

SAN FRANCISCO District 5 Youth Budget Needs Report

Summer 2020

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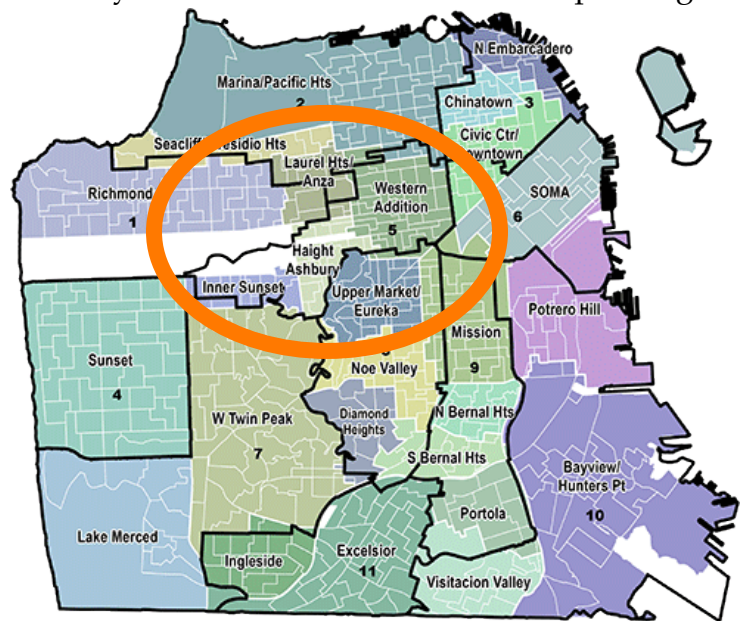


INTRODUCTION

This report is a compilation of responses from an online questionnaire that was shared with youth (ages 12-23) who live and work in District 5. District 5 covers a number of neighborhoods, including the Western Addition, Hayes Valley, Lower and Upper Haight, NoPa, Cole Valley and Inner Sunset. The goal of the questionnaire was to gather input and feedback on the unmet needs of District 5 youth and programs that serve young people. In this report, we will outline our process and the recommendations that came from this assessment, with the intention that the Mayor and District 5 Supervisor implement our recommendations during the budget process, specifically during the add-back process.

The City & County of San Francisco is experiencing revenue losses for the general fund in the current fiscal year ranging from \$265 to \$386 million due to the deficits that have occurred since the COVID-19 pandemic hit San Francisco. We anticipate that several departments and programs will receive budget cuts, however, we urge you to maintain current funding for the programs that fund youth services and consider expanding funding in the areas that we highlight in this report.

Each year, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors releases a list of budget amendments, known as “add-backs.” These are funds that each Supervisor allocates to various City departments for programs in their respective districts. We recommend the District 5 Supervisor’s Office use this report to inform both their advocacy during the add-back process this year and their community engagement efforts over the next year.



METHODOLOGY

The Youth Commission District 5 team (District 5 Youth Commissioner Calvin Quick and Mayoral Appointees Arsema Asfaw and Nora Hylton) originally intended to hold a District 5 Youth Townhall on March 14, 2020 at the Buchanan YMCA, as a way to assess the unmet needs of District 5 youth in their communities and neighborhoods, and provide feedback to the Supervisor’s office and Mayor’s offices going into the budget process (which takes place during the summer of each year). Unfortunately, due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this in-person forum had to be cancelled.

In response to this circumstance, the YC District 5 team put together a questionnaire including the questions we had intended to solicit input on, and sent it out to the

organizations and youth we had engaged with in planning the now-cancelled District 5 Youth Forum. Responses were accepted from youth ages 12-23 who live, go to school, or work in District 5. The questionnaire was open from June 1 to July 22, 2020. We conducted social media outreach for this questionnaire (including on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), and sent it out to youth and adult contacts in schools and community organizations in District 5. The Department of Children, Youth and their Families (DCYF) also forwarded the questionnaire to their service providers in District 5. A full list of organizations and schools we reached out to can be found at the end of this report.

It is however important to note that the past few months have been a difficult time to collect information and input from youth in San Francisco, as many are preoccupied with the day-to-day challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Shelter-in-place order, and associated economic downturn. Other organizations that have attempted more statistical data collection on youth impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (specifically Chinese Progressive Association) have also had more difficulty than usual getting youth to respond. As a result, the YC District 5 team has provided supplemental information to close gaps in information from certain groups of youth while staying faithful to the concerns and focus of youth who responded and engaged with the questionnaire.

FINDINGS

The findings here are in-depth summaries of the aggregate responses to each question posed on the District 5 Youth Budget Questionnaire, presented along with references to organizations and programs cited. There were 21 respondents to the questionnaire (see Appendix B for a demographic breakdown of respondents).

1. *What are the challenges you have faced in your community and/or neighborhood? (e.g. unreliable transportation options, housing insecurity, contact with the juvenile justice system, etc.)*

Responses indicated challenges in a number of areas. Long-standing safety concerns were brought up, including regarding **racial discrimination**, **food (in)security**, and **homelessness** (especially in the Hayes Valley). In addition, **gentrification** (housing insecurity) and the **wealth gap** were mentioned as challenges.

Furthermore, **bus infrequency**, and the general unreliability of transportation for youth who rely on it to get to school and/or work, was noted as a day-to-day problem for low-income youth especially. The difficulty of finding employment opportunities (especially for youth during the current COVID-19 pandemic and Shelter-in-place order) is another more long-term concern touching on the livability of the City for youth.

2. *How do you use transportation (clipper cards, transit vouchers, school buses, other)? What works, what is problematic, what could be improved?*

Most respondents reported that they rely on public transportation and use clipper cards for the most part. A few responses indicated that they use both Muni & Bart to get

around. Concerns related to this reliance on public transportation include the inaccuracy and inconsistency of arrival times for buses (the 38 Geary was specifically noted), a deficit of efficient routes in the north side of the City, and the fact that while some youth have access to the Free Muni for Youth program, not all their peers have this benefit. Some respondents reported regularly not paying the fare anyways, which points to the flaws of the existing paperwork-heavy Free Muni for Youth program.

3. What issues in District 5 have you seen the City address? Have those issues been resolved?

The main issues indicated by respondents had to do with **homelessness/affordable housing, cleanliness, livability** and **safety** of District 5. Many respondents indicated that homelessness was a big issue in District 5, and were disappointed in the City's response, which was not seen as effective. Respondents also indicated that District 5 had issues with trash on the streets and general cleanliness, as well as a lack of feelings of safety for its residents, either because of generalized violence or because of the relationship between the community and San Francisco Police Department (SFPD).

4. What resources would you like to see in your community and/or neighborhood? (e.g., more street trees, more parks, more streetlights, more youth programming, etc.)

Respondents indicated that they would like to see the installment of **more public amenities**, such as streetlights, public parks, public restrooms, community centers/recreational centers and youth programs. The other main issue area was the need for **more harm reduction/rehabilitation centers** and **affordable housing**, specifically for homeless and previously homeless community members, as well as more education around how to access affordable housing.

5. What programs do you feel are really working for you, either after-school or through your school?

Respondents cited a number of community centers and programs (mainly after-school and/or extracurricular) that they felt were really working for them. In particular, three initiatives run through [Collective Impact](#) were highlighted as fulfilling this vision:

- The Ella Hill Hutch Community Center in the Western Addition (555 Fulton St.), which serves as a hub for the historically African-American Western Addition and Fillmore neighborhoods, and also features a range of sports and play facilities,¹ was mentioned by five respondents.



¹ SF Parks Alliance, <https://www.sfparksalliance.org/our-parks/parks/ella-hill-hutch-center>.

- [Magic Zone](#), which offers year-round programming and economic opportunities for youth and Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), such as enrichment, civic engagement, youth development, community building activities, career explorations, and college prep, was mentioned 4 times.
- [Mo' Magic](#), the Fillmore neighborhood collaborative non-profit that brings together different community stakeholders to offer and promote opportunities for local youth and TAY, was also mentioned by one respondent.

Other programs cited include the African American Arts and Culture Center ([AAACC](#), 762 Fulton St.), another Fillmore/Western Addition organization that supports and promotes AA artists, the Japanese Community Youth Council ([JCYC](#), 2012 Pine St.) which offers youth employment, college prep and child care programs in the Fillmore/Japantown, and the [Boys and Girls Club](#) of San Francisco, which runs the Don Fisher Clubhouse (380 Fulton St.) in the Civic Center area, along with school-based clubs at Gateway Middle and High Schools. One respondent's school (International High School, 150 Oak St.) helps out with lunch expenses if students eat out in Hayes Valley, which is cited as helping to offset the cost of taking the bus to and from school.

Most respondents who indicated affiliation to neighborhoods other than the Fillmore/Western Addition (Hayes Valley, Haight-Ashbury) did not cite any programs: 3 out of the 5 Hayes Valley respondents did not answer the question; 1 of the 2 Haight-Ashbury respondents did not answer, while the other replied "none."

6. Are there any programs you would like to see offered or expanded for youth in your school or community?

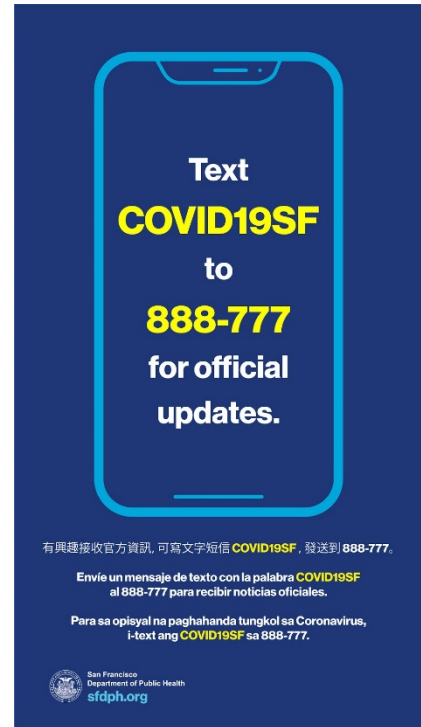
Respondents noted a variety of programs they would like to see expanded and/or offered, mainly in community. These include youth employment programs such as **Opportunities for All** and **City-led job fairs** (for three age groups: middle schoolers, high schoolers and TAY), after-school and **enrichment** programs offered through Magic Zone and JCYC, and more opportunities for **recreation** (such as at community centers like Ella Hill Hutch). One respondent proposed grants from the City for local leaders to lead workshops in the community.



Six respondents answered that there were not any programs they would like to see offered or expanded, while a couple indicated that they did want to see youth programming expanded but were not able to specify what that would look like ideally for them. This points to the disparities within the District in youth access to City- and Community Based Organization (CBO)-run programs.

7. How has San Francisco's response to COVID-19 and the state of emergency impacted you? Are there additional ways you think the San Francisco government should respond to better serve your communities in future emergencies?

The responses to this question were varied, a few respondents stated that San Francisco's response to COVID-19 had not affected them at all, while the majority indicated that they would like **more transparency** and **clarity** in communications between the government and their community. A few respondents pointed out specific issues that were making the pandemic hard on their communities, such as a **lack of jobs and/or loss of a job**, people deliberately ignoring social distancing guidelines, and the **loss of community** found at community centers such as The Ella Hill Hutch Community Center. There were also several respondents who expressed concern for the way the City was handling the pandemic in regards to the **homeless population**, and the necessity to make sure that all people were adequately housed and had access to Personal Protective Equipment such as gloves and masks.



8. Do you have anything else you would like to share?

The majority of respondents answered “No” to this question. The three respondents who had a different answer requested:

1. The removal of the citywide curfew, or, if not possible, moving the curfew to 11:00 PM - 5:00 AM.
2. A graduation for SFUSD students in the class of 2020, recognizing their hard work.
3. Formal measures to stop SFPD officers from wearing thin blue line masks.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Make Muni more effective for youth. This means more frequent service along high-ridership corridors in District 5 that serve youth and students (38 Geary, 5 Fulton, 22 Fillmore). Muni should also be free for all youth and TAY (up to age 23, as per recommendation of the full Youth Commission).

2

Expand youth programs (see above, q6). Invest both in programs cited by youth as working well for them in the western part of the District, such as Magic Zone, the AAACC, JCYC and Boys and Girls Club, as well as in other youth programs in the western part of the District to serve youth in the Inner Sunset and Haight-Ashbury.

3

Employment opportunities for youth (see above, q6). Continue to invest in the Opportunities for All program as well as in City-led job fairs for middle schoolers, high schoolers and TAY, and make sure that information about these opportunities and events reaches all youth and youth-serving CBOs in District 5.

4

Address street cleanliness & houselessness. Provide more targeted services for people, especially youth, experiencing home- and houselessness in the District (both offering temporary shelter and services and long-term permanent supportive housing). More effectively pick up trash and keep streets and parks clean for youth to use.

5

Affordable housing. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the District and hold free workshops at local community centers on affordable housing, making the system of affordable housing more approachable and accessible for local residents.

6

Expanded Community Spaces. Invest in more local parks, community centers and indoor recreation centers for the residents of District 5, and get community input before making changes to City led programs. Plant more trees on the streets and install more streetlights.

7

Communication between City government & community. Get community input on issues that affect San Francisco residents (i.e., defunding SFPD, SFPD thin blue line masks, changes to City-run programs), and during times of crisis, make sure that there is clear and transparent communication about City policies (i.e. citywide curfew, social distancing measures).

NEIGHBORHOOD BREAKDOWN	
<p><u>HAYES VALLEY</u></p> <p>REC #4:STREET CLEANLINESS & HOUSELESSNESS.</p> <p>REC #5:AFFORDABLE HOUSING</p> <p>REC #6:EXPANDED COMMUNITY SPACES.</p>	<p><u>HAIGHT ASHBURY/ASHBURY HEIGHTS</u></p> <p>REC #6:EXPANDED COMMUNITY SPACES.</p>
<p><u>FILLMORE/GEARY/WESTERN ADDITION</u></p> <p>REC #1: MAKE MUNI MORE EFFECTIVE FOR YOUTH</p> <p>REC #2:EXPAND YOUTH PROGRAMS</p> <p>REC #3:EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH</p> <p>REC #4:STREET CLEANLINESS & HOUSELESSNESS.</p> <p>REC #5:AFFORDABLE HOUSING</p> <p>REC #6:EXPANDED COMMUNITY SPACES.</p> <p>REC #7:COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CITY GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY</p>	<p><u>OTHER</u></p> <p>REC #2:EXPAND YOUTH PROGRAMS</p> <p>REC #6:EXPANDED COMMUNITY SPACES.</p>

CONCLUSION

We thank all of our community members and partners who engaged with us during this process (see Appendix A for a list of the organizations the YC District 5 team engaged with). The needs of youth in the City and District 5 are constantly evolving, especially in the context of the current public health crisis, but we urge City decision-makers to not forget about the needs of young people when planning how, where, and on whom the City spends its money during this challenging time.

APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY PARTNERS

CBOs:

Mo' Magic
Larkin Street Youth Services
Coalition for California Youth
California Youth Connection
Bay Area Student Activists
Sunrise Bay Area
City Youth Now
Coleman Advocates
Extinction Rebellion Youth - SF Bay

City Departments/Officials:

Department of Children, Youth and their Families
Shakirah Simley (*Office of Racial Equity*)
De'Anthony Jones (*Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services*)
District 5 Supervisor's Office

Schools:

Students at Urban School of SF
Students at Jewish Community High School
Students at International High School

APPENDIX B - DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents were given the option to fill out the following demographic information, the results of which are given below.

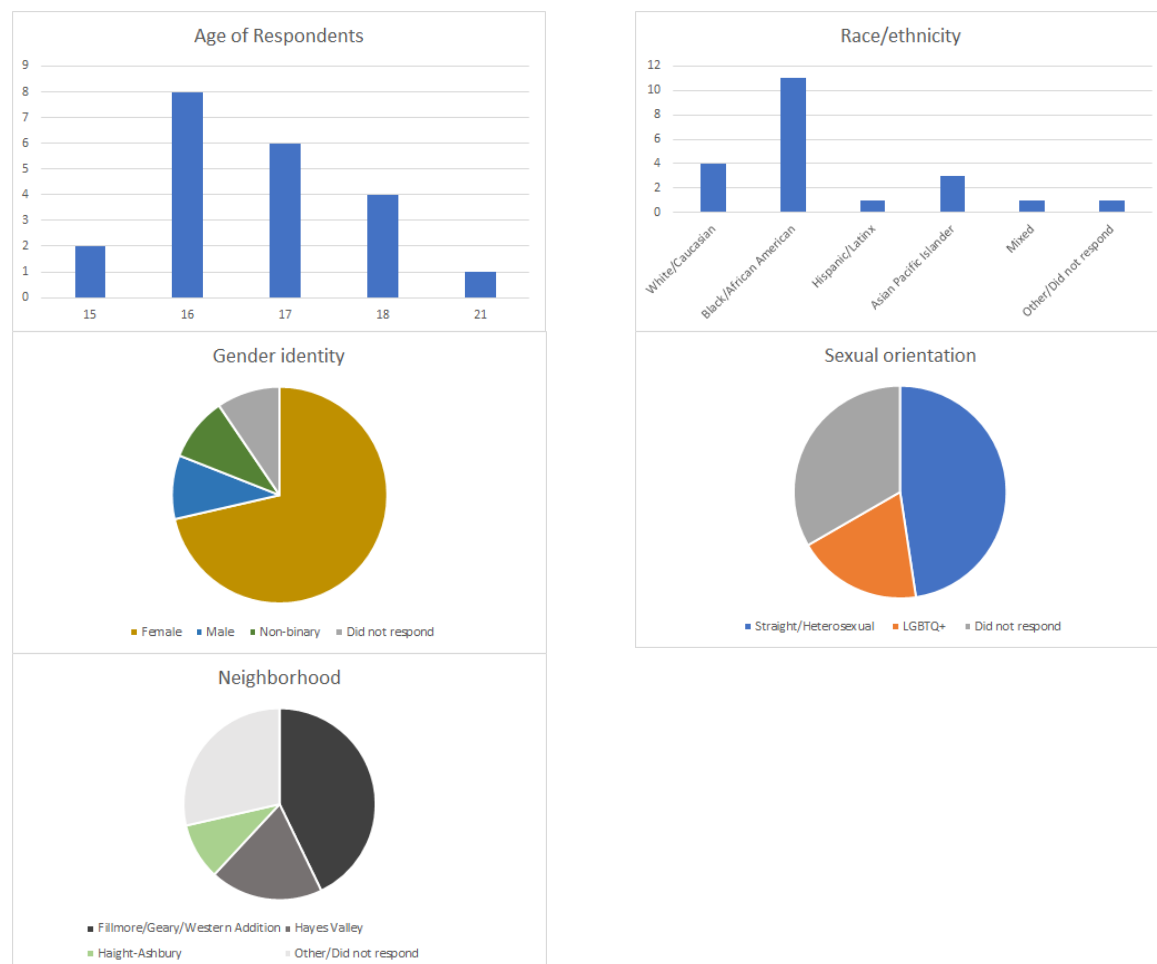


Image credits:

Calvin Quick (personal)

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