

# YBCBD Street Population Outreach Services

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## Overview

The Yerba Buena Community Benefit District's mission is to advance the quality of life for property owners, residents and visitors of the Yerba Buena neighborhood by fostering a safer and more secure community, enhancing the environmental quality and beauty, and reinforcing the viability of our economic base. To help create a clean, safe and secure community, we contract with MJM Management Group (MJM) and the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD). MJM provides on the ground services including Community Guides, Clean Team, Social Services Specialist, and a 24-hour dispatch service. SFPD provides a bike patrol officer who works 10 hours a day, 7 days a week to address nuisance and quality of life issues.

The plight of the neighborhood's street population is a complex issue. Community Benefit Districts are a piece of the response to problems of homelessness, drug addiction, mental illness and uncivil behavior. Our role is to work with individuals in our neighborhood to help them connect to available services and resources. In this document, we outline efforts we undertake each day to address issues facing people in need.

## Approach

The YBCBD's philosophy is to help people in need with compassion and respect. Our approach is to partner with available City and nonprofit services to help create a safe, vibrant, and welcoming neighborhood for all. YBCBD's Community Guides, Social Services Specialist, SFPD bike patrol officer and Clean Team are trained to assist and respond with respect and dignity. We work closely with City departments and social service agencies and are actively learning from their efforts.

The Yerba Buena neighborhood has changed dramatically since the YBCBD's formation, increasing the need for and importance of our services. The resident population has doubled since 2009, more businesses call Yerba Buena their home base, and there has been a marked increase in visitors to cultural institutions and Moscone Center. More developments are under construction or planned that will fuel long-term growth in the neighborhood.

With growth comes challenges. Our sidewalks and streets are more crowded, office space is limited and expensive, and more people are living on neighborhood streets. Yerba Buena's street population has grown, and erratic and aggressive behavior is not uncommon. We've also seen an increase in open drug use – and needles – and aggressive panhandling. For example, needle removal by our Clean Team and Community Guides has increased from two per month in 2012 to 43 per month in 2017. We will continue to work with the City, community organizations and our property owners to be part of solutions to this complex issue.

## Services

**Community Guides:** YBCBD Community Guides are the eyes and ears of the neighborhood. They undergo extensive training, which allows for keen understanding and compassionate response in approaching quality of life issues. Training that helps inform the Community Guides' awareness of managing street population issues includes: De-escalation and Situational Awareness Training, SFPD Academy Crisis Intervention Training, Tactical Communications, Mental Health First Aid, Homeward

Bound Program, HOT Team Field Training, San Francisco Adult Probation Department, Veteran's Affairs Trainings, Transgender Awareness Training, CPR/Basic First Aid, and more. In addition to ongoing training in these areas, our Guides tour facilities and service organizations throughout the City that serve the street population to obtain information about available resources.

Our Community Guides provide assistance such as shelter referrals, connecting individuals with the San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT), reporting aggressive panhandling, and working with SFPD to address neighborhood quality of life issues. For example, when interacting with someone who is sleeping or camping on the sidewalk, the Guides first approach the individual to determine if they need assistance, to offer assistance (food, shelter, referrals, etc.), and advise them of the rules restricting camping. If the person accepts services or moves elsewhere, the issue is closed. If the person is uncooperative or needs additional help, the Guide requests assistance from our SFPD bike patrol officer or contacts Police non-emergency for assistance. We believe it is not a long-term solution to simply have people move from one place to another and that connecting them with services is our first priority. Our Guides also report cleaning issues to the Clean Team.

**Clean Team:** The Clean Team focuses on sidewalk and gutter sweeping, graffiti abatement, cleaning and weeding tree wells, sidewalk steam cleaning, spot power washing, monitoring public trashcan overflow, and reporting illegal dumping to the City for removal. They also work with the City, including the Department of Public Health and the Department of Public Works, to remove needles, human waste, and remnants of encampments. In addition to training on effective ways to clean the neighborhood, Clean Team members receive extensive training in Incident Report Writing, Reporting Issues to 311, SFPD Codes & Ordinances, DPW Training, SF Street Ordinances and Park Codes, Cleaning Products, Safe Working Tips, Hazard Materials and Communication, Customer Service Training, and CPR/Basic First Aid.

**Social Services Specialist:** In 2016, we started a one-year pilot program to help provide enhanced services to the District's street population and to better connect with available resources. We've learned over the years that it's not enough to provide a shelter referral or directions to a hot meal to someone in need. Rather, the Social Services Specialist is able to spend time building relationships, establishing trust, and helping individuals navigate the complex system of available services. For example, they will help a person make an appointment to sign up for benefits and escort the individual to the appointment. Titus Tolliver, a former YCBCD Community Guide, is our Social Services Specialist. He has received all of the training mentioned above, both with greater depth and more frequency.

**SFPD Bike Patrol Officer:** The YCBCD contracts with SFPD for 10 hours of coverage, 7 days a week. Officers are on-duty, uniformed SFPD bike patrol officers that primarily address nuisance and quality of life issues such as aggressive panhandling, illegal vending, trespassing, littering, permit violations, and noise complaints. The officers also address criminal activity as needed. The officers work closely with the Community Guides, especially when addressing the needs of the street population.

**YCBCD Dispatch:** The YCBCD created multiple ways to access YCBCD services. There is a centralized dispatch center that addresses issues. Property owners, businesses, residents, and visitors can download the mobile app (YCBCD Assist), call, text, email or submit a request for services online at [www.ycbcd.org](http://www.ycbcd.org). All issues are received, reviewed and prioritized by a dispatcher who sends a Community Guide, Clean Team member, the Social Services Specialist, or the bike patrol officer to address requests.

### **Community Involvement and Advocacy**

In addition to these services and programs, YBCBD staff are actively involved in City efforts to further address issues concerning our neighborhood. We serve on the Southern Station Community Police Advisory Board and the Better Market Street Citizen's Advisory Counsel. Staff also regularly attend hearings on issues related to pedestrian safety, transit, housing, and homelessness and participates in the bi-monthly meetings of CBDs in San Francisco to share resources and information. Currently CBDs are exploring a partnership with the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing to hire additional social services specialists to provide enhanced services for the districts.

### **YBCBD Services Committee**

The largest portion of our annual budget is allocated to clean and safe services. In FY17 the amount is just under \$2 million. The YBCBD Services Committee meets monthly to discuss and address areas of concern and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors for how best to manage the budget and program. They work to ensure the services offered meet the requirements defined in the Management Plan, oversee the services contract with MJM Management Group and the partnership with SFPD. They conduct performance walks to measure the cleanliness of neighborhood sidewalks and are overseeing the Social Services Specialist pilot program. The committee is comprised of YBCBD board and community members.