisco is beginning to see real success in supporting long-term recovery for those on our streets struggling with deadly drug addictions, now is the time to double down on an approach that works and expand this model to a navigation center," said Supervisor **Matt Dorsey**, who has publicly acknowledged his own journey in recovery from

drug addiction as a motivating factor in his policy agenda. “Give its proximity to Delancey Street — one of the nation’s leading residential self-help recovery organizations, which has expressed its openness to exploring ways to help support a drug-free, recovery-oriented pilot program — the Embarcadero Navigation Center is uniquely positioned for success in ways few other facilities could match. I applaud Mayor Lurie for his efforts to put recovery at the forefront of his administration’s response to our drug crisis, and I look forward to learning more about what a drug-free, recovery-focused Embarcadero Navigation Center would entail.”

Hailed by DPH Director Daniel Tsai as one of “very few interventions that we have from a public health standpoint where we’re getting people plugged into a bed and initiating treatment literally immediately,” the RESTORE model has already been identified as one for which city officials express high hopes, with plans to dramatically expand the number of beds making full use of the approach.

At a hearing last week before the Board of Supervisors’ Government Audit and Oversight Committee, RESTORE was described as a joint initiative of San Francisco’s DPH and HSH, with six defining elements that include: 1) immediate, 24/7 access to services to get someone off the street; 2) clients must agree to structured treatment plan to enter the program and get a bed; 3) clients receive gold-standard medications for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), like buprenorphine or methadone; 4) clients must meet case managers daily, who proactively and assertively help progress to longer-term treatment and recovery options; 5) increased daytime programming with structured outpatient care; and 6) discharge planning and warm handoffs to treatment, recovery and next level of care.

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For immediate release:

May 20, 2025

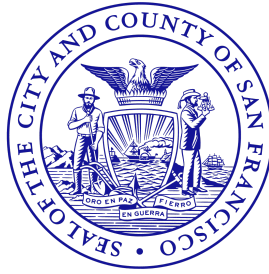
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May 20, 2025

Ms. Angela Cavillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
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San Francisco, Calif. 94102-4689

Emailed to: Angela.Cavillo@sfgov.org

Letter of Inquiry: Requesting an estimation of resources and time needed to convert the Embarcadero Navigation Center into a drug-free recovery-oriented pilot program

Dear Madam Clerk,

I submit this Letter of Inquiry (LOI) in accordance with the provisions of San Francisco City Charter § 16.114 governing the Board of Supervisors' power of inquiry and review, to request responses from the following two city agencies:

- The Department of Public Health (DPH); and
- The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH).

I seek an estimation of resources, staffing and time necessary to convert the Embarcadero Navigation Center into a drug-free recovery-oriented pilot program, which may be based on the RESTORE¹ or similar model that allows Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), includes drug-testing requirements, and prohibits the use of illicit drugs.

¹ Joint presentation of the S.F. Department of Public Health, Department of Emergency Management and Police Department to the Government Audit and Oversight Committee, Board of Supervisors, "The Four Pillars Approach," May 15, 2025, page 10, <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7253055&GUID=1FFA7DF8-013C-41DB-910D-2555243FCF9F>

Relatedly, my office is soliciting feedback from the Delancey Street Foundation — an adjacent institution located at 600 The Embarcadero — that for more than 50 years has been the nation’s leading residential self-help organization for adults seeking structured recovery from Substance Use Disorders (SUDs), as well as for those exiting homelessness, incarceration and other traumas.

Based on my preliminary conversations, I understand that Delancey Street would be open to exploring opportunities to support the City’s efforts to implement a drug- free, recovery-oriented pilot program at the Embarcadero Navigation Center. In my view, the proximity of these facilities suggests a strong potential for a productive and successful working partnership that few other city facilities could match.

Background

An acronym for “Rapid Engagement Shelter and Treatment for Opioid Recovery,” the RESTORE program recently announced by Mayor Lurie’s Administration has earned significant news coverage last month² for its success at the 35-bed Adante Hotel. Hailed by DPH Director Daniel Tsai as one of “very few interventions that we have from a public health standpoint where we’re getting people plugged into a bed and initiating treatment literally immediately,” city officials have expressed hopes to further expand the program — to “soon double the number of beds, with the hope of operating up to 200 across the city.”³

At a hearing last week before the Board of Supervisors’ Government Audit and Oversight Committee on “Four Pillars” drug policy strategies, RESTORE was further described to us as “an innovative, new model to help people quickly move from the street into treatment and a bed,” delivered in coordination with HSH. If I correctly understand the RESTORE program’s defining elements, I would welcome information on whether and to what extent its approach would be adaptable to larger shelter settings like the Embarcadero Navigation Center:

² “San Francisco to Expand Combination Shelter-Opioid Treatment Program for Homeless Residents” by Riley Cooke, KQED News, April 17, 2025, <https://www.kqed.org/news/12036307/sf-expand-combination-shelter-opioid-treatment-program-homeless-residents>.

³ Joint presentation of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, Department of Emergency Management and Police Department to the Government Audit and Oversight Committee Board of Supervisors, “The Four Pillars Approach,” May 15, 2025, <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7253055&GUID=1FFA7DF8-013C-41DB-910D-2555243FCF9F>

1. Significantly scaling up immediate and 24/7 access to services to help get unhoused individuals seeking recovery from illicit drugs off the street;
2. Requiring that clients agree to a structured treatment plan that may include drug testing to enter the program and get a bed;
3. Affording clients' immediate access to such gold-standard medications for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) as buprenorphine or methadone;
4. Facilitating clients' meetings with case managers, who would work proactively and assertively to help clients progress into longer-term treatment and recovery options;
5. Increasing daytime programming with structured outpatient care, and exploring options for recovery-oriented partnerships; and
6. Working toward successful discharge plans that may include warm handoffs to treatment, recovery or the next level of care.

Fulfilling the promise of 'Recovery First'

More than merely scaling up existing program models, I believe these recovery-oriented approaches represent an important innovation in DPH's Behavioral Health Roadmap — one that's fully committed to "Build a Comprehensive Pathway to Recovery" — and that represents a bold and desperately needed step to support and incentivize long-term recovery.

In my view, this approach aligns well with policy direction recently passed by the Board of Supervisors in the "Recovery First" ordinance I authored,⁴ which, if signed by Mayor Lurie, will define remission from substance use disorder as "living a self-directed and healthy life, free from illicit drug use," and enshrine long-term remission through the process of recovery as the City and County of San Francisco's primary drug policy goal. As I said when introducing the Recovery First legislation earlier this year, only by aligning our civic aspirations with what any of us would want for a loved one struggling with addiction may San Francisco claim a drug policy worthy of the City of St. Francis. A drug-free and recovery-oriented Embarcadero Navigation Center would well reflect these vital priorities.

⁴ "Administrative Code - Recovery First Substance Use Disorder Treatment Policy," File #: 250190, Final BOS Action: May 13, 2025, <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7158850&GUID=59012E35-EF4B-41FE-ABBB-8501DF09B5C1&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=250190>

Letter of Inquiry: Requesting an estimation of resources and time needed to convert the Embarcadero Navigation Center into a drug-free recovery-oriented pilot program
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Thank you so much for your consideration on this LOI. Should you or recipient departments require clarification or further information, I welcome the opportunity to elaborate. I'm cc'ing below my Chief of Staff, Dominica Donovan, who is prepared to assist if I'm unavailable.

Sincerely,



MATT DORSEY

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