



## Citywide Public Space Initiative

June 2018

At their best, our public spaces are where we connect, relax, play, and express our civic values. Yet many of our public spaces are not realizing their full potential and our growing city needs them more than ever.

Community stakeholders want improving their public spaces to be quicker and easier. Public agencies want strong partners to augment their role in managing spaces that need more than government alone can provide when it comes to cleanliness, activation, and community engagement. *How can we elevate our public spaces and the neighborhoods that care for them with the limited resources we have?*

The **Citywide Public Space Initiative** will do two things: the first will be to coordinate interagency relationships, streamline policy decisions and facilitate external partnerships to respond to the specific needs of public spaces in its portfolio; and second will be to establish a new citywide non-profit entity that will partner with government agencies and community stakeholders to improve and manage a variety of public spaces across the City.

Instead of re-inventing the wheel for every new project or activation effort, this new entity will function as a hub of historical knowledge, tools and best practices, providing a range of services to help community-based organizations or to do the work where there is no organization at all. By working at a citywide scale, the entity will be able to achieve cost savings to deliver services efficiently. This is an innovative approach that will help achieve greater consistency and equity in the conditions of public spaces throughout the City.

The entity will provide the following types of services in close coordination with the hyper-local groups concerned about specific places:

- **Cleaning and safety services** including litter abatement, maintenance and ambassadors, with particular focus on workforce development partnerships to provide these services
- **Activation services** including programming, events, and promotions
- Public space improvement **project planning**, fundraising, and implementation; and
- **Administrative services** (i.e. fiscal sponsorship, grant management, executive and administrative staffing, insurance, subcontracting, fundraising).

To establish this entity, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) will begin by forming a working group with City agencies that own or have programs to improve public spaces. This group will identify an organization and award seed funding to incubate the new entity over the next 2 years. The working group will then work with the new entity to hire staff and consultants, develop a 3 year strategic plan, identify and implement a number of pilot projects, and begin seeking contracts and fundraising.

For information about how to get involved with this effort, please contact Amy Cohen at [amy.b.cohen@sfgov.org](mailto:amy.b.cohen@sfgov.org) or Margaux Kelly at [margaux.kelly@sfgov.org](mailto:margaux.kelly@sfgov.org) at OEWD.