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External Email

"Stronger Together", "We are all in This Together." These are all catch phrases now.

And now Storytelling is kind of a new phenomenon. And that's great. But we have been telling our stories for years. HIGH OPPORTUNITY AREAS

What's great is that we No longer have to work to change the narrative concerning housing, how serious it is, who needs it. How lives are impacted.

Advocates for Housing who were once homeless themselves have always believed that there was a place for us at the table when discussing Housing. But particularly Affordable Housing and Supportive Services. Because We know what it is like to be unhoused. We use our voices Not only to share our experience, but to elevate the voices of 1000's of people still in need of Housing, whose voices have been drowned out by the Nimbys and people who oppose Affordable Housing. We bring the voices of our communities, by listening conversing, and conveying their concerns. And Bring Truth To Power.

So in that sense Civic engagement should be expected. But there is a difference between civic duty and civic engagement We don't get paid for our work. There is a such thing as Social Capital. Reciprocity. Knowing that we get it back in support from our community...us representing them. This MTC/ ABAG workshop can be an example of that kind of support.

Keeping fresh in our minds what it's like to be without a home, a place to raise our children, make plans. We along with millions of Americans were already experiencing what others now Imagine.

Imagining will my kids be able to go to school? Will there be a shortage of food? Will we have shelter T the end of the month? Will I be okay? These hardships were always prevalent to the homeless population . Suddenly millions of people are experiencing that same of desperation from despair. Realizing the intersectionality of not only being without shelter, raising children, but having no income, while living with health concerns. Millions unfortunately now know that dreaded feeling of Uncertainty that comes with Insecurity.

But the question is why did it take a Pandemic for us all to imagine, to have the the radical imagination to House the homeless population in hotels and motels. To remove the doubt and cynicism and overthinking of concerns regarding Housing our most vulnerable citizens, veterans, elderly, disabled, Single women raising children.

Instead of saying how is that going to work? We should be saying ."All things are possible". We just needed to imagine, to see, what it looked like to provide those needed services.

We had to move past the disquieted hearts. To begin forward thinking.

But now we know, the funding can be made available under the right circumstances.

It is possible. Radical imagination.

There is a program in Oakland that helped 4000 families retain their Housing with legal assistance, financial. Assistance, and other supportive services.

Programs like this should be, need to be, expanded and made permanent. But we have fight the status quo to make the change we want to see.

AB 2923 Zoning Requirements for Bart, Local Measure, Campaigns: Everyone In, Poor Peoples Campaign, Schools and Communities First. Resident Empowerment.

I often tell of a Story About an experience I shared with my daughter (who is now 16).

We went to the Poor Peoples Campaign

A couple of years ago. There we met a young lady with her daughter . She explained that she was living in RV.. and Could no longer afford the maintenance. So it was parked on the side of the road. And at night they were Frightened.

I Thought. What could I do? When I Got home My daughter, said why didn't we offer her our living room.

I learned that day, we need that kind of Radical Immigration to solve this housing