

# Central Market expansion leads throng of CBDs in the works citywide

More neighborhoods form benefit districts

BY TOM CARTER & JONATHAN NEWMAN

**D**EFLATING the down economy's belt-tightening, the movement that pays to make sidewalks clean and safe and promote neighborhood business is spreading through downtown with the proposed expansion of the Central Market Community Benefit District leading a parade of wannabes.

The advisers say that one benefit district's improved streets positively affect the next one, and that creating one CBD stimulates the creation of another.

Central Market CBD, which runs along Market Street from Fifth to Ninth, seeks to expand southward to Howard Street, tripling its budget. A Rincon-Transbay CBD is in the works for a 30-block district between the Embarcadero and Second Street. And a third interested area wants a district to run along both sides of the Embarcadero from the Bay Bridge to Pier 31.

There are also aspiring districts in Lower Polk Street, Potrero Hill and on Broadway, according to the Office of Economic and Workforce Development that oversees their creation.

Meanwhile, downtown hotels are well along in forming a district to expand Moscone Center. Two CBDs in the Excelsior are in the works, and there's talk of possible districts, too, in SoMa along the bay, south and west. "But it's just talk," says Jim Chappell, an MJM Management consultant who has advised on a half dozen CBD creations, including the current Central Market expansion.

"I'm always working on three to five in any given year," says Lisa Pagan, OEWD project manager. "So this seems average." But, after counting seven neighborhoods on the wannabe list, she admits, "It's quite a few." As much as OEWD encourages the efforts and offers technical help, though, Pagan doesn't consider a CBD undertaking is serious until it has a steering committee rolling it forward, and some on the list aren't there yet.

The interest shows "belief" in the effectiveness of community benefit districts, Pagan says. That's buoyed by developments downtown — lots of construction, the influx of new companies with thousands of employees, the mayor's push to revitalize Market Street from the Ferry Building to Octavia and general optimism for the city's future.

The latest flurry of activity appears to be the most since 2005 when five CBDs were created: Tenderloin, Fisherman's Wharf, Noe Valley, Castro and the one block at 2500 Mission St.

The areas want cleaning, greening, neighborhood promotion and beautification so avidly they vote to assess themselves to pay for a range of services. The word "tax" is assiduously avoided with use of the term "assessment," though, whatever you call it, it's

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2 years in jail for 2007 stunt at Burning Man

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The oral history of Ray Jason

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## BIGGEST CBD IN THE CITY

\$27 million effort to boost tourism

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# CENTRAL CITY

# EXTRA!

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## NO CURE



PHOTO BY MARK DONEZA

Carlos Saenz gets his blood pressure taken by Sister Kathleen Laverty in a routine check at St. Anthony's health clinic, where he learned nearly five years ago that he has diabetes.

# DIABETES CENTRAL

## Disease is like an epidemic in the Tenderloin

BY TOM CARTER

**D**IABETES, the sneaky, nasty disease that can wreck you a dozen ways before killing you off, quietly stalks the Tenderloin like a starved rat. You may not be aware you've got the disease for years before exhibiting symptoms so obvious — such as unquenchable thirst — that you're finally

driven to seek answers.

As the city's poorest neighborhood, the TL becomes its most vulnerable for diabetes. Legions of poor seniors, low-income families and the hapless homeless are stuck in bad dietary habits, unaware that simple exercise — even before getting needed medications — can be the beginning of a better and longer life in their new lifelong challenge. There's no cure for diabetes. But management controls it.

Nationally, 26 million people have diabetes with an estimated 7 million undiagnosed, figures that are rising. One in 10 adults over age 20 has diabetes and more than 1 in 4 seniors 65 and over have it. Those figures, too, are going up. Equally disturbing, half of the nation's seniors are prediabetic, meaning they're at the edge of a blood sugar count that, once crossed, basically determines their fate.

Whatever scary ratios exist nationally, the Tenderloin is worse, experts say. Health Matters, a Website of a coalition of health foundations, nonprofit hospitals and organizations headed by the Department of Public Health, says the TL has a rate of diabetes five times the city average.

"Diabetes is a huge problem," says Dr. Ana Valdes, who heads St. Anthony's Medical Clinic on Golden Gate Avenue. The clinic's diabetes program keeps growing. This year, 250 diagnosed diabetics got help, compared with last year's 200 regulars, a 25% jump she expects to continue annually.

"Junk food that causes obesity drives it," Valdes says. "Two liters of soda is cheaper than bubbly water."

Nurse Karen Hill, who heads Glide Health Services, is part of the growing effort to rein in the unchecked diabetes spread among the poor. She agrees the problem is immense.

"We have quite a lot of it — 268 diabetics registered at the clinic," Hill says. "Four years

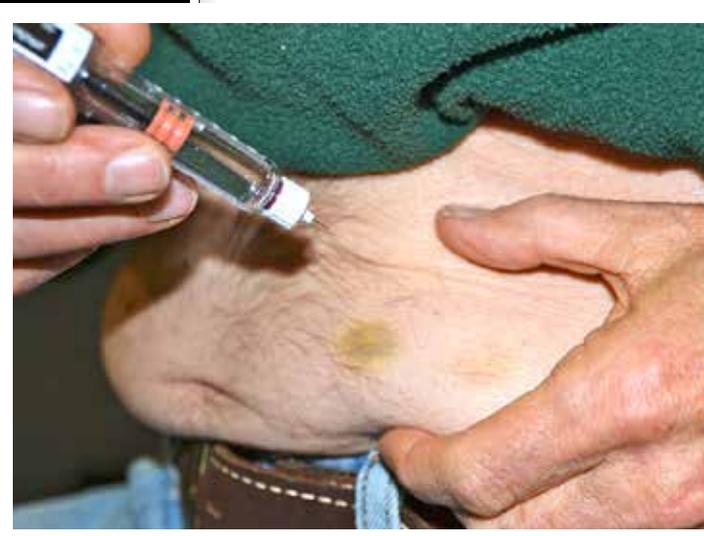


PHOTO BY MARK DONEZA

A diabetic injects insulin sometimes many times a day, a formidable challenge, especially for the homeless.

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