

TENDERLOIN

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN



Tenderloin Newsletter

June 2023



Dear Tenderloin residents and communities,

As we approach the second half of the year, SF Planning's Tenderloin team is excited to announce the next chapters of our work with the neighborhood. We start by sharing our first newsletter with the community in addition to a **brief reflection** on what 2022 brought for the Tenderloin and what we have accomplished.

Our team is committed to fostering collaborative partnerships, centering equity, and promoting community self-determination. The Tenderloin Action Planning effort will facilitate community-driven initiatives and culminate new capacities to advance equity when improving quality of life for neighborhood residents, workers, and small businesses. Within these capacities, SF Planning will continue to convene and serve as a liaison to shape inter-agency efforts to address the crisis on the neighborhood streets.

In this first newsletter, we share about various components of our work as a growing ecosystem of impact for the neighborhood: Community Action Grant projects, new partnerships with Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC) and United Way Bay Area (UWBA), community-driven emerging priorities, community leadership group reshaping, and community empowerment on understanding progress on streets conditions.



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#TenderloinPlan

Community Action Grants Coming to Life

In June 2022, Mayor Breed approved \$4 million for community-driven projects in the Tenderloin, an unprecedented dedication of resources resulting from years of community organizing to improve the neighborhood's vibrancy and quality of life.

Our team designed a first of its kind participatory budgeting process to seek community-sponsored projects, an innovative process that Tenderloin residents had called for **in prior outreach and organizing efforts** that ended with 1,400 residents and workers voting on proposals, and 21 projects selected for funding.

The final selected projects focus on neighborhood priorities which have been outlined over many years of outreach and engagement: enhancing public space safety and vibrancy through activation, supporting the needs of youth battling stressful conditions in their neighborhood, navigating the challenging night conditions on the streets, and improving access to essential needs. We are excited to share the Tenderloin Community Action Projects pamphlet with the community.

Over the last few months in 2023, our team has been working closely with community project sponsors to further define their scopes and support implementation of these projects. We are excited to announce that United Way Bay Area will partner with community project sponsors to bring these projects into reality. These projects will be implemented from summer 2023 to spring 2025 through interagency and cross-sector collaboration that includes SF Planning, Mayor's office of Housing and Community Development, Office of Economic and Workforce Development, Department of Public Health, Human Services Agency, United Way Bay Area, as well as community leaders and entrepreneurs in



the Tenderloin. The community projects will bring new life to the Tenderloin within the next year: New public spaces such as the Golden Gate Greenway and Elm Alley School Street will transform underutilized, car-oriented streets into pedestrian-first streets to bring much-needed outdoor space for residents of all backgrounds to gather and spend time outside and for kids to play safely on the alley behind their school. A Teen Drop-in Center will bring open-ended activities for the youth in the neighborhood, and an Arab Youth Center that will offer culturally competent resources for the Arab youth and their families. Night Wellness Navigators will provide care and resources to the streets of the neighborhood during the night-time when most other street operations end. These and other projects will bring energy to the neighborhood and contribute to the vibrancy and safety of the streets of the Tenderloin.

SF Planning has also launched a collaborative partnership between community project sponsors to build collective impact in the neighborhood that exceeds the sum of implementing each project individually. Together as a cohort, project sponsors are collaborating across project categories, leveraging organizational resources and experience to build collective impact. Collective impact translates to better outcomes and deeper impact achieved because of synergistic developments within the cohort. Collaboration for collective impact within the Community Action Grants cohort is grounded by regularly recurring cohort meetings. In the of these collective impact meetings on May 24, project sponsors workshoped **many ideas** where their collaboration promises a broader reach in the community.



Community Leadership Group Reshaping

To support the development of a unified voice advocating for practical solutions, effective strategies and investments, SF Planning is partnering with community leaders to facilitate establishing a community leadership group.

This work is pursuing the Community Stakeholder Group discussions our team facilitated in the Fall of 2022 including an open and diverse group of residents and community stakeholders. After a few meetings, and major contributions to participatory budgeting processes, key stakeholders requested to retreat and rethink the purpose of the group. The rethinking

informed **a discussion in February** on what a community stakeholder group could support for the Tenderloin and how residents and communities can form a cohesive leadership group that delivers a unified voice. The neighborhood has shaped this unified voice a few times in the past two years, when signing the letter to the Mayor that instigated the Tenderloin Emergency Initiative, when advocating for allocated funding to the neighborhood, and when merchant groups organized, and called for and secured more enforcement on drug dealing on the streets. The community was loud and clear that the purpose of a community leadership group needs to be intentional, the representatives should be diverse, and that the group function in partnership with the City. To advance

Tenderloin community leadership capacity in the neighborhood, SF Planning is excited to announce a new partnership with Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC). Through this partnership, TNDC will seek and establish community partners who actively engage and organize Tenderloin residents and stakeholders. This collaboration, supported by expert consultants hired by SF Planning, aims to support the community in establishing a sustained, unified voice in the neighborhood: a community leadership group. Once established, our team in close collaboration with interagency partners, will support the leadership group in their advocacy.



Priority Investment Areas emerging

Community-driven priority areas have continued to shape, parallel with implementation of short-term term Community Action Projects.

Our team has viewed these community driven-priority areas as medium-term solutions and investments that will eventually support the Tenderloin Community Action Plan. We remain nimble to identify and elevate these medium-term priorities as they arise through our community partnerships. Our team is currently focusing on four priority areas.

First is supporting small businesses, in collaboration with Office of Economic And Workforce Development to fund small businesses grants in the neighborhood. This priority reflects the community's voting results during the Tenderloin participatory budgeting process, as part of the Tenderloin Community Action Plan, to build upon and increase resources for small businesses. Planning will work with OEWD to shape these funding programs, so they may result in a collective impact for the Tenderloin. **Second, is informing investments for youth**, in collaboration with Department of Children,

Youth, and their families (DCYF), as they roll out a new five-year funding cycle for children, youth, transitional age youth (TAY) and their families later in July. The Tenderloin has one of the highest concentrations of children and youth in San Francisco, especially from immigrant families. The open-air drug market and substance use on the streets of the Tenderloin leave youth more vulnerable and exposed to the drug scene at the margins. In conversations with youth service providers and experts, we have learned that investing in youth, especially disconnected youth, in the Tenderloin may require elevating certain priorities. Through this partnership our team will facilitate a neighborhood-specific analysis of gaps and priorities for youth investments to support DCYF in decision making for program grants awarded to serve Tenderloin children, youth, TAY and their families. **Third is planning for public Space and pedestrian Safety Improvements.** In collaboration with the community-led Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force, this effort will identify priority opportunities and strategies to articulate and advocate for further investments in streetscape, open space and traffic safety improvements in the Tenderloin. This

partnership aims to help transform the current ad-hoc approach to public space design and advocacy into one that is based on assessed needs and ideas defined by pilot projects, community conversations, and interagency coordination. Preliminary strategic areas could be: creating an alley system, design a road diets network, promote strategic quick-build projects, develop a creative plan for public space maintenance, and, finally, draft a long-term vision for an open space network connected by safe and clean streets. **Lastly is to activate housing priorities.** As the City focuses on implementing the City's adopted Housing Element, the Tenderloin team will partner with community to activate housing priorities including planning for improving SRO conditions, addressing vacancy in supportive housing, and facilitating housing with advanced treatment options.

Our team will continue to work with community partners to identify community-driven priorities and advance those towards investment and implementation. The community leadership group, once formed, will advise our team to focus or expand these four priority areas of work.

Street Conditions Progress and Challenges

As the Tenderloin Emergency Initiative transitioned into sustained operations, the Department of Emergency management has continued to run daily interagency street response in the Tenderloin. The Joint Field Operations (JFO) is a multi-departmental effort to improve street conditions in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco.

The JFO began in January of 2022 in response to the Tenderloin Emergency Initiative. At the time, the JFO was intended to be a short-term approach to supporting individuals experiencing homelessness or struggling with substance use disorders to access resources and treatment and the Tenderloin Center (TLC). When the TLC closed, the JFO became an ongoing approach to service-linkage with a continuing component of street cleaning. The **JFO functions** seven days per week from 9:00am – 1:00pm and is staffed by many city departments including SFFD, HSH, DPH, MTA, DPW, SFPD, DEM. In addition to the ongoing collaboration amongst city departments, the JFO has forged working relationships with several Community Benefit District (CBD) organizations. In addition to sharing updates and concerns around street conditions, these groups support the JFO with street cleaning when additional resources are required. Positive feedback has been provided to the JFO, regarding an improvement in street conditions from housed community members, business owners, service providers, and CBD staff. The unhoused community has expressed gratitude for the predictable and consistent nature of the JFO, which has increased their trust and confidence in not being mistreated by city staff. In March 2023, the Department of Public Health launched a reconfigured neighborhood-based street



response team called Bridge Engagement Services Team (BEST) Neighborhoods. The team provides trauma-informed behavioral health assessment, engagement, and community-based therapeutic interventions 7-days a week, with a focus on clients who are unhoused, diagnosed with serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder, and who are disconnected from the health care system. BEST Neighborhoods currently has two teams working primarily in the Tenderloin, SoMa, Mission, Castro and Haight Ashbury areas. The team is currently ramping up staffing and will eventually provide services in neighborhoods across San Francisco.

Most recently the City has started collaborations with the California Highway Patrol as well as the National Guard to address the open-air drug market and drug use. A new **Drug Market Agency Coordination Center** has been established near the Tenderloin to address these issues citywide. Led by the

Department of Emergency Management this Center will continue the unified command collaboration with San Francisco Police Department, and the Department of Public Health.

SF Planning has remained close to understanding the scope and scale of street operations, and a partner as needed. As we start moving towards identifying and implementing community priorities, our team is committed to serving as a stronger conduit to elevate community priorities in addressing the street conditions in the neighborhood. Our work will focus on empowering the community with better understanding of progress on the streets. This will include a revamp of **data dashboard** we have been hosting in the next few months to better keep the community informed of progress, and hosting conversations bridging between community and interagency partners to shape strategies of street operations.

Stay Tuned For Our First Quarterly Meeting This Summer!



We want to acknowledge that without the dedicated commitments, advocacy, and resilience of the Tenderloin community, none of these remarkable efforts would have been possible. We send our sincere appreciation to all those who continue to work tirelessly towards a healthier, safer and vibrant Tenderloin. We are excited to further strengthen our partnership with the Tenderloin Community and expand our connections. We invite you to celebrate and learn more about these upcoming projects and investments. **Sign-up** to get notified for our first quarterly community meeting in the summer. At this meeting,

- We will celebrate community action grants launching with the sponsors presenting their projects.
- Provide an update on community leadership group process
- Seek community input on street conditions progress outcomes
- Overview of the four priority areas of our work



Looking forward to seeing many of you!

~ SF Planning's Tenderloin team



 [For more info:](https://sfplanning.org/project/tenderloin-community-action-plan)

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