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125 YEARS OF

SERVICE

MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Jan. 8, 1900, was the day the City of San Francisco officially marked the beginning of the San Francisco Board of Public Works, the original name given to our department. The first task was to organize and regulate street construction and paving projects.

Over the past 125 years, our duties have expanded and evolved to meet new challenges and opportunities. And today we have a much more diverse and far-reaching portfolio.

In late 2024, we structurally reorganized the department to better align with our strategic plan and, specifically, our goal to deliver impactful projects and lean into our core services.

With the City's post-pandemic economic recovery still underway, streamlining our work to be more efficient and effective will set us up for future success.

The biggest change in the reorganization was revamping how we develop, design and deliver capital projects – casting the work in two retooled divisions – Project Design and Development and Project Delivery. Other changes involved our permitting, inspections and community engagement teams.

While this overhaul is internal to the workings of our department, I am confident that San Francisco residents, property owners, businesses, nonprofits, community groups and our City partners will reap the benefits.

For more than a century, Public Works has been on the front lines serving the people of San Francisco – showing up day and night, in every neighborhood, through booms and through busts. It's in our DNA.

You'll get a better idea of the breadth of our work as you read through this annual report, showcasing some of our achievements and our day-in-and-day-out operations during Fiscal Year 2024-2025. I hope you enjoy the look back.

In continued partnership,







VISION

BE VALUED AS A DRIVER OF SAN FRANCISCO'S COMEBACK.

MISSION

PUBLIC WORKS - TO MAKE SAN FRANCISCO CLEANER, SAFER AND MORE BEAUTIFUL, MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT.

CORE VALUES

SAFETY • RESPECT • RESPONSIVENESS • TEAMWORK • INTEGRITY

STRATEGIC PLAN

A LIVING DOCUMENT THAT DRIVES WHAT WE DO AT PUBLIC WORKS.

IT HELPS US MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT WHERE TO BEST
DIRECT OUR RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

GOAL 1: VALUING OUR PEOPLE

Objectives

- 1A Provide career support
- 1B Hire efficiently and timely for long-term success
- 1C Improve the workplace experience

GOAL 2: DELIVERING IMPACTFUL PROJECTS AND SERVICES

Objectives

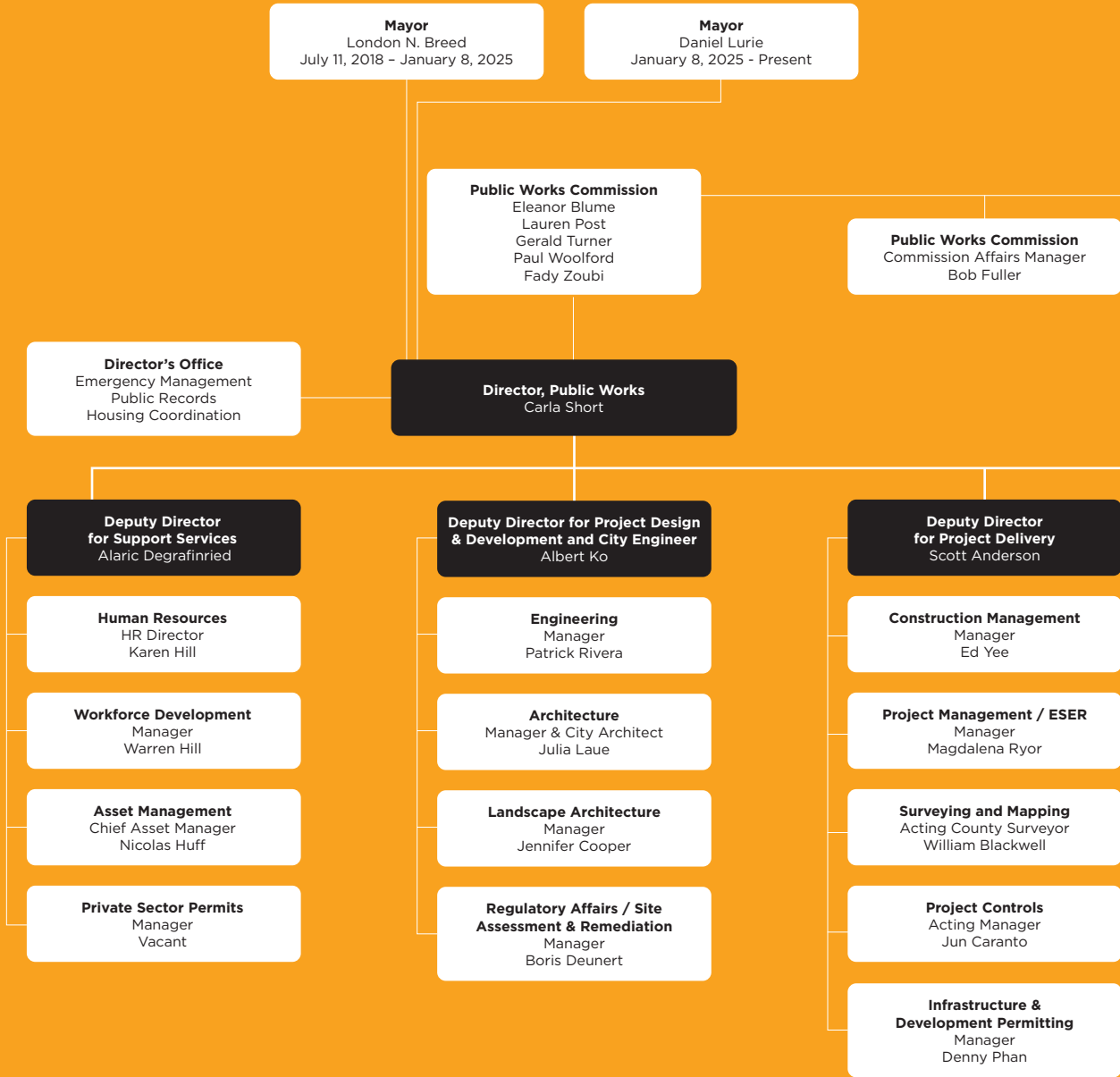
- 2A Improve key partnerships and optimize our core services
- 2B Be a leader in climate resilience and sustainability
- 2C Reinvigorate our Emergency Management Program
- 2D Assess organizational structure to determine the most effective framework for project delivery

GOAL 3: REVITALIZING THE CITY

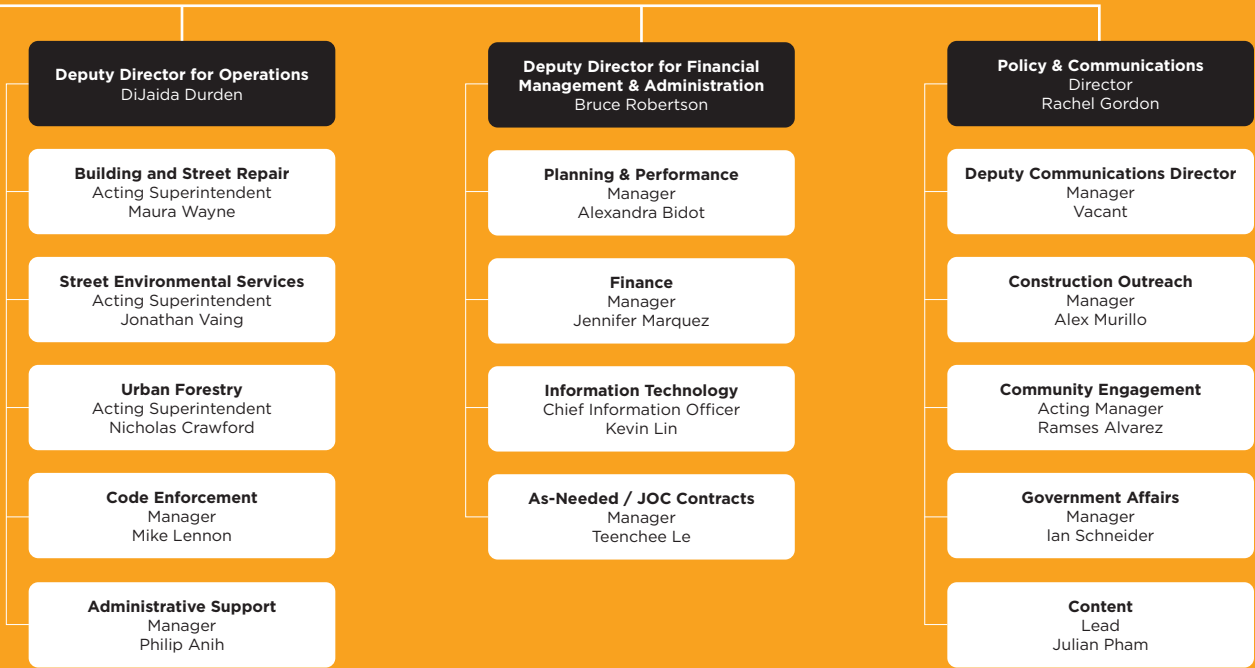
Objectives

- 3A Beautify shared and public spaces
- 3B Support citywide housing priorities and initiatives
- 3C Identify and prioritize ongoing maintenance funding for capital projects

ORGANIZATION



Sanitation & Streets Commission
 Jayshawn Anderson
 Azalina Eusope
 Thomas Harrison
 Kimberlee Hartwig-Schulman
 Christopher Simi



San Francisco Public Works
 City and County of
 San Francisco

Headquarters
 49 South Van Ness Ave.
 San Francisco, CA 94103

Operations Yard
 2323 Cesar Chavez St.
 San Francisco, CA 94124

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC WORKS

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Communications and Public Affairs

The office keeps the public and staff informed of the department's services, projects and programs through mass media, social media, websites, community meetings and various other outreach activities. The team produces reports and the monthly community and employee newsletters, briefs elected officials and troubleshoots constituent concerns. The team also oversees media relations and organizes press conferences and special events to celebrate projects.

Emergency Management Program

The program works to continuously improve our capability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from both natural and human-inflicted disasters.

Housing Coordination

The Housing Coordinator leads all aspects of the department's housing development efforts. This includes streamlining and rethinking processes to reduce permitting timelines, and developing performance measures that are outcome-focused, measurable and time-bound to advance the goals of the City's Housing Element.

Public Records

The office fields, processes and fulfills public records requests in accordance with the City's Sunshine Ordinance. For this fiscal year, Public Works had a total of 1,175 public records requests, a 5.5% increase from the previous fiscal year.

PROJECT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

City Engineer and Deputy Director

for Project Design and Development

The Project Design and Development Division provides comprehensive engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, and regulatory affairs and site assessment and remediation services. The Project Design and Development Division includes the following bureaus/programs:

Architecture

Provides programming, architectural design, site and master planning, conceptual design and construction support services. The bureau's architects work closely with client City departments and community groups to create architecture within the urban context that reflects the uniqueness of San Francisco neighborhoods.

Engineering

Provides technical services in the following engineering disciplines: hydraulic, civil, electrical, mechanical and structural. Each of these groups plans and designs technical work for infrastructure and building projects for Public Works and other City departments.

Landscape Architecture

Provides design services and oversees them into construction, including renovation and new construction, for City departments. Landscape architecture projects include streetscapes, plazas, green infrastructure and stormwater management, parks and recreation facilities, and the design of any outdoor spaces associated with public building projects throughout San Francisco.

Regulatory Affairs / Site Assessment and Remediation

Ensures Public Works meets all City, state and federal environmental laws and regulations, especially those involving hazardous materials and environmental hazards. This section coordinates with the San Francisco Planning Department on CEQA compliance and provides expertise in areas such as air quality, historic and archaeological resources, biological resources and noise. It also works independently and with the Department of Public Health to assess and manage hazardous building materials, contaminated soil and groundwater. The section oversees specialty As-Needed Contracts for environmental work, maintains transparent online records, updates construction specifications for regulatory compliance, and leads the development of related Public Works procedures.

PROJECT DELIVERY

Deputy Director for Project Delivery

The Project Delivery Division provides project management, construction management, surveying and mapping, project controls and infrastructure and development permitting services. The Project Delivery Division includes the following programs/bureaus:

Construction Management

Implements the project plans designed by Project Management, Engineering and other City agencies' staff and safeguards the construction and delivery of capital projects by providing professional construction management and inspection services and enforcing all applicable codes.

Infrastructure and Development Permitting

The Bureau of Infrastructure & Development Permitting (IDP) serves as the City's central coordination and technical hub for major development and public infrastructure projects, playing a key role in advancing Mayoral Executive Directives and City housing initiatives that support housing production, economic development and public investment. Through its Infrastructure division, IDP coordinates the planning, permitting, delivery and acceptance of public infrastructure associated with major Development Agreement projects, working across City agencies and private

stakeholders to resolve complex issues and ensure timely project implementation. Through its Development Permits division, IDP manages permits and supports the planning, design and delivery of City and public agency projects, publicly funded construction projects and priority development projects that impact the public right of way, streamlining reviews and approvals while ensuring compliance with City standards, regulations and permitting requirements.

Project Controls

Provides services for construction projects related to contract preparation, contract compliance, procurement strategy, risk management, quality assurance and quality control, cost estimating, and certified payroll administration.

Project Management

Delivers major infrastructure capital projects from planning, design and regulatory approval through construction. The bureau delivers a variety of major public infrastructure projects on behalf of Public Works and other City agencies.

Surveying and Mapping

The Bureau of Surveying and Mapping, Office of the City and County Surveyor, provides responsive, client-oriented, high-quality land surveying and subdivision map processing services to the public and City agencies. These surveys and maps provide the basis for land, housing and infrastructure delivery in San Francisco.



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Deputy Director for Financial Management and Administration

The Office of Finance and Administration includes administrative units that provide budget, capital planning, analytical, performance management, contract administration and information technology support services for the department. The costs of the division are accounted for in the City's budget system under "General Administration," as well as reflected as overhead charges. The programs within the Office of Finance and Administration include:

As-Needed / JOC Contracts

Oversees and manages the As-Needed Construction and As-Needed Professional Services programs. The As-Needed Construction program is comprised of the Job Order Contracting, Master As-Needed and General As-Needed contracting mechanisms. The As-Needed Professional Services program includes contracts for design and support services in engineering, architecture, project management and construction management. Together, these programs support the effective and timely delivery of projects for the department and for other City departments we serve.

Finance

Oversees budget preparation; capital planning, analysis and reporting; grants research and administration; accounting and contract administration. Finance also prepares analyses and produces reports to support decision-making and implement and manage the department's projects and programs. This includes the creation and monitoring of the annual budget; preparation of an annual indirect cost plan; participation in bond authorizations and sales; development of the capital plan and grant proposals; and financial oversight, budget monitoring, funding coordination, and reporting for capital projects and programs. Accounting responsibilities include reviewing and entering financial and purchasing transactions; preparing grant billings and account analyses; recording of construction in progress and entering information on fixed assets; collecting revenues; disbursing funds and guiding funds through required procedures until final liquidation. Contract Administration is responsible for advertising bids; distributing plans and

specifications; receiving bids; processing documents; handling bid protests; awarding contracts and ensuring compliance with insurance, bonding and licensing requirements.

Information Technology

Designs, programs, operates and maintains all department-wide automated information systems and equipment. Services include process analysis and planning; software development, configuration and implementation; network and hardware installation; technology operations; help desk and security; and software support and system compliance functions.

Planning and Performance

Monitors key activities of the agency to improve service quality as well as support the creation, monitoring and measurement of the department's strategic plan.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Asset Management

The Asset Management Team provides strategic leadership for the department's asset management program, setting policy, standards and long-term plans. The team coordinates data, systems and practices across business units, strengthening asset inventories, lifecycle planning, risk analysis and budgeting. It also leads departmentwide training and city-wide collaboration to build consistent, modern asset management capability.



Human Resources

The Human Resources bureau oversees a full portfolio of employee services, including recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training and development, compliance with anti-discrimination laws, accommodations, payroll and benefits, leaves, labor relations, contract negotiations and environmental health and safety. The department's human resources functions had been under the Office of the City Administrator but were transferred to Public Works, starting in Fiscal Year 2022-23. The change provides Public Works an opportunity to build an operation from the ground up, tailored to the department's own human resources needs.

Private Sector Permits

Reviews and approves permits granting residents, businesses and contractors legal permission to use or construct in the public right of way. Annually, Public Works approves between 25,000 to 30,000 permits. The most visible permits are Street Improvements, Shared Spaces, Street Space, and Encroachment permits.

Workforce Development

Creates pathways to employment and career advancement for San Francisco residents while supporting Public Works' workforce needs through apprenticeship, transitional employment, youth workforce and grant-funded workforce initiatives. The bureau administers workforce partnerships and employment programs, including the Pit Stop public toilet program and community-based organization collaborations, that provide training, work experience and access to careers in the skilled trades and public service.

OPERATIONS

Administrative Support

Supports Public Works operations through centralized fleet management, communications dispatch and inventory services. The section coordinates vehicle and equipment readiness, radio communications, and the procurement and distribution of tools, supplies and operational resources for department staff.

Building and Street Repair

Provides professional construction, repair and remodeling services to City-owned facilities; provides emergency-repair services 24 hours a day to ensure that the police, fire department and other public safety operations are fully functional; and oversees paving and street repair work, including patch paving and filling potholes, as well as sewer repair, which includes brickwork.

Code Enforcement

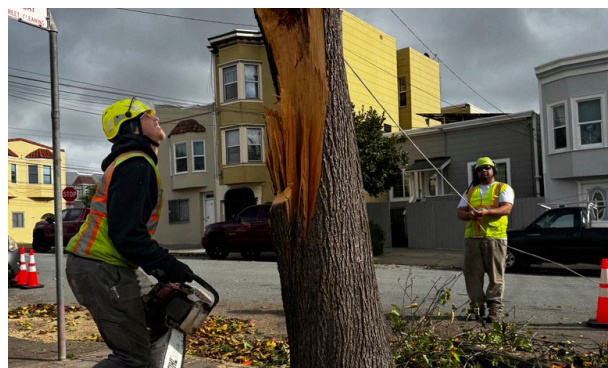
The Inspection and Code Enforcement bureau is tasked with regulating both commercial occupancy/use of the public right of way and construction work taking place within and/or impacting the public right of way, which includes performing both proactive and reactive inspections and taking enforcement action, as warranted, to ensure permit conditions are being followed and sidewalks and roadways in need of repair are fixed.

Street Environmental Services

Cleans streets and curbs using mechanical street sweepers; removes graffiti; adds, removes and replaces litter receptacles; and oversees manual cleaning work crews. Although sidewalk maintenance remains the responsibility of property owners, the bureau sweeps and cleans sidewalks in heavily used commercial corridors and steam-cleans human and dog waste and other biohazards.

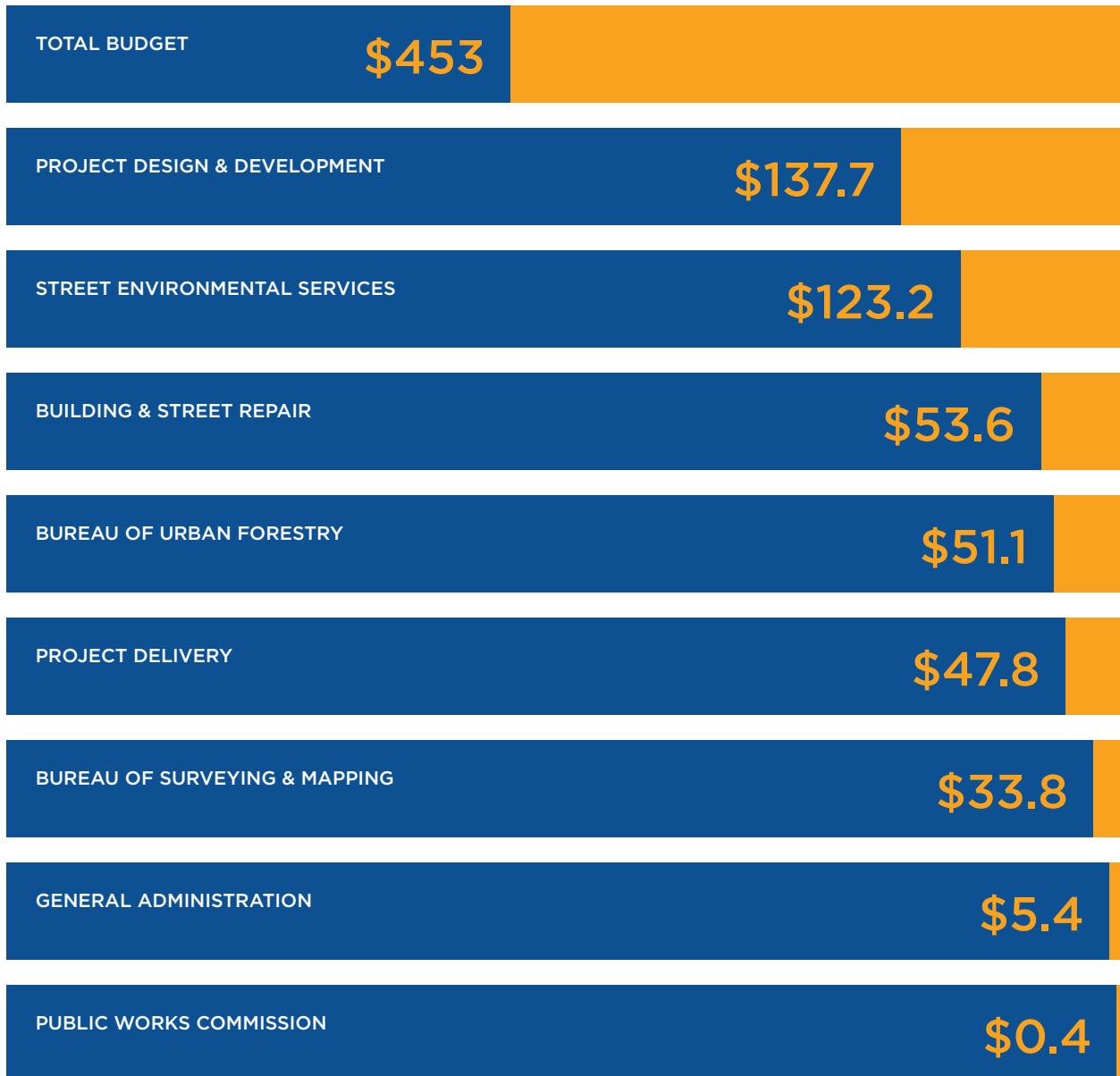
Urban Forestry

Responsible for median maintenance, tree planting and maintenance of all street trees. In addition, the bureau's Cement Shop repairs sidewalks and medians and builds curb ramps.



BUDGET

FY 2024-25 (MILLIONS)



BUREAU POSITION SUMMARY

FY 2024-25 - NUMBER OF POSITIONS

383

PROJECT DESIGN
& DEVELOPMENT

371

STREET ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES

273

PROJECT DELIVERY

216

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

209

BUILDING & STREET REPAIR

200

BUREAU OF URBAN FORESTRY

127

BUREAU OF SURVEYING
& MAPPING

7

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

5

SANITATION &
STREETS COMMISSION

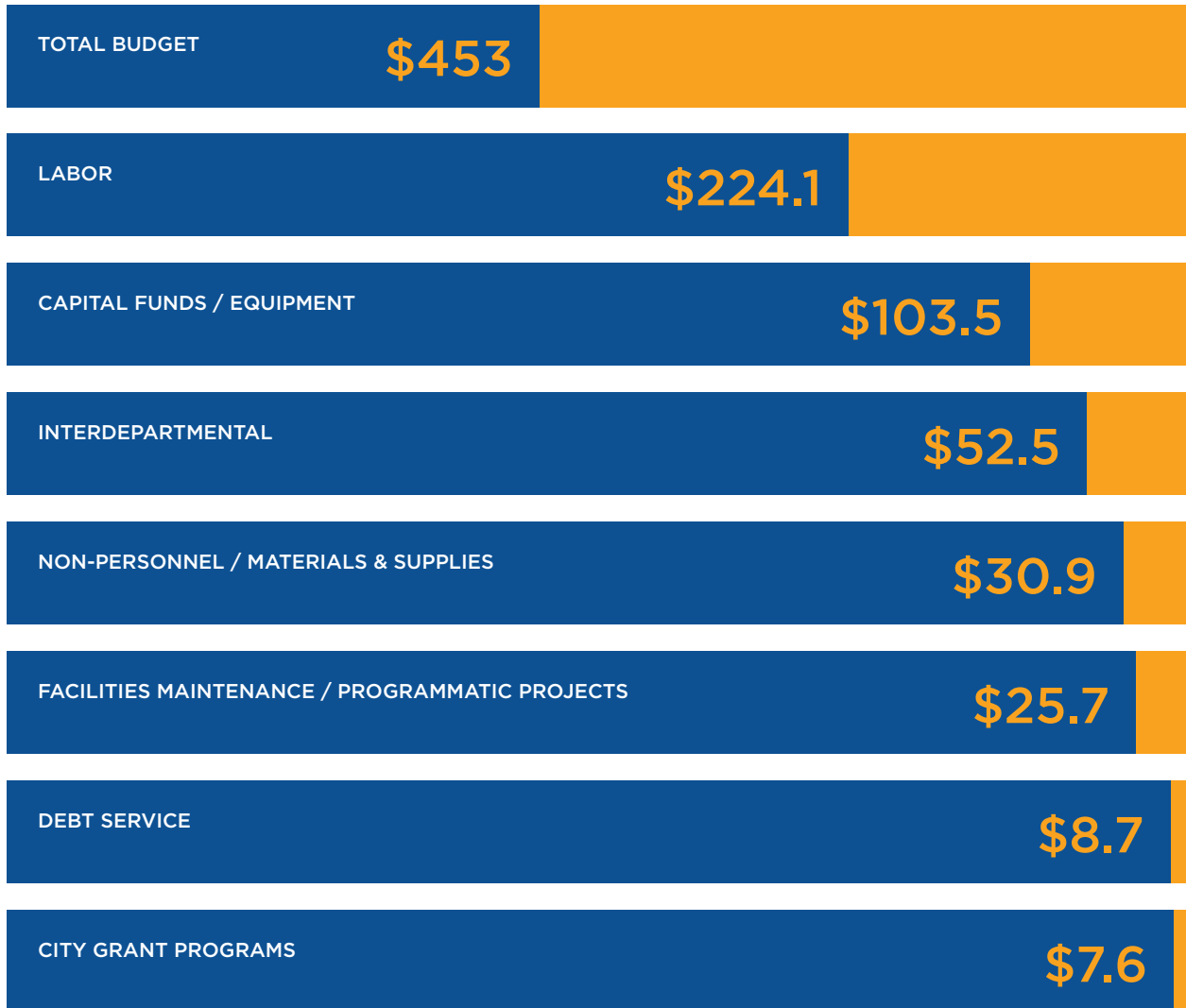
FUNDING SOURCES

FY 2024-25 (MILLIONS)



BUDGET USES

FY 2024-25 (MILLIONS)



STATS

75

PAVEMENT CONDITION INDEX
(PCI SCORE)

557

BLOCKS PAVED

1,025

CURB RAMPS CONSTRUCTED

1,787

TREES PLANTED

10,489

POTHoles FILLED

27,208

DEBRIS PICKED UP
(TONS)

53,933

GRAFFITI SERVICES REQUESTED

79,905

SIDEWALKS REPAIRED
(SQUARE FEET)

159,268

SWEPT BY MECHANICAL SWEEPERS
(MILES)

163,809

STREET CLEANING SERVICES REQUESTED

COMMISSIONS

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

The Public Works Commission serves as the oversight body for the San Francisco Department of Public Works. Established by Proposition B, approved by voters in November 2020, the Commission is responsible for setting policy directives, overseeing departmental performance, approving and reviewing contracts, and conducting an annual performance review of the department. It also plays a role in designating and filling staff positions.

Commission meetings provide a public forum for community members to hear about and comment on the department's work.

The Commission consists of five members: two appointed by the Board of Supervisors, two appointed by the Mayor, and one appointed by the City Controller. The Mayor's and Controller's appointments are subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors.

SANITATION AND STREETS COMMISSION

The Sanitation and Streets Commission is the oversight body for the San Francisco Public Works Operations Division. Created by Proposition B on the November 2020 ballot and further defined by Proposition B on the November 2022 ballot, the Commission sets policy directives and is responsible for overseeing the Operations Division performance, reviewing the designation and filling of staff positions, establishing minimum standards of cleanliness for the public right of way and setting baselines for services to be administered by the division.



125 YEARS

Jan. 8, 1900, was the day the City of San Francisco officially marked the beginning of the San Francisco Board of Public Works through legislation that would usher in an era of cleaner streets and safer infrastructure for the residents of the City.

Today, we're known as San Francisco Public Works and we continue to provide many of the same programs and services that we did more than 125 years ago – while facing many of the same challenges.

As San Francisco's history has moved forward through prosperous and challenging times – natural disasters, wars, social and technological revolutions, pandemics – Public Works always has been a stalwart in keeping the City clean, beautiful and safe.

Countless men and women have served the City through our organization. Technology has transformed our work. Our values have evolved. We've become a much more diverse organization. However, we know there always will be room for improvement as we continue to face old and new conundrums.

1900

San Francisco Public Works is officially created as the Board of Public Works.



1901-1934

The Hetch Hetchy Valley is chosen as the ideal source for the City's water. The law authorizing the dam passes.





1903

Union Square



1906

Great Earthquake and Fire: A 7.9-magnitude earthquake, along with subsequent fires, destroys much of San Francisco.





1910

Workers pave Mission Street at 18th Street.



1911

Twin Peaks Reservoir



RACIAL EQUITY INITIATIVE

To support Public Works’ foundational statement of being “committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment,” the Racial Equity Team achieved several milestones during the fiscal year. The team concluded the inaugural mentoring program for racial equity for architects, engineers and project managers, which focused on career development and cross-cultural learning for 40 participants. The initiative was expanded to include a cross-divisional program centered on the needs of Operations staff. Ten Operations employees received key trainings on how to put together a resume, write a cover letter, strengthen job interview skills and explore educational support programs in partnership with the citywide career center. Operations supervisors also received digital literacy training.

In addition, the Racial Equity Team expanded and deepened departmental capacity for ongoing racial equity efforts to further embed equity values in all staff members’ day-to-day work. The team developed resources to support front-line and office-based staff in developing their racial equity goals with an accompanying video tutorial. Beyond those tools, the team rolled out a Racial Equity Fundamentals training series in collaboration with Liberation Consulting, marking the first time consistent racial equity training was made accessible to all staff. Building on the fundamentals series, the team held trainings on more advanced topics, such as culturally sensitive communication.

Now part of the department’s Planning and Performance bureau, the team also explored how to better integrate equity in process improvement, building data analysis skills to conduct more robust service delivery equity analyses.

1912

Geary Street



1913

The cornerstone of new City Hall is laid.





1913

Construction begins on the Palace of Fine Arts for the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition.



1913

Ashbury tank



PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

We hosted our annual Public Works Week celebration with open houses, project tours, an employee recognition ceremony and a special acknowledgement of our 125th anniversary serving San Francisco.

The series of events ran from April 28 through May 2. A highlight was the open house at the Operations Yard, which drew a record 500-plus very enthusiastic students, from grade school through community college.

There were a lot of great hands-on activities with our urban forestry, street cleaning and trades crews – from building, staining and planting planter boxes and crafting metal toolboxes to painting out graffiti and smoothing out cement. Bucket truck rides, glazier demonstrations and a chance to work the equipment used by our plumbers were among the other offerings.

We also had representatives from crafts unions there who could talk to visitors about possible careers in the trades.

Our other open house was held at our 49 South Van Ness Ave. offices, drawing about 130 grade-schoolers who worked with our architects, landscape architects, engineers and project delivery teams to build model cities and then place them on what we call shake tables to see how they'd fare in a simulated earthquake.

We hosted tours of the historic Third Street Bridge, our Materials Testing Lab and the Animal Care & Control building that we designed and delivered.

We also held our annual employee awards and pin ceremony, honoring outstanding employees and teams, rising stars in the department with one to five years on the job and the employee whose volunteer efforts stand out.

Founded in 1900 as the Board of Public Works, the department remains a 24/7 operation with a vast portfolio that touches every neighborhood in San Francisco. Once a year, we step back to take stock of our work and our employees with a week-long celebration.

1914

Lotta's Fountain



1915

Market Street





431 00140

MONTGOMERY
POST

NO
TURNS

43100182

EMERGENCY
CALL 911

43100290

DUPRE

every

125 YEARS OF

CLEANING THE CITY

STREET TEAMS

In March, the City launched a new street team response model, a key part of Mayor Daniel Lurie's strategy to get people into treatment, ensure safe and clean public spaces and responsibly manage taxpayer resources.

The new street teams model creates increased accountability for the homelessness and behavioral health response by combining teams from across seven departments – including Public Works, Police, Fire, Sheriff, Public Health, Homelessness and Supportive Housing and Emergency Management – into a single team that focuses on specific geographic areas to ensure the City is strategically managing resources, coordinating operations and responding swiftly to conditions on the street.

Previously there were nine service-oriented street outreach teams, alongside the Police Department and Public Works-managed street responses.

The new model aims to respond swiftly to emerging issues while working to identify and prevent larger-scale displacement and public safety concerns. It was created in partner-

ship with the highly skilled front-line staffers who work tirelessly every day to get people into the care they need.

Key reforms include:

- The reimagined street teams serve as five tightly knit neighborhood units, with an additional citywide unit. The teams conduct outreach to get people into the care they need while enforcing sit/lie laws and federal Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- Each neighborhood team works with individuals who have high acuity behavioral health challenges or experience chronic homelessness. The team supports them to exit the street into stable care and housing or connections to loved ones.
- Each team is led by a San Francisco Department of Emergency Management employee, acting as a team conductor, ensuring communication between City agencies and creating clarity for neighborhood stakeholders, such as business owners and residents.

1915

Ocean Beach



1915

Third Street bridge construction: Public Works has been operating, maintaining and retrofitting this project since.





1915

San Francisco City Hall is rebuilt following the destruction of the original 1899 building in the 1906 earthquake.



1915

Twin Peaks Boulevard





1915

Twin Peaks Tunnel



1916

Twin Peaks Boulevard



CLEANCORRIDORSF

Once a week, starting at 8 o'clock on Thursday mornings, a laser-focused team of Public Works crews descends on a neighborhood street filled with shops, cafes and offices.

They pull out their power washers, paint brushes, weed whackers and brooms and jump into action. They are part of the specialized street cleaning operation known as CleanCorridorsSF.

In addition to the manual labor, we also send through mechanical sweepers to clear leaves and litter from the curb lane and a flusher truck to wash down the roadway. Graffiti inspectors and outreach workers also are on hand to inform residents and businesses about their responsibilities to help keep San Francisco clean. They also tell them about the tools and services we have available to aid them.

CleanCorridorsSF initially began in February 2020 in the Tenderloin's Little Saigon area but was shut down a month later when shelter-in-place COVID-19 restrictions were enacted. Public Works relaunched the operation in January 2021, and it has been going strong ever since. We kicked off the new season in July with the start of the new fiscal year and rotate through a different neighborhood every week.

While our street cleaners are on the job 24/7 throughout the City, moving quickly from site to site to respond to the 11,000 or so service requests that come to us each month through the City's 311 customer service center, the CleanCorridorsSF initiative allows us to do a proactive, deeper cleaning, down to digging out sidewalk weeds and steam-cleaning away the grime from curb ramps. The team of 10 to 20 workers typically scours at least eight blocks during each operation.

1916

A street flusher makes its way down Polk Street in front of City Hall.



1916

Construction is underway at Ocean Beach Esplanade.



WE TAKE A LOTTA PRIDE IN UPKEEP OF HISTORIC FOUNTAIN

Public Works crews made their yearly pilgrimage to Lotta's Fountain in April to make sure the San Francisco landmark was in tiptop shape for the City's annual commemoration of the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906.

Every year on April 18, at 5:12 a.m. – the date and time the devastating earthquake struck – City officials and history buffs gather on a pedestrian island at the downtown intersection of Market, Geary and Kearny streets where Lotta's Fountain sits.

And every year our crews make sure the historic cast-iron structure is spiffed up and in good working condition for the anniversary event. The team included a plumber, electrician, painter, locksmith and stationary engineer.

There was the lantern to fix atop the 8-foot-tall fountain, a vandalized lock to repair, nicks and scratches to buff out and paint over and water features to get running correctly.

We take a lot of pride in this maintenance operation, for Lotta's Fountain plays an important role in San Francisco history. After the 1906 earthquake, it was the only source of water for the people of the area and the working horses pulling goods and trolleys down Market Street.

The monument also served as a meeting place for residents after the calamitous 7.9-magnitude earthquake shook the City, sparking a destructive fire that burned for days.

Today, Lotta's Fountain – named after Lotta Crabtree, a theater star from the 1800s – stands as a symbol of San Francisco resiliency. And we'll continue to do our part at Public Works to make sure the fountain and the message it represents endure.

1916

City officials lay a cornerstone for the new Main library.



1917

Palace of Fine Arts





1917

Marina Boulevard



1918

Mechanical street sweeper





1918

Catch basin cleaner at Eddy and Taylor Streets



1918

A civic gathering in front of City Hall, probably Armistice Day parade, with Mayor James Rolph Jr. in attendance.



SPECIAL EVENT CLEANUPS

Throughout the year, San Francisco plays host to a multitude of large-scale events – from one-off festivities like the NBA All-Star Weekend to annual celebrations like Bay to Breakers, Pride and the Chinese New Year Parade.

With the City buzzing in the spotlight, Public Works crews were front and center, keeping the streets and sidewalks looking good for residents and visitors.

For the yearly parades and cross-town run, we have street cleaners on the ground, working a tightly choreographed op-

eration to clean up after the events. The team uses brooms, rakes, shovels, blowers, flusher trucks and mechanical sweepers to pick up the litter.

Large operations are not new to us – they are part of our Operations portfolio and we carry out the work with pride and efficiency.

It's great to see the momentum of San Francisco's comeback building and these crowd-pleasing events help drive the progress.

1919

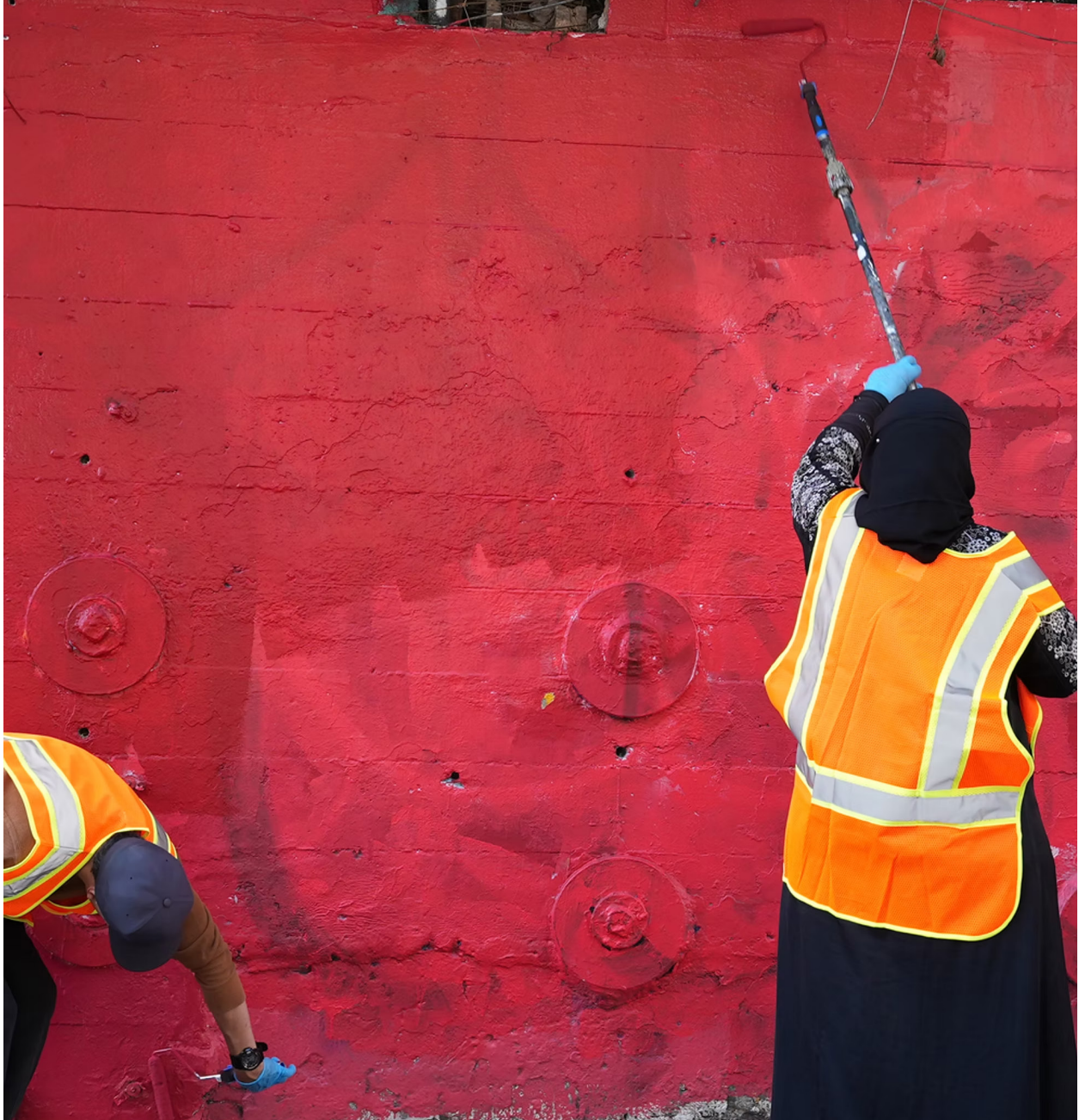
War Women's Day Parade



1921

High-Pressure Water System in Civic Center





1922

Laying of a corner stone at the dedication of the California State Building in Civic Center.



1923

Army Street sewer construction



TENDERLOIN GRAFFITI WIPEOUT

In a small alley at the edge of the Tenderloin, paint buckets, reflective vests and rollers sat beneath string lights and the bright October sun. Nearby, scores of volunteers began to arrive, huddling up for group photos and a pep talk ahead of the first-ever Tenderloin Graffiti Wipeout event.

Then, armed with brushes and filled with energy and resolve, they got to work, eradicating unwanted tags that blight buildings, light poles and garbage cans. The Oct. 4 workday, hosted by Public Works and the nonprofit Tenderloin Community Benefit District, exceeded expectations, with nearly double the anticipated volunteer workforce showing up and the effort yielding immediate results as one tag after another got wiped out.

Public Works provided paint, brushes, rollers, scrapers and other tools to remove graffiti, as well as safety vests and other gear for the volunteers. We also had paint-matching machines on hand to closely match the color of the buildings that had been tagged.

The Tenderloin Community Benefit District identified which blocks to target and did an outstanding job getting out the volunteer force. Pro cleaning crews from both the community benefit district and Public Works also put their expertise to work removing tags.

But when it comes to graffiti, success is, unfortunately, fleeting. Tags continue to be a scourge. In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, which ended June 30, we received 45,507 graffiti-related service complaints. The prior year that number stood at 53,228.

The drop can be attributed, in part, to a pilot program we launched a few years ago to provide courtesy graffiti abatement on private property in neighborhood commercial corridors, if the property owners choose to opt in. Hundreds of people have signed up and thousands of abatement operations have been conducted since the start of the program.

Public Works, which is responsible for removing graffiti on public property in the right of way, is on the job every day, removing tags from parking meters, light poles, retaining walls and traffic signs.

1923

San Francisco Board of Public Works street cleaning truck



1924

Street cleaning trucks



TENDERLOIN BEAUTIFICATION DAY: A TEAM EFFORT

Collaboration. Community. Determination. These are just a handful of words that capture the spirit of this year's Tenderloin Beautification Day event that brought together residents, City officials and community organizations for an impactful neighborhood cleanup.

More than 60 volunteers came out for the June 21 workday. They were joined by teams from Public Works, which provided paint and other graffiti-busting supplies, and the Tenderloin Community Benefit District, which hosts the annual event.

Throughout the neighborhood, volunteers wiped out tags that marred storefronts, apartment buildings, parking meters, mailboxes and retaining walls.

The dedicated volunteers also learned from our cleaning pros how to properly use power washers to scrub grime off the sidewalks. Inch by inch, they watched the hard, steady stream of water they sprayed work its deep-cleaning magic.

The Tenderloin, one of San Francisco's most vibrant and diverse neighborhoods, has long been challenged with problematic street conditions. But it also is a neighborhood brimming with community resolve to make things safer and cleaner for the many families and seniors who live there and the small businesses that operate there.

The Tenderloin Community Benefit District, a nonprofit funded by special assessments paid by the property owners in the area, works to improve conditions in the neighborhood and create a more welcoming environment.

Public Works collaborates closely with the organization, not just for special events like the Tenderloin Beautification Day, but throughout the year. By coordinating schedules and leveraging resources, we are able to more effectively take care of the neighborhood.

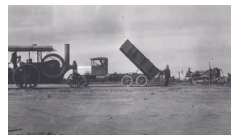
1928

A worker operates an excavator.



1928

Workers move sand at the Great Highway.





1928

Playland at the Beach opens.



1928

San Francisco Fire Department 30-foot Water Tower





DOLLOCK
T HARTE
GRAY
Q MILLER
OLLINS
VENSON

2024 SAFETY WEEK

SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC
WORKS

SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC
WORKS
DESIGN
& MAINTENANCE

125 YEARS OF

DESIGN

CITY OPENS A NEW BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER TO HELP PEOPLE IN CRISIS

As San Francisco continues to bolster its resources for people in urgent need of behavioral health care, a new emergency hub for those in crisis aims to provide rapid access to life-saving services, alleviate suffering on the City's streets and free up local hospital emergency rooms.

Located near the northern edge of the City's Tenderloin neighborhood, the 24/7 stabilization center at 822 Geary St. – staffed by nurses, doctors, behavioral health specialists and case managers – helps stabilize clients in a safe environment and then support their next steps through dedicated care coordination. The facility began accepting clients on April 28.

The 6,400-square-foot center – which Public Works designed and delivered on behalf of the San Francisco Department of Public Health – offers first responders, street teams and members of law enforcement a safe and effective alternative to hospital emergency departments where they can bring people in crisis to connect them with services and treatment.

Construction on the project began at the end of February 2024 and was completed in April 2025. Public Works handled construction and project management, design and contracting, and facilitated permitting, disability access coordination and materials testing.

The space has been thoughtfully designed to be comfortable, welcoming and uplifting.

It features abundant natural light, a mix of private and communal seating areas, and direct access to counselors and wellness practitioners. To enhance the environment, the design team opened up the existing ceiling to expose the original wood trusses, creating a sense of warmth and openness. Skylights and carefully integrated lighting were added to bring a soft glow and visual interest to the space.

The facility serves people experiencing severe anxiety and panic attacks, depression and thoughts of suicide or self-harm, acute mental health emergencies, including agitation and restlessness, as well as health crises resulting from substance use or drug reactions.

1929-1939

The Great Depression begins.



1930

Alemaný Storm Drain Sec. A





1930

Fillmore Street Main Sewer:
Fell Street west of Van Ness Avenue



1933

Public Works garbage truck





1933

Coit Tower is built.



1934

U.S. Penitentiary opens on Alcatraz Island.



MISSION BRANCH LIBRARY RENOVATION: AN EXERCISE IN EXACTITUDE

A Public Works-led project, delivered on behalf of the San Francisco Public Library, will help restore the beloved Mission Branch Library to some of its original glory while adding much-needed upgrades to transform the facility into a less cramped, more accommodating and more climate-resilient space for staff and patrons.

Work on the historic building requires immense precision and attention to detail.

Crews have to be careful as they dig into the soil to carve out the basement, gut the inside of the structure and work on the rebar that crisscrosses the facility, which sits at the corner of 24th and Bartlett streets.

The makeover must preserve the design integrity of the landmark building while preparing the facility for modern-day needs.

Among the planned improvements: providing a 100-person community room, constructing a dedicated teen room, re-

storing the main entry to its original location, replacing the lost historic main staircase, building additional restrooms and adding a fenced courtyard and sustainability features, such as rooftop solar panels and air conditioning.

The library – the first branch in the San Francisco Public Library system – is steeped in history and San Francisco lore. For Public Works engineers that means keeping a watchful eye over every step of the renovation, which kicked off in August 2023 and is expected to wrap up by fall 2026.

Construction on the building – which is designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style – is a precarious balancing act. Literally.

In order to excavate the new basement space, crews installed so-called soldier piles and beams that hold up the building’s side facing Orange Alley. That means part of the structure is essentially suspended in mid-air. The measure is temporary.

Seismic improvements are also part of the renovation work.

1934

Third Street Sewer



1936

Bay Bridge opens.



A LASTING PEACE

An ambitious overhaul of Japantown’s venerable, five-tier pagoda and the surrounding Peace Plaza has been underway since spring 2024 – though years of planning and community outreach preceded it.

Public Works is providing landscape architecture, architecture and engineering services and managing construction on behalf of the Recreation and Park Department for the Peace Plaza renovation project, situated in the heart of the neighborhood, between Post Street and Geary Boulevard, just east of Webster Street.

The goal is to make the 30,000-square-foot open space more inviting – with fresh landscaping, serene light features and new porcelain tiles – and provide seismic improvements to the plaza and pagoda to keep people safe.

The Peace Plaza was created and donated in the mid-1960s as a gift from Osaka, San Francisco’s sister city in Japan. A seismic evaluation of the decades-old pagoda revealed that the structure did not have adequate capacity to resist a major earthquake.

To fortify the pagoda, crews are strengthening its ring beams with additional concrete in minimally visible areas. They are also reinforcing the columns with carbon fiber wrap and steel tendons – called post-tension tendons.

The fiber wrap provides added shear capacity and ductility to each individual column and the post-tension tendons, anchored into the podium slab and running along the columns, help prevent the pagoda from overturning during an earthquake.

The challenge – as is often the case with historic structures – is improving the pagoda’s resilience in the face of earthquakes while at the same time keeping it as close to the original as possible.

Another critically important aspect of the plaza overhaul: waterproofing it to help keep a subterranean, two-story parking garage underneath the Peace Plaza dry.

The revamped plaza is also going to feature new benches, a larger permanent stage and terraced seating.

1937

Golden Gate Bridge opens.



1937

Surveyors measure a sidewalk on Market Street near Montgomery Street.





1937-1938

Map of San Francisco



1939

Construction of WPA San Francisco Scale Model:
Painting buildings





1940

Golden Gate Park Museum



1941

San Francisco Fire Department east side of Third Street



CONSTRUCTION IN A HEALTH CARE HUB TAKES SURGICAL PRECISION

Shielded by milky, zipper-lined plastic curtains and guarded by boxed devices measuring the air pressure, a quiet – yet vitally important – transformation has been underway at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital’s Building 5, deep in the heart of the crucial health care hub.

Under the direction and supervision of Public Works project and construction managers, architects and engineers, crews have been adding seismic upgrades and making improvements to laboratories and health care spaces across multiple floors of the 1970s-era hospital building, located at 1001 Potrero Ave. Public Works is delivering the project on behalf of the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

But unlike conventional construction sites, the work at Building 5 is taking place in carefully monitored, air-controlled bubbles so dust and hazards can’t leak out into the surrounding working health care setting used by doctors, nurses and patients.

The projects are part of a bond-funded initiative – approved by voters in 2016 – to consolidate many of the outpatient

specialty clinics into one place for patient convenience. Today, the various clinics can be found in different buildings on the sprawling campus or offsite.

The revamped clinics are going to be able to serve more patients in a safer, more welcoming environment with expanded space for direct care and support services. Updated technology, fire-safety and electrical systems, new furnishings and other upgrades also are part of the overhaul.

And crews are retrofitting the existing Building 5 structure to make sure it can better withstand a strong earthquake.

But delivering such an ambitious renovation in an active health care setting requires surgical precision and meticulous planning. Much of it starts with infection control, which means creating a barrier between the construction workspace and the rest of the hospital.

The ongoing improvements at Building 5 mark the latest effort to revamp The General campus and shore up its structures in the face of earthquakes.

1941

Sea Cliff pumping station



1941

Workers perform crack sealing.



BEAMING WITH PRIDE: REC CENTER REBUILD HITS CONSTRUCTION TARGET

City officials, community members and construction workers celebrated a major construction milestone in June as the last steel beam was bolted into the structural frame of the Eugene L. Friend Recreation Center.

The new South of Market rec center is going to replace the outdated, existing facility with a larger indoor-outdoor space designed to serve the diverse needs of children, families and seniors who use the popular venue for sports, classes and gatherings with friends and neighbors.

Located near Harrison and Sixth streets, it is the only rec center in the neighborhood and long has been an important community hub, serving the public for 35 years.

The new center is going to include a gymnasium with two full-size basketball courts; a new entryway on Harriet Street; an exercise area; a kitchenette; a reception area and office; and two multi-purpose rooms. In addition to new lighting

and landscaping, the center's outdoor area is going to include a new playground, a picnic area and sport court.

Construction on the \$59 million project began in February 2024 and remains on track to wrap up in late summer/early fall 2026.

Public Works is managing construction and providing contracting and landscape design services for the project. The rec center is owned and operated by the Recreation and Park Department.

Funding for the project is a mix of public and private sources. More than half the funding, \$30 million, comes from the voter-backed 2020 Health and Recovery Bond. Additional support came from developer impact fees, private donations and philanthropic contributions, including a \$520,500 in-kind grant from the Trust for Public Land, a national non-profit focused on access to nature and the outdoors.

1942

Third Street Bridge



1942

Fourth Street Bridge





1942

Lombard signals samples



1942

Aquatic Park



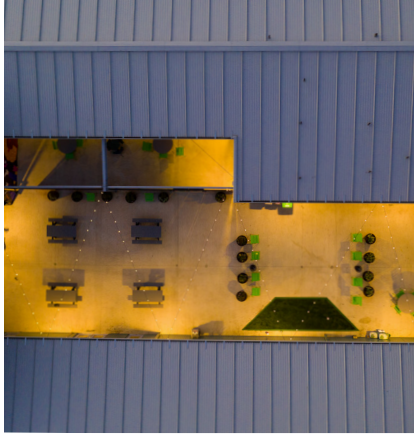


Photo by Tim Griffith



Photo by Alejandro Velarde

1943

Bernal Cut drainage system at west side of Arlington Street and Mateo Street



1944-1960

Municipal Railway Streetcar Rail Removal begins.



NEW CITY ARCHITECT



Public Works Director Carla Short named Julia Laue as San Francisco's new City Architect in December.

Laue had been with the department for nearly 12 years, serving as Principal Architect and manager for the Bureau of Architecture. She oversees a staff of 65-plus that works on a variety of design projects, among them health centers, libraries, homeless shelters, transportation and public utilities facilities, recreation centers, police stations and more.

Laue became the first woman to serve as San Francisco's City Architect, a role established in 1907 as San Francisco was rebuilding after the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906.

This position was created to uphold the highest standards in design and construction for the City's public structures, ensuring resilience and excellence in the wake of the earthquake's devastation.

Prior to joining Public Works, Laue worked for private-sector design firms, taking on such impactful projects as Santana Row in San José, the Gates Computer Science Building at Stanford University and the Ritz-Carlton resort in Kapalua, on the west side of Maui.

Earlier in 2024, Laue was elevated to the American Institute of Architects' College of Fellows, which recognizes architects for their exceptional work.

1945

Lincoln Way Storm Relief



1949

A repair crew works at Mission and Fourth streets.





125 YEARS OF

MAINTAINING THE CITY

PAVEMENT CONDITION INDEX SCORE

Across the City, the department bested the yearly 500-block paving target for this fiscal year, paving 561 blocks. The effort will help keep San Francisco on track to maintain the best paving condition rating among big Bay Area cities.

Overall, during the past 15 years, 9,249 – or 71% – of San Francisco’s nearly 13,000 blocks have been resurfaced.

The cumulative \$979 million investment over that decade-and-a-half timespan has yielded the City a score of 75 on the independently rated Pavement Condition Index or PCI for short – a ranking deemed “good” by the regional Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

San Francisco’s PCI score hovered in the mid-60s during the early 2000s. But the City’s strong commitment to fund roadway maintenance over the last 15-plus years has resulted in a steady rise in the pavement condition score.

One of the paving projects was on the street leading up to Coit Tower and the visitor parking lots serving the cherished landmark perched atop Telegraph Hill.

With its panoramic Bay views, lush urban parkland, breathtaking architecture and, yes, very steep hills, it’s no surprise that this hill has become one of the City’s true treasures and most popular tourist destinations.

But a steady stream of visitors also means lots of wear and tear on roads and parking spots.

After careful planning and coordination, Public Works – as steward of the public right of way – made plans to perform these much-needed repairs in early 2025. The work was strategically timed to take place during the lull in tourism that was expected between NBA All-Star Weekend, which San Francisco hosted Feb. 14 – 16, and the time when most schools were on spring break.

There was a lot of work to squeeze into this roughly eight-week period, including fully repaving the pothole-pocked roadway on Telegraph Hill Boulevard between Kearny Street and Coit Tower; completely reconstructing the rutted Coit Tower parking lot; and constructing three new ADA-compliant curb ramps near the tower’s main entrance.

1949

Redevelopment projects occur in many neighborhoods but are most impactful in the Fillmore and Western Addition.



1950

Construction of the Broadway Tunnel begins.





1951

Street sweeper vehicle



1952

Public Works crews chop a fallen tree to clear the road for traffic.





1956

Arborists prune a Chinese Elm at Arguello Boulevard and Golden Gate Avenue.



1958

2,500-gallon flusher



CURB RAMPS: WHEN IT COMES TO EXPANDING ACCESSIBILITY, OUR ENTHUSIASM IS NOT CURBED

San Francisco Public Works oversaw the installation of 1,212 new ADA-compliant curb ramps during the fiscal year, expanding accessibility in neighborhoods throughout the City. The total number represented a 30% increase over the prior year.

For people who use a wheelchair or walker, push a stroller or delivery handcart or have difficulty stepping up or down a curb, well-designed, well-built curb ramps make it easier to get around.

All City departments and private contractors doing work in the public right of way near street corners may be required to put in curb ramps that meet today's state and federal disability access requirements.

Among the projects that trigger the need for new curb ramps are street resurfacing operations, traffic signal upgrades, sewer and gas line replacements, private developments and streetscape improvements.

Public Works' engineers design the curb ramps, which vary

from location to location due to such factors as slope and other site conditions. The curb ramps are built by both Public Works' Cement Shop crews and private contractors.

With about 50,000 potential locations for curb ramps in San Francisco, Public Works began installing them in the 1970s and implemented a formal program in 1989. Today, there are more than 35,000 curb ramps – a significant achievement, but there's more work to do.

We continually assess requests for new curb ramps. The top priority is given to people with mobility disabilities who ask for curb ramps at an intersection where each corner does not have at least one curb ramp in good condition.

The department then takes into account several factors when prioritizing installation, including the number of requests for a location, if the location is along a high-injury corridor, meaning there have been a disproportionate number of pedestrian injuries, and proximity to schools, senior centers, health care facilities and other key community-serving resources.

1958

Locksmith Shop



1958

The San Francisco Giants play their first season at Seals Stadium.



TAKING THE CREWS TO TREASURE ISLAND

A contingent of Public Works crews, representing various trade shops, toured some of Treasure Island's newest green spaces and parks in September to get the lay of the land.

With about 290 acres of new open space cropping up around Treasure Island and its sister island, Yerba Buena Island, in phases over the next decade and beyond, it will fall to Public Works' trade shops to help with repairs, maintenance and inspections – from electrical work to plumbing.

Moored halfway between San Francisco and Oakland, Treasure Island – which housed a U.S. Navy base for more than half a century – has been undergoing an ambitious redevelopment process decades in the making. So, too, has Yerba Buena Island, which serves as a midway respite for the Bay Bridge and sits just south of Treasure Island. The two islands are connected via a narrow strip of land that holds Treasure Island Road.

Some 8,000 homes, with 2,200 of those designated as affordable units, are slated for the islands. Public transportation connections, a neighborhood shopping corridor, public

art, hotels, restaurants and more are part of the vision, too, creating in essence a new San Francisco neighborhood surrounded by water. The project, split into four major phases, is anticipated to be complete by 2042.

A new permanent training facility for Bay FC, a women's professional soccer franchise, is going to be built on Treasure Island. And nearly 1,000 new homes on the islands are already open or nearing completion. A total of 41 parks are planned across the islands. As of fall 2024, there are about 10 acres of new parks open to the public.

From the start, Public Works has had a significant role in the development on the islands: reviewing and approving the proposed mapping and project phasing; issuing infrastructure permits; and providing construction management services for the infrastructure and parks improvements.

Public Works also is helping with trades work, engineering, repairs and regular inspections. As the redevelopment project moves forward and the community grows, so will Public Works' duties.

1960

Public Works plays a pivotal role in the struggle over the International Hotel.



1961

Eureka Valley Branch Library





1962

Galileo High School students partner with Public Works staff for a neighborhood cleanup event.



1962

Potrero Hill neighbors work to beautify the areas alongside Vermont Street and create a pathway of flowers.





1964

Civic Center Auditorium renovation



1965

Ground is broken for the "Dragon Gateway" to Grant Avenue.



A PICTURESQUE SIDEWALK MAKEOVER

One of the most popular sightseeing spots in San Francisco – the 700 block of Steiner Street with its row of beloved Victorian homes known as “The Painted Ladies” – was overdue for some much-needed TLC.

In June, Public Works Bureau of Urban Forestry cement and arborist crews – with cement mixers in tow – descended on the block to give the sidewalk in front of the homes the expert care and repairs it needed.

For seven workdays that month, they set out safety cones along the stretch as fascinated passersby looked on. The team of a dozen masons, arborists and drivers demolished large swaths of the pathway, which had been badly damaged by roots anchoring eight large ficus trees on the block.

All told, crews replaced 1,400 square feet of cement. The work was completed as part of StreetTreeSE, a voter-backed initiative that provides Public Works with a dedicated funding stream to care for the City’s street trees and repair sidewalk damage they may cause.

The sidewalk on Steiner Street was pushed up and creating tripping hazards for residents and the many tourists who visit daily. Some of the uplift exceeded four inches in height.

Named so because of their delightful pastel palette, the homes, located across the street from Alamo Square, are celebrities in their own right, having been featured in countless films, books and television shows, and showcased on social media platforms and in visitors’ vacation photos.

The homes, built by developer Matthew Kavanaugh in the late 1890s, also are known as the Seven Sisters and Postcard Row. The stately Victorians, with their Queen Anne architectural style, feature varying hues of purple, red, yellow, blue and green. Their peaked roofs, asymmetrical façades, gingerbread-style gables, wood shingles shaped into various designs, classical columns, spindles and balustrades, cut-away bay windows and intricate stain-glass paneling – all against the backdrop of downtown – are unmistakable.

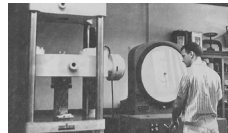
1965

McLaren Park children's play area



1965

300,000-pound concrete and steel testing machine at the Materials Testing Lab





SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC
WORKS

125 YEARS OF

GREENING

ARBOR DAY 2025: GROWING COMMUNITY, PLANTING SUCCESS

Leavenworth. Larkin. Van Ness. Turk. Golden Gate. McAllister. Fulton. Fell. Lafayette. Hickory. Oak. Howard. Eddy. Polk. Hayes. Lily. Each of these San Francisco streets now is a bit greener and more inviting thanks to a one-day planting blitz on Arbor Day that grew San Francisco's urban forest by 110 trees.

These new trees don't just beautify our neighborhoods; they also are an essential component of the City's ecosystem and provide magnificent environmental and social benefits. While Arbor Day is a once-a-year event where we join together to celebrate trees, our job is to care for them every day – with skill, doggedness and pride.

As stewards of San Francisco's street trees, Public Works not only maintains the urban forest, we also look for opportunities to expand it. Arbor Day traditionally is our biggest planting day of the year. We hosted the Arbor Day 2025 event on March 8.

In all, we planted 15 different species, among them Persian ironwoods, zelkovas, bay laurels and trident maples.

Throughout the morning, community volunteers and Public Works staff worked together in small groups, planting and staking one tree at a time. Their efforts followed a lot of prep work that occurred in the weeks and days before – from scoping out potential planting sites to readying the tree basins.

It is work our Bureau of Urban Forestry staff does on a daily basis, but for Arbor Day, the scope of the job balloons.

Our annual Arbor Day event goes beyond expanding the urban forest. We also host a community fair – held this time on the grounds of Civic Center Secondary School and drawing hundreds of people – where folks of all ages have fun.

1966

Condition of structures in Yerba Buena boundaries



1967

Summer of Love





1969

Public Works oversees improvements and expansion to Candlestick Park.



1970

A Public Works-led neighborhood planting project





1971

A “blockman,” the equivalent of what is known as a corridor worker or block sweeper today, cleans a commercial corridor.



1972

San Francisco Pride begins.



LIVING THE DREAM: THE TRANSFORMATION OF A HAYES VALLEY ALLEY

The Market-Octavia area in the heart of Hayes Valley acts as a transportation gateway to a city perpetually on the move.

More than a dozen transit lines travel through the busy neighborhood, including the historic F-line trolleys that run along Market Street. A near-constant stream of cars, trucks and motorcycles rumbles up and down a twisting ramp leading to and from Highway 101 – the remaining appendage of a double-decker freeway that once bifurcated the community. Commuters zip through the area on e-bikes and huff up hills on conventional bicycles.

In this neighborhood in motion, a Public Works-led project aims to make a narrow side street off of Octavia Street into a community destination, a leafy gathering spot to slow down, amble through and maybe even linger.

With the help of Public Works project managers, construction managers, landscape architects and engineers, the one-block stretch of Ivy Street, between Laguna and Octavia

streets, in Hayes Valley is primed for a transformation. The goal is to bring a new intimate neighborhood street feeling to this very busy neighborhood.

New raised crosswalks at both ends of the block look to reduce traffic speeds, increase visibility and provide safe crossings for people who walk. The raised crosswalks will be combined with traffic-calming bulb-outs – one already exists on one end of the alley and another will be built at the other end.

Additional street trees bring more cooling shade; new benches provide respite for pedestrians; and a decorative asphalt overlay – designed by a local artist – provides a splash of abstract beauty. Improved pedestrian lighting illuminates the alley by night. Textured paving on the road further nudges drivers to slow down and curb ramp upgrades provide increased accessibility.

The project is set to be completed in spring 2026.

1973

A streetscape reconstruction and beautification project at Sanchez and 14th streets



1974

The Electrical Shop repairs and tests synchronous, impulse and carrier type clocks before the advent of digital clocks.



#LOVEOURCITY: VOLUNTEERS CARE FOR NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood Beautification Day is Public Works' flagship volunteer program where community members pitch in to create greener and cleaner public spaces.

The monthly events bring together City workers and volunteers of all ages to care for our neighborhoods and boost civic pride. We rotate Neighborhood Beautification Days through a different supervisorial district every month, January through November.

Volunteer teams, with the help of our Public Works pros, come together to plant trees, weed medians, mulch green spaces, pick up litter and wipe out graffiti.

This monthly effort is managed by our Community Engagement Team, which organizes and supports more than 1,000 volunteer events a year to green and clean San Francisco neighborhoods and steward more than 100 street parks. We work with community groups, businesses, individual residents, schools, religious institutions, service organizations and nonprofits to get the work done.

1974

Cement masons complete a new sidewalk in front of the War Memorial Opera House.



1974

Crews remove litter from a street in Chinatown.





1974

Then-Supervisor Dianne Feinstein speaks in front of Lotta's Fountain.



1977

The Tymco Model 600 mechanical street sweeper is introduced.





1978

Moscone-Milk assassinations



1978

Trash can unveiling in Noe Valley



GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GREEN-JOBS WORKERS

The Public Works Street Tree Nursery, which opened in fall 2023 in the South of Market neighborhood, already is putting down roots in the community.

In collaboration with nonprofit partner, Friends of the Urban Forest, the New Roots workforce development program provides community members with apprenticeship opportunities in street tree stewardship.

Four participants from San Francisco's disadvantaged neighborhoods have completed the program and in July another cohort began work at the nursery.

The program, which launched in December 2023, offers young adults, 18 to 26 years old, training and hands-on work experience in nursery operations, tree planting and tree care.

The program curriculum includes introductory botany and ecology courses, resume workshops, career counseling and communication training. The program also works with outside nonprofits to offer financial literacy training and

affordable housing assistance workshops to help meet participants' needs.

The trees and plants cultivated at the nursery will in turn be used to continue greening San Francisco neighborhoods.

New Roots is funded by the California Natural Resources Agency, the state Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the City of San Francisco through a Cal Fire grant. Participants earn \$19.95 an hour.

The introduction of the New Roots program coincided with the opening of the Street Tree Nursery. Developed on a 14,000-square-foot plot of underutilized Caltrans land, the nursery is situated underneath the I-80 freeway, off of Fifth Street, between Harrison and Bryant streets.

The Public Works Street Tree Nursery, first conceived of in 2014, has been a beacon for not only the South of Market neighborhood – one of San Francisco's neighborhoods with the smallest tree canopy – but for the City as a whole.

1982

Sheet Metal Shop: Louvered intake



1982

Parade for the San Francisco 49ers in Civic Center Plaza





ST. FRANCIS

FIRE
RESCUE

FIREBOAT 3

re Department



10
9

125 YEARS OF

**PUBLIC HEALTH
& SAFETY**

HIGH PRESSURE UPGRADES TO VITAL FIREFIGHTING NETWORK

For the first time in nearly a century, San Francisco is overhauling a crucial part of its emergency firefighting apparatus – with the help of some Public Works engineering and design know-how.

In the wake of the devastating Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906, it became clear the City needed an emergency water supply that can function after a major temblor to aid in firefighting efforts. City leaders devised a standalone system now known as the Emergency Firefighting Water System.

It includes a resilient 135-mile high-pressure pipeline network, a 10.5 million-gallon reservoir at Twin Peaks, two large-capacity storage tanks, underground water storage tanks, also known as cisterns, about 1,600 dedicated high-pressure hydrants, two high-pressure seawater pumping stations and a handful of manifolds that allow fireboats to pump Bay water into the City’s pipelines. Manifolds also can be directly connected to hoses used by firefighters to douse blazes.

In the 1930s, the City began to strategically install the five

cast iron fireboat manifolds along its northeastern shore, from Fort Mason to Islais Creek. But some existing manifolds are at risk of being destroyed during a major earthquake due to their locations. And additional manifolds are needed to provide adequate access and coverage.

Public Works staff designed the first new manifold, which was installed at Treasure Island in 2024. Engineers had to fashion the manifold in a way that allows it to be easily maintained, repaired and operated.

A new mixed-use development is taking hold on Treasure Island. The artificial island is fed by a domestic water supply that runs through pipes across the Bay Bridge.

If the line is severed during a major earthquake, Treasure Island would lose its water source.

Other manifolds – like the existing one at Fort Mason, which sits on federal land – are situated in precarious locations. The plan is to install new ones in safer locations.

1984

Plumbing Shop: Plumber running a pipe threader



1985

A glazier repairs a broken door.





1986

Public Works designs and manages construction of the exterior restoration of the Legion of Honor.



1986

The great musical flusher





1986

Street inspector Carl Lee prepares to issue a notice to repair a sidewalk.



1986

Surveyors Michael Scott and Hellmund Wong prepare a survey for the Great Highway seawall.



TAKING SAN FRANCISCO BY STORM

A series of winter storms walloped San Francisco in December, knocking down trees and power lines, flooding streets and parks and surprising longtime City residents with an unprecedented pre-dawn tornado warning.

The worst of the tempests hit on Dec. 14, driven by the forceful combination of strong winds and heavy rains. Public Works' Bureau of Urban Forestry crews responded to hundreds of service requests for downed trees and branches that blocked roads and sidewalks and landed on vehicles, buildings and overhead power lines.

Thankfully, no injuries were reported.

The National Weather Service issued San Francisco's first-ever tornado warning just before 6 a.m. on Dec. 14, awakening many slumbering residents with a better-pay-attention alert on their cell phones.

The warning expired less than a half-hour later, with no touch-down reported in the City. However, fierce winds

felled several trees, one after another, along the Bernal Cut that separates Glen Park from Bernal Heights.

Our tree crews were on the ground – and high up in wind-whipped bucket trucks – throughout the day and into the night, cutting down and removing storm-damaged street trees in neighborhoods across San Francisco. Cleanup continued in the days that followed.

Other storms rolled through the City, keeping our crews busy during the first weeks of winter. In addition to the arborists' tree work, Public Works crews help keep the storm drains clear, mop up after localized flooding, make rain-related road repairs and address landslides. We also hand out free sandbags to San Francisco residents and businesses, with thousands distributed in December alone.

Key to our response work is the Public Works Radio Room, a 24/7 service that triages all requests that come in from 911 and 311 and dispatches them to appropriate staff.

1987

More than 100 daily assignments are handled each morning in the Centralized Dispatch Office.



1989

The 6.9-magnitude Loma Prieta Earthquake strikes the greater San Francisco Bay Area.



STREET VENDING ENFORCEMENT

In the fall of 2022, City officials adopted new rules to prohibit sidewalk vending in the Mission District that was causing impassable and obstructed sidewalks, forcing pedestrians to walk in the roadway, blocking access to and from buses, obstructing entrances to stores and restaurants, generating noise complaints, facilitating the sale of allegedly stolen merchandise, damaging street trees, producing litter and leading to other problems impacting the enjoyment of the neighborhood. The crackdown, enforced primarily by Public Works street inspectors, resulted in less reported crime and fewer requests for sidewalk cleaning.

In June 2024, Public Works allowed vending to resume on a limited basis on Mission Street, between 23rd Street and 24th Street, issuing permits to vendors who agree to keep the path of travel clear, offer proof that their goods were not stolen and abide by a set of good neighbor rules. By October, the pilot was extended to cover two additional blocks and allow vendors to obtain permits for the stretch between 22nd Street and 25th Street. While conditions have improved overall, challenges remain with unpermitted vending activity that mushrooms when the enforcement teams are not present.

1992

Volunteers sweep on Eddy Street.



1993

Sunset Branch Library seismic and access upgrade





1993

Jake Szeto informs a flower stand vendor of encroachment permit requirements.



1994

Mission Police Station is dedicated.





1995

United Nations Plaza upgrades are completed in time for the U.N. 50 celebration.



1997-1998

Public Works embarks on the design and construction of a new Emergency Communications Center.



PIT STOP: FLUSH WITH SUCCESS

San Francisco's innovative Pit Stop public toilet program, launched by Public Works in 2014, has averaged one flush a minute.

What began with three locations in the Tenderloin, the Pit Stops now have expanded to more than a dozen neighborhoods. Between 2014 and late 2024, there have been more than 5 million uses.

What makes a Pit Stop a Pit Stop is that it is staffed. The paid attendants are on site to ensure that the toilets are kept clean and in good working order and used for their intended purpose.

The goal is simple: Offer facilities where people can take care of their bathroom needs in a safe, private space, providing them with an alternative to using our streets and sidewalks as a toilet.

In addition to making sure the facilities are stocked with toilet paper and kept in good condition, the attendants serve as de facto neighborhood guardians – helping tourists with

directions, calling 911 when they spot a medical emergency and sweeping the nearby sidewalk.

We use different types of toilets in the Pit Stop program – from portable units to fixed-location bathrooms. The hours and days of operation vary by location, based largely on usage data.

Each Pit Stop also is equipped with sharps receptacles and free dog waste bags. On average, we collect 1,323 used needles and hand out 458 dog waste bags a month – both services that help keep our streets cleaner and safer.

Over the years, the program has drawn the interest of government and nonprofit organization representatives from Europe, Asia and across the United States who have wanted to see how the Pit Stops operate.

Public Works manages the Pit Stops. Nonprofit grantees staff them with participants in their workforce development programs.

1997-1999

After suffering extensive damage during the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, City Hall undergoes a renovation.



1999

Graffiti removal



ELECTRICIANS GET A CHARGE OUT OF LIGHTNING ROD PROJECT

The City's 911 Call Center at Turk and Laguna streets is an around-the-clock operation where public safety dispatchers field an average of 3,200 calls a day and serve as the initial point of contact for fire, police, emergency medical and other first responders.

In fall 2024, Public Works electricians helped install new lightning rods on the metal roof of the center. The new lightning protection system is vitally important to help shield the call center from damage during inclement weather.

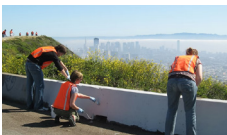
The previous system had deteriorated and provided limited coverage. The new system offers enhanced protection and ensures compliance with modern safety standards, safeguarding the critical building against potential lightning strikes more effectively.

The newly installed network of 60 rods, also called air terminals, is linked via about 1,200 feet of wire, or conductor, that runs along the edge of the roof. Together the system acts as a protective outer shell so the lightning doesn't electrify the building, enter any of the existing electrical systems or fry any electronics. It also serves to protect the people inside.

If a lightning bolt were to strike the roof, the system – a mix of copper and aluminum parts – is built to direct the current all the way to the electrical grounding system in the basement. As part of the installation work on the roof, Public Works electricians also added new LED lights to help illuminate Jefferson Square Park across the street from the 911 Call Center.

2001

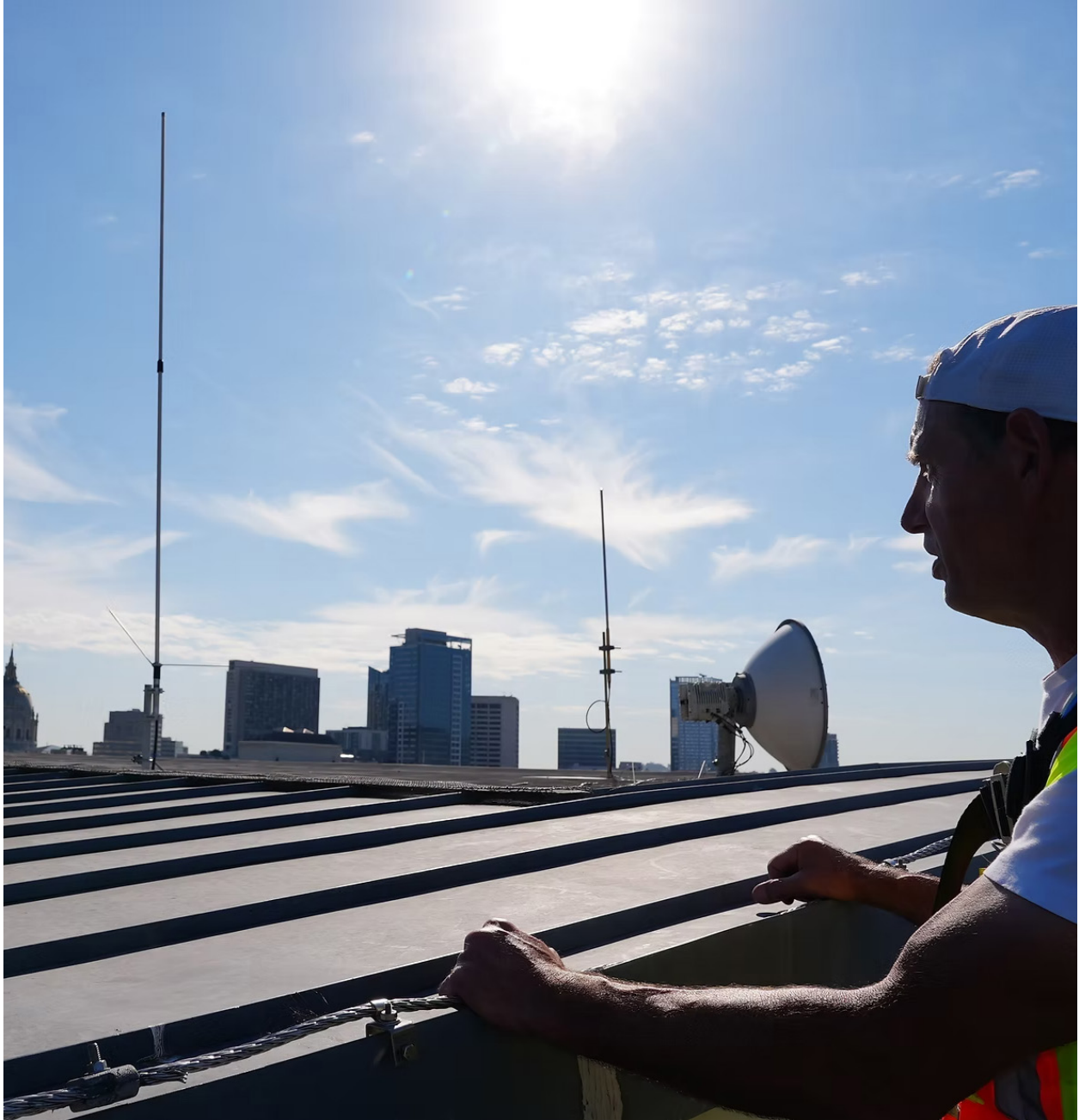
Community Clean Team, San Francisco Public Works' longest-running and largest volunteer program, begins.



2005

Public Works launches the Graffiti Watch program.





2005

The Excelsior Branch Library opens following a seismic retrofit and many other improvements.



2005

The PGA-approved Harding Park Clubhouse, designed by Public Works, opens.





2005

Public Works designs and constructs the new Octavia Boulevard as part of the Central Freeway Replacement Project.



2006

Two blocks of deteriorated roadway at Waverly Place in the heart of Chinatown are reconstructed.



SFPD GUN RANGE: PUBLIC WORKS' INSPECTION AND REPAIR TEAMS HIT THE TARGET

Four times a year, crews from Public Works' structural engineering team use a hammer, in a method known as hammer sounding, to tap the overhead steel-frame truss that holds up wooden baffles at the San Francisco Police Department's outdoor firearms range. The baffles, dimpled with round indentations, keep stray bullets from ricocheting and leaving the range.

The hammer sounding serves as an extension of the visual inspection crews perform.

What crews mainly look for are signs of corrosion – cracked paint on the steel tubing, for example, is another sign of rust – that can make the truss vulnerable to failure. A truss member failed due to extensive corrosion in 2016. While no one was injured, the level of corrosion discovered from the failed truss member prompted the quarterly inspections.

The SFPD shooting range is located down a long drive-away off of John Muir Drive near Lake Merced in the City's southwest. While the range is closed to the public and out of public view, the sound of gunfire provides a reminder of its

presence. The Police Department uses the range to train and recertify officers in firearms use.

Originally opened in the early 1940s, the range was renovated five decades later when the truss was added. Eventually, the Police Department would like to build a new indoor firing range when funding becomes available. Until then, the game plan calls for regular upkeep of the existing facility.

That's where Public Works comes in.

Our engineers provide routine structural inspections, our architecture bureau handles project management and our trades workers from our Bureau of Building and Street Repair perform the needed repairs and upkeep, including carpentry, welding, painting, roofing and electrical work.

After a recent inspection found severe corrosion in steel pipe segments on two trusses, a welder with our Steamfitter Shop went to work making repairs and a painter, wielding a roller, applied a fresh coat of epoxy to protect against the salty air. The firearms range sits near the Pacific Ocean.

2008

Public Works provides project management work for the design and construction of the California Academy of Sciences.



2009

Public Works transforms 7,800 square feet of space at 17th and Castro streets.





125 YEARS OF

**STREETSCAPES
& PUBLIC
SPACES**

POTRERO GATEWAY PROJECT UPLIFTS A NEIGHBORHOOD THROUGH COMMUNITY VISION, THOUGHTFUL DESIGN

A community-driven vision to turn a patch of trash-strewn public land into a safer, more welcoming corridor near a freeway offramp in the Potrero Hill neighborhood came to life in April with the completion of a transformative streetscape project.

The Potrero Gateway project – led by Public Works, from design to implementation – helped create a safer passageway under the U.S. Highway 101 overpass on 17th Street, between San Bruno Avenue and Vermont Street, as well as the adjacent block of Vermont Street, between 17th Street and Mariposa Street.

Both stretches had been identified by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency’s Vision Zero team as needing upgrades to make the area safer and more accessible for people who walk and bike.

Crews widened sidewalks, built corner bulb-outs to shorten crossing distances, constructed concrete dividers to protect

both eastbound and westbound bike lanes and installed new metal picket fencing along the area’s perimeter and new lighting to illuminate pedestrian pathways underneath the freeway. Landscaped elements complement the streetscape and safety improvements.

In partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission, four new public art sculptures were installed on both sides of the overhead freeway – two at the corner of 17th Street and Vermont Street and another two at 17th Street and San Bruno Avenue.

Public Works hosted a ribbon-cutting celebration in front of the sculptures on April 28.

This project was inspired by and built in collaboration with passionate members of the Potrero Hill and Dogpatch communities, who shared a desire to improve and beautify this previously neglected, litter-pocked space under the freeway overpass.

2010

The first Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response (ESER) bond is approved by voters.



2010

Public Works oversees the \$594 million Laguna Honda Hospital Replacement Program.





2010

The Valencia Streetscape Improvement Project, between 15th and 19th streets, provides sidewalk improvements.



2011

Public Works provides various technical services for the new Betty Ann Ong Recreation Center.





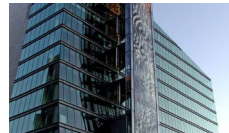
2011

The \$248 million Road Repaving and Street Safety Bond is approved by San Francisco voters.



2012

Public Works celebrates the opening of the new headquarters of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.



THE AHA MOMENT THAT SPARKED THE NEW GOLDEN GATE PARK GATEWAY DESIGN

Oval-shaped masonry walls, interspersed with larger boulders, now grace the new entry plaza to San Francisco's largest park – along with fresh native plants and a special irrigation system, new pedestrian lighting and curb ramps.

Public Works designed and planned the Golden Gate Park gateway project on behalf of the Recreation and Park Department, which oversees Golden Gate Park – San Francisco's signature green space, a 1,017-acre oasis in the City's western half that eclipses even New York City's famed Central Park in size.

Connecting the Inner Sunset neighborhood to Golden Gate Park, the gateway at Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way is one of the most heavily used entrances to the park.

One of the main goals was to foster a sense of place at the entry point. It needed to be a jumping off point, a stepping

stone of sorts, where park visitors – from parents with strollers to tourists new to the area – could gather and collect themselves before heading into or out of the green space.

Now, more than 5,000 square feet of new concrete paving and plaza space – in addition to about 6,000 square feet of fresh landscaping – offers a generous springboard into the City's emerald sanctuary.

Another important objective for the gateway project was to make the area safer and more visible for pedestrians. New pedestrian lighting and curb ramps aim to help with visibility and accessibility.

The rock for the masonry work was sourced from a Napa quarry. The new greenery is 100% native plants, including Coast Live Oak and California Buckeye.

2013

Public Works launches Giant Sweep, a citywide anti-litter campaign.



2014

The James R. Herman Cruise Terminal, a project delivered with the help of Public Works, opens at Pier 27.



MAIDEN LANE POPS WITH NEW DECORATIVE ASPHALT

Just in time for the holiday hustle and bustle, Public Works – in collaboration with San Francisco Planning and the nonprofit Union Square Alliance – wrapped up work on a decorative asphalt project along Maiden Lane where curious tourists and enterprising shoppers stroll past high-end boutiques and storefronts on the pedestrian-only street.

Like gift wrapping on a present, a series of lines and loops now graces two blocks of the historic alleyway, which is bookended by Stockton and Kearny streets and located near Union Square.

Public Works landscape architects designed the pattern and our Bureau of Building and Street Repair crews repaved the roadway before a contractor installed the decorative asphalt. Our project and construction management teams shepherded the work through delivery.

2014

Public Works' Pit Stop Program begins in the Tenderloin to provide clean and safe public toilets.



2015

The historic War Memorial Veterans Building undergoes essential seismic upgrades and improvements.





2015

The first Navigation Center opens in the Mission District on a former school site.



2015

San Francisco's new Police Department headquarters and public safety campus opens in Mission Bay.





2015

The new San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center opens. Public Works managed construction.



2016

Proposition E is approved by 76% of voters, allowing Public Works to care for the City's street trees.



BURNSIDE STAIRS: STEPPING UP!

Step by step, a mundane, utilitarian public staircase connecting a quiet cul-de-sac with a busy street in the Glen Park neighborhood metamorphosed into a community treasure packed with beauty and meaning.

The Burnside Steps project, a mosaic-tiled stairway in San Francisco, showcases not only the rich history of Glen Park but also the spirit of community pride and determination. It was brought to life by artists Aileen Barr and Colette Crutcher whose laudable work on other tiled staircases in San Francisco is well-known.

Public Works owns the staircase that runs between Burnside Avenue and Bosworth Street and worked closely with the community to ensure the proposed project would meet safety and accessibility codes.

The department's Cement Shop crews assisted in the site prep and helped with the finishing touches. Our engineering, disability access coordination and Director's Office teams also were involved in the project delivery.

But it was neighbor Renee Berger's doggedness and community organizing skills that made Burnside Steps a reality.

The newly tiled steps, officially unveiled at a joy-filled celebration on Oct. 27, rise above a colorful mural completed previously that tells the story of Glen Park's natural bounty of flora and fauna.

The 69 mosaic-tiled steps continue the narrative, focusing on Islais Creek, a historic waterway that now largely runs underground through the Glen Park neighborhood but flows aboveground in Glen Canyon Park.

The mosaic-tiled stream runs along the stairway and is depicted in gradient blue hues. Fish, birds and wildflowers are featured throughout. The middle of the staircase bursts with yellows, oranges and reds, representing the sun reflecting in the stream.

The sidewall of the stairway features iconic images from Glen Park's history.

2017

Glen Canyon Park Recreation Center reopens after a \$14 million makeover.



2020

The COVID-19 global pandemic begins. Public Works employees are on the front line of the City's response.



BETTER MARKET STREET PROJECT HITS MILESTONE

In February, Phase 1 of the Better Market Street improvements project reached substantial completion – bringing shorter crossing distances for pedestrians, new street trees and more visible traffic signals to the downtown corridor.

Additional upgrades include new curb ramps and street paving, street base reconstruction, decorative pavers and rebuilt sidewalks.

Public Works led the project from start to finish, providing project management, design, construction management, regulatory affairs and public affairs services.

The Phase 1 upgrades run along Market Street between Fifth and Eighth streets. The Better Market Street project stretches from Steuart Street to Octavia Boulevard. Construction of the future phases is dependent on funding availability.

2020

Margaret Hayward Playground reopens following a \$28 million renovation.



2020

Fireboat Station No. 35 opens at Pier 22 ½ as a two-story, 14,837-square-foot facility built on top of a steel float.





2020

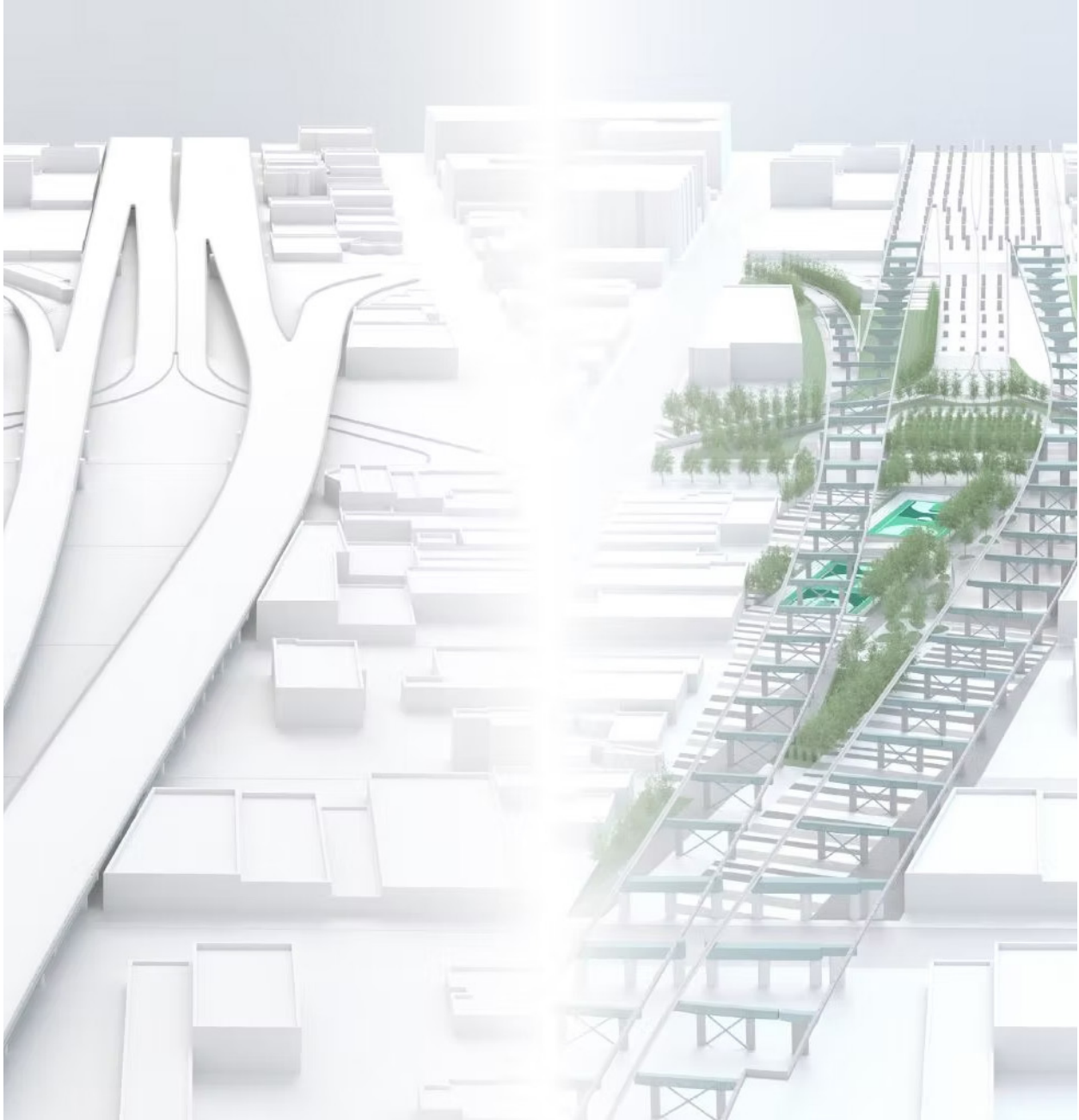
City voters establish the Public Works Commission and the Sanitation and Streets Commission to provide oversight.



2021

Public Works crews conduct their annual Lunar New Year cleanup in Chinatown.





2021

The new Animal Care and Control facility opens to serve the City's animals and the humans who care for them.



2022

At the northern edge of the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood, the Southeast Community Center opens.



LANDSCAPE DESIGN INITIATIVE TO COOL DOWN THE SOUTH OF MARKET HEATS UP

On the heels of the success of its budding street tree nursery in the South of Market neighborhood and with the help of a new state grant, Public Works began exploring the potential to redesign a stretch of right of way beneath the I-80 freeway overpass to help mitigate existing flooding issues, better protect pedestrians and bicyclists and safeguard residents from climate change impacts.

Public Works was awarded a \$626,000 grant from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in summer 2024 to launch the SoMa Under Freeway Park project. The funding is a needed first step to create a vision for the space – roughly 10 acres total – bounded by Fourth, Sixth, Harrison and Bryant streets.

In addition to lighting, greening, art and stormwater management elements, the heart of the project would be an open space that – depending on community input and available funding – could include basketball and pickleball courts, a skate park, a dog park or similar amenities.

Not only does the neighborhood suffer from a dearth of open space and recreation opportunities, but its residents are also disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change, including heat and air quality inequities.

A recent study – produced by the Public Works Landscape Architecture team – showed that SoMa residents are more likely to be hospitalized for asthma or with diabetes complications during a heat event. That is because the area – with its proximity to the freeway, abundance of asphalt and lack of shade from trees – creates the perfect environment to trap heat and air pollution, a phenomenon known as the urban heat island effect.

Besides increasing air pollution in the neighborhood, the freeway divides the community and creates unsafe street conditions for people who walk and bike due to its street design, ramps and crossings. The new project will aim to right these environmental inequities, provide access to recreation, expand the tree canopy and biodiversity and celebrate cultural expression for the underserved neighborhood.

2023

The City is awarded a \$12 million federal grant to plant thousands of new street trees to fight climate change.



2023

San Francisco Public Works opens the City's first street tree nursery.



EV CHARGERS: POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

The City has made it a little easier for drivers to power up their electric vehicles with the installation of the first publicly available curbside chargers in San Francisco under a pilot program launched in April.

Public Works, the San Francisco Environment Department and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency teamed up with a firm, called it's electric, to enable the installation of compact, user-friendly chargers without the need for extensive street work or direct utility connections. The company, which partners with property owners to utilize their untapped electricity supply, provides people with their own cable for their EV to plug into a curbside charger.

The pilot started with two Level 2 chargers that are located on Hermann Street, just west of Fillmore Street, outside the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers' headquarters. The pair of curbside chargers – anticipated to be the first of many – were installed by union electricians and represent an important step forward in expanding access to EV charging infrastructure.

Public Works facilitated the permitting process to allow installation of the EV charger infrastructure in the public right of way.

The expansion of EV charging at the curb opens a new frontier of potential for convenient, publicly accessible charging.

As the newest option, curbside charging joins other established pathways, such as EV chargers in private garages and public lots, to deliver convenient charging solutions to residents, visitors and businesses.

Through partnerships with cities, it's electric manages the installation, operation and maintenance of chargers at no cost to municipalities or building owners, striving to seamlessly integrate into the urban landscape while providing a convenient charging option for EV owners.

The new chargers dispense 7.6 kW, adding about 25 miles of range per hour, and are open to the public.

2023

San Francisco hosts the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Summit.



2025

San Francisco Public Works celebrates 125 years of service.





2025

The City opens a new Behavioral Health Center, an emergency hub for those in crisis, at 822 Geary St.



2025

Amid a citywide push to simplify permitting and cut red tape, the Love Our Neighborhoods Permit Program launches.



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