

# PBID ramps up services in 2023

The ramp-up has begun with enhanced services provided to the downtown community for the next 10 years through the Property-Based Improvement District (PBID), approved by property owners last summer.

“We look forward to ramping up our district’s new services in January and anticipate to have new services fully staffed within 90 days of the new year,” said **Chris Arkley**, operations manager.

Arkley provided a rundown of what to expect in 2023 and beyond for PBID clean, safe, and other services such as business development, street life and capital improvement projects.

## CLEAN

“We’re excited to roll out new services and provide our cleaning expertise in new areas,” Arkley said. “Some new services will be more noticeable sooner than others.”

In preparation for a newly expanded district in southern, northern, eastern and western directions, members of Groundwerx and San Jose Downtown Association have walked new block faces multiple times to assess conditions. They have cataloged more than 100 points of interest such as multistory residences, law offices and auto shops that may require immediate cleaning, as well as targeted areas they anticipate will need repeated attention from the Groundwerx team.

Groundwerx has already received a request for sidewalk cleaning from Devine Wine and Cheese on Devine Street, which was outside the previous boundary but now inside the expanded 2023 district. SJDA aided the business by coordinating a volunteer cleanup with San Jose State University students last fall.



**Chris Arkley**

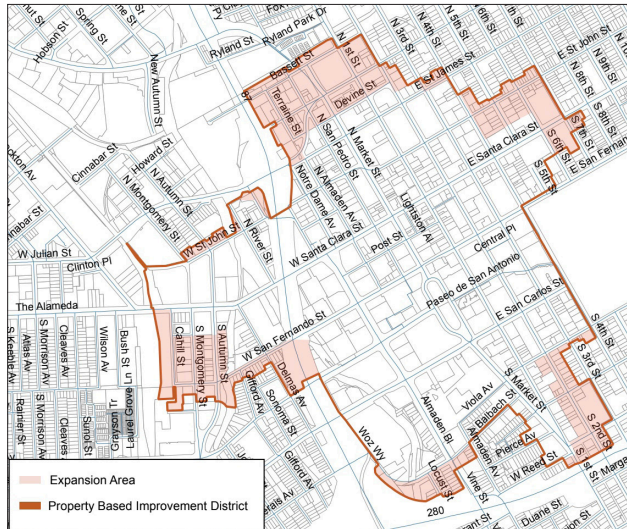
“We are already planning some deep-clean events early in 2023 and looking at involving community volunteer groups in an effort to foster partnership and get to know our new members,” Arkley said.

The entire district will receive the same amount of cleaning services, a change from the former two-tier basic and premium structure. Everyone in the district should also notice an increase in pressure-washing activity. Groundwerx continues to monitor the amount of trash collected, graffiti cleanups and business / property contacts.

“The direct connection between us and our members and how we responded to their request is most important to me,” Arkley said. “Looking forward, our goal is to quickly address the areas in need of the most help to bring the new district as a whole up to the high standards we strive for.”

## SAFE

The PBID is beefing up the numbers of safety ambassadors and adding a new Social Impact Team dedicated to connecting with the



**PBID boundaries for clean and safe services extend in all directions.**

unsheltered population downtown. Each unit will assist the other.

“Borrowing from best practices in other assessment districts across the country, SJDA will implement a Social Impact Team dedicated to working with our unsheltered population,” Arkley said. “This was a vital need identified during the 18-month renewal process for the district.”

Once established, this new team of five can connect unhoused individuals to service providers with minimal entry requirements who can offer a menu of assistance options including food, care kits, overnight warming locations, cooling centers, day-time activity centers and information about Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings. Such “low-barrier” referrals can help build trust between the Social Impact Team members and the individual, which could help move that person along the path to accept tempo-

rary or more permanent housing assistance, he explained. The team also has the option to collaborate directly with PATH (People Assisting the Homeless), which provides outreach and case management services to individuals interested in a long-term solution.

Arkley hopes the team can be in place and on the streets as soon as possible in 2023.

The expanded district will have an average of four safety ambassadors per shift per day, twice the number serving downtown recently.

“Safety Ambassadors will be able to move through the district with ease and take a more data-driven approach to their deployment, while still having staff available to respond to urgent matters or assist with a special project,” Arkley said. “One concept we are studying is identifying days and times when there are higher pedestrian traffic patterns from Diridon Station to the downtown core, so we can deploy our safety ambassadors along those routes as more people return to work.”

With the Social Impact Team, safety ambassadors will have capacity to spend more time connecting with storefront businesses, employees and visitors as well as continue to provide safety escorts when someone requests assistance getting from one part of downtown to another.

In addition, PBID staff will work with its Board chaired by President **Chris Friese** to gain a better understanding of the safety needs of the district through 2023 before making any change in the deployment of Secondary Employment Unit officers. SEU officers will continue to patrol downtown on a purposely random schedule.

## OTHER PROGRAMS

The PBID also assists in business development, street life and capital improvement projects. With renewal, some additional funding will go toward efforts to assist businesses with their development and for more and/or enhanced street life and beautification programs.

Additionally, property owners agreed to a new mechanism for assessment increases specific to capital projects that would only be levied on commercial properties with approval by the City Council.

For capital projects, SJDA seeks private sector and foundation partners to increase capacity to undertake these multiyear, multi-faceted projects. Past projects include the MOMENT shops at San Pedro Square and SoFA Pocket Park.

A new project set to debut in 2023 teams Street Life Manager **Sarah Billings** with internationally renowned design and engineering firm ARUP on a comprehensive downtown lighting plan that covers a variety of ways in which lighting can enhance safety, vibrancy and beauty downtown. It also provides product recommendations, gives an overview of existing private (think the lighting on your building) and public lighting levels throughout downtown, and scalable projects that can be deployed in spaces throughout the core.

## Report a mess or issue / Request an escort

The Groundwerx dispatch number (408) 287-1520 and Groundwerx app remain the best means to connect with clean and safe teams in response to issues in the Downtown Property-Based Improvement District (PBID). The app can be downloaded on Apple App Store and Google Play.

This allows not only for ease of deployment, but also clear and consistent communication. All of Groundwerx’s clean and safe programming communicates over two-way radios.

If you would like to connect directly regarding with questions or concerns about PBID operations, please connect directly with Operations Manager **Chris Arkley** at [carkley@sjdowntown.com](mailto:carkley@sjdowntown.com).

## Letter from the President

While you hear this at the start of every year, I’m declaring that 2023 is going to be the biggest, most important year in history yet!

Truth be told, there is a lot of change happening in the world right now, and with that change brings uncertainty and anxiety. I get it, things might seem scary right now. But to remind you of a quote from a previous column from **Heraclitus**, “The only constant in life is change.”

As an entrepreneur, I am more of a glass-is-half-full type of person, and I see plenty of opportunities. I am going to give two pieces of advice on how we can collectively use the new year to create

a better community for everyone:

**Be Pro-Active.** Make that resolution to improve yourself in some way. Try to start something challenging this year and make progress at it.

Make an effort to meet someone new. If you see a need to be filled, ask yourself, “Why not me?” as opposed to waiting to see if someone else takes it. Volunteer at a cause you are passionate about. Make your voice HEARD.



**Alan ‘Gumby’ Marques**

# Making this (y)our best year yet

There are a lot of communities and posts within both the SJDA and City of San Jose itself that need to be filled and are waiting for concerned citizens like yourself to step up and make a difference.

I am excited to announce that in 2023 the SJDA will host a series of town halls where we will do community outreach so we can have meaningful discussion on specific issues that impact our lives. Stay tuned!

**Be Empathetic.** We are a community of individuals, and while any one of us can start something, it always takes a lot of support to see that vision through. If we listen to each other and

work together, we can accomplish anything.

If you’re feeling overwhelmed by all of this then please reach out. I promise we’ve all been there before as well and you are not alone. There are resources that can help and there is always someone who cares. As a martial arts instructor, I often like to remind people to measure my success not just on my “strongest” students, but also on my “weakest” students.

Nothing is ever guaranteed in life, but that’s part of the adventure. Downtown San Jose is a wonderful place to have that adventure. Make 2023 your year – I’m rooting for you!



