

1. What is a Business Improvement District (BID)?

A Business Improvement District is a defined area within which property owners are self-assessed to fund services that improve overall quality of life for residents and visitors. These services supplement those provided by the city and can include additional cleaning and safety measures, beautification, marketing and a variety of other services that help to develop and promote the area. The USBID was the first and is now the largest of the City's 11 existing property-based business improvement districts.

2. What is the difference between a Business Improvement District (BID) and a Community Benefit District (CBD)?

Business Improvement Districts and Community Benefit Districts are very similar. They both strive to improve and promote a defined part of a city. Usually a Business Improvement District is in a principally commercial area, whereas a Community Benefit District encompasses a neighborhood with a significant residential component.

3. What area does the USBID cover?

A lively 27-block community surrounding Union Square Park makes up the USBID. Union Square is San Francisco's top visitor destination and is known for its eclectic mix of world-class shopping, hotels, restaurants and theatre. It is generally bordered on the north by Bush Street, on the east by Kearny Street, on the south by Market Street and on the west Taylor Street. Within this service area there are 2980 parcels, which include both public and private ownership. For more details view our [parcel map](#).

4. What services does the USBID provide?

The original USBID was founded in 1999 and focused primarily on cleaning and safety issues. Today's expanded USBID continues to recognize the need for maintenance and public safety programs and has added marketing, advocacy, beautification and capital improvement programs to its commitment to enhance the experience of the Union Square area and contribute to a safer and more vibrant community.

5. How is the USBID governed and operated?

The USBID is governed by a board of directors made up of the property and business owners and other stakeholders representing a variety of businesses in Union Square. Representation is proportional to industry presence within the Square. All major measures are voted upon by the Board of Directors, then given to the USBID staff to implement. The USBID also follows a [management plan](#) and contract with the City of San Francisco.

If you want to participate, you can:

Attend our Board of Directors meetings. The Board meetings are held bi-monthly on the third Thursday from 9-10:30 a.m. (locations will vary). All Board meetings are noticed in advance, and the agenda is posted on the USBID's website and at the City's main library. For more information, contact jeani@unionsquarebid.com.

6. What are the USBID's advisory committees, and how do I get involved?

The USBID has also formed several advisory committees in order to help supervise and provide suggestions for the district. You're welcome to attend any of the committee meetings if you would like to know more about what's going on in Union Square and what we do:

- The Marketing Advisory Committee
- The Public Affairs & Advocacy Advisory Committee
- The Services & Public Safety Advisory Committee
- The Streetscapes & Beautification Advisory Committee
- The Finance Advisory Committee
- The Audit Advisory Committee

To receive meeting notices, please contact jeani@unionsquarebid.com.

7. How does the BID work with city agencies?

Partnership with city agencies is instrumental to the USBID's mission. Members receive supplemental benefits in addition to the city's usual cleaning and safety services. The USBID also works hand in hand with the city in order to represent and lobby on behalf of the stakeholders of Union Square.

8. How is the USBID Funded?

The USBID is funded through a self-assessed tax on the property owners of Union Square that is administered by the City Tax Assessor's Office through property tax bills.

9. What is the BID's budget?

The USBID's budget is published in the [Annual Report](#) submitted to the City of San Francisco. The USBID's assessment for the 2010-2011 fiscal year is \$3,026,330.

Per the BID's management plan with the City of San Francisco and property owners the budget is allocated 65% to clean and safe services, 15% to management and administration and 10% to marketing with a 10% contingency fund.

10. Who do I contact for services?

To report service needs to the USBID's Dispatch Center, contact the dispatcher at (415) 781-4456 or by e-mail at cleanandsafe@unionsquarebid.com.