A VIBRANT COMMUNITY FOR ALL
Welcome to the TLCBD 2020 Year in Reflection.

We take this opportunity to step back from the urgency of the daily work and express our deepest gratitude to everyone who has partnered with us, energized us, and came together for the Tenderloin in this most challenging of years.

We began January 2020 with renewed support from Tenderloin Property Owners and, by leveraging their increased investment in the TLCBD, we were able to raise additional public and private funds to support our vision for a vibrant neighborhood by expanding our programs into each area of our Core Framework.

We established new programs to support Tenderloin Parks and Open Spaces, Economic Opportunity for small businesses and residents, Pedestrian Safety, an expanded Tenderloin Camera Network, and Neighborhood Pride while continuing to deepen the work of Safe Passage and the Clean Team.

But even as we built these new programs, the cloud of COVID-19 brought uncertainty, exacerbated community trauma, and strained our typical ways of working together. And yet, throughout the pandemic, TLCBD staff relied on collaboration with neighbors, property owners, merchants, the many neighborhood-serving organizations and City partners to persevere.

Despite the need for physical distancing, we are now more connected to one another than we have ever been. And one thing stands true: The Tenderloin community is resilient, resourceful, courageous, and cannot be ignored.

At every step of the way we adapted, grew, and continued to ask ourselves what does the neighborhood need in this moment and what can we do? We did not just pivot our work to respond to the crisis, but actually found ways to bring and experience joy in dark times.

The Year in Reflection offers a snapshot of the year, program by program, but what is most striking is that our impact was strongest when programs and community members worked together.

As we look ahead, we continue to push for cleaner, safer streets, parks and public space; and neighborhood initiatives that benefit ALL.

On behalf of the TLCBD Board of Directors & Staff, we wish you a healthy and joyous 2021.

Simon Bertrang,
TLCBD Executive Director
TLCBD Core Framework

Clean  Safe  Inviting Space

Physical Environment

Community Connection

Community Voice

Neighborhood Pride

Economic Opportunity

Jobs/Employment

Healthy Business Environment

The Tenderloin, A Vibrant Community for ALL
CLEAN TEAM

Everyday heroes respond with resilience, positivity, and service during unprecedented times.
Our most understated story of 2020 is the day-in day-out dedication of our Clean Team. These essential heroes worked through unprecedented times, political tension, white supremacist culture and racism, the uncertainty amid COVID-19, new guidelines, PPE scarcity, crowded sidewalks, increased trash, graffitied storefronts, and even smoky conditions.

The Clean Team deepened partnerships with City agencies and community members, supporting events from Outdoor Dining to Play Streets, and supporting the Jones Street Neighborhood Way. We successfully advocated for increased resources and took on the responsibility of 68 artist-designed Bigbelly stations to replace inadequate distribution of City trash cans in the neighborhood.

In response, community members thanked our teams daily, and even provided donations to support lunches from District restaurants.

**In 2021, we want to build on this deep sense of connection and pride to address root issues so that the people of the Tenderloin can experience consistently clean sidewalks. We are far from done or deterred!**

It goes without saying that none of this is possible without the support of property owners, partner agencies, City officials such as the District 6 Supervisor’s Office, private donors, and community members. We are in this together!
ARTIST: WRIPLY BENNET
PRESENTED BY THE TRANSGENDER DISTRICT

HOODLINE
“Tamper-proof trash cans on the way to every Tenderloin intersection”
Our Community Benefit Districts @LowerPolkCBD @TLCBD @SOMAWestCBD are the unsung heroes of San Francisco’s downtown neighborhoods. The CBD’s clean our streets, promote safety & security, organize programming/events & help foster a sense of community. Double down on CBD’s!

- Adam Mayer, Community Member (Twitter)

“The TLCBD Clean Team are incredibly hard workers who have made such a difference in the community.”

- SF Office of Economic Workforce Development, SFOEWD (Twitter)
Neighborhood Pride Program solidifies community connection and voice as the foundation of advocacy and agency for the Tenderloin.
The TLCBD Neighborhood Pride Program is founded on two pillars for positive change: Community Connection and Community Voice. Primed to support neighbors of block-based groups, we began 2020 convening block group meetings, visioning for improvement projects such as community murals and supporting events like Four Corner Fridays and Tenderloin Talk LIVE. The pandemic didn’t just heighten and create areas of need, it immediately upended our traditional ways of communicating and working with one another. Despite the obstacles, the program pivoted, persisted, and strengthened. New block groups formed with increased frequency of meetings and communications. New partnerships and touchpoints emerged. Program participants, including residents, community based organizations, schools, and merchants communicated needs and offered one another support. These networks, with cross program support from the Inviting Space Program, were critical in developing and pushing for street openings to support service provision, safety, outdoor dining, park openings, and Play Streets.
“Hope is alive in the Tenderloin: What the neighborhood needs now to reverse decades of neglect”
Program participants worked together to form partnerships with City agencies and hold them accountable as conditions in the neighborhood worsened. Ultimately, this work led to the formation and implementation of the Tenderloin Neighborhood Plan.

Neighbors continue to exhibit agency and advocacy in multiple venues, including City-staffed work groups, commissions, roundtables, and other community health convenings, always pushing for their neighborhood.

It was through this collective work that City agencies, in June and July, acted in collaboration with community members to deliver alternatives for more than 600 people experiencing homelessnesses on Tenderloin sidewalks.

**Our work is far from over. The pandemic has only reinforced our vision for the Tenderloin’s path toward sustained positive change.**

In 2021, the TLCBD will continue to support community member connection and voice through the Neighborhood Pride Program. We’ll deliver more projects from small (think murals) to BIG (permanent open spaces). We’ll launch and grow stipend programs to facilitate resident engagement. We will refocus energy in neighborhood youth, advancing their voice and hopes for their neighborhood. Lastly, we will continue to push the TL Thrives Initiative, our commitment to addressing the community trauma associated with the neighborhood’s open drug market.

The voices of the Tenderloin reinforce and push us to continue in this work. It is through knowing these voices that one sees the true beauty of the neighborhood—its vibrancy and diversity.

In 2020, we began to share neighborhood voices through the #TLTogether series which you’ll find throughout this reflection. We look forward to sharing more voices and forging new connections.
TL TOGETHER

TL Together is about the people. Through our interview series we share the vastly diverse stories of people of the Tenderloin.
TENDERLOIN is...
Neighbors
Friends
Families
Immigrants
Merchants
Advocates
Artists
Visionaries
“I like to present a friendly reminder that we live in a beautiful place. Yes, there are challenges. But if you spend time, and take a little longer, you will see what I see and start to appreciate the neighborhood.”

-Tan Sirinumas, TL Artist

“What makes things work is when we connect with other people and tap into the generosity and the good values that we all hold. Then you can make something happen.”

- Kathy Curran, Healing Well SF

“I was inspired by the Tenderloin’s heritage as being a longtime haven for Queer and Trans people. There are so many people living in the TL that deserve to be acknowledged and celebrated and my work aims to do just that. The Tenderloin is also the site of the Compton Cafeteria riots, and is now the first official Transgender District in the world!”

-Crystal Vielula, TLCBD BigBelly Artist
“One of my wishes is for people to understand the intrinsic value that all humans have. We love the neighborhood and being part of the community. There’s so much that this neighborhood brings to the city.”

- Steve Binnquist, YWAM

“I love the openness of the Tenderloin, people tend to be unapologetically who they are in the TL. It’s an environment where many are very open with where they are and that’s a huge platform for change in the right circumstances. I also love the diversity here.”

- israel Richardson, TL Resident & Advocate

“I was really trying to convince my daughter and myself that we’d get housed...but she never lost faith in me. Never lose faith in yourself. Have a good support network. Nothing is accomplished alone.”

- Tracey Mixon, TL Resident & Advocate
Inviting Space Program comes to fruition, bringing joy and connection despite the need to distance.
Among the achievements of 2020 was the creation of the Inviting Space Program, which welcomed a new Director to lead efforts in creating open space opportunities, activating parks with programming, and other public art initiatives.

Early on, the program delivered the arts component of the Bigbelly project, which rendered artist work in conversation with neighborhood assets such as murals, youth poetry, and history. The Grand Reopening Celebration at Turk Hyde Mini Park was an incredible pre-pandemic moment. During this time, Sergeant John Macaulay Park was also undergoing its own stellar renovation.

Despite the distanced and isolating nature of the pandemic, which necessitated shutting and limiting our playgrounds various times, the Inviting Space program adapted, utilizing a toolbox of unique skills to support street openings for Shared Spaces, Play Streets, and the Jones Street Neighborhood Way, which will be beautified with murals in 2021.

“The pandemic has been really hard on everyone’s mental health and a lot of the kids really want to be able to see their friends and play. Coming out on the streets is a great way for them to see their friends without being so afraid.”

-Itziel, 13 years old, TL Resident

"Here’s what the Tenderloin’s new safe streets program looks like"
Indeed, many of our highlights of the year would not have been possible without this program.

And as a reminder of the critical role our parks play in giving life to our neighborhood, we closed the year on a festive note with the Tenderloin People’s Congress 3rd Annual Boeddeker Tree Lighting Ceremony (virtually), and the first Tenderloin Winter Walk, which connected the three Tenderloin parks, along with shops and restaurants along its path.

In 2021, with funding from the District 6 Supervisor’s Office, Lower Polk Community Benefit District and private foundations, TLCBD Safe Passage will manage safe access to neighborhood parks, including through partnerships with Urban Alchemy, Code Tenderloin, CARE Team and others.

We’ll also continue to lean into the voices of our community members through the Park Network Resident Advisory Group, bringing to life their vision for more open and active spaces in the neighborhood.

“We are all inside all the time because of the pandemic and I just have to get used to doing everything alone. On this day we come out with all of our friends and new kids and the great thing is you can come out here and do what you want. It’s a free open space for all of us.”

- Mokdad, 13 years old, TL Resident
“It is great I love seeing all the kids out here together playing and it’s so nice to have the street so clean. I really love it so much to just have all this open space for the kids to play.”

- Bushra, TL Resident & Mother
Play Streets creates a safe space to get outdoors in the Tenderloin, the City’s neighborhood with the highest number of children per capita.
The Tenderloin is one of the most diverse and densest neighborhoods in San Francisco. Most parks in the neighborhood are very small, adding up to only 0.17 acres per 1,000 residents, compared to 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents city-wide.

COVID-19 has been especially difficult for Tenderloin families, as playgrounds closed and many did not leave their apartments at all for seven months.

We worked with Livable City, SFMTA and other community partners and City agencies to get approval to create temporary space for play on the 200 block of Turk Street, which fronts several densely residential buildings, including high numbers of children and families. We launched a series of Play Streets events, closing the block to automobile traffic from 10am-3pm on select Saturdays and opened up for activities such as bike riding, art, chalk drawing, hula hooping, movement classes, drumming classes, backpack giveaways, resource sharing, and COVID-19 testing.

Be on the look out for more Play Streets in 2021!
SAFE PASSAGE

Safe Passage Program supports food security, mental health, youth and senior programs, and safe access to Tenderloin Parks.
The roots of Safe Passage are firmly planted as a community-led response to community-identified needs. While the year began with our Corner Captains providing support to youth, seniors, and other community members at intersections and sidewalks throughout the Tenderloin, the start of shelter-in-place meant the rhythms of daily life in the neighborhood were stifled.

Among the biggest community-identified needs during the pandemic were inadequate food security and a sense of isolation for residents. In collaboration with partners from TNDC, La Voz Latina, Salvation Army Kroc Center, the SF-Marin Food Bank, area schools, and the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF), Safe Passage Corner Captains began supporting the Tenderloin’s food distribution efforts.

To foster connection, continuity, and well being, Safe Passage developed weekly virtual trainings open to community members and Corner Captains, as well as a support network of regular phone calls to program participants.

Safe Passage ultimately returned to provide on-the-ground support for neighborhood parks and now, in partnership with Code Tenderloin and the YMCA, have supported the safe opening and expanded evening hours of the Tenderloin’s beloved flagship Boeddeker Park. Safe Passage is also working with after school programs and area schools to help youth navigate safely back to school and learning hubs respectively.

**The Safe Passage Program and its Corner Captains continue to be a source of inspiration for our entire organization and community.**
“Thank you Safe Passage Corner Captains for ALL that you do to help kids (and everyone else!) feel safe and seen! Wishing you all good health - and safety!”

Kidpower International
Instagram: @kidpowerca

“[Being part of Safe Passage] is a lot better than not doing anything, hanging out in a room. You get to see the kids, you get to see society. Instead of just being in your own corner of the world, you get to see the whole thing.”

- Lewis Murphy, #TLTogether
Safe Passage, Corner Captain & TL Resident
“Another reason the #TenderloinComunity Rocks...we have the best CBD in the city! Grateful to @TLCBD and #SafePassage.”

- Lydia Bransten, Community Member (Twitter)
TLCBD’s Pedestrian Safety Program works to transform high-speed traffic corridors into the neighborhood streets the Tenderloin deserves.
In support of the neighborhood’s long-standing traffic safety needs, we expanded our Safe Passage work to launch a Pedestrian Safety Program, which helped form the Tenderloin Traffic Safety Taskforce to better organize, engage and educate to improve pedestrian safety.

Advocacy from the TLCBD and other community groups began to pay off as SFMTA and other City agencies including SFFD, supported and permitted opening streets to pedestrians on the 100 block of Golden Gate and the 300 block of Ellis, which has become the Tenderloin Community Resource Hub with COVID-19 testing (supported by GLIDE), food distribution, and more.

The SFMTA also supported more walking space along Jones Street, from Golden Gate to O’Farrell, with additional cleaning and engagement resources.

In 2021, we will continue to advance this work with more open space projects along Golden Gate and Leavenworth, reductions in speed limits, as well as the completion of several pedestrian scrambles throughout Tenderloin intersections.

This work is grounded in the belief that Tenderloin community members deserve open space to enjoy healthy activity and vital resources.
Tenderloin Camera Network expands, committed to improving the quality of life and safety in the Tenderloin through an unbiased lens.
The Tenderloin Camera Network, a system of cameras throughout the Tenderloin stewarded and maintained by TLCBD staff, expanded in 2020. We believe the network to be a critical tool and resource in improving safety and quality of life for the many diverse communities of the Tenderloin.

The Tenderloin Camera Network provides the opportunity of unbiased evidence in response to specific incidents. It is dedicated to being impartial, providing timely and reliable footage upon request only, in accordance with the TLCBD Camera Network Usage Policy which bans biometric technology, prohibits real time surveillance watching, and stores footage for 30 days.

Incidents for which the Tenderloin Camera Network has provided footage include homicides, shootings, stabbings, assaults, arson, and other property crimes. In other instances, community members have requested footage to support victim advocacy.

This project has been made possible in part by a grant from the Chris Larsen Fund, an advised fund of Silicon Valley Community Foundation. The most recent contribution builds on the success of the program, which launched with six locations in 2016.

Today there are 21 sites, totaling more than 167 camera views within approximately 40 blocks of the Tenderloin. In 2021, TLCBD plans to continue the expansion of the network through the installation of additional cameras, increased maintenance support, and staffing.
Economic Opportunity Program takes shape & quickly moves to support small businesses during the pandemic.
TLCBD developed a vision for an Economic Opportunity Program which took shape through a merger with TEDP (Tenderloin Equitable Development Project) to provide technical assistance, resources, and other opportunities to small businesses.

We believe the success of our merchants is deeply tied to the neighborhood’s well-being.

Early in 2020, program efforts supported lease negotiations, retail attraction and retention, technical assistance, and marketing. The effects of the pandemic on small businesses has been catastrophic, straining an already volatile climate for mom and pop operators. But the program and the merchants it serves remain steadfast, responding with a never ending sense of resourcefulness, hustle, and determination. Our small business owners have been a testament to the neighborhood’s resiliency and character.

Our Economic Opportunity Program responded to needs by providing immediate and timely resources to impacted businesses. We distributed sixty-eight, $2k mini grants in April. We developed a program landing page with frequent updates and regular direct communication with our network of businesses to inform them of grants and loan opportunities that could help them and their employees; we co-hosted webinars and regularly offered assistance with the ever-changing rules and regulations brought on by the uncertainty of the times. Since April, we’ve continued to assist businesses with access to additional grants and low/no interest loan opportunities.

CBS LOCAL
“A Destination For Good Food’ – SF Tenderloin Street Transformed Into Outdoor Dining Corridor”
The Economic Opportunity Program also served as an incubator to the Tenderloin Merchants Association, and together we’ve helped launch and sustain the Tenderloin Outdoor Dining program, in which we provided $3k grants to cover outdoor dining costs.

We shared stories of business owners and fostered a more connected business community. This work would not have been possible without the work of the collective Board of Directors for TLCBD and TEDP, as well as our partners at the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (SF OEWD).

**We will continue to do everything in our power to support our hard-working small businesses as they face the ongoing challenges created by the pandemic.**

In 2021, we will also expand the program to hone workforce opportunities for Tenderloin Community members, building up support for job seekers of all ages and backgrounds through new and continued partnerships and initiatives.
“I stopped by our Tenderloin outdoor dining on Larkin to thank everyone for their hard work over last few months—there was a lot of resistance, doubt, skepticism initially. But people came together & made it happen. Thank you @TLCBD @UrbanAlchemyUA @TLMerchants & all the businesses.

We also were able to demonstrate that the TL wants & deserves transformational street changes, that better utilize city streets for positive safe community and economic activity. I’m hopeful about what we can accomplish in the future.”

-Matt Haney, District 6 Supervisor
Join in this work.
Volunteer. Donate.

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