UNION SQUARE
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016
The Union Square BID serves members and creates a high quality visitor experience by managing and activating public spaces, attracting new investment and advocating for the District’s future success.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The 2016 Strategic Plan defines a clear path forward for the Union Square Business Improvement District (USBID) for the next three years. USBID leadership, staff, and stakeholders developed a bold new vision for the Union Square District as the vibrant heart of San Francisco and an international destination where visitors come to enjoy exceptional retail experiences, luxury hotels, world-class cultural institutions, and great public spaces found only in this City by the Bay. To secure that vision, the USBID Board and staff identified a new mission statement grounded firmly in the organization’s core services and programs, charging the USBID with creating, managing, and promoting a high quality visitor experience and advocating for Union Square’s future success as an economic, cultural, and civic hub.

Union Square is the heart of San Francisco, serving as the City’s retail, hotel, and historic center. Given Union Square’s importance to the City’s image and brand, it has been the USBID’s focus since its founding in 1999, to keep the district clean, safe, attractive, and vibrant. Serving as the “voice of Union Square”, the USBID represents the interests of its members while responding to emerging global trends in retailing, hospitality, and the public realm that are reshaping dense, urban centers. As such, the USBID and its programs, initiatives, and priorities should also change with its surrounding environment so it can respond and adapt to the needs of its members and the expectations of visitors attracted to Union Square.

In order to amplify Union Square's assets, take advantage of opportunities, and meet future challenges, the USBID developed a Strategic Plan to prioritize and guide its work with concrete goals, strategic initiatives, and objectives, including key performance indicators to assess progress in the coming years.

The Strategic Plan Framework, which forms the foundation of the plan, provides focus and direction for USBID activities over the next three years. It articulates the organization’s vision, mission, values, and goals, plus corresponding projects and programs for realizing plan objectives and key performance measures to track progress in the coming years. It also recommends organizational changes to support the Plan’s implementation.

**GOING FORWARD**

Downtown districts worldwide are transforming and creating new economic opportunities, driven by creative Millennials, technology, and global investment, and regaining their footing as centers to shop, live, work, and play.
The Union Square BID serves members and creates a high quality visitor experience by managing and activating public spaces, attracting new investment, and advocating for the District’s future success.

Vision
Union Square is the vibrant heart of San Francisco and an international destination where visitors come to enjoy exceptional retail experiences, luxury hotels, world-class cultural institutions, and great public spaces found only in this City by the Bay.

Mission
The Union Square BID serves members and creates a high quality visitor experience by managing and activating public spaces, attracting new investment, and advocating for the District’s future success.

Values
Act as Community Trustees
Initiate Collective Action for the Greater Good
Develop Innovative and Resourceful Solutions
Promote Service to Members and the Community
Accountability /ROI

Mission-Related Service Areas
Clean and Safe
Public Space Design and Programming
Planning, Policy, and Advocacy

Supporting Service Areas
Marketing and Communications
Organizational Leadership and Management

Strategic Initiatives
Partner with the City of S.F.
Implement Public Space Initiatives
Data-Rich Advocacy
Targeted Internal Communications
Match Needs and Capacity

Objectives
See Page 31

Key Performance Indicators
See Appendix
Union Square, long considered the Bay Area’s premier shopping and hotel district, continues to evolve in step with changes in the retail, hospitality, office, and tourism markets. New hotels, luxury retail, “fast fashion” offerings, proximity to world-class cultural amenities, iconic visitor attractions, and excellent public transit opportunities make Union Square hyper-connected to the future.

In order to amplify these assets, take advantage of opportunities, and meet future challenges, the USBID developed a vision for guiding the USBID’s future through this Strategic Plan. The vision for the USBID and the Strategic Plan are not static. Union Square is ever changing as priorities shift and objectives changes.

MISSION-RELATED SERVICE AREAS

A. CLEAN AND SAFE
Ensure a high level of cleanliness and safety for Union Square and strive for continued operational improvements.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #1: OPTIMIZE THE USBID’S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
The USBID advocates and partners with the City for public services that Union Square requires and that members, visitors, workers, and residents deserve.

Top Priority Objectives:
• Partner with City agencies, including SF Public Works and SFPD, to clarify minimum baseline service levels, as defined in the USBID Management Plan
• Define optimum USBID service levels and articulate the process for securing additional services and distribute this information to members and stakeholders
• Maintain and expand the security camera project and develop a sustainable maintenance and funding plan

B. PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING
Reinforce Union Square’s status as an international destination with an attractive, activated, well designed and managed public realm supported with unique and frequent programming and events.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #2: IMPLEMENT THE USBID PUBLIC REALM ACTION PLAN AND ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES
Public realm improvements coupled with strong, effective activation have the potential to advance multiple Strategic Plan objectives, such as enhancing the pedestrian experience, improving public safety, promoting the Union Square brand, and spurring private- and public-sector reinvestment.

Top Priority Objectives:
• Implement the Public Realm Action Plan
• Install and track pedestrian count systems and share findings with businesses and City officials
• Develop and implement a fundraising program, targeting public, private, and philanthropic sources in support of the USBID Public Realm Action Plan
C. ADVOCACY, POLICY, AND PLANNING
Advocate for a clean, safe, attractive, and vibrant Union Square to City officials and stakeholders on behalf of its members and serve as “the voice of Union Square” on City and State public policy and priorities affecting the district.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #3: ADVOCATE FOR UNION SQUARE INTERESTS
The USBID directly engages City officials and decision makers, business and advocacy groups, and various private and non-profit agencies to advocate and leverage additional resources for Union Square. This involves navigating political processes and personal relationships with key individuals and partner organizations.

Top Priority Objectives:
• Complete an economic impact study of Union Square and share findings with the City, members, business and civic organizations
• Develop a public information strategy and materials to share information about the USBID and its value to the City and Union Square’s economic importance
• Develop a BID Renewal Plan, including task and activity lists, timelines and outreach strategies, and execute the USBID Renewal process and plan
SUPPORTING SERVICE AREAS

D. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
Focus the USBID’s marketing and communication programs to promote and reinforce Union Square’s brand as an international destination to draw new and repeat visitors to the district.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #4: TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS AND MESSAGING
Articulate the USBID’s value, relevancy, and benefits to members and stakeholders through the USBID website, social media, and traditional marketing collateral, and leverage resources and relationships with visitor and hospitality-related partners.

Top Priority Objectives:
• Shift the marketing and communications efforts to 80% internally focused and 20% public facing
• Make all members and stakeholders aware of the USBID’s value, its ongoing projects, member ROI in terms of USBID services, and opportunities to get involved
• Use marketing and communication programs and products to generate new revenue opportunities through sponsorships

E: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
Ensure that the USBID’s structure, organizational performance, funding levels, and staffing levels align with member expectations by building on the success of the organization’s dedicated and committed Board and management team.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #5: MATCH ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY WITH MEMBER AND STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS
As the primary advocate for Union Square, the USBID has a tradition of engaged leadership as represented by strong Board and Committees, and supported by dedicated management and staff. As Union Square evolves, the USBID must also change and evolve to meet member expectations and balance the demands of its core functions, while taking on new initiatives and staying current with emerging downtown trends and dynamics.

Top Priority Objectives:
• Explore additional revenue streams, including forming or becoming a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
• Develop a “New Leader Orientation” program for Board Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee members
• Develop a new leadership orientation and expectations program to encourage more member engagement and leadership advancement
UNION SQUARE BID
ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Union Square BID (USBID), a 501(c)(4) property-based business improvement district, represents approximately 27 blocks of downtown San Francisco containing over 580 parcels and over 1,200 storefront and upper floor businesses. Long considered “the heart of San Francisco” and a starting point for many first-time visitors, Union Square’s attractions contained in this dense urban core – the famous cable cars, historic Union Square Park, renowned restaurants, luxury hotels, and one of the largest concentrations of retail shopping on the West Coast – make it San Francisco’s #1 visitor destination.

To maintain Union Square’s standing as a premier downtown district, a group of concerned property owners and retailers established a 10 block BID along lower Powell Street in 1999 to improve the area’s cleanliness, safety, and economic vitality. This BID, set up for an initial five-year period, was renewed and expanded for another five years beginning in 2004. The success of the USBID’s efforts led to its second reauthorization for a 10-year period starting on July 1, 2009, and included an expansion of its boundaries to...
approximately 27 block and new services, such as marketing, advocacy, beautification, and capital improvements.

**Current USBID services and programs include:**

- Clean and Safe
  - Cleaning and Maintenance Ambassadors
  - Hospitality Ambassadors
  - Public Safety Ambassadors
  - “10B” SFPD Officer (police patrol )
  - Security Camera Project
  - Union Square Cares
- Marketing and Communications
- Advocacy and Public Affairs
- Streetscapes and Public Realm

The majority of USBID funding derives from annual property assessments, followed by foundation and City grants. A 23-member Board of Directors comprised of property owners, retailers, hoteliers, and at-large individuals, is responsible for setting the USBID priorities and policies, while the USBID management team oversees the organization’s day-to-day operations.

The USBID’s geographic center is Union Square Park. The district’s boundaries roughly encompass Bush Street on the north, Market Street on the south, Kearny Street on the east, and Mason Street on the west with a few blocks extending towards Taylor Street.
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In 2015, the USBID Board of Directors began a process to develop and conduct a strategic planning process, framework, and document. The USBID selected MIG, Inc., a Berkeley-based consulting firm with extensive experience working with BIDs, to develop a strategic plan for the next three years.

BOARD AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT

This strategic planning process, the second in the USBID’s history, included in-depth engagement with USBID Board members, the management team, and staff using multiple platforms to gather their input:

In-Person Stakeholder Interviews: The consultant team completed one-on-one interviews with ten (10) USBID Board members selected by the management team, in addition to USBID staff, to identify key issues and opportunities facing the Union Square area and the USBID.

Online Board Survey: The full USBID Board received a comprehensive online survey on the strengths, opportunities and challenges facing the USBID and their vision for the USBID’s future.

Board Strategy Workshops: The USBID Board, management team, and staff participated in two facilitated, off-site planning workshops to envision, shape, and refine the strategic plan framework that formed the basis for the final strategic plan document.

A Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of select Board and staff members, met four times to guide the planning process. The Committee worked to identify strategic plan drivers and preliminary issues, list potential district opportunities, and review and recommend the final strategic plan draft to the Board for approval.

This inclusive strategic planning process ensured the final strategic plan reflects the interests and ideas of those responsible for driving the new USBID strategies and objectives moving forward.

BOARD REVIEW, APPROVAL, AND ANNUAL REVIEWS

The USBID Board received a draft strategic plan outline in late May 2016 to review and provide high-level comments, followed by a final draft strategic plan submitted at the Board’s September 2016 meeting for review and approval. MIG, Inc. provided the Board with a high-level presentation of the strategic plan framework and answered questions from the Board regarding the strategic planning process and plan. Committee Chairs will review their respective Strategic Plan objectives (Appendix A) and key performance indicators with their committee members on an annual basis and revise as needed.
Union Square’s status as a premier hotel and retail district remains one of its most valuable assets, attracting domestic and international visitors to stay, shop, and play. These Union Square assets make a significant contributor to San Francisco’s economy and the thousands of persons employed by its businesses.

**Union Square Highlights:**

- Union Square ranks as the #1 visitor destination in San Francisco
- Union Square contains the largest collection of hotels in the City
- San Francisco received upwards of $50M in sales tax from Union Square businesses in 2015
- Approximately 1,200 businesses operate in Union Square, employing over 25,000 people
- Retail/entertainment sector accounts for over 37% of total Union Square employment, followed by managerial/professional (30%), and lodging (19%)

**MARKETPLACE CONDITIONS**

Union Square’s position as a prime location for retail and hotels derives from a multiplicity of factors, including City planning policies and zoning laws that support an attractive, compact, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-rich district.

Though Union Square remains a dynamic and commercially successful downtown core, the district could face significant challenges from emerging economic trends and changing consumer tastes. For instance, double-digit growth in online retailing, disruption to traditional “brick and mortar” retailing, changing demographics, and the rise of on-demand transportation and home sharing services, are a few trends that could negatively impact Union Square’s iconic brand as a hotel and shopping destination.

Furthermore, numerous construction and development projects underway near Union Square provide newer hospitality and retail alternatives that could draw residents and visitors away from Union Square. At this time, it is unclear whether the projects collectively present a threat to the district, or a new opportunity to attract more visitors to Union Square.
2. UNION SQUARE BID ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INFLUENCES

These projects include:

- Central Subway completion and connectivity to Soma and Chinatown in 2019
- Mission Rock (new parks and retail/restaurants with 1,500 housing units)
- Moscone Center Expansion (doubling of new convention space, new public realm improvements with potential plans for new Yerba Buena area hotels)
- 6X6 (new 240,000 sq. ft. “fast fashion” shopping center in Mid-Market)
- 5M Project (800 new housing units, new parks and public realm improvements, 600,000 sq. ft. of new commercial space)
- Transbay Neighborhood (4,400 new housing units, 100,000 sq. ft. retail, 6 million sq. ft. office, 1,000 hotel rooms, world-class floating urban park)
- The Hub (new, mixed-used retail and housing neighborhood at Van Ness/Market)
2. UNION SQUARE BID ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

RETAIL
According to Cushman & Wakefield’s Retail Snapshot Q4 – 2015 report, Union Square remains the City’s most prestigious retail district with local shoppers and tourists. Rent in Union Square rose from $600 (PSF) in 2014 to $650 (PSF) in 2015, an increase of 8.3%. Between 2010 and 2015, rental rates in Union Square increased 62.5%. Overall, retail vacancy rates in Union Square dropped to 1.1% between 2010 and 2015. Investors will continue to pursue, and pay, top dollar for premier San Francisco high street retail sites. In general, job growth in the technology sector, coupled with a solid tourism market, is encouraging retailers to enter and expand in San Francisco.

HOSPITALITY
According to San Francisco Hotel Council data, hotel occupancy rates showed significant gains between 3% and 15% from 2010 to 2015, and average daily room rates (ADR) - perhaps a more important index - increased an average of 60% during the same period.

EMPLOYMENT
According to a 2012 impact analysis of business improvement/community benefit districts in San Francisco, Union Square is one of the City’s major employment centers. Approximately 3,000+ businesses employ just over 25,000 persons spread among these following sectors - retail/entertainment (37%), managerial/professional (30%), and lodging (19%).
TOURISM
Tourism is one of San Francisco’s most important industries, according to SF Travel’s 2014 visitor profile study. Approximately 24.5 million visitors in 2015 accounted for $9.3 billion in tourism-related spending. This included 18.9 million leisure visitors (up 2.7 percent from 2014) and 5.8 million business travelers in 2015 (also up 2.7% from 2014). Union Square ranked #1 in 2014 as the most commonly visited San Francisco neighborhood, attracting 53% of all visitors to the City. These same visitors shopped (29.8%) and dined (29%) in Union Square.

ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS
Union Square’s strength as one of the City’s top economic drivers and visitor destinations is due to multiple factors giving Union Square significant advantages over its competitors.

ASSETS
Union Square boasts assets that are the envy of most American downtowns – an international brand name, luxury and value retailers, a large daytime hotel, retail, and office workforce, world-class cultural institutions, excellent regional and local public transit and vehicular access, and a cohesive, pedestrian-scaled walking environment.

THE PEOPLE
• The first blocks of lower Powell Street attract the largest number of pedestrians in San Francisco and rank in the top five in pedestrian volumes with other world famous streets, such as Oxford and Regent Streets (London) and Times Square (NYC)
• Distinctive energy and vibrancy of a 25,000+ person workforce, which creates a dynamic, interactive, and engaging weekday environment

RETAIL ENVIRONMENT
• Union Square contains one of the country’s largest concentrations of luxury retailers, department stores, and “fast fashion” stores
• Union Square accounts as the predominate place to shop for San Francisco visitors
• Presence of major American flagship stores and recognizable and appealing international brands
• Strong appeal to international and domestic travelers, particularly the growing China and India visitor markets

TOURISM
• Visitors from across the world come to Union Square to enjoy the cable cars, Union Square Park, historic architecture, pedestrian-scaled environment, theatres, restaurants, and an active street life
• Union Square ranked #1 in 2014 as the most commonly visited neighborhood by San Francisco visitors
• Union Square ranked #1 as the most popular neighborhood to dine
LOCATION, ACCESS, AND CONNECTIONS

- Powell Station is BART’s third busiest system station after Embarcadero and Montgomery stations
- Powell station is MUNI’s busiest station by total number of total daily boardings and disembarkations
- Seven major MUNI bus lines transect Union Square, including the 38 and 38R Geary bus lines, one of MUNI’s top performing lines by ridership
- Access to 18 transit lines, including MUNI light-rail vehicles, buses, historic trolleys, cable cars, and BART
- Construction of a new Union Square/Market Street MUNI station linking the district with SOMA and Chinatown neighborhoods, with proposals to extend the line to North Beach and Fisherman’s Wharf
- Availability of Class A, B and C office space and co-working flexible spaces for creative, non-traditional office uses
- Union Square’s high density and proximity of people, businesses, and amenities, making it an attractive destination to start a business
- Central location adjacent to San Francisco’s financial and cultural districts, including Chinatown and Nob Hill, with excellent access to local and regional public transit access and vehicular access to the I-80

CHALLENGES

Union Square’s economic success is by no means guaranteed. USBID and its members must continue addressing challenges, mitigating possible threats, and advocating for additional City resources if it is to realize its full economic potential.

CHANGING MARKETPLACE OF DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENTS

- Impacts associated with changing demographics, technological changes, shifts in consumer tastes and behaviors, use of alternative transportation modes, rising social inequality, focus on people-centered design, and movement towards 24-hour cities, and other emerging issues
- Continued disruptions in the hospitality and retail sectors (growth in short-term rental platforms, online shopping, experience-based consumption, decreased focus on luxury retail purchases) could negatively impact Union Square as a visitor destination and, ultimately, its economic base
- Union Square’s vulnerability to competition from revitalized and newer San Francisco mixed-use retail and restaurant districts, including suburban shopping and downtown centers perceived as cleaner, safer, more attractive, and family friendly
2. UNION SQUARE BID ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Union Square, like other City neighborhoods, experienced a sharp increase in property crimes in recent years, negatively impacting visitor perceptions about the district.
- Weekend pedestrian traffic on Union Square’s southern border is more than double weekday traffic, suggesting opportunities to attract more weekday visitors and, thereby, more “eyes and ears” on the street.
- Observational and numerical pedestrian data show Union Square is predominately a daytime destination, with significantly less pedestrian activity in the evening, and pedestrian traffic around Union Square varying significantly depending on the day of the week and time of day.
- Visibility of police presence in Union Square is perceived as substantially less when compared to similar urban shopping and hotel districts, such as New York City’s Times Square and Chicago’s Michigan Avenue.
- Presence of homeless sleeping in doorways, aggressive panhandlers, and persons with mental illness are common in Union Square, and at times overwhelming, adding to negative visitor perceptions about the district’s safety and overall appeal as a location to stay, visit, or play.
- Perceptions of safety in Union Square are negatively impacted by the area’s close proximity to areas associated with a disproportionate share of criminal activity and persons needing intensive behavioral health services compared to other City neighborhoods.
- Historic “Golden Triangle” light poles provide the dominant source of sidewalk lighting at night, but emit insufficient light for evening visitors to Union Square, discouraging evening pedestrian counts and night time-related economic activity.

CLEANLINESS

- The USBID manages a strong cleaning program with the resources it has available, but it is often perceived by members and stakeholders as the primary means of cleaning services in Union Square, rather than as a supplemental service to City baseline services, as originally designed.
- Some USBID members desire levels of cleaning services that are not achievable with current funding levels, which may necessitate the USBID exploring varying service funding models and/or an assessment increase upon renewal.
- San Francisco’s high cost of living presents significant challenges to recruiting and retaining Cleaning and Maintenance Ambassadors.
- At times, the City’s inconsistent and unpredictable enforcement around issues of illegal dumping, litter, and sidewalk grime work against the efforts of the USBID’s Cleaning and Maintenance Ambassadors who strive to keep Union Square up to cleaning standards desired by members.
I. INTRODUCTION

• Need for the USBID to continue articulating the frequency and level of its cleaning services provided (the scope of which is determined by the budget which is constrained by current assessment levels) and communicate to USBID members the benefits of these services on a regular basis

PUBLIC REALM INVESTMENT AND PROGRAMMING

• Union Square’s public realm and infrastructure is the responsibility of multiple City departments, which can create challenges and obstacles to advancing public realm improvements
• The USBID lacks a 501(c)3 tax-exempt designation, thereby making it ineligible for a variety of public funds, including private and philanthropic monies, to fund Public Realm Action Plan initiatives
• City policies, practices, and fees constrain opportunities for the USBID to regularly program the district’s streets, sidewalks, and public spaces as a means to draw additional people and attention to the area
• Variable quality and finish of Union Square building facades, sidewalks, and streetscape elements can detract from Union Square’s unique character and urban fabric that make it such an attractive and appealing destination
PROMOTION AND MARKETING

- Union Square’s branding and wayfinding efforts could better direct visitors to the area’s unique activities, amenities, and attractions
- The name “Union Square Business Improvement District” does not sufficiently give its members and stakeholders a strong sense of the organization’s mission and purpose
- Stronger communication and more consistent messaging of the USBID’s benefits, value, relevancy, and ROI using the USBID website, social media, and traditional marketing collateral
- Union Square’s economic impact to the City is not fully understood or appreciated for purposes of advocating and promoting Union Square

leverage additional resources
- Staff capacity and resource issues impact the USBID’s ability to develop and/or implement unique events and activities much more frequently and at a scale that would attract new visitors to the district

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTIVENESS

- Majority of USBID assessments are dedicated primarily to clean and safe functions, which is not on par with comparable BIDs in major cities across the country, and restricts the USBID’s ability to fund other services and initiatives that serve its vision and mission
- USBID staffing levels are disproportionately low in comparison to
staffing levels of BIDs with comparable budgets, scope, and services

• Alignment of USBID organizational goals, strategies, and priorities between the USBID Board, Committee Chairs, and Committee members varies at times, resulting in the organization not always achieving its maximum organizational capacity

OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the challenges facing Union Square, there exists tremendous opportunities to bolster the area as a unique, popular, world class destination by creating a cleaner, safer, more active and attractive district.

MAINTAIN AND PROMOTE EXISTING ASSETS

Build on and promote Union Square’s existing assets, such as hotels, luxury and “fast fashion” retailers, restaurants, theatres, Union Square Park, strong transportation access, pedestrian-scaled environment, and its internationally recognized brand.

ACTIVATE OPPORTUNITY SITES AND PUBLIC SPACES

Activate Union Square’s underutilized sidewalks, streets, alleys, and public spaces to create new amenities, activities, and revenues streams, with a focus towards increasing Union Square’s appeal to a wider demographic profile.

MAKE UNION SQUARE COOL

Leverage Union Square’s reputation as a luxury hotel and retail district by developing “must see” activities, events, and experiences on a regular and consistent basis aimed at local and regional visitors, in addition to City residents.

BRING MORE EVENING VIBRANCY

Strengthen Union Square’s nighttime economy by increasing visitorship through more police presence, better pedestrian and public space lighting, more exterior building uplighting, and more late-night transportation options.

PREPARE THE USBID FOR RENEWAL

Start the USBID’s Renewal Campaign process, including possible expansion, by building awareness and recognition of the organization’s services and benefits to its members and stakeholders.

UNION SQUARE BID SERVICE AREAS

CLEAN AND SAFE

Cleaning and safety programs are the USBID’s longest-established services (since 1999) and served as the primary factors leading to the USBID’s founding. Currently, these service areas receive the majority (65%) of USBID assessment revenues and are overseen by the USBID Services Manager, in consultation with the USBID’s Executive Director and the Deputy Director.

CLEANING

The USBID contracts with Block-by-Block, which provides Cleaning and Maintenance Ambassadors to perform general and specialized cleaning and maintenance services, such as sidewalk and gutter sweeping, cardboard pick-up, bi-weekly pressure washing, graffiti and
sticker removal, and special requests on a daily basis. Block-by-Block’s USBID operations are managed by an Operations Director and Operations Supervisor co-located at the USBID office, and work under the direction of the USBID’s Services Manager. When necessary, the USBID coordinates with SF Public Works and waste management company Recology to mitigate illegal dumping and enforce City waste removal policies. Recently, the USBID contracted with Downtown Street Team Program (a “work-first” homeless service program connecting individuals with case management, housing, and City services in return for work) to supplement existing, contracted cleaning services.

PUBLIC SAFETY
The USBID utilizes a four-pronged approach to improving safety in Union Square for visitors and workers.

1) Work closely with the Central and Tenderloin Police Captains to ensure Union Square receives the number of “beat officers” commensurate with the district’s needs.

2) Hired an SFPD “10B” officer to patrol Union Square to cite and arrest suspects, when warranted. The 10B program requires these officers to receive a wage 1.5 times their regular salary.

3) Implemented a security camera project, primarily funded from a donor-advised grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, to install approximately 300 cameras throughout Union Square. Footage from the cameras is available to anyone upon request, though the majority of requests to date are from the SFPD and the District Attorney’s Office to assist with new or ongoing criminal investigations.

4) Deploy Safety Ambassadors during the day and evening hours as part of the USBID’s contract with Block-by-Block. Though the Ambassadors possess no enforcement capabilities, they serve as a crime deterrent by providing a visible and additional set of “ears and eyes” on the street and, thereby, improving the perception of Union Square as a safe district.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
The USBID’s Marketing and Communications function includes multiple programs designed to promote Union Square’s brand, communicate the USBID’s values and services to its members, and produce member and public events to increase visitorship to Union Square. In addition, this function maintains and enhances the USBID website and helps drive visitor traffic to the website to promote Union Square activities, events, and attractions that will ultimately generate new revenue streams to support its programs. A Director of Marketing and Communications oversees this function, with staff support provided by a Marketing Coordinator.
PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADVOCACY
The USBID has built strong relationships with elected City officials and all levels of City staff and is widely regarded as an effective and well managed organization. However, the USBID has faced challenges in representing Union Square’s importance and the significance of its stakeholders to City and State officials due to a lack of impactful data. Historically, the USBID has not prioritized economic impact data or other market research, though there is now significant support for these types of data. Stakeholders strongly support the USBID furthering its public affairs and advocacy work through additional policy making programs, additional research and outreach to members and public entities.

STREETSCAPES AND PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS
The Streetscape and Public Realm function includes projects that support Union Square’s brand as a world-class district and a favorite visitor destination. In 2015, the USBID articulated these projects in a Public Realm Action Plan with the following goals: provide a single source for public realm improvements; articulate over-arching principles; document existing conditions; identify future projects; and provide a plan for Union Square to encourage ideas and funding opportunities to implement the plan. A Director of Strategic Initiatives oversees this function and coordinates efforts with the Services Manager and the Director of Marketing and Communications, in consultation with the Executive Director.
and Deputy Director, to facilitate and develop public realm improvement efforts. The position collaborates closely with officials and staff from SF Public Works, SF Planning, and SFMTA.

**UNION SQUARE BID COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIDS**

Business Improvement Districts differ dramatically in terms of their scope of services, structure, staffing, and revenues. The following table “USBID Comparison to BIDs of Comparable Size and Types of Service Areas” shows six other BIDs relatively comparable in size, budget, and service areas with the USBID. The table is for comparison purposes. It is recommended that an in-depth analysis, with findings, be conducted at a future date.
## USBID Comparison to BIDs of Similar Size and Types of Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Union Square Business Improvement Development</th>
<th>Times Square Alliance</th>
<th>Chicago Loop Alliance</th>
<th>Downtown Denver Partnership</th>
<th>Downtown Santa Monica Assoc.</th>
<th>Downtown Long Beach Assoc.</th>
<th>San Jose Downtown Assoc.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Revenue 14–15FY (Totals)</td>
<td>$3,458,140</td>
<td>$19,956,200</td>
<td>$3,016,047</td>
<td>$6,873,534</td>
<td>$7,961,810</td>
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<td>Blocks</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Revenue Per Bock</td>
<td>$138,325</td>
<td>$997,810</td>
<td>$167,558</td>
<td>$57,279</td>
<td>$173,083</td>
<td>$61,146</td>
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<td># of Visitors (Approximate)</td>
<td>13M</td>
<td>40M</td>
<td>25M</td>
<td>&lt;10M</td>
<td>8M</td>
<td>&lt;3M</td>
<td>&lt;2M</td>
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<tr>
<td>BID FTE Positions</td>
<td>6 (includes BID &amp; Foundation staff)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27 (includes BID &amp; Foundation staff)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
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### Service Areas

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<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Cleaning</th>
<th>Public Safety</th>
<th>Hospitality</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Social Service Outreach/Homeless Job Training</th>
<th>Advocacy, Public Affairs &amp; Research</th>
<th>Public Realm/Streetscapes</th>
<th>Landscaping</th>
<th>Marketing &amp; Communications</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Economic/Business Development</th>
<th>Foundation (501) c(3)</th>
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<td>Foundation (501) c(3)</td>
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<td>YES</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Development Corporation</td>
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**UNION SQUARE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 | 29**
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives organized by USBID service areas, represents the Strategic Plan’s “actionable items”. Objectives range in priority, scale, and effort. In addition, each objective is assigned a lead and support staff (if necessary), followed by a completion date timeframe (see Appendix A for details).
GOAL AREA A

CLEAN AND SAFE

GOAL

Ensure a high level of cleanliness and safety for Union Square and strive for continued operational improvements.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #1: OPTIMIZE THE USBID’S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

The USBID advocates and partners with the City for public services that Union Square requires and that members, visitors, workers, and residents deserve.

OBJECTIVES (top priorities in bold)

A1 Partner with City agencies, including SF Public Works and SFPD, to clarify minimum baseline service levels, as defined in the USBID Management Plan

A2 Define optimum USBID service levels and articulate the process for securing additional services and distribute this information to members and stakeholders

A3 Maintain and expand the security camera project and develop a sustainable maintenance and funding plan

A4 Create cleaning and waste staging areas

A5 Increase and maintain the number of Cleaning Ambassadors, including the use of Downtown Streets Team members, for supplemental cleaning

A6 Conduct a security and lighting audit for the district

A7 Expand the level of coordination between the USBID and private security deployed by district members

A8 Evaluate the effectiveness of social service work provided through the Union Square Cares Program

A9 Work with service provider to institute a phone app-based system to report cleaning issues, maintenance issues, and safety concerns

A10 Explore the feasibility of deploying regular pay SFPD officers in place of 10B officers

A11 Develop a block captain system to monitor, coordinate, and improve cleanliness and safety in their area

A12 Explore the feasibility of limiting certain types of deliveries to night-time hours to alleviate daytime
traffic congestion and provide additional night time security

**A13** Work with night club owners and businesses with night-time operations to address public safety issues

*Ongoing (OG)*

**OG-A14** Enlist and build strong relationships with other business organizations
GOAL
Reinforce Union Square’s status as an international destination with an attractive, activated, well designed and managed public realm supported with unique and frequent programming and events.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #2: IMPLEMENT THE USBID PUBLIC REALM ACTION PLAN AND ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES

Public realm improvements coupled with strong, effective activation have the potential to advance multiple Strategic Plan objectives, such as enhancing the pedestrian experience, improving public safety, promoting the Union Square brand, and spurring private- and public-sector reinvestment.

OBJECTIVES (top priorities in bold)

B1 Implement the Public Realm Action Plan (priority projects: Stockton & Powell Streets Pedestrian Zones, backstreets and laneways, and Powell Street Promenade)

B2 Install and track pedestrian count systems and share findings with businesses and City officials

B3 Develop and implement a fundraising program, targeting public, private and philanthropic sources in support of the USBID Public Realm Action Plan

B4 Develop materials and collateral and work with property owners and managers to maintain attractive street frontages during property turnovers

B5 Develop a Sutter Street retail study and plan

B6 Continue working with BART on Powell Street BART/MUNI station cleaning, maintenance, and capital improvements

B7 Work with the City of San Francisco and BART on the design and programming of the Union Square and Powell Street Stations concourse to maximize cleanliness, public safety, and activation
Ongoing (OG)

**OG-B8** Work in partnership with the City to develop and maintain public improvements

**OG-B9** Increase both the quality and quantity of programming in Union Square Park

**STRATEGY DIAGRAM REPRESENTING KEY PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS**
GOAL
Advocate for a clean, safe, attractive, and vibrant Union Square to City officials and stakeholders on behalf of its members and serve as “the voice of Union Square” on City and State public policy and priorities affecting the district.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #3: ADVOCATE FOR UNION SQUARE INTERESTS

The USBID directly engages City officials and decision makers, business and advocacy groups, and various private and non-profit agencies to advocate and leverage additional resources for Union Square. This involves navigating political processes, with specific knowledge and personal relationships with key individuals and partner organizations.

OBJECTIVES (top priorities in bold)

C1 Complete an economic impact study of Union Square and share findings with the City, members, business and civic organizations

C2 Develop a public information strategy and materials to share information about the USBID and its value to the City and Union Square’s economic importance

C3 Develop a BID Renewal Plan, including task and activity lists, timelines and outreach strategies, and execute the USBID Renewal process and plan

C4 Complete a visitor intercept survey and share the findings with the City, members, and partner entities

C5 Work with partner entities to acquire the resources needed to augment USBID services towards improving the visitor experience

Ongoing (OG)

OG-C6 Demonstrate the USBID’s value and influence, both economically and politically

OG-C7 Advocate for a clean and safe district

OG-C8 Continue coordinating and collaborating directly with the Board of Supervisors and City department heads
OG-C9 Partner with SF Travel to advocate for clean, safe, and civil sidewalks

OG-C10 Advocate for and influence City and State legislation impacting the USBID’s mission and Union Square

OG-C11 Maintain “Square Affairs” newsletter to provide members and stakeholders with information relevant to USBID’s accomplishments and services

OG-C12 Take a leadership role representing Union Square on matters of common concern, such as Central Subway construction mitigation, lower Stockton Street redesign, mobile food facility permits, and other issues identified by the Public Affairs Committee
STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #4: TARGETED COMMUNICATIONS AND MESSAGING

Articulate the USBID’s value, relevancy, and benefits to members and stakeholders through the USBID website, social media, and traditional marketing collateral, and leverage resources and relationships with visitor and hospitality-related partners.

OBJECTIVES (top priorities in bold)

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MARKETING

D1 Shift the marketing and communications efforts to 80% internally focused and 20% public facing

D2 Use Marketing and Communications programs and products to generate new revenue opportunities through sponsorships

D3 Develop a New Member Orientation Program

D4 Position bi-monthly Coffee and Connections meetings as a member benefit

D5 Explore the feasibility of renaming the USBID for marketing and positioning purposes

D6 Develop and refine “Only in Union Square” marketing efforts highlighting Union Square’s unique image and brand

Ongoing (OG)

OG-D7 Make all members and stakeholders aware of the USBID’s value, its ongoing projects, member ROI in terms of USBID services, and opportunities to get involved

OG-D8 Continue learning series program, including “Meet the Concierge” events

OG-D9 Continue to promote Union Square as a place to visit, shop, stay, and play

OG-D10 Publicize USBID accomplishments and new programs and initiatives

OG-D11 Gather visitor feedback to help continually improve USBID programs

OG-D12 Maintain a robust online and social media presence

OG-D13 Maintain the “Around the Square” newsletter and provide information relevant to both businesses and visitors

GOAL

Focus the USBID’s marketing and communication programs to promote and reinforce Union Square’s brand as an international destination while articulating the USBID’s value, relevancy, and benefits to members and stakeholders.
GOAL

Ensure the USBID’s structure, organizational performance, funding levels, and staffing levels align with member needs by building on the success of the organization’s dedicated and committed Board and management team.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #5: MATCH ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY WITH MEMBER AND STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS

As the primary advocate for Union Square, the USBID has a tradition of engaged leadership as represented by strong Board and Committees, and supported by dedicated management and staff. As Union Square evolves, the USBID must also change and evolve to meet member expectations and balance the demands of its core functions, while taking on new initiatives and staying current with emerging downtown trends and dynamics.

OBJECTIVES (top priorities in bold)

E1 Explore additional revenue streams, including forming or becoming a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization

E2 Develop a “New Leader Orientation” program for Board Members, Committee Chairs, and Committee members, with a focus on roles and responsibilities, to encourage more membership advancement and leadership advancement

E3 Establish a process to ensure that all Committees remain aware of each other’s priorities and projects and work in support of the Strategic Plan

E4 Develop a fundraising plan and consider hiring a fundraiser to implement it

E5 Develop a Clean and Safe affiliate member program allowing non-property owners to more directly engage with the USBID

E6 Develop and implement a performance tracking and reporting system to regularly evaluate the success of USBID’s programs
4 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

These key performance indicators provide a feedback mechanism for the USBID Board, Committee Chairs, the management team and staff, to assess performance of the USBID’s five service areas. The indicators provide a point-in-time measure. It is expected the indicators will change and evolve alongside the USBID’s evolving priorities.

A. CLEAN AND SAFE
   a. Union Square crime rates
   b. Incident figures
   c. Monthly Union Square Cares report data
   d. Amount of donations to Union Square Cares and related organizations
   e. Number of SFPD beat officers in the district
   f. Cleanliness survey results
   g. Member and visitor surveys

B. PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING
   a. Pedestrian count data
   b. Visitor perception intercept survey results
   c. Amount of leveraged funds for public realm projects
   d. Number and frequency of programmed events
   e. Number of completed projects

C. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
   a. Percentage of opened member-targeted e-mails
   b. Visitor attendance at USBID-sponsored events
   c. Number of people attending “learning luncheons” program

D. ADVOCACY, PLANNING, AND POLICY
   a. Property values
   b. Hotel ADR
   c. Retail sales
   d. Sales tax revenue
   e. Number of jobs by employment sector
   f. Funds dedicated to USBID by the City
   g. Funds saved by USBID on services taken up by City
   h. Qualitative relationship with City/ City responsiveness
   i. Annual number of meetings with City Supervisors
   j. Legislative results

E. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
   a. Staff size
   b. Size of operating budget
   c. Board ethnic, racial, and gender diversity
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