

Unfortunately, many of the major candidates for mayor in San Francisco have made anti-liberty positions a core part of each of their platforms. We thought it might be valuable to discuss in-depth what these positions are and why the Libertarian party opposes them.

Mark Farrell is running on the promise of [clearing all large tent encampments within his first year in office](#). In the first [mayoral debate](#), the way he talked about this stuck out to me: “we treated [homeless] people with compassion and respect, but if they said ‘no’, we took their tents away.” He then proceeded to brag about how his policies forced homeless people to leave the city. We don’t see it as compassionate to run people out of town, and we don’t see it as respectful to impose our will on a vulnerable person with violence. An encampment sweep has never improved the job market, built a single unit of shelter or housing, improved a homeless person’s mental health, or cured their drug addiction. Without addressing the underlying causes of homelessness, the sole purpose of an encampment sweep becomes clear: to move homeless people somewhere we don’t have to see them.

Daniel Lurie believes that San Francisco should mandate addicts [engage in “treatment on demand” or face arrest](#). When police officers find an individual committing an offense associated with addiction or mental illness, they will be given a choice: they can accept treatment, or they can go to jail. To appreciate the subtext here, it’s necessary to understand that essentially all effective treatments for addiction or mental illness require the use of medication. Abstinence-based treatment for addiction to opioids like fentanyl is known to be [ineffective and extremely dangerous](#): people *need* medication, often over a long period of time, to withdraw safely. By offering treatment as an alternative option, Lurie’s policy openly admits that arresting people for low-level non-violent offenses is completely unnecessary and a waste of city resources. He only plans to use arrest as a threat to coerce San Francisco residents into taking medication against their will. Unlike Lurie, US courts and even prisons almost never forcibly medicate individuals because they recognize the obvious ethical concerns and the incredibly high potential for abuse.

Aaron Peskin has advocated strongly for the [expansion of rent control](#). Rent control, while seemingly beneficial for tenants in the short-term, consistently leads to [unintended negative consequences](#). It discourages new housing development, as landlords face limited returns on their investments. This lack of new supply exacerbates existing housing shortages, driving up prices for units which are not rent-controlled. Rent control also reduces the quality of existing housing, as landlords have less incentive to maintain or improve their properties. Ultimately, it creates an unfair system where long-term tenants benefit at the expense of newcomers, who are forced to pay exorbitant prices or struggle to find housing at all.

London Breed’s platform is silent on perhaps the one common thread of her tenure as mayor: rampant corruption. In January 2020, the Director of Public Works [Mohammed Nuru was arrested](#) not only for accepting bribes himself, but also of conspiring to bribe other public officials. In 2021, it was additionally discovered that multiple subsidiaries of Recology had bribed Nuru in exchange for allowing them to illegally increase fees on San Francisco residents. In 2022 [news broke](#) of a \$1.7m public toilet in Noe Valley where, once under public scrutiny, the

cost of construction was suddenly reduced to \$300k. In 2024, multiple nonprofits such as [SF SAFE](#) and the [Providence Foundation](#) were charged with submitting fraudulent invoices to city departments and mis-spending city funds on “booze and cigars”.

Breed can't be directly blamed for every instance of corruption in the city. However, she can absolutely be blamed for the corrupt acts [she's committed herself](#), including soliciting and receiving improper gifts. She can also be blamed for not sufficiently addressing the root causes of corruption:

- **Lack of Transparency and Oversight.** Closed-door decision making and ineffective oversight mechanisms are the primary ways that corruption thrive. When the \$1.7m estimate for a public toilet was first given to Assemblyman Matt Haney for approval, he admits to not having scrutinized it other than asking if it could be lower, being told no, and then passing it to the governor. The head of the Recreation and Parks Department blamed the cost on excessive regulation like CEQA reviews and requirements to use union labor. However this reasoning doesn't hold up under scrutiny (only \$500 was budgeted for environmental reviews) and the full \$1.7m estimate was never publicly justified.
- **Over-Regulation.** In the best cases, it's often that corruption happens simply because over-regulation has created laws that are too complicated to follow. People may not know they are breaking the law, or they may know that something is illegal and choose to do it anyway if the legal path is too onerous. This is ultimately the cause of much of the corruption [that's been uncovered in the Department of Building Inspection](#). Nobody ever doubted that bribing DBI inspectors was *probably* illegal. However, they did it anyway because getting permits legally in San Francisco is a slow and grueling process that kills most projects before they begin.