

Tenderloin-Little Saigon Community Transportation Study Summary of Workshop #1 – Transportation Needs and Priorities February 28, 2006

Publicizing of the Workshop

Tenderloin Housing Clinic and Southeast Asian Community Center underwent an intensive, month-long effort to promote the community workshop, working to ensure all stakeholders would be informed about the event and that the maximum number of individual stakeholders was reached. A variety of methods were used in order to achieve these goals.

Media:

Press releases sent out to all major and alternative media sources in San Francisco, included ethnic publications serving Latino and South East Asian communities and online blogs and news websites. Results were achieved, most prominently when the San Francisco Examiner published an article about the event, and when a major Southeast Asian newspaper reprinted the press release in full on its front page.

Door to Door Outreach:

Small Business Owners and Employees: Store to store outreach was done to approximately 50 businesses in Study Area. Owners or employees reached were notified about the study, invited to the event, and provided with posters to put in storefront windows to notify the public about the event.

In Little Saigon area alone which covers the corridor along Larkin Street from Golden Gate to Post and along Ellis street from Leavenworth to Van Ness, SEACC's staff visited 28 businesses with the same outreach purpose and urged them to attend the Workshop. There were promises but from our own experiences, we understand right from the beginning that for better outreach to businesses in Little Saigon, we have to come to them rather than relying on them to come to the workshop for simple reasons that almost all of these businesses are mom-and-pop ones and they are too busy, working from dawn to dusk, to have spare time for any non-mandated meetings.

Social Service Providers and Clients: Outreach was done to approximately 35 providers in Study Area. Directors or employees were notified about the study, invited to the event, and provided with posters to put in places where clients could easily view. Providers included those working with *seniors, disabled people, homeless people, and youth.*

SRO Tenants: Distributed approximately 1,200 quarter-sheet fliers to tenants of SRO hotels in Study Area inviting them to the event. At least half distributed door-to-door by volunteers or THC employees, while the remained were left at front desks or placed in mailboxes.

Outreach to Community at Large:

Approximately 375 fliers posted throughout community on bulletin boards, light posts, public areas, etc. The announcement was sent out via e-mail to approx. 2,550 members of Tenderloin-Little Saigon community. Transit riders were also specifically targeted, as fliers were placed on every bus shelter in the Project Area.

Outreach to Targeted Communities:

Latino Community: Meeting was announced at La Voz de La Ciudad Central meeting, a neighborhood Latino group, and approximately 100 fliers were distributed by members of La Voz to other Latinos in the Project Area.

South East Asian Community: We distributed more than 1,000 flyers in English, Vietnamese and Chinese to clients at the Southeast Asian Community Center, Lao Family, Inc, Vietnamese Family Services Center, Vietnamese Elderly Mutual Assistance Association and at community events and meetings in Little Saigon.

TAC Involvement:

The Technical Advisory Committee reviewed the outreach strategy and received updates of its progress. In addition, the TAC reviewed all materials to be used at the community meeting prior to it being held, and were invited to make comments about these materials. They provided input concerning what communities should be specifically targeted during the outreach process and ways to make the meeting materials more user-friendly. The Study Team made a concerted effort to address all their comments.

Workshop Agenda and Structure

Agenda:

The meeting took place from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 28, 2006 at St. Boniface Auditorium, 133 Golden Gate Ave., located in the heart of the study area. The agenda of the meeting went as follows:

5:30 Open House

- Self-guided tour of display boards that report out on transportation needs and priorities
- Sign in: who are the participants (provides names for raffle drawing)

5:45 Staff Introduction to Study / Preliminary Findings

- Staff provides 15 min. overview of study and objectives for the evening
- Staff presents outreach process and results from technical and outreach efforts

6:05 Large Group Q&A

- Staff facilitate discussion

6:15. Dot Survey Sessions

- Dot surveys on display boards
- Identify priorities from among a comprehensive list of transportation needs (participants may add new items to the list)
- Identify priorities from among a list of “tensions” between needs

- Map of Tenderloin: place dots on problem areas: fast traffic, crowded sidewalks, dangerous intersections, etc. (participants may add complaints that are not mapable)
- Map of Tenderloin: place dots on the bus stops you use, key destinations
- Identify priorities from among near term (Lifeline grant) projects

7:10 Large Group Session

- Staff facilitated discussion of Dot Survey results
- Objective is to identify a few top projects to prepare applications for

7:25 Open House / Raffle Drawing

- Opportunity for one-on-one Q&A with staff
- Staff selects raffle winner(s)

7:30 Adjourn

- Staff closing comments / next steps

Display Boards

In order to familiarize attendees with both the study and the findings of the existing conditions research, there were a variety of display boards throughout the meeting area explaining various aspects of the study. These boards addressed the following subjects:

- *About the Study (including Outreach Plan)*
- *Past Studies Findings*
- *Demographics: car ownership; mode share of Tenderloin residents*
- *Transit Performance: reliability analysis; routes by frequency*
- *Pedestrian Conditions: findings from walking audit*
- *Pedestrian Collisions: causes, collision rates*
- *Traffic Issues: speeds, parking facilities on and off street*

Interactive exercises

In addition to the display boards, there were a variety of interactive exercises attendees were asked to participate in. They addressed the following:

- *How people use Muni*
- *Prioritizing the needs of the community*
- *Specific problem areas in the neighborhood*
- *A wishlist of improvements for the community*

Raffle

In order to increase attendance and create a more enjoyable atmosphere, the community meeting included a raffle for a variety of prizes. A Muni FastPass sparked the most interest, and likely increased turnout. The raffle was held at the end of the meeting in order to keep attendees at the event for its entirety, and appeared mostly successful at this task. Attendees seemed to enjoy the raffle a great deal.

Lifeline Funding

The meeting included one additional interactive task. Because Lifeline funding would be allocated by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission before the

completion of the study, attendees were asked to prioritize possible projects that Lifeline could fund in order to best inform any Lifeline grant application made on behalf of the Tenderloin. A list of projects was provided, and participants rated them. A space for additional ideas for projects was provided.

Workshop results

Who Participated

Over 50 people attended the event – 43 signed up for the study mailing list. Attendees were primarily residents of the Tenderloin, and included a wide array of ethnicities. African-Americans, Latinos, and Southeast Asians were all represented. Seniors, disabled and the homeless attended, as did non-profit workers and transit riders. Many attendees were low-income, and residents of both SRO hotels and apartments attended. The primary stakeholder groups who did not appear represented were small business owners and youth.

In general the two-hour workshop was a great opportunity, but a minor drawback was the location of the workshop. The location was viewed by quite a few participants that SEACC spoke with, especially older participants, as an unsafe neighborhood. More than one expressed this reserve to SEACC staff when asked why they did not come to the workshop as promised.

Participant Comments

The primary way for workshop participants to record feedback at the workshop was on Post-It notes provided at each board station. Participants wrote comments on post it notes and attached them to the boards. In addition, one interactive exercise asked that attendees write down what they'd like to see change in their community. This is a list of their responses, organized by transportation modes, with two additional categories to encompass comments about the study itself and miscellaneous comments. Comments made by more than one person are noted.

Transit – Key Themes

Several key themes emerged from workshop participants' comments on transit. Most involve the transit experience. Buses are too crowded, do not come often enough, and are often driven by people who are not considerate towards riders, particularly seniors. Bush shelters are dangerous and dirty, and transit costs too much. These themes are generally consistent with the messages heard during previous months' outreach efforts. One small difference, however, is the frequency with which people at the workshop mentioned they wanted more buses to run on specific lines. The 27, 19 and 30 were all mentioned as routes that should include more buses.

Each individual comment is noted below:

- Separate signal times for buses
- 24 hour routes for all buses serving the Tenderloin, particularly the #27 Bryant
- Keep bus shelters cleaner

- Stop drug dealing in shelters
- Senior and disabled seats on buses are directly over tires, and drivers hit bumps hard, making these seats uncomfortable
- Run more buses on the #30 line, as many Tenderloin residents use it to get to and from Chinatown and other places.
- The bus shelters should be larger at the main transfer points. Sometimes there are only three seats available for 20 people waiting at a bus stop
- Buses are too crowded and rough for kids to be safe on them
- Run more buses on the #27 line, as it is the major Tenderloin line (mentioned twice)
- Run more buses on the #19 line
- Improve reliability of the Van Ness bus lines
- Bus drivers should be more customer-oriented
- More local routes should be added
- Bus drivers should be more sensitive to the elderly
- Buses should be lowered further down at stops so seniors and disabled can board easier
- More public restroom should exist close to bus stops
- #19 bus line often runs late
- Bus drivers often begin driving before riders have a chance to sit down
- City should provide more free tokens for important appointments riders in the Tenderloin might have, such as SSI appointments and health care appointments
- The #38L should stop at Leavenworth, not Turk.
- City should launch public campaign to get out of towners out of their cars and onto transit
- Subsidized passes should be cheaper (mentioned twice)
- More NextBus indicators
- Remove street car island at O'Farrell and Market as it causes obstruction
- Buses are too crowded
- Eliminate front seats to enable faster front door boarding
- BART should re-open its restrooms at downtown stations immediately
- Passes should be cheaper during non-rush hour times

Pedestrian Safety – Key Themes

One key theme emerged from workshop participants' comments on pedestrian safety and security. Attendees feel unsafe on the street in the Tenderloin, and want a variety of efforts taken to make them feel safer. This theme is generally consistent with the messages heard during previous months' outreach efforts, though during the workshop attendees were more specific about exactly what changes they wanted made.

Each individual comment is noted below:

- There should be a countdown signal at the intersection of Larkin and Eddy.

- There is too much parking on the sidewalks, forcing pedestrians to walk into the street
- There should be more pedestrian bulb-outs
- Add more crossing guards
- Provide extra pedestrian safety devices around schools
- Decrease jaywalking, which is dangerous
- Skateboarders on sidewalks are a danger to pedestrians
- Benches should be provided every half-block so seniors have a place to rest

Pedestrian Security

- More security on the streets is necessary
- More streetlights are needed

Bicycles

- Keep bikes off the street
- Increase the fine for biking on the streets, possibly to taking away the offender's bikes
- Some people on bikes are using them to deal drugs
- Add bike lanes to Post, Hyde, Turk and Golden Gate

Traffic

- Cars at Grove and Hyde always drive through the stop light there
- Lower the speed limits in key areas (mentioned twice)
- Reduce traffic in general, particularly on Van Ness Avenue
- Cars need to use their turn signals more, including police cars.
- Slow down traffic (mentioned twice)
- Bus only lanes are good, but only during peak hours

Parking – Key Themes

Several key themes emerged from workshop participants' comments on parking. Attendees wanted pedestrian safety prioritized over parking, were opposed to more parking garages being added to the neighborhood, wanted more enforcement of parking violations, and desired residential parking permits for the Tenderloin. These themes are not generally consistent with the messages heard during previous months' outreach efforts. While many respondents during previous outreach efforts echoed those concerns voiced at the workshop, an equal amount said they wanted more parking in the neighborhood due to the current lack of it in the area. In previous outreach efforts, however, the open-ended nature of the questions did not ask respondents to prioritize between pedestrian concerns and parking concerns, and in this workshop they were. The results were that people generally seemed to support pedestrian safety over more parking.

Each individual comment is noted below:

- Delivery trucks park in bus lanes too often
- There should be no more big parking garages in the neighborhood

- Parking garages coming to Hastings Law School and Trinity Plaza should be stopped (mentioned twice)
- No angled parking should be introduced to the neighborhood
- There should be residential permits provided to neighborhood residents with cars
- Stop people from double parking
- Find better ways for delivery trucks to drop off or pick goods than by double parking
- More enforcement of drivers who park on the sidewalk
- Prioritize transit over parking

Study

- More outreach should be done to disabled and homeless people (mentioned twice)
- More outreach should be done to Muslim and African-American communities
- Study should include public housing in its outreach

Miscellaneous

- City CarShare should be expanded, and there should be more outreach to the Tenderloin encouraging residents to use it
- There should be more coin-operated public restrooms on the streets

Results from Interactive Exercises

All interactive exercise used dots as a means of discovering respondents concerns about transportation, and discern Tenderloin residents' priorities. Each numerical value below represents the number of dots placed by respondents next to each category.

“How many days a week do you use MUNI?”

Days a week	Number of Responses	Percentage of total
0 days/week	1	5%
1-3 days/week	6	30%
4-6 days/week	5	25%
Every day	8	40%
Total	21	100%

“What are the two Muni routes you use the most?”

Route	Number of Responses	Percentage of total
38 Local	13	30%
38 Limited	5	12%
5 Fulton	2	4%
19 Polk	9	21%
31 Balboa	4	9%
27 Bryant	5	12%
16 Express	0	0%
Other Route	5	12%

Totals	43	100%
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Prioritizing Needs

Question:

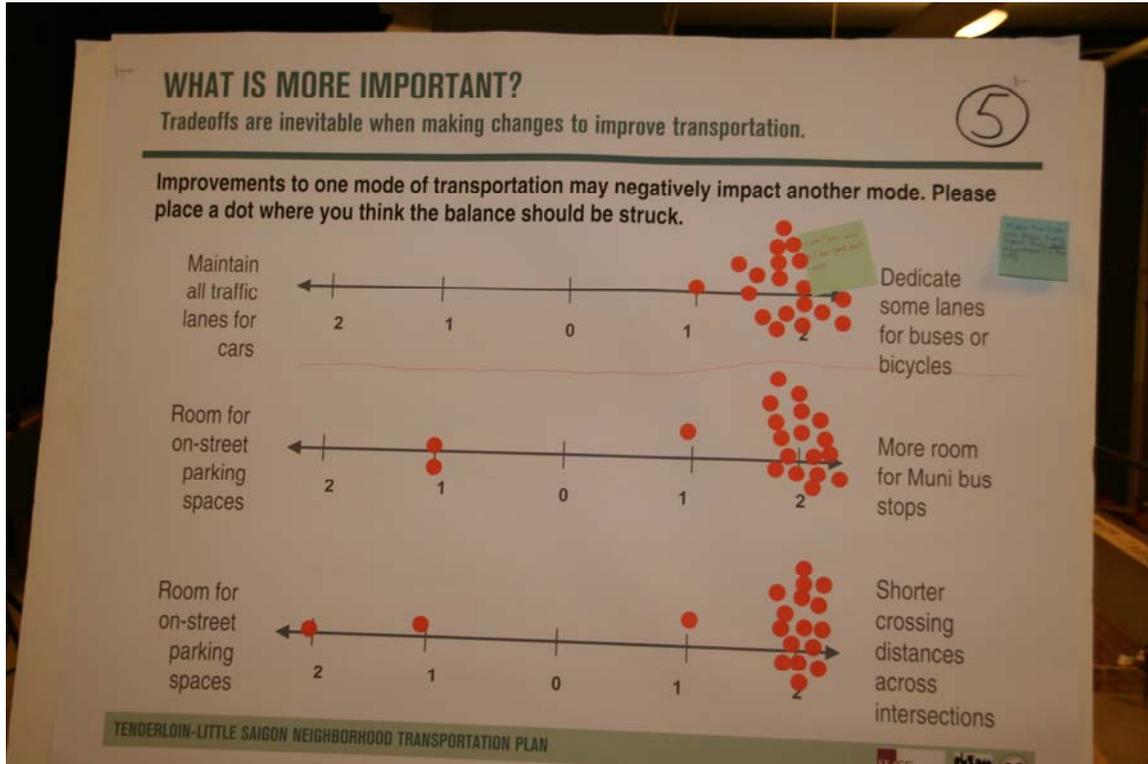
Place a dot on the three most important transportation needs to address in the Tenderloin.

Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of total
<i>Pedestrian Safety</i> – Take steps to reduce the frequency and severity of pedestrian collisions in the neighborhood	6	7%
<i>Pedestrian Conditions</i> – Take steps to make walking more pleasant and appealing in the neighborhood	4	5%
<i>Reduce speed of car traffic</i> – Take steps to reduce speeds of cars traveling on neighborhood streets	10	12%
<i>Reduce amount of car traffic</i> – Take steps to reduce the amount of car traffic in the neighborhood	3	4%
<i>Improve reliability of transit</i> – Take steps to reduce bunching of buses so they arrive at stops more evenly spaced. This makes the amount of time you wait more predictable	10	12%
<i>Reduce cost of transit for low-income people</i> – Increase the availability of Muni’s Lifelike pass, which allows low-income people to purchase a regular monthly pass for \$35	16	20%
<i>Improve bus stops</i> – Take steps to improve the condition, comfort, security, and amount of information at bus stops	8	10%
<i>Improve conditions for bicycling</i> – Improve conditions for bicycling to improve cyclist safety and reduce the number of cyclists that ride on the sidewalk	7	9%
<i>Increase availability of on-street parking</i> – Better manage parking to reduce double parking and make it easier for customers of Tenderloin businesses to find on-street spaces	1	1%
<i>Reduce crowding on Muni</i> – Take steps to improve the capacity of Muni routes as they run through the Tenderloin, as well as reducing bus bunching, which contributes to crowding	16	20%
Totals	81	100%

Question:

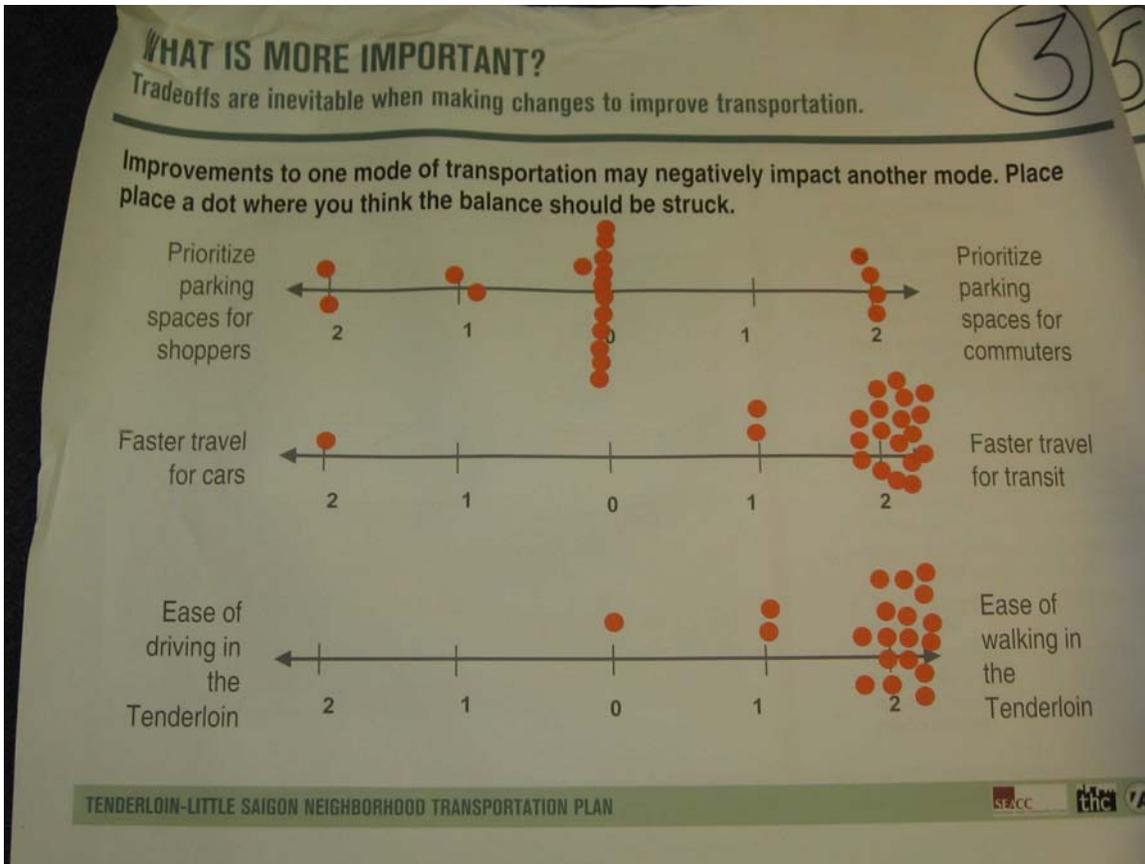
Improvements to one mode of transportation may negatively impact another mode. Please place a dot where you think the balance should be struck. *(Note: respondents were asked to place a dot on a continuum, with numerical values along the continuum.)*

The values, from left to right, were 2, 1, 0, 1, 2 Responses are listed left to right.)



-Workshop participants had clear priorities for the use of traffic lanes. All respondents favor dedicating some traffic lanes for buses or bicycles, with most of these respondents (over 90%) strongly favoring dedication of lanes for buses or bicycles.

-Participants had clear priorities for the use of street space. Almost all respondents (over 90%) favored creating more room for Muni bus stops over room for on-street parking spaces. They also favored (over 90%) creating shorter crossing distances across intersections rather than making room for on-street parking spaces. Clearly public transit and pedestrian safety are priorities for the community over parking concerns.



-Workshop participants did not have clear priorities about whether to prioritize parking space for shoppers or for commuters. Most responded that they though both should be given equal treatment.

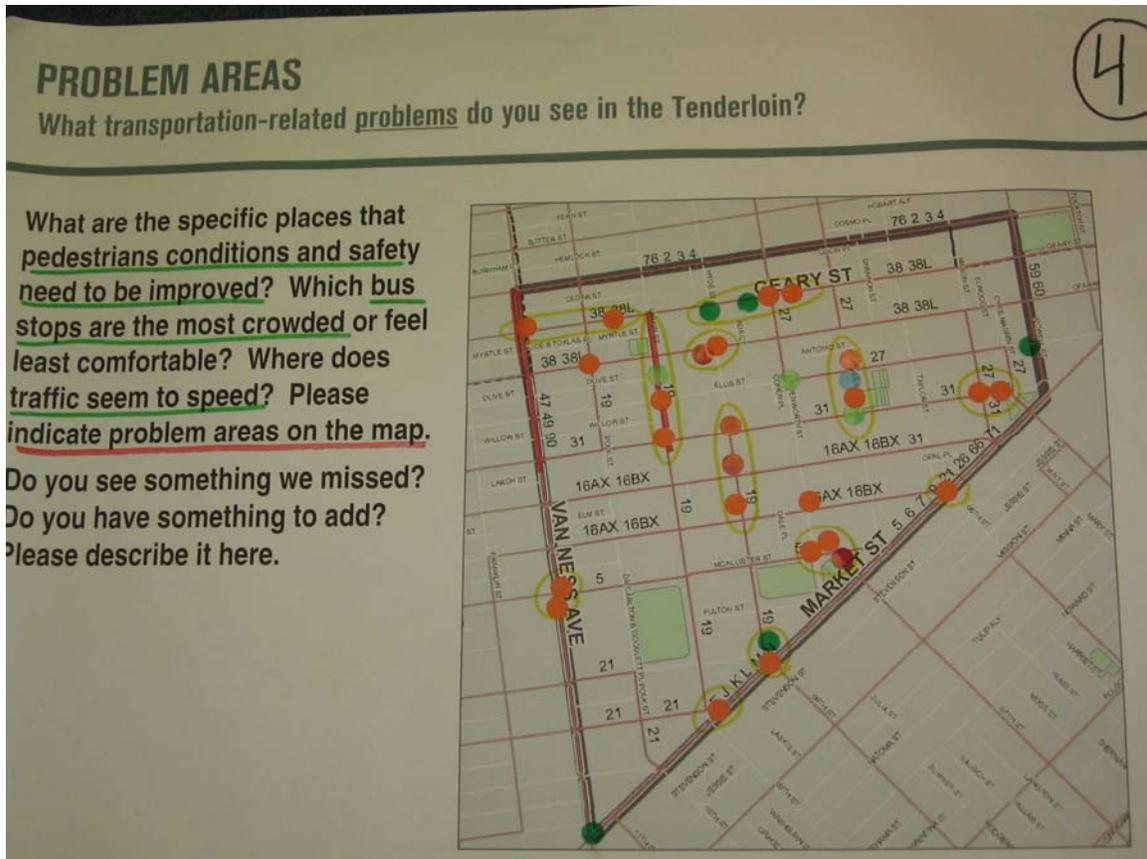
-Participants expressed clear priorities concerning speed of cars and transit. Almost all respondents (over 90%) stated they wanted faster travel for transit more than faster travel for cars.

-Participants expressed clear priorities about whether to make driving or walking easier in the Tenderloin. Every respondent except one stated they preferred increasing the ease of walking over increasing the ease of driving in the neighborhood.

Problem Areas

Question:

What are the specific places that pedestrian conditions and safety need to be improved? Which bus stops are the most crowded or feel least comfortable? Where does traffic seem to speed? Please indicate problem areas on the map.



No specific intersections were heavily identified as problem spots. Instead, workshop participants identified a few corridors as problematic. The key corridors identified as problem areas the North to South corridors of Larkin, Hyde and Leavenworth, as well as the East to West corridors Eddy and Ellis. A large majority of responses could be located in the inner portion of the Tenderloin targeted by this study. This area, bordered by Larkin, Golden Gate, Jones and Geary, is where the highest concentration of residents in the neighborhood live.

- Van Ness and Geary – 1 response
- Van Ness and Franklin – 2 responses
- Polk and O’Farrell – 1 response
- Geary between Polk and Larkin – 1 response
- Larkin between O’Farrell and Ellis – 1 response
- Larkin and Ellis – 1 response
- Larkin and Eddy – 1 response
- Larkin and Market – 1 response
- Hyde and Geary – 1 response
- Hyde and O’Farrell – 2 responses
- Hyde and Eddy – 1 response
- Hyde and Turk – 1 response
- Hyde and Golden Gate – 1 response

- Market and Hyde – 2 responses
- Leavenworth and Geary – 3 responses
- Leavenworth and Ellis – 1 response
- Leavenworth and Golden Gate – 1 response
- Leavenworth and McAllister – 3 responses
- Jones and Ellis – 2 responses
- Jones and Eddy – 2 responses
- Market and Taylor – 1 response
- Mason and Eddy – 2 responses
- Powell and Ellis – 1 response

Neighborhood Center

Question:

Where is the ‘heart’ or ‘center’ of the Tenderloin?

Answer:

- Larkin and Ellis – 3 responses
- Larkin and Eddy – 3 responses
- Leavenworth and Ellis – 3 responses
- Leaven worth and Eddy – 1 response
- Leavenworth and Ellis – 1 response
- Hyde and Ellis – 1 response
- Hyde and Turk – 1 response
- Jones between Geary and O’Farrell – 1 response
- Jones and Ellis – 2 responses
- Geary and Mason – 1 response

The large number of responses for Larkin and Ellis and Larking and Eddy could indicate many seeing the Little Saigon area as the heart of the community, for this is near the center of that neighborhood. The Leavenworth and Jones corridors also seem to be primary areas, likely because many businesses and social services exist on these streets. It’s important to note no dots were placed past Larkin, Geary, or Golden Gate, and only one dot past Jones street, revealing the area within these borders represents the broad heart of the area to almost all participants.

Lifeline projects

Question:

The ideas listed below have all been mentioned in previous community studies of the Tenderloin. Please place dots next to the projects that you would like to see happen soon.

Responses	Number	Percentage
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Tenderloin-Little Saigon Community Transportation Study

	of Responses	of total
Improve lighting of the sidewalks	6	11%
Make intersections safer with more curb bulbs and ramps	6	11%
Re-time traffic signals to favor transit and slow cars	4	7%
Install red-light running cameras at some stop lights	5	9%
More cleaning of sidewalks and bus stops	6	11%
Expand availability of Lifeline Fast Pass for low-income individuals	7	13%
Pave the Geary/O'Farrell bus-only lane with color to keep cars out	3	6%
Install NextBus Muni real-time arrival information at stops to tell how many minutes until the next bus arrives	10	18%
Taxi vouchers for disabled	1	2%
Pedestrian count-down signals, especially around schools	1	2%
Muni tokens for doctors and psychiatrists to get to key appointments with patients/clients	1	2%
Compel BART to open its restrooms immediately	1	2%
Study best practices in other cities, including providing free jitneys	1	2%
Give more tickets to drivers using bus lanes during a.m. hours	1	2%
Bike lanes on Post, Hyde, Turk and Golden Gate	1	2%
Totals	54	100%

Note: As a result of this community meeting and previous outreach efforts, the Tenderloin Housing Clinic, Municipal Transportation Agency and Humans Services Agency are currently submitting a proposal to expand the Lifeline Fast Pass program with funding from the Lifeline Transportation grant.