Tenderloin's dream toilet: free, clean, compostable

CBD invests \$20,000 in a green prototype

BY TOM CARTER

N its campaign to provide free public bathrooms and eliminate human waste on Tenderloin streets, the neighborhood CBD has boldly invested \$20,000 in an Oakland company to design a prototype public toilet that, if it can really recycle waste, could end up serving the rest of the city — and beyond.

The seed money would start Hyphae Design Laboratories on its way to go where no one has successfully gone before in making a durable, compostable public loo.

"We'll need to attract more money," Hyphae founder Brent Bucknum told the Tenderloin Futures Collaborative Oct. 19. The company's contract with CBD shows it needs \$94,000 for development.

"The big question is how to handle hazardous material from street toilets."

Dina Hilliard
TL CBD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Key to development of the TL toilet is public input to hear what type of W.C. people want, Bucknum said. The first outreach meetings will be Nov. 10 at St. Anthony's, 150 Golden Gate Ave. in the Poverella Room at 2 and 5:30 p.m.

The CBD is concerned because the neighborhood each month expe-

riences "700 to 800 incidents" of human feces in the streets, sidewalks and alleys, said Dina Hilliard, the TL CBD executive director.

The leading dump site last year, according to the CBD's sidewalk cleaner, Clean City, was near a methadone clinic at 433 Turk St., in a dark, cul-de-sac alley, Dodge Street — behind Harrington's bar at Turk and Larkin streets. The site was tops with 123 "incidents."

In the CBD's initial effort to address the issue earlier this year, it contracted with Rescue Mission at

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Rescue Mission's free toilet, open to the public weekdays, has tripled its usage.

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TENDERLOIN STAR



PHOTO BY TOM CART

Betty Traynor distributes flyers at Boeddeker Park gate for the noontime jazz being played inside. With grants, she brought summer concerts back to the park.

The park's best friend

Betty Traynor is dedicated to Boeddeker

BY TOM CARTER

ETTY Traynor frowned at Boeddeker Park's faded clubhouse door Thursday, Oct. 13. Rec and Park had locked the door and shut down the park, forgetting that the regular 3:30 p.m. Friends of Boeddeker Park meeting, which she chairs, was to meet inside. But no way now.

In seconds, Traynor had taped a sign on the door directing people to the L.A. Cafe and was making a beeline down Jones Street, headed for a suitable meeting table, a handful of Friends-of scurrying behind.

The scenario showed the park's unpredictable access and Traynor's determination to preserve and utilize the precious open space in the city's poorest neighborhood. Traynor has been the park's primary steward for eight years and a major reason Boeddeker is getting a \$5 million makeover starting next year.

The park's impending change stems from Trust for Public Land's successful multiyear campaign to land state and foundation money. Boeddeker qualified as a TPL project because it was in the central city, underused, has 3,000 kids living in the neighborhood and has an active advisory

group, with Traynor its spearhead and chair, though she prefers the title "facilitator."

"In all my dealing with the public, she stands alone," says Jake Gilchrist, who was key in TPL's campaign, but now works for Rec and Park. "Quiet, humble, extremely effective."

Gilchrist started attending Friends of Boeddeker meetings in June 2006 to evaluate the park as a TPL project and was impressed with Traynor's devotion and follow-through.

"All the changes at Boeddeker are a direct credit to her," he adds. "She is unfailingly consistent. And you know she's always going to be there. In the community process, staffs come and go. But there are certain champions, like Betty. She's doing all she can for the park. She's one of my favorites."

Boeddeker has been a conundrum. Originally, it supplanted the Downtown Bowling Alley in 1978 and was called Central City Park. With a \$3.2 million makeover in 1985, it reopened as Boedde-

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TENDERLOIN STARS

THERE are 30,000 of us in the Tenderloin, each unique in special ways. Tenderloin Stars captures the personality, humanity and, often, strangeness of our remarkably diverse populace. These are the people who make our neighborhood great.