

District 6 gets \$3.2 million for more services

Supervisors add to mayor's budget

BY TOM CARTER

DISTRICT 6 is getting \$3.2 million more in the budget that the Board of Supervisors passed on July 25 than was in the mayor's budget.

The district's added programs and services are part of \$28 million that the Budget and Finance Committee put into the city budget while cutting a like amount. The committee, chaired by District 6 Supervisor Chris Daly, worked with the balanced \$5.7 billion budget that the mayor had sent to the board.

Mayor Newsom signed the supes'-approved budget July 28.

The 18 additional District 6 programs and services include bedbug abatement, a new Sixth Street drop-in center and social services for nonprofit housing developers. The funds mainly go to city departments to disburse to nonprofits that run the programs.

Anticipating the closure of the McMillan Drop In Center at 39 Fell St., the budget added \$635,000 for creating a multiservice drop-in center for the homeless in the Sixth Street Corridor. Supervisor Daly added the funds but, according to the Department of Public Health, no location has been identified.

Another \$500,000 would go to the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp. and the Chinatown Community Development Center, like TNDC a nonprofit developer and manager of affordable housing and social services.

For more than a decade, the two have developed and operated supportive housing and have used voluntary supportive services for the people they house. TNDC has 1,800 units in the Tenderloin and surrounding neighborhoods; 250 are homeless households. CCDC has 1,200 units; 230 for the homeless and extremely low-income households in the TL.

The nonprofit developers wrote Daly in May that the properties they acquired before recently funded city projects came into being — such as

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BLIND PAINTER'S EXHIBIT

Art Beat with Ed Bowers



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BENEFIT DISTRICT IN BLACK

First year ends with surplus

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UNLIKELY TO SHOW UP HERE

Lethal heroin mixture

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CENTRAL CITY



SAN FRANCISCO

SOUTHSIDE



PHOTOS BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Wing Mui and wife Nbi recently relocated their Mission Cleaners to 144 Sixth St.

End of skid row?

New businesses, better housing signs that 6th St. is turning corner

BY JOHN GOINS

THE revitalization of the Sixth Street area from a corridor of crime addled with liquor stores, prostitutes and pawnshops into a healthy community of small businesses, safe, well-lit streets and, perhaps, one day, the laughter of children, is a slow work-in-progress.

Since 1992 the Redevelopment Agency has pumped more than \$70 million into the area, \$55 million of which was spent on 1,400 units of affordable housing after the '89 earthquake, said Mike Grisso, the Redevelopment Agency's South of Market project manager.

The rest — \$15 million — has been spent on nonhousing improvements to bolster the area's infrastructure, including widened and heightened sidewalks and façade improvements. Developers have chunked in an additional \$130 million, for a total of \$200 million over 14 years, a Redevelopment document shows.

And still it's the city's skid row.

But perhaps that's changing as the housing and improvements near critical mass, the population becomes infused with younger, working professionals, and the

Federal Building a block away on Seventh Street takes shape.

"There are two economies on Sixth Street — the nighttime and the daytime," said Angel Cruz, the owner of Club Six, a popular venue for clubbers, at 60 Sixth St. "Nighttime is doing great; the daytime is picking up."

Cruz, a board member of the nonprofit Urban Solutions, working to improve the area, said: "The SRO hotels will always attract lower-income folks. It's not about gentrification — it's about coexistence, how to coexist with the SRO residents in the neighborhood."

"Things began to change around the new millennium," he said, but "Sixth Street has, traditionally, always been an entertainment area since the '40s and '50s. The area was less desirable in the '70s."

Cruz said it was "good to see much needed funds for infrastructure" such as new "sewer lines and palm trees" on Sixth Street.

A large fan whirs above the inside door of Midtown Loan, a pawnshop at 39 Sixth St., where four men and a woman stand in line waiting to conduct business. Ralph Kazanjian, who has run the shop since 1964, says, "This was a pretty desolate place before. Things have changed dramatically in the past 25 years. I think they've done as good a job as they can, but it's moving at a snail's pace."

The effort to improve and beautify the neighborhood has continued through the help of Urban Solutions, which created the Six on Sixth project in 2003. Thirty-five façade projects have been completed since then and Executive Director Jenny McNulty feels optimistic about the future and the

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Tenderloin Health's short lines for shelter early in the month belie the surge later when clients run out of money.