

TENDERLOIN

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Tenderloin Newsletter

October 2023



Dear Tenderloin residents and communities,

We are excited to share with you our **second quarterly newsletter** this year. Our **first newsletter** at the beginning of the Summer described components of our work. Each quarter we will update our progress on these initiatives.

Our mission is to bring Tenderloin community's voice into action and transform that action into reality through investments. Our vision is for the Tenderloin to transition out of a state of crisis into a neighborhood where residents have equitable access to improved quality of life and a diverse and vibrant neighborhood for all. We aim to achieve this through facilitating community-driven initiatives, cultivating new capacities, and interagency collaborations and investments.

This newsletter will first highlight our most recent Community Event held on October 5; provide updates and next steps for Community Action Projects that will continue to come to life in the neighborhood and the community-driven Strategic Priorities; and lay out the next steps of outreach and engagement for Tenderloin Community Action Planning.



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#TenderloinPlan

Community Event Celebrating Milestone

We started fall 2023 with an in-person update to the community at Kelly Cullen Community Center on October 5th, 5-6:30pm. Thank you for the huge turnout and your interest in hearing more about our work.

SF Planning Director Rich Hillis gave opening remarks highlighting how community organizing and advocacy in the Tenderloin brought city resources to the neighborhood. The meeting proceeded with a comprehensive presentation of our work from the team, followed by an open house where Community Action Project sponsors engaged with the broader community. Community members also had the opportunity to learn more about our progress, provide their input, and suggest ways for further engaging in our four strategic priorities: Small Business Support, Youth Investment, Public Space, Housing, and outreach and engagement as we move forward. You can find the meeting material on our webpage, including the [presentation](#), [informational boards](#), and [photos of community's input](#).



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 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. The process culminated with 1,400 residents and workers voting on proposals, and 21 projects selected for funding.

Community Action Projects Coming to Life

We are excited that more Community Action Projects will come to life in the neighborhood this fall!

In the past few months, these funds supported community events and the inaugural launch of services in the neighborhood:

- By the end of September, 14,430 meals were delivered to about 500 people withing five supportive housing buildings.
- TL Muslim Youth Collaborative organized their first ever Eid Al-Adha celebration in July, and more than 300 people attended this major celebration.
- Grace Notes Community Cultural Festival brought artists and neighborhood organizations to showcase creative and cultural work at the corner of Turk & Hyde on Aug 12th. Upcoming festivals dates: December 9th and January 2th.
- BiSHoP hosted the first outreach event in Arabic to educate Arab families on affordable housing opportunities and application process.
- SEACC delivered services to community members including recreational activities for seniors, technical assistance for job and school applications, and supported outreach to Vietnamese and Cantonese speaking small business owners.
- TLCBD's clean team, park stewards and safe passage team received funding support and continued to support community-led events and activations. In addition, TLCBD's clean team expanded its operational hours, and the safe passage team will start a new effort to escort seniors to Farmers' Market.
- Code Tenderloin launched the Night Navigators program. In their first 4 weeks of operation, the team has made hundreds of contacts and many connection to resources.



The public space improvements are also advancing through designing and permitting process:

St. Anthony Foundation's Golden Gate Greenway project received approval from the SFMTA Board for an extended street closure of the 100 block of Golden Gate Avenue (Mon-Sun, 6 am-6 pm); new movable planters barricades will be installed by mid-November. Fabrication has also started for three parklets (in front of 111 Jones, Saint Boniface Catholic Church and 826 Valencia Tenderloin Center) and an installation permit is forthcoming. The 826 Valencia Tenderloin Center parklet will be the first to be installed in November and it will feature large fiberglass planters with trees, metal planters, benches, and two lending libraries for children and adults to borrow books or read on site. **Look out for community volunteer days to come out and help with this first exciting feature on the Golden Gate Greenway.**

Timeline for building the other two parklets will be shared in our next newsletter, but we expect that they will be in place by early Spring 2024.



The community group soon to be Friends of Elm Alley also submitted their official permit application to SFMTA for street closure to transform Elm Alley by Tenderloin Community School into a School Street – a street that hosts activities related to the school during the



school opening hours such as safe drop-off and pick-up, a welcoming environment for families and an interactive space for children to play. The project has received a preliminary interagency approval and will be at the SFMTA Board for final approval at the end of November. Stay tuned for some upcoming play on the street!

As of October 2023, the majority of 21 Community Action projects have either started delivering services or are in the designing/permitting phase. A few are finalizing scopes and contracts with our partner, United Way Bay Area or are still in the process of submitting the required information. We've received many inquiries and concerns about the process and funding distribution timeline in the past few months. While we understand and share these concerns, we are confident that the City has put in place requirements and processes that create a fair, transparent, and healthy financial agreements with grantees to address recent

challenges that the City has faced. For those interested, we have put together **a detailed step by step process** through which SF Planning has partnered with City agencies, non-profits, and community sponsors to program and distribute Tenderloin's funding.

A detailed timeline of all community action projects implementation and services can be found **here**. We look forward to seeing more of these projects and services in the Tenderloin.

Our team continues to cultivate the spirit of collaboration within the Community Action Projects cohort. The cohort made specific **commitments** towards collaborative partnerships to build collective impact in the neighborhood. We will host our second cohort meeting before the end of the year and share the outcomes in our next newsletter.

Strategic Priorities Solidifying and Advancing

In our last newsletter we shared four community-driven priorities. We have solidified these as our four strategic priorities for which we aim to create medium-term investment plans in collaboration with partner agencies. Here are the updates on our work in each of these areas.

First is supporting small businesses, we collaborated with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development to first program \$380,000 to support small businesses, voted by Tenderloin community during participatory budgeting process, and second to inform the medium-term investments on small businesses in the Tenderloin.

We hosted three small business stakeholder workshops, where TLCBD, TNDC, Southeast Asian Community Center (SEACC), and New Community Leadership Foundation (NCLF) came together to shape small business priorities. We participated in a well-attended Tenderloin Business Coalition event to engage directly with business owners. Additionally, with support from SEACC we interviewed Vietnamese and Cantonese-speaking business owners to ensure our proposal reflects the needs of owners from diverse culture background.

Our team also conducted qualitative surveys of key commercial corridors on Larkin Street, Golden Gate Avenue, and Eddy Street, to better understand the unique characteristics and conditions of storefronts in the Tenderloin, including their strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

Building upon the community voice we've heard through our groundwork, our team is pleased to propose the allocation of our small business funding into three key categories: supporting existing businesses, aiding new businesses in filling vacant

storefronts, and funding business technical assistance.

Currently we are working closely with OEWD to launch the funds for small businesses to access. We also will continue to deepen our engagement with business owners whose primary language is not English, and coordinate our joint investments in the Tenderloin. This alignment will empower us to strategically channel resources in both the short-term and medium-term, bolstering the small businesses and entrepreneurial endeavors within the Tenderloin community.



Second is informing investments for youth, in collaboration with the Department of Children, Youth, and their families (DCYF), our team is finalizing a neighborhood-specific gap analysis to identify the unique needs of TL youth that should be prioritized for funding. In the past three months we have conducted needs assessment through:

- interviews with youth service providers
- focus groups with both connected and disconnected youth
- focus groups with parents in language (Arabic, and Spanish)
- Listening session with the Tenderloin Afterschool Collaborative

We have heard powerful stories during these conversations and anticipate concluding our outreach in the coming weeks. Here are a few notable quotes:

*“We’re not kids, our families depend on us. **We need access to jobs and resources that will help us help our families,**” expressed a teen participant.*

*“We aren’t attracted to programs that are geared towards children and where we’re always supervised. I can see myself attending a program that offers **open gyms, game rooms, and hangout spots with low supervision,**” shared a teen participant.*

*“Obviously the current programs don’t attract disconnected youth. We need programs that provide them **opportunities and safe places to hang out,**” emphasized a youth service provider.*

Our short-term goal is to inform final funding allocations by DCYF for its 2024-29 five-year funding cycle to address the unique needs and priorities of Tenderloin youths. We hope to share the final gap analysis with the community soon. In the longer term, we wish to facilitate new programs or adjustments to existing programs to better serve Tenderloin youth.

A detailed presentation of our work on this priority area is available [here](#).

Third is planning for public space improvements and activation. Our team participated in community conversations including with the community-led Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Task Force. Based on these conversations, we will be focusing on “Placemaking” in the Tenderloin through public space improvements and activations. A placemaking approach could be a powerful complement to enforcement and health services interventions by creating positive experiences deterring drug dealing and drug use on the sidewalks, and improving public safety and quality of life. **We aim to coordinate placemaking interventions with increased public safety enforcement from various agencies, as a neighborhood recovery strategy.** In this way, we could replace drug related activities with positive neighborhood serving events and improvements. The placemaking strategy is organized around four focus areas:

- **First is to include alleys in the public space network of the Tenderloin** by transforming them into school streets, mini-parks, mini-plazas or special events places. The goal is to increase the open space in the neighborhood.
- **Second is to improve specific commercial corridors, in coordination with our small business support efforts,** to increase the neighborhood quality of life and strengthen business health by increasing foot traffic.
- **Third is rethinking neighborhood entrances** as welcoming gateways offering opportunities for special activities, art, and signage.
- **The fourth and last focus area is to transform currently underutilized lots into neighborhood hubs with recreational activities for Tenderloin residents.** In the coming months, all these ideas will be explored through pilot projects, community conversations and by forming a community working group in collaboration with interagency partners.

A detailed presentation of our work on this priority area is available [here](#).

Our fourth strategic priority is activating housing priorities. Building on the Housing Element process, the Tenderloin team **identified community housing priorities from past outreach events, the Tenderloin Community Survey, and through conversations with community organizations and housing providers.** These include:

1. Improve deeply affordable housing assets to ensure a dignified standard of living,
2. Preserve housing affordability through acquisition,
3. Protect vulnerable residents at most risk of homelessness by providing rental subsidies for SRO and permanent supportive housing residents,
4. Expand on-site case management services, especially behavioral health + substance use disorder,
5. Improve access to affordable housing suitable for families with children and Transitional Aged Youth, and culturally component housing services.
6. Reduce vacancies in existing permanent supportive housing buildings

Our team held conversations with Permanent Supportive Housing Providers Network, as well as community organizations serving Arab families for affordable housing access.

In our Community Event on October 5, the broader community commented on the six housing priorities. In the coming months, we hope to form a working group and collaborate with interagency partners to delve deeper into investing in solutions for these priorities in the next two years.

A detailed presentation of our work on this priority area is available [here](#).

Our team will continue working with community partners to advance community-driven priorities towards investment and implementation. We remain nimble to identify and elevate additional medium-term priorities as they arise from this collaboration.



Community Outreach and Engagement Relaunching

Since the completion of the participatory budgeting process, our team has relied on various outreach and engagement tools and approaches including hosting topic-based community expert convenings, focus groups, community expert interviews, as well as open houses such as our more recent Community Event on Oct, 5. In addition, to maintain a thorough understanding of the community voice landscape we also participate in community-led events, tabling

community events, and community meetings hosted by other agency partners. In the next few months, we hope to shape two working groups to advance our strategic priorities on **open space and housing**.

As we shared in our last newsletter, SF Planning has partnered with Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC) who will support our outreach and engagement, and particularly facilitate community leadership. Through this partnership, TNDC will dedicate a full-time

staff for one year to support our outreach and engagement in the neighborhood. As a first step TNDC will bring together four additional lead organizations with engagement roles to set up a framework and vision towards building a unified voice. This work aims to build a sustainable community leadership in the Tenderloin representing diverse voices and perspectives and building consensus amongst them.

Street Conditions Progress and Challenges

The City provides various street outreach and response efforts throughout the City, with some efforts specific to the Tenderloin.

The Joint Field Operations (JFO), a multi-departmental effort led by Department of Emergency Management to improve street conditions in the Tenderloin continues to operate seven days per week from 9:00am – 1:00pm and is staffed by many city departments including SFFD, HSH, DPH, MTA, DPW, SFPD, DEM, and works in collaboration with Community Benefits District including Clean Team.

The Department of Public Health leads a neighborhood-based, multi-disciplinary, behavioral health outreach team called BEST (Bridge and Engagement Services Team) Neighborhoods. The program has a dedicated team who works 5-days a week in the Tenderloin and SoMa neighborhoods. The team primarily works with clients who are unhoused, diagnosed with serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder, and who are disconnected from the health care system. The BEST Neighborhoods team provides behavioral health assessment, engagement, and community-based therapeutic interventions with the goal of stabilizing clients and transitioning them to long-term care and supports.



The **Night Navigator Program (pictured)** run by Code Tenderloin, funded as a Community Action Project and in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, is the newest addition to the street teams addressing a long-needed gap of providing services and care during the night. The team operates 4-days a week from 7am – 3am and provides street level engagement and referrals and connections to resources.

The new Drug Market Agency Coordination Center continues to operate a multi-departmental effort to address open air drug scene in the Tenderloin and SoMA in coordination with multiple law enforcement agencies. Their efforts to date have led to drug dealing and use arrests and significant amounts of narcotics seized.

What you should look forward to...

Some TCAP highlights by the end of the year:

- Golden Gate Greenway's first parklet installation and related opportunities to participate in community work days
- Seeing night navigators in action during the evenings
- Small business support program roll-out
- Application for two working groups: open space and housing
- Draft of the Tenderloin youth services gap analysis

Looking forward to continuing advancing community-driven projects and priorities with you all !

~ SF Planning's Tenderloin Team



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

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