



[Appropriation - ~~\$2,500,000~~ \$1,100,000 of Prior Year's Fund Balance in General Fund to Department of Public Works for Street & Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot Enhancement Project - FY2017-2018]

**Ordinance appropriating ~~\$2,500,000~~ \$1,100,000 of prior year's fund balance in General Fund to Public Works for funding Street & Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot Enhancement Project in FY2017-2018.**

Note: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*; deletions are *strikethrough italics Times New Roman*. Board amendment additions are double underlined. Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough-normal~~.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. The sources of funding outlined below are herein appropriated in Fiscal Year 2017-18.

**SOURCES Appropriation**

Fund / Department ID	Project & Activity / Authority	Account	Description	Amount
10000 / 230018	10026733-0001/	499999	Prior Year's	\$2,500,000
GF Annual Account	10000	Beg Fund Balance -	Fund Balance	<u>\$1,100,000</u>
Ctrl Fund /	GE Administration/	Budget Only		
GEN General City	Operating			
				<b>\$2,500,000</b>
<b>Total SOURCES Appropriation</b>				<b><u>\$1,100,000</u></b>

1 Section 2. The uses of funding outlined below are herein appropriated to  
 2 Department of Public Works to fund street & sidewalk cleaning pilot enhancement project in  
 3 Fiscal Year 2017-2018.

4  
 5 **Uses Appropriation**


Fund / Department ID	Project & Activity / Authority	Account	Description	Amount
10020 / 207956	XXXXXXXX - XXXX	501010	Temporary	\$1640,000
GF Continuing	/XXXXX	Salaries Misc.	Salaries	<u>\$210,000</u>
Authority Ctrl Fund /	Street & Sidewalk			
DPW SES Budgetary	Cleaning Pilot Enhancement			
10020 / 207956	XXXXXXXX - XXXX	538000	Community	\$230,000
GF Continuing	/XXXXX	CBO Services-Budget	Grants	
Authority Ctrl Fund /	Street & Sidewalk			
DPW SES Budgetary	Cleaning Pilot Enhancement			
10020 / 207956	XXXXXXXX - XXXX	540000	Materials &	\$100,000
GF Continuing	/XXXXX	Materials & Supplies- Budget	Supplies	
Authority Ctrl Fund/	Street & Sidewalk			
DPW SES Budgetary	Cleaning Pilot Enhancement			

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Fund / Department ID	Project & Activity / Authority	Account	Description	Amount
10020 / 207956	XXXXXXXX - XXXX	560000	Equipment	\$560,000
GF Continuing	/XXXXX	Equipment - Budget		
Authority Ctrl Fund/	Street & Sidewalk			
DPW SES Budgetary	Cleaning Pilot			
	Enhancement			
<b>Total USES Appropriation</b>				<u>\$2,500,000</u>
				<u>\$1,100,000</u>

Section 3. The Controller is authorized to record transfers between funds and adjust the accounting treatment of sources and uses appropriated in this Ordinance as necessary to conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

By:   
BUCK DELVENTHAL  
Deputy City Attorney

FUNDS AVAILABLE:  
BEN ROSENFELD, Controller

By:   
BEN ROSENFELD  
Controller

<p><b>Item 8</b>  <b>File 18-0116</b>  <i>(Continued from the March 1, 2018                  Budget and Finance Committee)</i></p>	<p><b>Department:</b>                  General Services Agency - Department of Public Works</p>
<p><b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b></p>	
<p><b>Legislative Objectives</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed ordinance appropriates \$2,500,000 of the prior year’s unassigned General Fund balance to the Department of Public Works (Public Works) to fund Street and Sidewalk Cleaning in FY 2017-18.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Key Points</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Street Environmental Services bureau of Public Works provides street and sidewalk cleaning Citywide. Street Environmental Services has zone teams that provide scheduled street sweeping, steam cleaning, manual cleaning, and litter removal on predetermined routes, as well as response to service requests. There are also crews that focus on hot spots, encampments, alleys, and swing and night shift operations.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Fiscal Impact</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed ordinance would appropriate \$2,500,000 from the prior year’s unassigned General Fund balance to Public Works to enhance street cleaning operations.</li> <li>• The a \$1,610,000 to pay for approximately 41,150 hours of temporary labor for street cleaning services, equal to approximately 19.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions over the course of one year, an increase of approximately 8 percent from Street Environmental Services current 247.5 budgeted FTE positions.</li> <li>• The proposed ordinance appropriates \$230,000 to community grants, which would be allocated to the Tenderloin Neighborhood Litter Reduction and Workforce Development Grant (TL Clean), which provides street cleaning in the Tenderloin neighborhood. The \$230,000 in funding would allow TL Clean to increase operations from five days per week to seven days per week.</li> <li>• The appropriation would also allocate \$100,000 for street cleaning materials and supplies, and \$560,000 to purchase two RAVO street sweepers.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Recommendation</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the proposed ordinance is a policy decision for the Board of Supervisors.</li> </ul>	

## MANDATE STATEMENT

City Charter Section 9.105 states that amendments to the Annual Appropriations Ordinance, after the Controller certifies the availability of funds, are subject to Board of Supervisors approval by ordinance.

## BACKGROUND

The Street Environmental Services bureau of the Department of Public Works (Public Works) provides street and sidewalk cleaning services citywide. Street Environmental Services has zone teams that provide scheduled street sweeping, steam cleaning, manual cleaning, and litter removal on predetermined routes, as well as response to service requests. There are six zones in the City, each approximately corresponding with two supervisorial districts, with the exception of a zone that approximately covers District 6. There are also crews that focus on hot spots, encampments, alleys, and swing and night shift operations. According to Mr. Bruce Robertson, Public Works Finance Manager, Street Environmental Services has a FY 2017-18 budget of \$64,992,106, and it typically expends its full budget each year.

On January 30, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance appropriating \$300,000 of cigarette litter abatement fees to Public Works to approximately 8,979 hours of temporary salaries for manual street cleaning services (File 17-1282).<sup>1</sup>

## DETAILS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The proposed ordinance would appropriate \$2,500,000 from the prior year's unassigned General Fund balance to Public Works to fund street and sidewalk cleaning. The proposed ordinance would appropriate \$1,610,000 for temporary salaries, \$230,000 for community grants, \$100,000 for materials and supplies, and \$560,000 for equipment.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the year ending June 30, 2017, identified \$14.4 million in unassigned General Fund monies that are available for future appropriations. The December 21, 2017 Financial Plan Update, prepared jointly by the Controller's Office, Mayor's Office, and Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office, assumed that \$11.9 million would be allocated to balance the FY 2018-19 budget, leaving \$2.5 million unallocated. The proposed ordinance appropriates the \$2.5 million for enhanced street cleaning services, as shown in Table 1 below.

<sup>1</sup> The cigarette litter abatement fee increased on January 1, 2018 from \$0.60 per pack to \$0.75 per pack, resulting in an estimated \$300,000 in increased fee revenues in FY 2017-18 to be allocated to street cleaning services. Increased cigarette litter abatement fee revenues in FY 2018-19 will be used to offset the General Fund contribution to street cleaning services.

**Table 1: Spending Plan for Supplemental Appropriation**

Staffing	Hourly Wage	Fringe Benefits and Overhead	Full Hourly Cost	Hours	Total Cost
9916 Public Service Aide	\$17.71	120.89%	\$39.31	41,150	\$1,610,000
Community Grants	Additional Days Per Week		Total Additional Days	Total Cost	
TL Clean	2		104	\$230,000	
Materials and Supplies					Total Cost
Brooms, shovels, pickers, bags, chemicals, uniforms, personal protective equipment					\$100,000
Equipment			Cost Per Unit	Units	Total Cost
RAVO Street Sweeper			\$280,000	2	\$560,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$2,500,000</b>

The proposed ordinance would appropriate funding for approximately 41,150 hours of temporary labor for street cleaning services, equal to the amount of labor provided by approximately 19.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions over the course of one year. Street Environmental Services currently has 247.5 budgeted FTE positions, so the supplemental appropriation would increase the bureau’s staffing by about 8 percent. According to Mr. Robertson, the Public Service Aide classification is not typically a budgeted position, but it is used for entry level temporary workers to gain experience for higher level positions. Temporary staff would be assigned to the Community Corridors program, which provides sidewalk sweeping and maintenance services along designated routes in commercial corridors citywide.

According to Mr. Robertson, the community grants would be allocated to the Tenderloin Neighborhood Litter Reduction and Workforce Development Grant (TL Clean),<sup>2</sup> which provides street cleaning in the Tenderloin neighborhood. TL Clean currently operates five days per week, but the \$230,000 in funding would allow it to operate seven days per week. The appropriation would fund additional service for one year, a total of approximately 104 additional days of service.

The proposed ordinance also appropriates \$100,000 for materials and supplies. According to Mr. Robertson, this includes brooms, shovels, pickers, bags, cleaning chemicals, uniforms, and personal protective equipment. The proposed ordinance also appropriates \$560,000 to purchase two RAVO street sweepers. Public Works currently owns four RAVO sweepers, and each has a useful life of about ten years. According to Mr. Robertson, Street Environmental Services currently has sufficient staffing to utilize all six sweepers.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval of the proposed ordinance is a policy decision for the Board of Supervisors.

<sup>2</sup> The original \$650,000 grant for the Tenderloin Neighborhood and Workforce Development Program for litter reduction and workforce development was awarded through a Request for Qualifications process in July 2017.

File # 18116  
Received in Committee  
3/15/12



Debris on sidewalks



Dirty needles

Trash on streets

“San Francisco has (arguably) the dirtiest downtown area in the Bay. The streets smell like urine, and if it’s raining they smell like fresh urine. This is an almost undeniable fact, it is the third truth in life besides death and taxes: San Francisco’s streets smell like piss. Smaller cities in the bay like Berkeley and Palo Alto are a lot cleaner, but the Bay Area as a whole is a dirty place. You might be asking ‘Why?’”



# 'There's Poop in There'

"The floor is dirty," said A'Nylah Reed, a 3-year-old student at the preschool, who irately explained having to navigate dirty conditions on her walks to school.

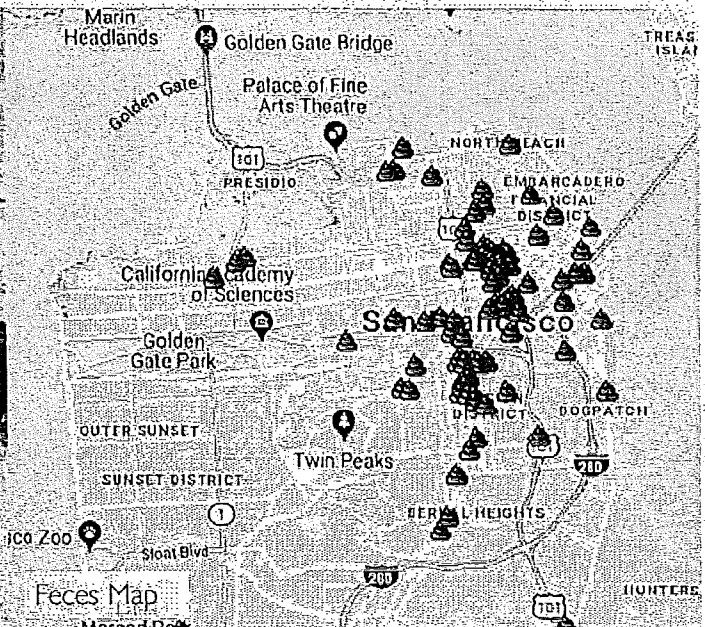
"There is poop in there," she exclaimed. "That makes me angry."

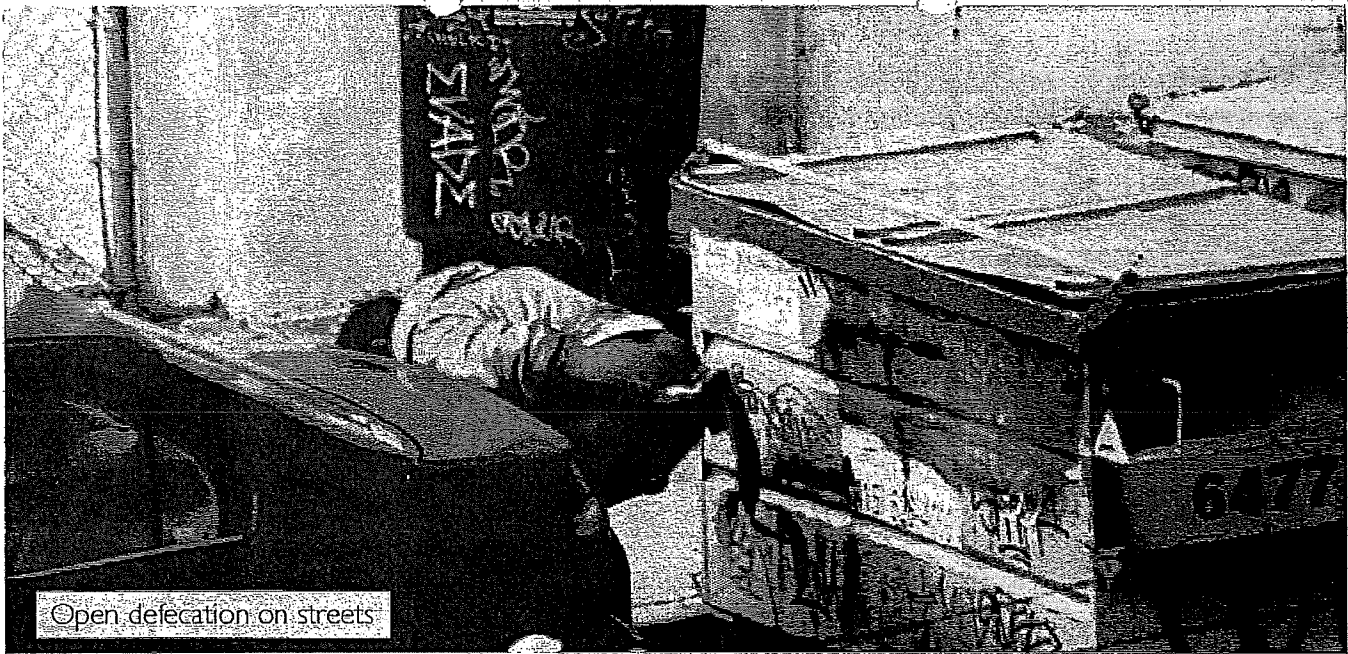
Kim Davenport, A'Nyla's mother, often walks her daughter to the Compass preschool on Leavenworth Street in San Francisco. She said she often has to pull her daughter out of the way in order to keep her from stepping on needles and human waste. "I just had to do that this morning!"



A'Nylah Reed, 3, regularly has to dodge piles of feces and drug needles during her walks to and from preschool in downtown San Francisco (Jan. 11, 2016).

Photo credit: NBC Bay Area





Open defecation on streets

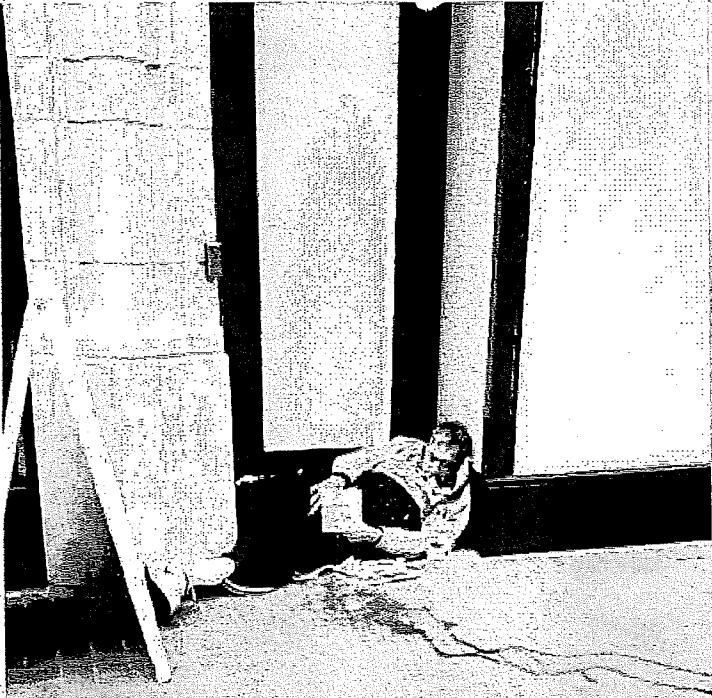
*“As a taxpayer, I have had it. This past week, I wrote to Mayor Lee about my concerns. That morning, I had again washed down the feces of someone who decided to defecate at my garage opening. This was the fourth time I had to do this in less than a year. The week before I was riding on Muni down Market Street. It was 1 p.m. On the sidewalk, a man pulled down his pants and was defecating on the sidewalk. Next to me was a family of four...obviously tourists. The two young daughters were staring at the man while the wife turned to the husband and said, ‘This is it, we leave tonight.’”*



Deceased Pet



Trash on sidewalks



Open urination on sidewalks

**“Survey of Downtown San Francisco Reveals Trash on Every Block, 303 Piles of Feces and 100 Drug Needles.”**

**“San Francisco has dirty streets, according to a visitor from Texas who wrote the president of the board of supervisors to say so.”**



Feces



Open drug use on sidewalks

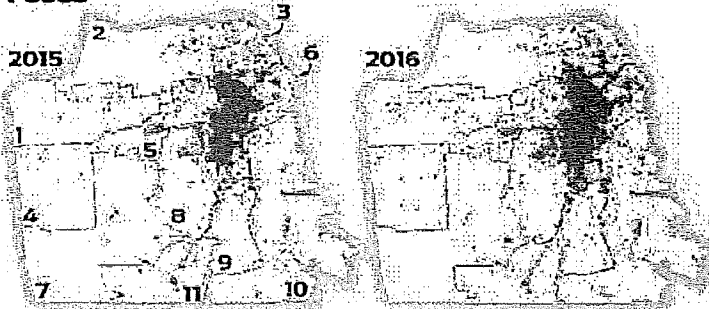
# Complaints of syringes and feces rise dramatically in SF

By Lizzie Johnson Updated 11:07 am, Wednesday, November 2, 2016  
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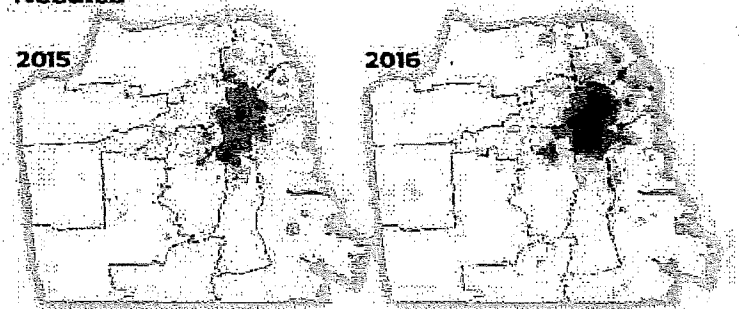
## Waste and needles across the city

Calls to San Francisco's 311 service portal increased by 25 percent in the 2015-2016 fiscal year to reach 413,700. Calls about feces increased in all supervisorial districts while complaints about needles increased in eight of 11 districts.

### Feces



### Needles



Supervisor	Reports of feces		Percent change	Reports of needles		Percent change
	2015	2016		2015	2016	
District 1	119	205	+72%	28	23	-18%
District 2	194	277	+43%	44	76	+73%
District 3	784	1,320	+68%	147	196	+33%
District 4	57	112	+96%	12	19	+58%
District 5	568	901	+59%	197	273	+39%
District 6	5,811	7,509	+29%	1,106	1,653	+49%
District 7	90	150	+67%	23	14	-39%
District 8	1,001	1,228	+23%	309	298	-4%
District 9	1,909	2,621	+37%	517	752	+45%
District 10	340	816	+140%	126	223	+77%
District 11	185	193	+4%	18	24	+33%
<b>Citywide</b>	<b>11,058</b>	<b>15,332</b>	<b>+39%</b>	<b>2,527</b>	<b>3,551</b>	<b>+41%</b>

Source: Office of the Controller

John Blanchard / The Chronicle

IMAGE 1 OF 10

More and more, it seems, San Franciscans need to watch where they step. And they're not imagining things: There's been an explosion in complaints about needles and feces on the streets and sidewalks.

Reports of improperly discarded syringes have jumped 41 percent since last fiscal year, according to a recent city controller's report. Complaints about feces have increased by 39 percent, with every district seeing a rise in the calls.

And, in a trend that must be disturbing to residents who don't live near the Tenderloin or SoMa, long perceived as epicenters of filth, there were big increases in complaints about the outlying neighborhoods to the city's 311 service portal for fiscal year 2015-16.

Watch: SF Neo Futurists on what makes their w

Complaints about needles have surged 73 percent in supervisorial District Two — the Marina and Cow Hollow. They were up even more — 77 percent — in District 10, the Bayview. District Four — the Sunset — saw a 58 percent increase. District Six — downtown, the Tenderloin and areas in District Seven — Lake Merced and West of Twin Peaks, — the Richmond — complaints increased 72 percent. The most needle-clean District Seven was up 67 percent, and the slowest increase of 29 percent.

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Streets are actually cleaner now than last year, with less excess litter, grime and illegal dumping along commercial arteries, the report shows. Twice as many roadways were cleaned of excess litter compared with last year, and there was less broken glass, too. Scores for landscaping also improved. But some complaints continue to skyrocket. The percentage uptick in calls about syringes and feces far surpassed the 25 percent growth rate in all calls to 311.

"There's a lot more people that need services coming to San Francisco," said Public Works Director **Mohammed Nuru**, who oversees cleaning of 90 percent of city streets and sidewalks. The department cleans up about 1,000 syringes a month and added two cleaning teams this year to the three it had.

"The city has a huge challenge ahead of us," Nuru said. "We need to figure out how to deal with these quality-of-life issues. A lot of them are from people who are living on the streets. That's a fact."

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The increase in complaints about needles was actually less than the increase in fiscal year 2014-15, when calls doubled. And data from individual districts illustrate how the hot spots for discarded needles are within Districts Six and Nine.

#### RELATED STORIES



**Watch where you step: SF's worst neighborhoods for poop, needles**



**not dogs**

**Reddit users alert S.F. newbie that the poop on his daily walk is from humans,**

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They included the intersection of Leavenworth Street and Golden Gate Avenue, Minna Street between Seventh and Ninth streets, the area around 14th and Harrison streets, and west of Van Ness Avenue and Mission Street between Market and Otis streets.

The percentage change in those three districts was greater than the city's overall 25 percent increase in calls in all categories, said Luke Fuller, a performance analyst in the city Controller's Office.

"They are unusual in terms of citywide trends," Fuller said. "Part of it could be because of gentrification, or more people out and about on the streets in those neighborhoods, or simply more homelessness. Problems can migrate in the city from year to year. It could correlate with any of those things."

District Six continues to top the list with 60,891 of the 413,700 calls the city received, nearly sevenfold more calls than any other district.

Since last year, complaints about human waste have risen by 29 percent, from 5,811 to 7,509. Syringe reports are up 49 percent, from 1,106 to 1,653, and broken glass has grown by 43 percent, from 246 to 352, likely because of more awareness of car break-ins.

Supervisor **Jane Kim**, who represents the district, which has seen the bulk of the city's new developments, said that it has been disproportionately affected by homelessness. She has advocated for increasing the city's **Pit Stop** program and opening more **Navigation Centers** — one-stop shops for getting homeless people off the streets, which could help keep biohazardous waste off streets and sidewalks.

"We know that services and shelters for homeless residents have largely been concentrated downtown, and that certainly has had an impact," she said. "We know the long-term solution: Housing and supportive services will get people off the streets permanently. ... Our residents deserve to walk on clean, safe sidewalks throughout our city."

Right behind Kim's district was District Nine, with a 37



percent increase in feces complaints from 1,909 to 2,621, 45 percent in syringe calls from 517 to 752 and 32 percent climb in broken glass reports from 190 to 250. Thousands of calls jumped 140 percent, and reports of needles grew 77 percent.

Supervisor David Campos, who represents District Nine, said the city is doing better, but it's still a long way from where it should be. "The report confirms what we have all been saying for a while now. It's happening everywhere, and I don't feel the city has done enough. The report confirms what we have all been saying for a while now."

Supervisor Malia Cohen, who represents District 10, called the trends unacceptable, calling on the city to devote more resources to addressing homelessness.

In the meantime, Nuru said crews will continue to push for clean streets on every block.

"My goal is to have the city clean in the morning when people are coming to work or visiting and out and about," he said. "The city gets that we have a huge challenge ahead of us."

*Lizzie Johnson is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: [ljohnson@sfchronicle.com](mailto:ljohnson@sfchronicle.com) Twitter: @lizziejohnson*

## Arts groups decry miserable state of Mid-Market streets

Heather Knight | on March 3, 2018

259



Photo: Michael Macor, The Chronicle

IMAGE 1 OF 5

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The American Conservatory Theater faces challenges of street crime and homelessness.

Patrons of the magnificent theaters that dot San Francisco's Mid-Market and Civic Center neighborhoods know that some of the most jaw-dropping drama isn't happening onstage at all. It's happening on the sidewalks and in the BART station just outside.



Photo: Michael Macor, The Chronicle

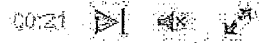
A street cleaner picks up a bag filled with syringes near the theater between Seventh and Eighth streets.  
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But plenty of arts patrons aren't willing to look the other way. I was recently forwarded an email sent to SHN, which produces shows at the Orpheum and Golden Gate theaters. It was from a Livermore woman who was canceling her subscription because the journey to the theater had become so miserable.

### LATEST SFGATE VIDEOS

Yosemite in the snow March 18

Yosemite is a winter wonderland after storm hits at the start of March 2018.



### Now Playing

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March 18...**  
Yosemite National Park

**The Regulars: The Blind  
Captain...**  
Santiago Mejía / San  
Francisco Chronicle

**Jordan%20Bell%20with%**  
San Francisco Chronicle

**Snow in South Lake  
Tahoe on March 2, 2018...**  
Dakota Giglio / SFGATE

"Between the odor and filth, the crowds of homeless hanging around the Civic Center and Powell

The Strand, a striking, bright red building that stands out amid the grimness of the neighborhood, opened three years ago with the pledge from City Hall that it would help usher in a renaissance in downtrodden Mid-Market and turn it into a glorious arts corridor.



Photo: Michael Macor, The Chronicle

The Mid-Market neighborhood where ACT's Strand Theater sits is one that the late Mayor Ed Lee was intent on improving and is still in need of attention.  
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But it turns out that adding a theater to a neighborhood didn't make its problems go away, and some ACT officials feel the city overpromised and far under-delivered.

ACT Executive Director Peter Pastreich said the company receives complaints from many of its 12,000 subscribers, especially older ones, who feel unsafe parking nearby and walking to the theater or riding BART and coping with the notorious Civic Center Station.

Peter Pastreich, executive director of the American Conservatory Theater, says many patrons at the Strand Theater feel unsafe parking nearby and walking in the Mid-Market neighborhood.  
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Elliott, who has the program from Lee's memorial service displayed in his office, was distraught by his boss' early death and seems personally committed to ensuring that his goals are fulfilled. On Jan. 26, Elliott attended a meeting at the Strand with Pastreich, police brass and representatives from Theater Bay Area and Alonzo King Lines Ballet to discuss what arts institutions need from the city.

Pastreich said small changes are helping, including the Tenderloin Police Station being informed of performance schedules so it can send extra officers to the block before and after each show.

In the months before his death, Lee had a keen eye on Mid-Market and would regularly grab staffers and march them over there to check on the quality-of-life issues, preferably with a stop at Popsons Burgers or Sam's Diner for his favorite fattening fare, Elliott recalled.

"It would completely blow up my schedule for the day — and my diet," Elliott said with a laugh. "Trying to order the egg white omelet at Sam's doesn't really work."

Elliott continues to walk from City Hall to Mid-Market three or four times a week, often grabbing tea at the Strand's cafe. He outlined remedies the city is trying to address the quality-of-life problems on the streets:

Navigation Centers, doubling the budget of the Homeward Bound program to provide free bus tickets home for people living on the streets, the unified command strategy of placing representatives from the Police Department and other agencies together in the same room every day, the drive to get 1,000 homeless people off the streets.

"When he got focused on a problem and he believed it was solvable, he was tenacious," Elliott said of Lee. "We lost our boss and our friend, but we have not lost a step in moving forward on these initiatives that were important to him."

The mayor's administration thinks these efforts are working, but it's not easy to find members of the public who agree.

"There can be a gap between data and perception," Elliott acknowledged. "People don't perceive a difference, and you can't deny what they're experiencing."

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San Francisco Public Works launched "Pit Stop" programs to reduce human waste on its streets. // Stephen Lam / REUTERS

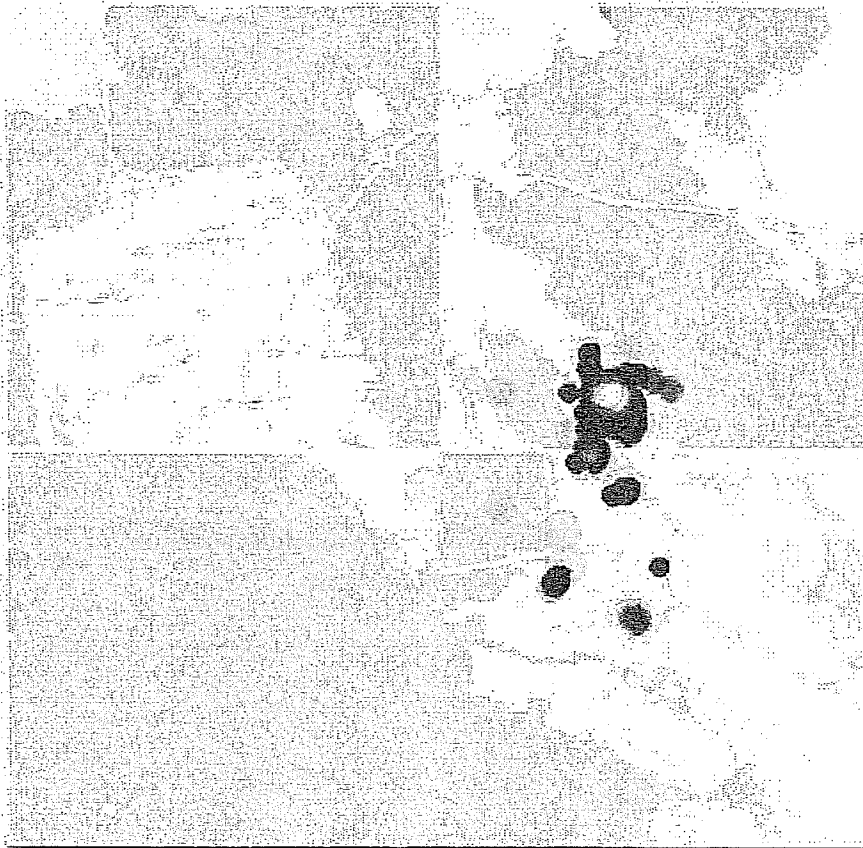
## Mapping San Francisco's Sidewalk Pooping Problem

ARIA BENDIX OCT 8, 2015

San Francisco is dealing with a number of crises right now: congestion, affordability, gentrification, public transit funding—the list goes on. But a new interactive map suggests public pooping is a pretty big problem as well.

Over the last few years, the city has seen more and more human waste crowding its sidewalks, so much so that one *Medium* writer dubbed the city "Shitty San Francisco." Back in 2014, web developer Jenny Wong created a map of all the public reports of excrement sightings made that year. The result was a startling image of a city inundated with filth, particularly near the financial district—a popular tourist locale.

San Francisco wasn't always this dirty. To show just how much human waste has accumulated there over time, self-titled "data explorer" William Mees made an even more comprehensive map of these reports from July 2008 to September 2015.



Map created by  william mees

While the Tenderloin district is consistently hit hardest by the city's poop problem, the map shows waste spreading to other parts of the city in increasingly large concentrations. Areas like SOMA and Mid-Market, for instance, are both dealing with an excess of feces.

"Let's face it: if you live in the city, regardless of location or class affiliation, you've probably had your own encounter with the aftermath of a public number-two," writes Noah Sanders of The Bold Italic.

There are a few explanations for what's happening. For one, San Francisco's poor zoning laws and lack of affordable housing have contributed to the city's growing homeless population. More homelessness means more people living without access to restrooms, and having little choice but to defecate in the street.

The more immediate problem is that San Francisco lacks a sufficient number of public restrooms. Only 28 toilets in the entire city are open 24 hours a day, while an estimated 500 or so bathrooms are needed to meet the city's demands.

Recently, San Francisco Public Works has tried to correct this problem by launching pilot “Pit Stop” programs in areas like the Tenderloin and SOMA. These programs provide mobile toilets, sinks, and used-needle receptacles, as well as dog waste stations, for all city residents. Mobile units have led to a decline in requests to clean up the streets, but they still pose the same issue of limited availability—“Pit Stops” are only open to the public from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m., Tuesday through Friday.

Though the first pilot program was launched in July 2014, it’s clear by the interactive map that levels of human feces are still on the rise. Now more than ever, San Francisco is in need of additional restrooms—or more businesses willing to open their restrooms to the public—to clean up its streets. Until then, watch your step.

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## About the Author



### Aria Bendix

✉ @ARIABENDIX / 📄 FEED

Aria Bendix is a frequent contributor to *The Atlantic*, and a former editorial fellow at *CityLab*. Her work has appeared on *Bustle* and *The Harvard Crimson*.



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## Survey of Downtown San Francisco Reveals Trash on Every Block, 303 Piles of Feces and 100 Drug Needles

By [Bigad Shaban](#), [Robert Campos](#), [Tony Rutanooshedech](#), and [Michael Horn](#)

Published at 10:26 PM PST on Feb 18, 2018 | Updated at 1:49 PM PST on Feb 19, 2018

The NBC Bay Area Investigative Unit surveyed 153 blocks of downtown San Francisco in search of trash, needles, and feces. The investigation revealed trash littered across every block. The survey also found 41 blocks dotted with needles and 96 blocks sullied with piles of feces.

Click the icons below to learn more:



Trash



Needles



Feces

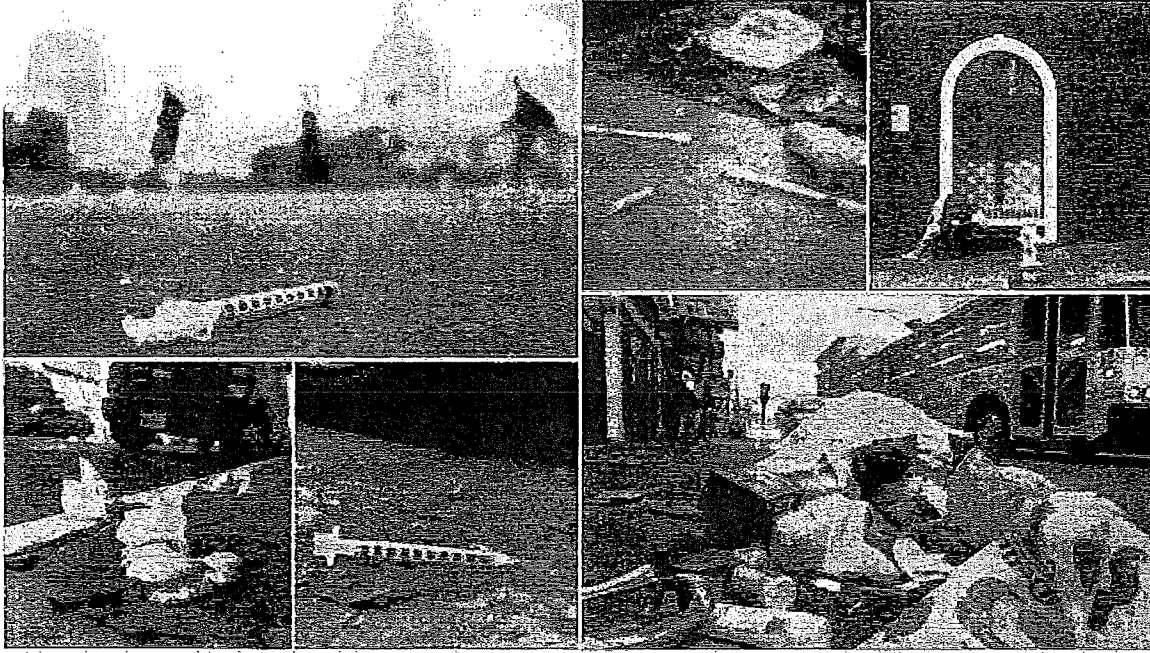


Overall Score

### Overall Sanitation Score by Block in Downtown

How dirty is San Francisco? An NBC Bay Area Investigation reveals a dangerous mix of drug needles, garbage, and feces throughout downtown San Francisco. The Investigative Unit surveyed 153 blocks of the city – the more than 20-mile stretch includes popular tourist spots like Union Square and major hotel chains. The area – bordered by Van Ness Avenue, Market Street, Post Street and Grant Avenue – is also home to City Hall, schools, playgrounds, and a police station.

## Survey of Downtown SF Reveals Trash, Feces, Drug Needles



The NBC Bay Area Investigative Unit surveyed a section of downtown San Francisco to determine the amount of feces, hypodermic needles, and garbage littering the heart of the city. The results reveal a disgusting and potentially deadly mix of contamination that experts now believe could exceed some of the dirtiest slums in the world. Investigative reporter Bigad Shaban reports on a story that first aired Feb. 18, 2018.

(Published Sunday, Feb. 18, 2018)

As the Investigative Unit photographed nearly a dozen hypodermic needles scattered across one block, a group of preschool students happened to walk by on their way to an afternoon field trip to city hall.

"We see poop, we see pee, we see needles, and we see trash," said teacher Adelita Orellana. "Sometimes they ask what is it, and that's a conversation that's a little difficult to have with a 2-year old, but we just let them know that those things are full of germs, that they are dangerous, and they should never be touched."

In light of the dangerous conditions, part of Orellana's responsibilities now include teaching young children how to avoid the contamination.





Preschool teacher Adelita Orellana says the prevalence of needles in San Francisco has forced her to educate her students, some as young as two years old, about the inherent dangers (Jan 11, 2018).

Photo credit: NBC Bay Area

### **"There's Poop in There!"**

"The floor is dirty," said A'Nylah Reed, a 3-year-old student at the preschool, who irately explained having to navigate dirty conditions on her walks to school.

"There is poop in there," she exclaimed. "That makes me angry."

Kim Davenport, A'nyla's mother, often walks her daughter to the Compass preschool on Leavenworth Street in San Francisco. She said she often has to pull her daughter out of the way in order to keep her from stepping on needles and human waste. "I just had to do that this morning!"



A'Nylah Reed, 3, regularly has to dodge piles of feces and drug needles during her walks to and from preschool in downtown San Francisco (Jan. 11, 2018).

Photo credit: NBC Bay Area

The Investigate Unit spent three days assessing conditions on the streets of downtown San Francisco and discovered trash on each of the 153 blocks surveyed. While some streets were littered with items as small as a candy wrapper, the vast majority of trash found included large heaps of garbage, food, and discarded junk. The investigation also found 100 drug needles and more than 300 piles of feces throughout downtown.

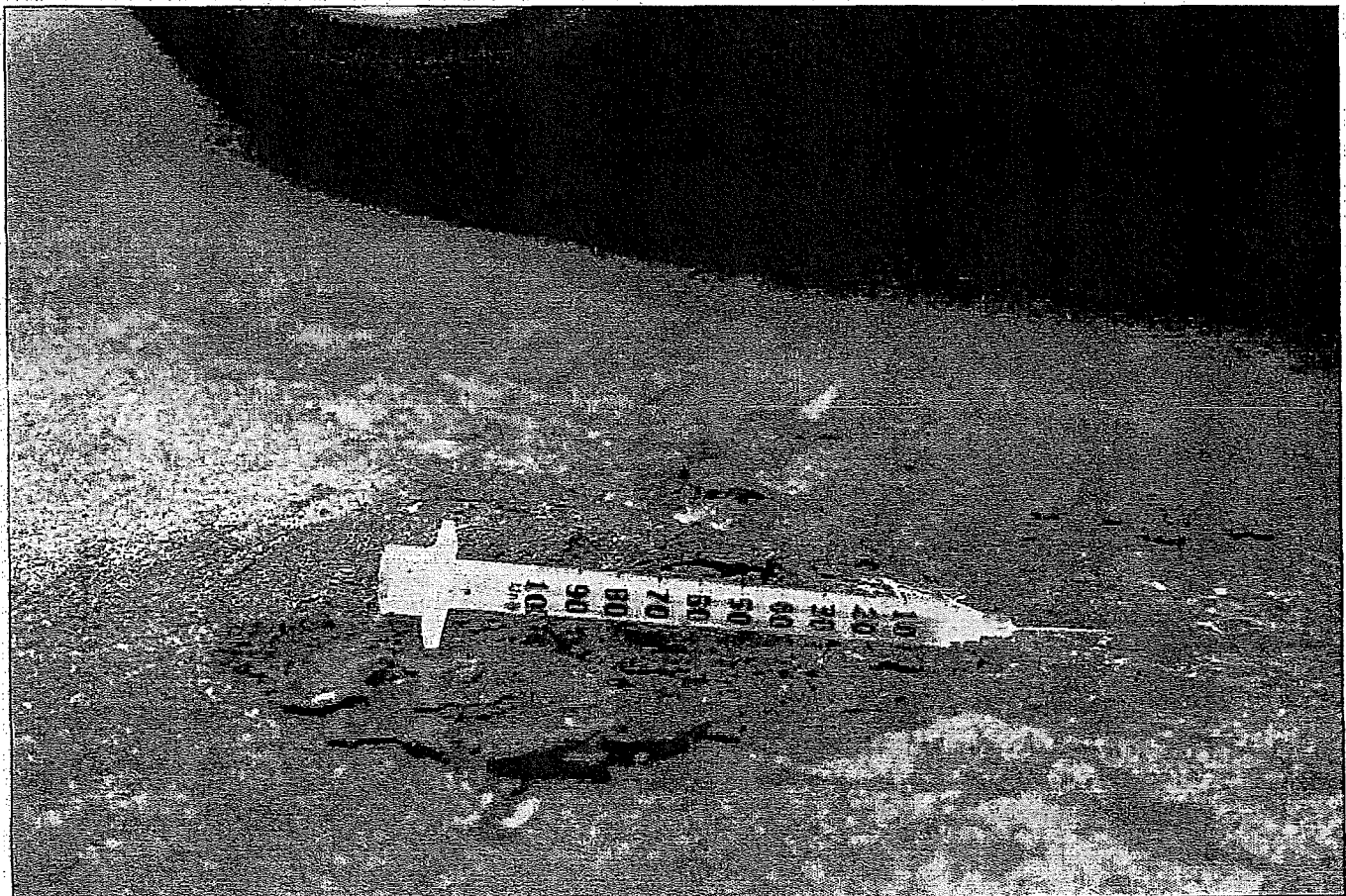


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A needle found on the streets of downtown San Francisco was one of 100 discovered as part of an NBC Bay Area Investigation into potentially dangerous conditions (Dec. 28, 2017).

Photo credit: NBC Bay Area.

## Dried Feces can Lead to Airborne Viruses

"If you do get stuck with these disposed needles you can get HIV, Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, and a variety of other viral diseases," said Dr. Lee Riley, an infectious disease expert at University of California, Berkeley. He warned that once fecal matter dries, it can become airborne, releasing potentially dangerous viruses, such as the rotavirus. "If you happen to inhale that, it can also go into your intestine," he said. The results can prove fatal, especially in children.

Riley has researched conditions across the poorest slums of the world. His book titled, "Slum Health," examines health problems that are created by extreme poverty.



Dr. Lee Riley is an infectious disease scientist at University of California - Berkeley and has researched health issues in some of the dirtiest slums around the world. (Jan 18, 2018)

Photo credit: NBC Bay Area

## San Francisco Compared to Some of the Dirtiest Slums in the World

Based on the findings of the Investigative Unit survey, Riley believes parts of the city may be even dirtier than slums in some developing countries.

"The contamination is ... much greater than communities in Brazil or Kenya or India," he said. He notes that in those countries, slum dwellings are often long-term homes for families and so there is an attempt to make the surroundings more livable. Homeless communities in San Francisco, however, are often kicked out from one part of town and forced to relocate to another. The result is extreme contamination, according to Riley.



Supervisor Hillary Ronen is convinced the solution to cleaning up San Francisco's dirty streets is contingent on adding more temporary shelter beds for the homeless (Jan 8, 2018).

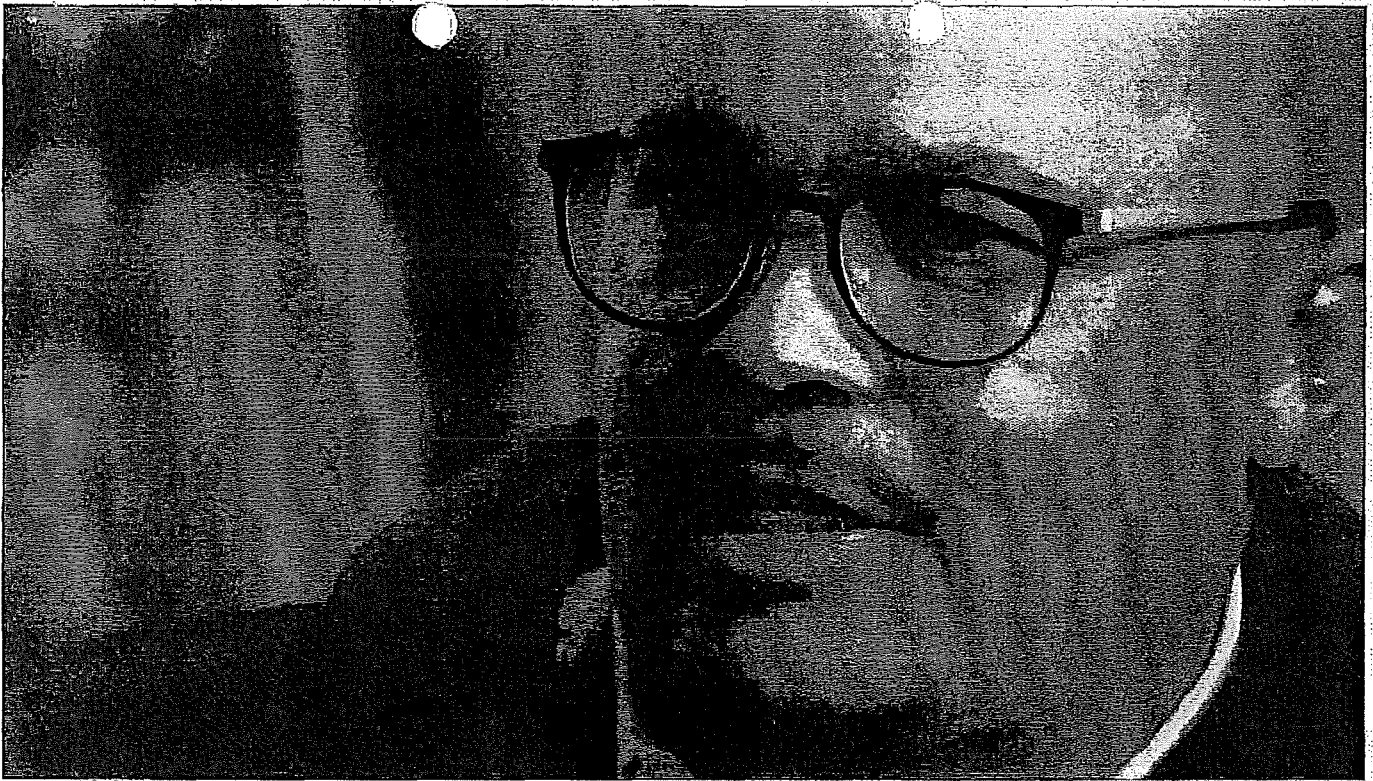
Photo credit: NBC Bay Area

### **'We Aren't Addressing the Root Cause'**

"Unacceptable. Absolutely unacceptable," said Supervisor Hillary Ronen. "We're losing tourists. We're losing conventions in San Francisco. All of this is happening because we aren't addressing the root cause, which is we need more temporary beds for street homelessness."

Ronen believes San Francisco has been too focused on permanent housing for the homeless and that the city has neglected to provide enough temporary shelter, which can provide the homeless a respite from the streets. The city currently has about 2,000 temporary beds. Ronen, however, believes an additional 1,000 are needed, at a cost of about \$25 million.

"We need to find a source of revenue," said Ronen. "Whether that's putting something on the ballot to raise business taxes or taking a look at our general fund and re-allocating money towards that purpose and taking it away from something else in the city."



Mohammed Nuru, Director of San Francisco Public Works, says cleaning human waste, trash, and needles from the city's sidewalks costs his department about \$30 million each year (Jan 12, 2018).

Photo credit: NBC Bay Area

### **San Francisco Spends \$30 Million Cleaning Feces, Drug Needles**

Until the problem is fixed, Mohammed Nuru, the Director of the Public Works Department, is charged with the towering task of cleaning the streets, over and over again. "Yes, we can clean, he said, "and then go back a few hours later, and it looks as if it was never cleaned. So is that how you want to spend your money?"

The 2016-2017 budget for San Francisco Public Works includes \$60.1 million for "Street Environmental Services." The budget has nearly doubled over the past five years. Originally, that money, was intended to clean streets, not sidewalks. According to city ordinances, sidewalks are the responsibility of property owners. However, due to the severity of the contamination in San Francisco, Public Works has inherited the problem of washing sidewalks. Nuru estimates that half of his street cleaning budget – about \$30 million – goes towards cleaning up feces and needles from homeless encampments and sidewalks.

### **'Human Tragedy' in San Francisco**

A single pile of human waste, said Nuru, takes at least 30 minutes for one of his staffers to clean. "The steamer has to come. He has to park the steamer. He's got to come out with his steamer, disinfect, steam clean, roll up and go."

Asked if he'd be willing to give up part of his budget and allocate it to more directly addressing the homeless problem – which would likely alleviate his cleaning problem – Nuru said, "The Board of Supervisors, the mayor – those are decisions that they need to make." He added, "I want to continue cleaning and I want to be able to continue to provide services. The Public Works Department provides services seven days a week, 24 hours a day."

Ronen acknowledges that finding the money to provide 1,000 additional beds for the homeless may very well take years. The city is planning on opening three new Navigation Centers for homeless people by the summer, but two centers will also be closing.



March 7, 2018  
Budget and Finance Sub-Committee  
Room 250 City Hall - 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA. 94102

Re File #: 180116

Honorable Supervisors,

The Arab American Grocers Association is writing in support of Agenda Item #8 File # 180116 for a \$2.5M Street and Sidewalk Supplemental. As a trade association and a grassroots formation of business owners and operators in San Francisco, we take pride in our storefronts and our neighborhoods. However, many of us pay for the upkeep of public right ways and street cleaning 3 times over through Community Benefit Districts, property taxes, and fees that have little accountability but are levied on our sector in particular i.e the Cigarette Litter Abatement Fee. We have been told by Department heads that although we are paying over \$6million a year in this fee alone, it ultimately does not go to street cleaning. We support a necessary audit of unused funds and a following through of the City's end of this promise to maintain our streets.

Best,

The Arab American Grocers Association (AAGA)

Arab American Grocers Association (AAGA) - 200 Valencia St, San Francisco, CA 94103

**Wong, Linda (BOS)**

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**From:** Somera, Alisa (BOS)  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 08, 2018 11:36 AM  
**To:** Wong, Linda (BOS)  
**Subject:** FW: Public Comment - Budget and Finance Committee Item #180116  
**Attachments:** AAGA - Support Re File 180116 .pdf

*Alisa Somera*

Legislative Deputy Director  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
415.554.7711 direct | 415.554.5163 fax  
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**From:** Miriam Zouzounis [<mailto:miriam.zouzounis@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 08, 2018 10:24 AM  
**To:** Corrette, Moses (BOS) <[moses.corrette@sfgov.org](mailto:moses.corrette@sfgov.org)>; Somera, Alisa (BOS) <[alisa.somera@sfgov.org](mailto:alisa.somera@sfgov.org)>  
**Subject:** Public Comment - Budget and Finance Committee Item #180116

Public Comment Attached



<b>Item 6</b> <b>File 18-0116</b>	<b>Department:</b> General Services Agency - Department of Public Works
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Legislative Objectives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed ordinance appropriates \$2,500,000 of the prior year's unassigned General Fund balance to the Department of Public Works (Public Works) to fund Street and Sidewalk Cleaning in FY 2017-18.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Points</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Street Environmental Services bureau of Public Works provides street and sidewalk cleaning Citywide. Street Environmental Services has zone teams that provide scheduled street sweeping, steam cleaning, manual cleaning, and litter removal on predetermined routes, as well as response to service requests. There are also crews that focus on hot spots, encampments, alleys, and swing and night shift operations.</li> </ul>	
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed ordinance would appropriate \$2,500,000 from the prior year's unassigned General Fund balance to Public Works to enhance street cleaning operations.</li> <li>• The a \$1,610,000 to pay for approximately 41,150 hours of temporary labor for street cleaning services, equal to approximately 19.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions over the course of one year, an increase of approximately 8 percent from Street Environmental Services current 247.5 budgeted FTE positions.</li> <li>• The proposed ordinance appropriates \$230,000 to community grants, which would be allocated to the Tenderloin Neighborhood Litter Reduction and Workforce Development Grant (TL Clean), which provides street cleaning in the Tenderloin neighborhood. The \$230,000 in funding would allow TL Clean to increase operations from five days per week to seven days per week.</li> <li>• The appropriation would also allocate \$100,000 for street cleaning materials and supplies, and \$560,000 to purchase two RAVO street sweepers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Recommendation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the proposed ordinance is a policy decision for the Board of Supervisors.</li> </ul>	

**MANDATE STATEMENT**

City Charter Section 9.105 states that amendments to the Annual Appropriations Ordinance, after the Controller certifies the availability of funds, are subject to Board of Supervisors approval by ordinance.

**BACKGROUND**

The Street Environmental Services bureau of the Department of Public Works (Public Works) provides street and sidewalk cleaning services citywide. Street Environmental Services has zone teams that provide scheduled street sweeping, steam cleaning, manual cleaning, and litter removal on predetermined routes, as well as response to service requests. There are six zones in the City, each approximately corresponding with two supervisorial districts, with the exception of a zone that approximately covers District 6. There are also crews that focus on hot spots, encampments, alleys, and swing and night shift operations. According to Mr. Bruce Robertson, Public Works Finance Manager, Street Environmental Services has a FY 2017-18 budget of \$64,992,106, and it typically expends its full budget each year.

On January 30, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance appropriating \$300,000 of cigarette litter abatement fees to Public Works to approximately 8,979 hours of temporary salaries for manual street cleaning services (File 17-1282).<sup>1</sup>

**DETAILS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

The proposed ordinance would appropriate \$2,500,000 from the prior year's unassigned General Fund balance to Public Works to fund street and sidewalk cleaning. The proposed ordinance would appropriate \$1,610,000 for temporary salaries, \$230,000 for community grants, \$100,000 for materials and supplies, and \$560,000 for equipment.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the year ending June 30, 2017, identified \$14.4 million in unassigned General Fund monies that are available for future appropriations. The December 21, 2017 Financial Plan Update, prepared jointly by the Controller's Office, Mayor's Office, and Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office, assumed that \$11.9 million would be allocated to balance the FY 2018-19 budget, leaving \$2.5 million unallocated. The proposed ordinance appropriates the \$2.5 million for enhanced street cleaning services, as shown in Table 1 below.

<sup>1</sup> The cigarette litter abatement fee increased on January 1, 2018 from \$0.60 per pack to \$0.75 per pack, resulting in an estimated \$300,000 in increased fee revenues in FY 2017-18 to be allocated to street cleaning services. Increased cigarette litter abatement fee revenues in FY 2018-19 will be used to offset the General Fund contribution to street cleaning services.

**Table 1: Spending Plan for Supplemental Appropriation**

Staffing:	Hourly Wage	Fringe Benefits and Overhead	Full Hourly Cost	Hours	Total Cost
9916 Public Service Aide	\$17.71	120.89%	\$39.31	41,150	\$1,610,000
Community Grants	Additional Days Per Week		Total Additional Days	Total Cost	
TL Clean	2		104	\$230,000	
Materials and Supplies					Total Cost
Brooms, shovels, pickers, bags, chemicals, uniforms, personal protective equipment					\$100,000
Equipment			Cost Per Unit	Units	Total Cost
RAVO Street Sweeper			\$280,000	2	\$560,000
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$2,500,000</b>

The proposed ordinance would appropriate funding for approximately 41,150 hours of temporary labor for street cleaning services, equal to the amount of labor provided by approximately 19.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions over the course of one year. Street Environmental Services currently has 247.5 budgeted FTE positions, so the supplemental appropriation would increase the bureau’s staffing by about 8 percent. According to Mr. Robertson, the Public Service Aide classification is not typically a budgeted position, but it is used for entry level temporary workers to gain experience for higher level positions. Temporary staff would be assigned to the Community Corridors program, which provides sidewalk sweeping and maintenance services along designated routes in commercial corridors citywide.

According to Mr. Robertson, the community grants would be allocated to the Tenderloin Neighborhood Litter Reduction and Workforce Development Grant (TL Clean),<sup>2</sup> which provides street cleaning in the Tenderloin neighborhood. TL Clean currently operates five days per week, but the \$230,000 in funding would allow it to operate seven days per week. The appropriation would fund additional service for one year, a total of approximately 104 additional days of service.

The proposed ordinance also appropriates \$100,000 for materials and supplies. According to Mr. Robertson, this includes brooms, shovels, pickers, bags, cleaning chemicals, uniforms, and personal protective equipment. The proposed ordinance also appropriates \$560,000 to purchase two RAVO street sweepers. Public Works currently owns four RAVO sweepers, and each has a useful life of about ten years. According to Mr. Robertson, Street Environmental Services currently has sufficient staffing to utilize all six sweepers.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approval of the proposed ordinance is a policy decision for the Board of Supervisors.

<sup>2</sup> The original \$650,000 grant for the Tenderloin Neighborhood and Workforce Development Program for litter reduction and workforce development was awarded through a Request for Qualifications process in July 2017.

Print Form

# Introduction Form

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2018 APR -2 PM 3:32

Time stamp  
or meeting date

I hereby submit the following item for introduction (select only one):

BY *[Signature]*

- 1. For reference to Committee. (An Ordinance, Resolution, Motion or Charter Amendment).
- 2. Request for next printed agenda Without Reference to Committee.
- 3. Request for hearing on a subject matter at Committee.
- 4. Request for letter beginning "Supervisor [ ] inquiries"
- 5. City Attorney Request.
- 6. Call File No. 180116 from Committee.
- 7. Budget Analyst request (attached written motion).
- 8. Substitute Legislation File No. [ ]
- 9. Reactivate File No. [ ]
- 10. Question(s) submitted for Mayoral Appearance before the BOS on [ ]

Please check the appropriate boxes. The proposed legislation should be forwarded to the following:

- Small Business Commission
- Youth Commission
- Ethics Commission
- Planning Commission
- Building Inspection Commission

Note: For the Imperative Agenda (a resolution not on the printed agenda), use the Imperative Form.

Sponsor(s):

Jane Kim, Sandra Lee Fewer, Hillary Ronen, *Aaron Peskin*

Subject:

Ordinance appropriating \$2,500,000 of prior year's fund balance in General Fund to Department of Public Works for funding Street & Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot Enhancement Project in FY2017-2018.

The text is listed:

[ ]

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor:

*[Signature]*

*Sandra Lee Fewer*

*Hillary Ronen*

For Clerk's Use Only

# Introduction Form

By a Member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor

Time stamp  
or meeting date

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I hereby submit the following item for introduction (select only one):

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- 3. Request for hearing on a subject matter at Committee.
- 4. Request for letter beginning "Supervisor [ ] inquires"
- 5. City Attorney request.
- 6. Call File No. [ ] from Committee;
- 7. Budget Analyst request (attach written motion).
- 8. Substitute Legislation: File No. [ ]
- 9. Reactivate File No. [ ]
- 10. Question(s) submitted for Mayoral Appearance before the BOS on [ ]

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- Planning Commission
- Building Inspection Commission

**Note: For the Imperative Agenda (a resolution not on the printed agenda), use a Imperative Form.**

**Sponsor(s):**

Supervisor Kim, Fewer, Ronen

**Subject:**

[Appropriation - \$2,500,000 of Prior Year's Fund Balance in General Fund to Department of Public Works for Street & Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot Enhancement Project - FY2017-18]

**The text is listed below or attached:**

Ordinance appropriating \$2,500,000 of prior year's balance in General Fund to Department of Public Works for funding Street & Sidewalk Cleaning Pilot Enhancement Project in FY2017-18.

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor: *[Signature]*

**For Clerk's Use Only:**

