



INFORMAL HOUSING

The National Association of Home Builders, USA

***Presentation to the
International Housing Association
2017 Annual Meeting***



INFORMAL HOUSING

1- Does your country have informal housing? If so how do you define it?

Informal housing is shelter which is subject to clearance by municipal order.

San Francisco ballot initiatives:

- Proposition Q: Ban sidewalk tents and empower police to confiscate within 24 hours notice so long as occupants were offered beds in shelters.
- Propositions J & K: \$50 million from small sales-tax increase to ease shortfall.

San Francisco homeless population: 6,700 (December 2016); 1,203 emergency beds.

Homeless population increased only 7% over ten years, but what has changed is visibility. Tech Boom construction has filled empty lots where people “experiencing homelessness” – that’s the preferred term – formerly slept in seclusion.

San Francisco Director of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, NY Times Dec 19 2016.*(i.e., the lack of documents land rights, build outside of building professional, etc.)*

2- What are the challenges that informal housing represent for your country?

Informal housing creates health and safety concerns, both for the residents and community.

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Encampments:

- There are 80 encampments in San Francisco, and private organizations donate camping tents.
- “Box City 7th Street. They may look like boxes to you, but to us they are home.”
- Wooden shanties clogging busy traffic are on wheels for easy relocation, installed with lockable doors and a glass window.
- Everybody’s building a lifeboat and living in it. SF Homeless Outreach Team.
- Los Angeles homeless population grew 11% from 2015-16 to 28,464 and the number of “makeshift” dwellings almost doubled.
- Santa Barbara designated “safe parking” lots for people who occupy vehicles.
- Drugs addicts, piles of garbage, mentally ill; or “we call it an urban camping experience.”

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3. What percentage of your housing stock would you consider informal housing?

Approximately 0.2% of the US housing stock could be considered informal, housing 0.18% of the population.

Homeless advocates apply the terms emergency, transitional, supportive and temporary differently. Makeshift. Cars.

Chronically homeless = homeless for greater than a year, or 4 episodes of homelessness over the past three years.

4. How does your country address individuals that do not have access to formal housing?

Local governments/municipalities are the primary movers.

National policies have had some success, such as lowering homelessness among veterans. The Rapid Re-Housing program succeeded in moving over 60,000 individuals to beds in 2015.

Census; State of Homelessness in America, National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Informal Community, Eugene, Oregon, November 2016

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Political Informal Housing, Washington DC, winter

