

## **Recyclers Focus Group**

### **Tell us about your daily life as a recycler**

- Use shopping cart to transport recycling
- Wear gloves to protect hands
- Recycling motors and anything electronic for copper and aluminum—Need tools
- Main goal CRV
- Some are scrappers, some are recyclers
- Making money and keeping streets clean
- 3-4 square miles per day covered—San Pablo to Oakland
- Full day's work
- Some recycling companies will not let you recycle unless you have a car or truck, others are more welcoming

### **What is good about your life as a recycler?**

- Clean up areas
- Exercise, movement, diversity of area
- Peace of mind
- Sanity
- Part of my recovery
- Minimize impact on landfills
- Helps get by
- 40-50 dollars a day for some, up to 80 or 90 a day for others.

### **What is the hardest thing about being a recycler?**

- People who don't clean up after themselves and leave a mess
- Hard Work
- Unfair wages
- Harassment
- Demanding
- Regulations make it tough
- Getting Tickets
- Too much walking

### **How do you stay healthy?**

- Self-Protection—Knife, Pepper Spray for dogs
- Gloves
- Long Sleeves
- Tetanus shots

- Hand Sanitizer or washing hands
- Good boots
- Getting enough sleep, which is hard to do when homeless
- Taking care of feet

#### What would make the work and life of recyclers better?

- More mobile/portable recycling centers
- Less regulation
- Less Tickets
- Assist recyclers with legal carts and IDs from some centers

#### Personal Safety Issues

- Some other recyclers will take your stuff
- Harassment by people who are anti-homeless
- Need to protect your things
- Can get jumped or into fights
- Perceived to be on the turf of others

#### How do the police and the cities treat you?

- Tickets can cost weeks of labor to pay off
- Oakland appears to be doing less enforcement recently
- Recyclers feel exposed and vulnerable

#### Thoughts about the bottle bill

- One person shared experience of transporting hundreds of pounds of wine and liquor bottles to recycler only to not earn anything for them
- Not enough places to take recyclables and not all glass taken
- Passing the bottle bill would clean up the streets
- We count on this money for food or shoes and wine and liquor bottles could increase our income