



Report to Neighborhood Board #13

5 Sept 2019

1. Where are the City-Funded Security Guards?

Funds for the Chinatown security guards have been in the City FY20 budget since July 1. However, Chinatown citizens have yet to see guards patrolling City properties here.

We are concerned about the City's silence and apparent lack of action in this matter. City properties are among the most derelict in Chinatown. For instance, on the River Street end of North Pauahi:

- The last 2 tenants in the commercial strip ewa of Pauahi Hale moved out this summer. The strip is now vacant and boarded up.
- Homeless people camp daily & nightly on the sidewalk in front of the vacant shops, and across the street at the Pauahi Senior Rec Center and Kupuna Hale Senior Housing. There is open drug activity throughout the day.
- An employee at PS 150 on Pauahi reported that a homeless male assaulted her in front of the Pauahi Senior Rec Center at mid-day on 8/7. She asked him to move off the sidewalk so she could pass. He punched her in the mouth and hit her over the head.
- Kupuna Hale Senior Housing staff reported at 2pm on 8/15 that it was "too scary to step outside".

On behalf of our Pauahi Street neighbors and the thousands of people who live & work in Chinatown, **we urge Mayor Caldwell's team to deploy the security patrols without further delay.** The funds are available now. Please spend them as promised for the safety of our community!

What City Administrators Should Do Now:

1) Deploy the private security guards at and around City-owned properties, as provided in the current City budget.

2) Commit to being an active, present landlord at your Chinatown properties.

- Find and vet responsible tenants for your vacant spaces. Lease to tenants who support a healthy neighborhood, not diminish it.
- Actively manage the properties. Be on site at least weekly. Fix the broken things. Listen to tenants and community concerns and act on them.

2. What Else Can the City Do Now?

- Provide all additional funding needed to support HPD in protecting Chinatown's citizens.
- Fast-track your negotiations with River of Life Mission so they may move their feeding operation to Iwilei this year.
- Close the Pauahi Street hygiene center and relocate Safe Haven out of Chinatown.
- Close the liquor stores that sell alcohol and drugs to homeless & mentally ill substance abusers.



3. Funding Sought for HPD Security Camera Upgrades

HPD District 1 personnel are in early discussions with the City's IT Department regarding costs to upgrade Chinatown's outdated camera monitoring system. Further, HPD has reached out to CM Fukunaga's office and community members to brainstorm ideas for funding the upgrades. We welcome this development and we hope to have more news to share in the coming months. The lack of a functional district-wide security camera system makes it even more urgent that the City deploy the promised security patrols in Chinatown.

4. IHS, City & State Partner on Court-Ordered Treatment for Mentally Ill Homeless Persons

The Star-Advertiser reported Aug 27 on this new multi-agency effort to get help for service-resistant mentally ill homeless people. It's the first practical application of Senator Rhoads' SB 1124, which allows judges to order treatment for persons whose psychosis poses a danger to themselves. This is good news for Chinatown. For many complex reasons that we have discussed at length in previous reports, mentally ill homeless people congregate in Chinatown in disproportionately high numbers. While these unfortunate people wrestle with their illness out in public, our community suffers from the well-documented fallout. We're grateful that IHS and other agencies have a new tool with which to get people off the streets and into supportive care.

5. Liquor Store Update?

No news since our Aug 1 report. We await further updates from the Honolulu Liquor Commission.

6. Ongoing Issues with Blight & Crime

Go to ChinatownWatch.com to view & post incidents.

7. Actions that Concerned Citizens Can Take Now:

- 1) **Call 911 to report violations.**
- 2) **Talk to your neighbors about the problems.** Encourage them to call 911, too.
- 3) **Post incidents anonymously to ChinatownWatch.com.** Please note that posting to ChinatownWatch.com is NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR CALLING 911.
- 4) **Urge the City Council and Mayor Caldwell to fund private security patrols for ALL of Downtown-Chinatown's public spaces.** Contact Councilmember Fukunaga's office to report incidents in your area. Email cafukunaga@honolulu.gov or call 768-5006
- 5) **Support HPD deploying police foot & bike patrols 24/7 throughout Downtown-Chinatown**
- 6) **Get some neighbors together to meet with the HPD's Community Policing team.** Call the CPT office at 732-3927. A strong community partnership with HPD is good for everyone.
- 7) **Merchants & property owners, please join the Chinatown Improvement District's neighborhood security patrol.** Call Lee Stack at 589-9927 or email chinatownimprovementdistrict@gmail.com, or via the website: cidchinatownhawaii.org.
- 8) **To order Chinatown Watch window signs for your business, email ChinatownWatch@gmail.com**

Homeless people with mental illness to get court-ordered help

By [Dan Nakaso](#) • Today • *Updated 10:53 p.m.*

Officials with the city, state and the Institute for Human Services are teaming up on a new approach to deal with homeless people with mental health issues by trying to get court-ordered help for the first of potentially hundreds of homeless people on Oahu.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell on Monday announced a one-year, \$500,000 contract between the city and IHS that initially will focus on trying to get Family Court judges to order mental health treatment for fewer than 10 homeless clients.

The contract follows the state Legislature's passage of SB 1124 last session to make it easier for judges to order homeless people with mental health issues to receive treatment such as the Invega drug, which has proved successful in treating mental illness.

Christopher Thomas, an attorney representing IHS, said the organization plans to go to Family Court in Kapolei to seek court approval for the first group.

The change in the law means attorneys only have to prove that a client is a danger to himself or herself — and not a danger to others — to enforce the monthly treatments, Thomas said.

At a press conference Monday at Chinatown's Smith-Beretania Park where homeless people gather every day, Caldwell thanked state Sen. Karl Rhoads (D, Downtown-Nuuanu-Liliha) for pushing the legislation and said the first cases will test the limits of the new law before the courts.

"All of us have a responsibility to tackle and solve this problem," Caldwell said.

The one-year contract with IHS is aimed at "tackling the most difficult part of the (homeless) problem," Caldwell said.

Caldwell was joined at Smith-Beretania Park by representatives from IHS and the state.

Connie Mitchell, IHS executive director, said her agency wants to help homeless clients who are "left alone to sleep in their own poop and pee" and sometimes are found with maggots growing out of open wounds.

The court-ordered treatment could help "reclaim years of life for some homeless people," Mitchell said.

City officials said the new Outreach Navigation program is aimed at the most service-resistant, chronically homeless people with mental health issues who will not accept help.

In a statement, Mitchell said, "For the past two years, IHS has witnessed the miracle of new medication that's cured mental illnesses for more than 40 chronically homeless individuals across Hawaii who were willing to accept treatment. Today, we are humbled to be awarded the homeless Outreach Navigation Program as it fulfills a much-needed gap in our system to help those who refuse, but are unaware they are sick, with obtaining access to treatment. Through assertive outreach, guardianships and utilization of Hawaii's updated assisted community treatment law, we can take the necessary steps forward to help solve chronic homelessness in our state."

The program will rely on psychiatric services to develop and implement treatment plans and file for so-called Assisted Community Treatment orders.

In a statement, Marc Alexander, director of the city Office of Housing, said, "True compassion is getting folks who are suffering from mental illness off our streets. An analysis by the Medical Examiner has already shown that living without shelter leads to an average age of death of less than 53 years old, and often these deaths have a nexus to mental illness. We hope the new Outreach Navigation Program not only changes lives, but actually saves them."