

# in the works

June 2020



James Donnelly on our Hot Spots crew cleans up around an encampment on Willow Street in the Lower Polk neighborhood. See story inside on the Public Works' COVID-19 response.



# I got you

**I protect you. You protect me.**

Covering your face is now required in many public spaces to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



# covered

ect me.

red  
-19.



City & County of San Francisco  
**Department of Public Health**  
[sf.gov/coronavirus](https://sf.gov/coronavirus)

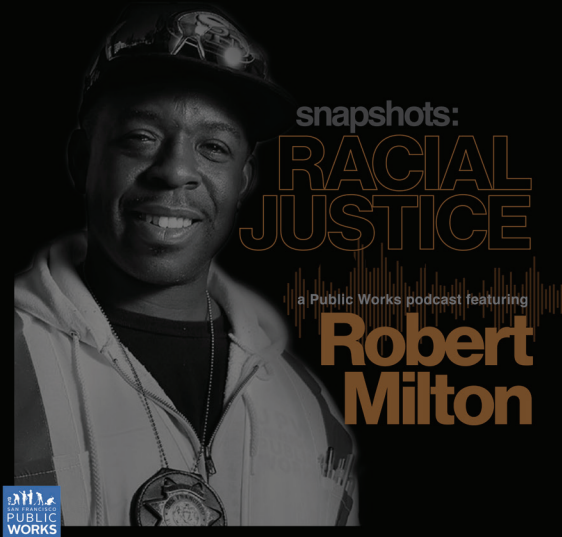
**snapshots:**

# RACIAL JUSTICE

a Public Works podcast



In Snapshots: Racial Justice we shine a spotlight on the Black Lives Matter movement for racial equity. Listen to these Snapshots of our colleagues' lives as they share their experiences with bias and social injustice - and their hopes moving forward. Everybody has a story and everybody deserves to be heard. For upcoming episodes, you can subscribe on [Spotify](#) and [Soundcloud](#).



Robert Milton is a supervisor with our Hot Spots crew here at Public Works. Growing up in San Francisco's Bayview neighborhood, he's watched the changes in his community and the evolution of the City he's always called home and is discouraged by the lack of progress when it comes to eradicating social injustices in our society. Hear his story [here](#).



Larry Stringer is the Deputy Director of Operations with San Francisco Public Works. Growing up as a young black man in San Francisco and through his 40 years of public service, he's had to witness a flurry of inequality in his pursuit of happiness. Hear his story [here](#).

# PUBLIC WORKS



## Steiner Bridge is Coming Down - Public Works TV Episode 68

For nearly six decades, the Steiner Bridge in the Western Addition has spanned Geary Boulevard, providing pedestrians a way to cross the busy roadway while avoiding ground-level traffic. Recently, Public Works and the SFMTA partnered to remove the outdated structure and make way for improved pedestrian safety and bus service at the street level. Public Works project manager Ellen Wong gives us a breakdown of the demolition.

For more detailed information about the project, [click here](#).



# Snowy Plovers Take *Flight* at



Guided by the schedule of the federally protected Snowy Western Plover, we were able to tuck the City's annual sand maintenance activities at Ocean Beach into the last week of June. ►



# nd Sand Crews Get to Work





► [Each year around this time](#), a Public Works contractor redistributes more than 16,000 cubic yards of sand, moving it from the side of the Great Highway toward the ocean. The goal is to reduce the likelihood of sand buildup on the roadway during windy weather. The crews focus their effort along the seawall between Noriega Street and Santiago Street.

We have a small window to perform the annual work; it must

be timed to make sure crews do not disturb the Snowy Western Plover, a small shorebird that is protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The plovers can be found at Ocean Beach about 10 months out of the year but take off in the spring or early summer to nest in other coastal areas and inland salt flats.

Once monitors with the federal Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) confirm that the plovers have left Ocean Beach and

that it is safe to begin relocating the sand, the crews using heaving earth-moving machinery get to work.

The work is being done in coordination with the GGNRA and under a special-use permit for activities that occur on federal parklands.

Public Works has hired Yerba Buena Engineering & Construction, Inc. to perform this work.



Our crews with the Bureau of Street and Sewer Repair built a new asphalt speed hump on O'Farrell Street, just east of Masonic Avenue, this month to slow vehicles on the busy stretch of roadway. ►



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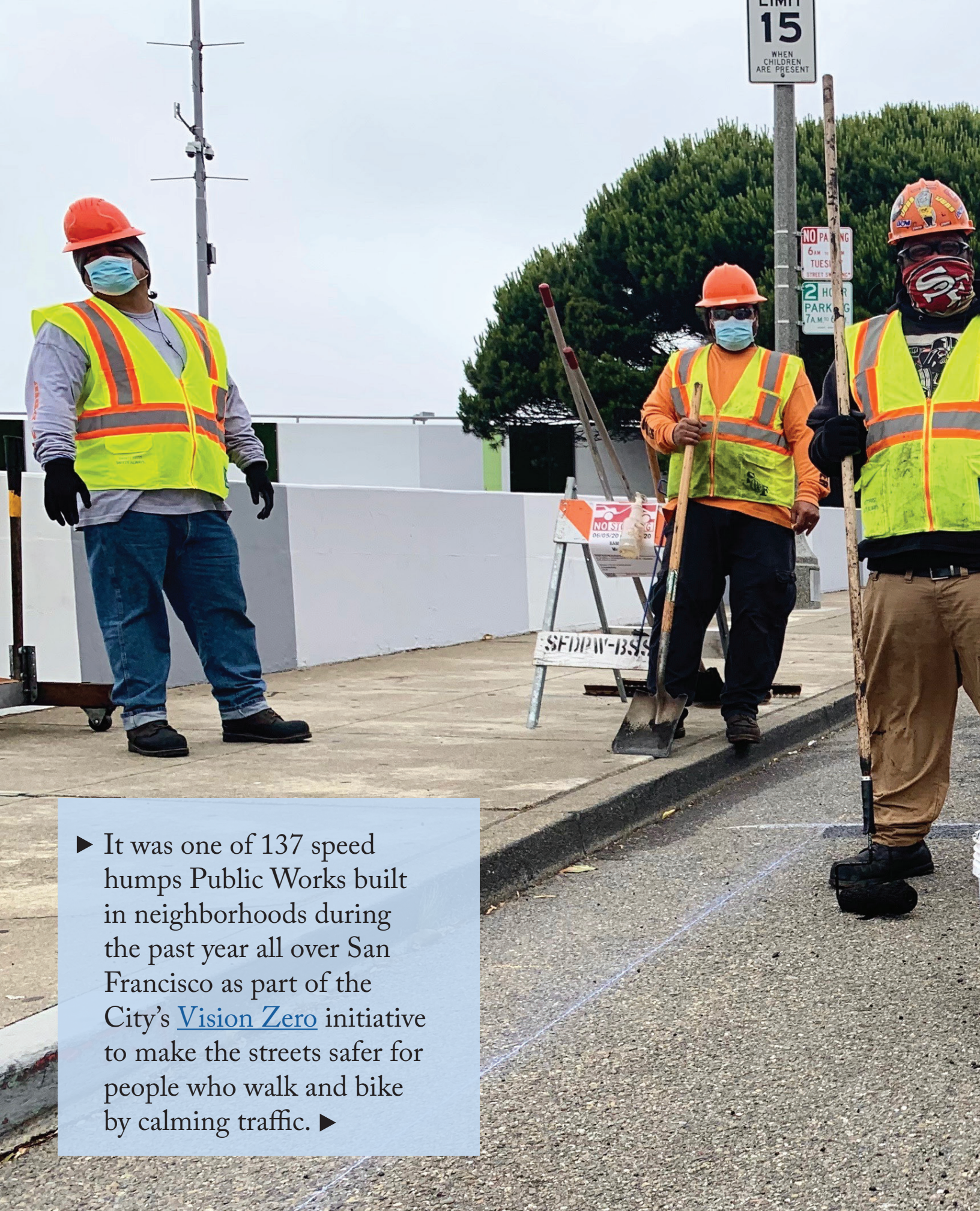




NO PARKING  
PREFERENTIAL  
ZONE  
8:00A - 5:00P  
MON-FRI

RAOUL WALLENBERG  
HIGH SCHOOL

# Timing Effect



► It was one of 137 speed humps Public Works built in neighborhoods during the past year all over San Francisco as part of the City's [Vision Zero](#) initiative to make the streets safer for people who walk and bike by calming traffic. ►







- ▶ Speed humps, 3 ½ inches high and about 12 feet wide, stretch across lanes of traffic to get drivers to slow down. They “are the most effective measure at reducing speeds and are less resource intensive than less effective tools such as median islands, traffic circles, or lane re-striping,” [according to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency.](#)



# COVID CRISIS: PUBLIC WORKS STEPS UP

Robert Milton, who runs our Hot Spots crew, rakes up debris at an encampment.

With the COVID-19 health crisis still gripping the region, the nation and much of the world, Public Works has remained on the frontline of San Francisco's response.

Much of our attention this month has been on the Tenderloin and the nearby Lower Polk alleys, where efforts are underway to move people from encampments



that sprawl across the sidewalks into safer and healthier living situations. Unsheltered residents are being moved into hotel rooms or into what are known as safe sleeping sites.

The work has involved numerous City agencies, among them Human Services, Public Health, Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Fire and the Healthy Streets Operation Center team, as well as partnerships with nonprofit service providers and community members.

For our part, Public Works has been building out the safe

sleeping sites. At a minimum, our painters put down markings for designated tent sites to allow for social distancing. At the larger locations, our plumbers have brought in water spigots and our electricians have hooked up charging stations. All have toilets and hand-washing facilities. Sites include Fulton Street between the Main Library and the Asian Art Museum; 180 Jones St.; Haight and Stanyan streets; Everett Middle School; and the 700 block of Eddy Street.

Our Building Design and Construction Division, which collaborates closely with our Operations Division, continues to scout new locations.

Our street cleaning crews, meanwhile, do a deep clean of the areas where the makeshift encampments once stood.

Public Works also manages the [Pit Stop](#) public toilet program, which we expanded to 33 new locations to augment the 24 locations in operation prior to shelter in place. All the toilets are staffed to ensure they are kept clean and safe, and most are open around the clock. In addition, we are overseeing the COVID-response handwashing stations that have been set up in areas with the most need.

On another front, our permits bureau has been working with other City agencies to develop and implement the [Shared Spaces](#) program that allows businesses emerging from the shelter-in-place shutdown to use sidewalk and curbside spaces to serve

their patrons with more social distancing.

And like all City departments, Public Works has employees deployed to the citywide Emergency Operations Center, working on planning, logistics, communications, operations, finance and other critical needs to keep our City moving forward during this unprecedented pandemic.



We are proud and honored to serve the people of San Francisco during this challenging time.

Photo (left): Robert Milton and Isaias Vidal take a break from an encampment cleanup.

Photo (right): Wooden stakes are just some of the debris that Isaias Vidal picks up in the hot spots.

Workers from our sheet metal and asphalt shops on Twin Peaks Boulevard, where they are installing a new guardrail.



# GUARDRAIL

Twin Peaks Boulevard snakes up to the highest point in San Francisco. The two side-by-side hills that gave Twin Peaks its name rise more than 900 feet high near the geographic center of the City, offering killer views of San Francisco and beyond – except when the fog rolls in. ►



# GUARDIANS





Crews had to dig holes six feet deep for the guard rail posts.




Normally, during the busy summer months when tourists flock to San Francisco, Twin Peaks Boulevard is packed with cars. But the crews worked on a street devoid of private automobiles: Twin Peaks Boulevard has been closed to traffic during shelter in place to provide more room for people who walk and bike for safe social distancing during the COVID-19 health emergency. ▶





This month, Public Works' crews from our asphalt, cement and sheet metal shops worked on a project to make the trip to and from the top of Twin Peaks safer by installing new guardrail along a stretch of the roadway. They dug post holes six feet deep into the rocky hillside and bent galvanized steel railing to match the curves.

A forceful drill is needed to cut through the rocky slope.



Hickory Alley  
(Van Ness to Franklin)

# Bringing New Life to Urban Alleys

Whether you live in San Francisco, work here or just come to visit occasionally, chances are you pass through the [Market Octavia Area Plan](#) each time you make a cross-town trip. Known as the primary crossroads of ►



ROAD  
WORK  
AHEAD

PAY HERE





Hickory Alley  
(Octavia to Laguna)



# POTENTIAL LIVING ALLEYS


Living Alleys within the Market Octavia Plan area //



- Belcher
- Birch
- Brady
- Brosnan
- Carmelita
- Chase
- Clinton Park
- Colton
- Colusa
- Elgin Park
- Elm
- Fillmore
- Germania
- Henry
- Hickory
- Hidalgo
- Ivy
- Jessie
- Lafayette
- Landers
- Laussat
- Lily
- Linden
- Minna
- Pearl
- Pierce
- Plum
- Potomac
- Ramona
- Rose
- Rosemont
- Sharon
- Stevenson
- Walter
- Webster
- Woodward







► the City’s major transportation corridors – all BART and Muni lines pass through this area, as well Highway 101 and major thoroughfares, such as Van Ness Avenue and Gough Street – its wealth of transit options has made it a hotspot for development in recent years.

Over the past decade, nearly 5,000 housing units have been built or are under construction in this small area, adding additional density and its related burdens to an already tightly packed section of the City. Although there are a few large parks to the area’s north and west, the Market Octavia Area Plan encompasses very little open public space within its actual boundaries. These limitations mean that to provide the residents of this area with adequate outdoor space to exercise, socialize and relax, we had to get creative. A solution? Alleys.

Although they’re easy to miss, alleys make up 6 percent of the total Market Octavia Plan Area, which is considerable given the fact that a vast majority of this area is either private property or high-traffic thoroughfares. In similarly dense portions of the City, namely Chinatown and South of Market, alleys and side streets long have been hubs for community activity and recreation. In recent decades, the City has taken

a more proactive approach in terms of making these spaces as accessible, safe and functional as possible.

This approach has culminated with the incorporation of “[Living Alleys](#)” into the wider Market Octavia Area Plan, which itself began in 2008. San Francisco has drawn heavily from a concept rooted in the Netherlands called “woonerfs,” or living streets, which reconceptualizes back alleys in dense urban settings as social spaces rather than just byways for vehicles. Locally, Public Works, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and the Planning Department are collaborating on the initiative.

The alleyways improvement idea takes this concept even further by incorporating a wide range of features, among them street trees, living walls, seating areas, play areas for kids, pedestrian-scaled lighting and public art. To further disincentivize car traffic, many unique roadway features, such as raised crosswalks, chicane turns and special paving, are included in these plans. The design features aim to land on the ideal combination of safety and attractiveness that transforms these spaces into hubs of community and activity for the area’s rapidly growing population.

There are currently two living alleys in the Market Octavia area – on Linden Street, between Octavia and Gough streets, and on Hickory Street, between Octavia and Laguna streets – but there are ample opportunities for expansion throughout the area. This untapped potential, as well as the need to provide enhanced opportunities for safe, socially distanced outdoor gathering due to the COVID-19 pandemic, prompted us to hold a [digital community workshop](#) on the Market Octavia Area Plan’s Living Alley component on June 24. The workshop gave us a chance to provide an update on the project’s status, namely its budget limitations – exacerbated by the COVID crisis – and a general timeline for implementation. The Living Alley project is slated to run until about 2026, with the initial design phase taking place this summer and fall. At the meeting, officials shared information on a total of 36 alleys throughout the Market Octavia Plan Area that have been identified as candidates for renovation. Presenters also outlined the criteria for selecting which of these 36 ultimately will be renovated.

Despite the uncertainties of these times, Public Works and its City partners remain determined to see more Living Alleys move from concept to reality.

The new floating fire station, now under construction on Treasure Island, eventually will be located at Pier 22 1/2.





One of Public Works most unique construction projects – [Fireboat Station 35](#) – is well underway. The future firehouse, to be located at Pier 22 ½ along The Embarcadero, will be a two-story, 15,000-plus square-foot structure behind the existing fireboat house.

The [San Francisco Fire Department's](#) floating fire station, which is on track for a March 2021 completion, is being built on top of a steel float and anchored by four guide piles, which will allow the structure to rise and fall with the natural tide of the Bay, king tides and projected sea-level rise.

The float arrived from Shanghai, China, in late January and is temporarily located on Treasure Island, while Public Works manages its construction – a joint venture between Swinerton Builders and Power Engineering and Construction. The float will make its way to Pier 22 ½ in November, and when it arrives, crews will continue its construction.

The existing fireboat house at Pier 22 ½ is a beloved San Francisco landmark and will continue to function as Engine Company No. 35 when the structure arrives from Treasure Island. The San Francisco Fire Department's existing three fireboats and rescue watercraft will be moored at the new facility, and the [Port of San Francisco's](#) aging Piers 22 ½ and 24, where they are currently docked, will be demolished and reconstructed to meet current seismic and safety standards.

The Fireboat Station 35 project is funded by the voter-approved 2014 Earthquake Safety and [Emergency Response \(ESER\) bond](#). The ESER bond program, which addresses critical public safety needs in the City by improving seismically deficient first response facilities, was renewed for a third phase during the March 2020 election with 82 percent of voter support.

Public Works is holding a series of virtual staff meetings to foster discussion on identifying racial equity and racial injustice in our organization and our communities. Participants shared their experiences, support and ideas for change.

