



Mid-Year Report July - December 2019

Executive Summary

In November of 2019 the Japantown Community Benefit District celebrated its 2nd full twelve months of providing economic and environmental enhancements in Japantown. It has been a year filled with bringing new ideas and solutions to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood.

The Board of Directors continues to guide the organization to make sure our purpose of improving environmental and economic enhancements remains on track through the programs and services that the JCBD provides, while continually assuring assessment monies are utilized according to the Management Plan.

Based on feedback from the 2019 Year-End Survey, safety and cleanliness remain a top priority for our property owners/stakeholders.

Community Ambassadors

Japantown continues to see the improvements made since the start of the Community Ambassador program. The Ambassadors' daily interactions with the handful of homeless can be challenging, but also make it easier to navigate and address any situation that may occur.

The Japantown community, especially the merchants, continuously interact with the Ambassadors, thus providing the JCBD with a direct method of communication.

In 2019 we did see a high turnover of Ambassadors, which was a reflection of the low hourly minimum wage we were able to offer. Compared to other CBD/BIDs, the Japantown Ambassador hourly rate was at least \$3.00 less, if not more. Working closely with Block by Block, we were able to create an improved plan to retain exceptional workers and improve operations by hiring an on-site operations manager/ambassador.

Japantown SafeCity Camera Program

The anonymous donation received in 2018 for the Japantown SafeCity Camera Program has helped fund the program's implementation, and one year of maintenance. The program is currently in Phase 4 of implementation. Through the program we provided SFPD with 48 video footages that have assisted in making arrests, and in many cases convictions. It has also strengthened our relationship with SFPD. Additionally, we are working with SF Safe to coordinate the production and installation of signage to discourage crime in Japantown.

Complying with the California Public Records Act (CPRA) was another area that we carefully examined internally and with legal counsel. Usage guidelines and policies were updated. We have met with digital technology watchdog groups such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), to make sure the Japantown SafeCity Camera Program is transparent and is in compliance with the CPRA.

The SafeCity Camera Program Committee was formed to oversee the program, report to the Board and to begin planning for Phase 5, which will include outreach to property owners just outside of the district, and will invite them to be a part of the Japantown SafeCity network. The committee is comprised of JCBD staff, a board member and representatives of Applied Video Solutions (AVS).

JapantownSF Street Lamp Banners

In July of 2019, the new JapantownSF branded street lamp banners were installed throughout Japantown. These colorful banners were designed by 3 local Japanese/Japanese American artists: Brandt Fuse, Brenden Oshima and Tomoko Maruyama selected through a RFP process. The new banners reflect the Japanese culture, cuisine and heritage that is abundant in our community. The colorful and eye catching graphics also highlight this important cultural district and merchant corridor.

Jtown After Dark

The JCBD partnered with the National Japanese American Historical Society, Nihonmachi Street Fair, SF Recreation & Parks and New People to bring the anime movie “*Mirai*” to the Peace Plaza during the 46th Annual Nihonmachi Street Fair. Working together on specific projects has enabled us to build and strengthen new and old relationships.

JapantownSF Branded Big Belly’s

On August 27th we held a ribbon cutting ceremony to unveil 4 new Big Belly Smart HC5 trash receptacles. OEWD Director Joaquin Torres, then-acting-Mayor Supervisor Vallie Brown and Japantown Merchants Association President, Richard Hashimoto all made opening remarks. Each of these receptacles were branded with the JapantownSF logo and sponsored by local merchants/organizations.

JCBD Who to Call List

The JCBD continues to be an important resource for businesses, property owners as well as those who live, work and visit Japantown. One of the things we noticed was that many people did not know who to call in case of emergencies. This was especially evident for the non-English speaking community. In response, we created a “Who to

Call” flyer that identifies who to contact for specific types of incidents, and made it available in both Japanese and Korean.

As a member of the SFPD Small Business Advisory Group, this flyer was presented at one of the meetings. Deputy Chief David Lazar, Investigations Bureau, immediately wanted to expand upon this flyer, much like the Park Smart campaign. The Advisory Group is currently revising/updating the “Who to Call” flyer so it can be distributed city-wide.

SFMTA Small Business Working Group

As the Geary BRT project inches closer to Japantown, it is important to have a direct pipeline to make sure our community members, especially our merchants, are kept up to speed with the planning and implementation process. Attending these meetings enables us to see what type of support is needed from SFMTA to make sure everyone knows there is a pre/post construction mitigation plan in place to keep disruption minimal to our merchant corridor.

Our stakeholders and community see the importance of the JCBD and the value the organization brings to Japantown. The JCBD will continue to keep the City and the community connected and strengthen the visibility of Japantown so that it remains a thriving destination for locals and visitors alike.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Horikiri

Executive Director

Japantown Community Benefit District, Inc.

2019 Mid-Year Highlights

Keeping Japantown Safe

In the final Phase 4 stage of the Japantown SafeCity Camera Program implementation.

Member of the SFPD Community Police Advisory Board for Northern Station and SFPD Small Business Advisory Group.

Keeping Japantown Clean

Installation of four JapantownSF branded Big Belly receptacles. Each was sponsored for one year by a business / organization.

Japantown Community Clean Up organized in partnership with the Mayor's Fix-It Team and SF Department of Public Works. Approximately 20 members of the Japantown community came to help.

Walk throughs with SF DPW and Mayor's Fix It Team to identify and address concerns. Punch list created to keep on track of fix-it issues.

Keeping Japantown Informed

Produced and distributed quarterly newsletters; emailed to property owners and hand delivered to businesses and organizations in Japantown.

Produced three Constant Contact Campaigns with a 367 member subscription list.

Produced and distributed "Who to Call" flyer to merchants and community organization. The flyer was translated to Japanese and Korean.

Community Meeting for Merchants in partnership with the Japantown Merchants Association with Recology and SF DPW, to discuss changes in cardboard collections.

Monthly attendance in Japan Center Garage Board and Japantown Task Force meetings. Providing JCBD updates, cleaning highlights and crime report.

Member of the SFMTA Small Business Working Group.

Created Vision Plan for the Revitalization of the Buchanan Mall to the San Francisco Japantown Foundation. This was the deliverable for the \$10,000 grant received.

Promoting Japantown

Sponsored 4th Annual Osaka Matsuri.

Sponsored Jtown After Dark Movie Night at the 46th Annual Nihonmachi Street Fair.

Partnership discussions with CAAM Fest and the Japan Information & Cultural Center, a division of the Consul General of Japan's office in San Francisco, to hold summer movie nights.

Launched the www.japantownsf.org website.

Held a Japantown Stamp Rally during the Aki Matsuri (Fall Festival) and Japantown Pin Rally at Santa is Coming event to encourage event attendees to support local merchants.

Produced the first JCBD Annual Report for FY 18-19.

Retained public relations firm LGPR, Inc. to help promote Japantown. The first campaign pitch was to promote *Oshogatsu* (New Year's) traditions in Japantown.

Organized the installation of Holiday Lights in the Buchanan Mall and Peace Plaza. The Peace Pagoda was also lit in holiday colors and currently is displaying 49ers colors for their win in the NFC Championship.

JCBD Community Fund created to support Japantown events/programs. Funding to go towards programs and activities that will promote Japantown and engage visitors, locals and district merchants. \$10,000 allocated for this fund each fiscal year. Information and application is made available on www.jtowncbd.org

JCBD Board and Staff

In 2019 board members Michael Sim and Sim Seiki stepped down and we welcomed two new board members: Alex Prouty of the Hotel Kabuki and Daniel Byron of 3D Investments (Japan Center Malls).

In September, JCBD hired two part time staff: Operations Manager, Brandon Quan who oversees the Community Ambassadors, Big Belly's and Japantown SafeCity Camera Program, and Administrative Assistant/Community Aide, Melissa Ayumi Bailey.

Description and Status of Each Contract that Provide Programs/Services

Applied Video Solutions (AVS)

The JCBD entered into an agreement with AVS in September of 2018 to implement the Japantown SafeCity Camera Program through a generous anonymous donation. Throughout the implementation and various phases of the project, AVS has provided JCBD staff with training, guidance and technical support to maintain a robust and secure video control center.

Block by Block

In July of 2019, JCBD signed our 2nd year contract with Block by Block to provide daily cleaning and hospitality services through their Community Ambassador program. The contract includes 2 full time Ambassadors and an Operations Manager (who divides his time between Fisherman's Wharf CBD and Lombard Street). Ambassadors work from 7:30am to 4:00pm, 365 days a week. As mentioned in the Executive Summary, hourly wages has been a factor in retaining good workers. An amendment was made to the contract in December, which reflects eliminating one Ambassador position, eliminating the Operations Manager role, and bringing in a full time Operations Supervisor, who will perform Ambassador duties as well as fulfill on-site supervisory tasks.

Big Belly Solar, Inc.

The JCBD was awarded a grant through the Office of Economic Workforce Development (OEWD) to install four Big Belly Smart HC5 trash receptacles. This grant was to cover for graphics application, installation and one year of service. The Big Belly's, in combination with our Ambassadors, have made a significant difference in the amount of daily trash on the streets. We are in the process of adding one additional Big Belly, and a sponsor has already been identified to support it.

LGPR, Inc.

In November 2019, JCBD signed a one year agreement with LGPR, Inc. LGPR is a public relations firm that will be spearheading our PR efforts to various local and national media outlets to help promote Japantown. They have started to create editorial content that will highlight stories and events which will showcase what makes Japantown a destination point. Their first PR pitch this past January showcased "Oshogatsu" New Year customs and events in Japantown. They helped in promoting the Japanese Cultural & Community Center's 49th Annual *Oshogatsu* Matsuri, which drew a record attendance this year.

Ziel Creatives

JCBD contracted with Ziel Creatives to create the new JapantownSF.org website. Prior to the new website, Japantown had two websites (sfjapantown.com, japancentermalls.com). Our Marketing & Communications Committee recommended that we combine these two sites, so that there is just one primary of source of online information for anyone wanting to know about what to do, eat and experience in Japantown. The new website launched on December 1st 2019, just in time for the holiday season.

Mid Year Financial Report

See attached JCBD Mid Year Financial Report 01.28.20.

Carry Overs

See attached JCBD 12.31.19.Balance Sheet.xlsx.

Non-Assessment Revenue

- Big Belly Sponsorship \$3,500
- Donation for Holiday Lighting \$1,000
- Secured 2nd year funding for Big Belly \$13,000

Summary of Changes

See attached JCBD Financial Summary 2020.xlsx.

Proposed Budget

See attached JCBD 2021 Projection Report.xlsx.

Statistical Summary of Services Provided

- Hotline Answered – 25
- Hospitality Assistance – 2242
- Request for SFPD, SFFD & EMS – 13
- 311 Requests – 170
- Pounds of Trash Removed – 7,500
- Trash Bags Collected – 300
- Cigarette Butt Picked Up – 41215
- Steam Cleaning - 3,500 linear foot
- Auto Glass Clean Up – 294
- Graffiti & Sticker Removed – 200
- Needle Clean Up – 174
- Weed Abatement – 240
- Sidewalk Power Washing – 8