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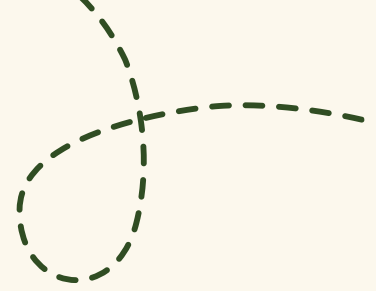
Friends of the Urban Forest **ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT**



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From the Desk of the Executive Director



In 2023 Friends of the Urban Forest continued to bring the benefits of trees and plants to the neighborhoods that most need and want them. That's a big win.

We began the year having recently updated our mission: Friends of the Urban Forest connects people with nature and each other by planting and caring for San Francisco's trees and gardens. We also updated our values, centering Environmental Justice, Community, Stewardship, Trust, and Joy. These touchstones guided our work throughout the past year and continue to do so.

Our 2023 achievements described in this report show why we're among the Bay Area's most respected and effective environmental organizations.

Besides planting trees, here is what sets us apart:

- We work in partnership with the communities we serve. Long before a planting day, our Community Engagement team gets to know the people and organizations in that neighborhood.
- We care for all the trees we plant until they're established. We prune, inspect, and water our young trees to ensure they have the best chance to reach healthy maturity.
- We distribute free native and fruit-bearing trees to residents of our least-forested neighborhoods as part of our Adopt-A-Yard-Tree program launched in 2023.
- We plant sidewalk gardens to beautify neighborhoods, create a natural habitat for pollinators, reduce stormwater runoff, and increase the lifespan of adjacent trees.
- We train youth and young adults to steward the urban landscape while developing job skills via our Green Teens, New Roots (launched in 2023), and Green Crew programs.

We've set ambitious goals for the next three years to build on these programs and are working hard to surpass them.

Frankly, I'm worried that another year has passed with tree losses outpacing tree planting when San Francisco already has one of the sparsest tree canopies of any major U.S. city. Funding for tree planting continues to fall short of the need, even in the face of a climate crisis, when trees are such an obviously cost-effective solution.

We will continue spotlighting the need for dedicated city funding for planting trees and invite San Franciscans to join us in advocating for it.

— *In gratitude,*
Brian Wiedenmeier



Street Tree Planting Program

Distribution of trees often follows traditional boundaries of redlining, meaning many of the areas with the lowest concentration of trees are also the least served by other benefits such as access to parks, transit, and healthy food. As an organization, we are committed to addressing the environmental harm caused by racism and injustice and reducing that canopy disparity to ensure that all communities have access to healthy trees and the benefits they provide.

Much of our work in 2023 centered in dense, heavily developed parts of the city with very little existing green space. These neighborhoods, often in the city center, such as SoMa, Tenderloin, Hayes Valley, Lower Nob Hill, and Telegraph Hill, are often older & developed haphazardly without planning for street trees or public green space from the outset. This makes finding suitable sites for trees much more difficult since we need to ensure adequate distance from all potential conflicts with infrastructure.

Even though it takes more time and resources to plant trees in these areas, we are dedicated to planting and caring for more trees in neighborhoods that have been most affected by environmental harm.



TREES PLANTED: 998

TREES PLANTED BY NEIGHBORHOOD IN 2023

Portola / Excelsior: **206**

Richmond: **203**

Sunset: **165**

Bayview / Visitacion Valley: **108**

Western Addition / Hayes Valley: **86**

Lower Nob Hill: **78**

North Beach / Telegraph Hill: **51**

SoMa: **39**

Dogpatch / Mission Bay: **8**

As long as the tree canopy gap exists, we'll continue to use our equity-based planting model to plant trees where they benefit the most people and have the most significant impact in creating a climate-resilient city. This is our commitment to our value of Environmental Justice.

OF VOLUNTEERS: 790

VOLUNTEER HOURS: 2,246

OF PLANTING LEADERS: 21

Tree Care and Watering Program

In 2023, our Tree Care Team made 2,021 scheduled visits to young street trees to check their health, maintain and adjust their supportive and protective hardware, and prune them to ensure a good structure.

The team also made 204 “emergency” visits to trees based on requests from community members due to storm-related damage, accidents, vandalism, and other problems. These visits often save trees that would otherwise be lost.

We also ensure that the trees we plant are regularly watered during their establishment period. Our young trees are installed with fast-filling, slow-draining, 15-gallon water bags. These bags are helpful for young trees’ root establishment, reducing soil erosion and preventing over-watering.

In 2023 we doubled our watering capacity to **watering 1000 trees every week** by acquiring and outfitting a second watering truck and by hiring additional watering staff. Our watering team supplements San Francisco Public Works' responsibility to water all street trees.



Friends of the Urban Forest cares for all the trees we plant during their establishment period (typically the first three years) to encourage healthy growth and a strong structure.



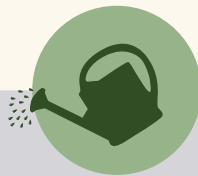
204

EMERGENCY &
REQUESTED VISITS



2,021

SCHEDULED VISITS
Pruning & Regular
Health Check



1,366

TREES WATERED
IN 2023



25,949

WATERING
VISITS

Greener Block Award: Transgender District

Since 2013, Friends of the Urban Forest has given the Brian Tsai Greener Block Award to recognize the part of San Francisco that has undergone the most significant transformation in increased street trees and/or sidewalk gardens in the public right-of-way in the past year.

In 2023 we chose to give the 11th annual Greener Block Award to the Transgender District!

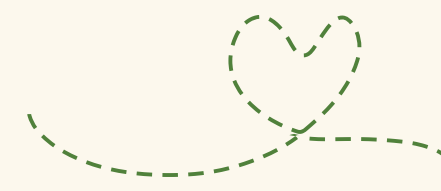
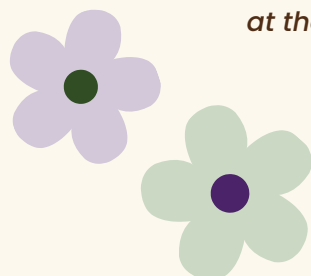
The Transgender District is the first legally recognized transgender district in the world. Its mission is to create an urban environment that fosters the rich history, culture, legacy, and empowerment of transgender people and their deep roots in the Tenderloin neighborhood.

The Tenderloin has long had less tree canopy cover than is average in San Francisco. In August 2022, Friends of the Urban Forest partnered with the Transgender District to plant new street trees in the neighborhood.

We deeply appreciate the leadership of the Transgender District, not only in greening the Tenderloin but in fostering community and empowering the trans community.



Executive Director Brian Wiedenmeier presented the award to the staff of The Transgender District on Tuesday, June 13, at Father Alfred E. Boeddeker Park at the northeast corner of Eddy and Jones Streets.



Adopt-A-Yard-Tree Program

We launched an Adopt-A-Yard-Tree program in February 2023 in response to numerous requests for native trees and fruit trees by the communities we serve. Many of these trees are better suited to yards, which gives them more room and better conditions to grow strong. Native tree species increase habitat for native wildlife and pollinators, and fruit tree species increase community sustainability, food security, and resilience. We also provide expert guidance to tree recipients so they can plant and care for the trees themselves.

The pilot season of this program was made possible by a \$50,000 Community Resilience Grant from Bank of America and the Arbor Day Foundation and by a grant from the Urban & Community Forestry Program of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. **As a testament to the program's success in 2023, we've received funding to continue the Adopt-A-Yard-Tree program through the end of June 2024.**

During our pilot season for the Adopt-A-Yard-Tree program, we distributed 200 trees in San Francisco neighborhoods with low tree canopy in partnership with organizations in those communities, including Wu Yee Children's Services and Bayview Community Hub.

TREES ADOPTED: 200

GIVEAWAY EVENTS OCCURRED IN THESE NEIGHBORHOODS

- Hunters Point
- SoMa
- Mission Bay
- Tenderloin
- Richmond District



Workforce Development Programs

GREEN TEENS

The Green Teens program made small but significant strides toward becoming a stronger program in 2023. To enhance the program's quality and impact, the decision was made to reduce the number of participants, allowing for more personalized mentoring and supervision for the 15 individuals we worked with. The program expanded its offerings by introducing new professional development trainings and collaborating with organizations such as SFWAR for Sexual Harassment Prevention and Beyond Measure Wellness Collective for Health at Every Size.

NEW ROOTS

The successful launch of the New Roots workforce development program in October 2023 marked yet another significant milestone. This program provides transitional-aged youth and adults with training and work experience at the City's new Street Tree Nursery. Integral to the program's efficacy was establishing pivotal partnerships with community organizations, notably St. Anthony's for de-escalation training and Bill Sorro Housing Program for affordable housing workshops for program participants. The program's profound impact on individual participant growth became evident with the engagement of four participants, collectively completing an impressive 103 hours of professional development training. Participants developed working resumes and cover letters, took an introductory ecology course, and visited the Literacy for Environmental Justice native plant nursery in the Bayview to learn about nursery best practices.

NUMBER OF NEW ROOTS PARTICIPANTS: **4**

TRAINING HOURS: **103**



15

**GREEN
TEENS**



67

**# OF TREES
CARED FOR**



31

**# OF TREES
PLANTED**

11

GREEN CREW PARTICIPANTS



580

OF TREES CARED FOR



338

OF TREES PLANTED



GREEN CREW

The Green Crew program achieved notable success through strategic enhancements in 2023. The appointment of a new Green Crew manager, along with introduction of the Green Crew Assistant Manager position, bolstered program delivery, participant supervision, and mentoring efforts. Pivoting to a six-month-long cohort structure, which was piloted in September, is proving to facilitate a more comprehensive and impactful experience for all participants involved in the program.



We want to especially recognize the contributions of Kira (left) and Antonio (right), who both started as Green Crew members and earned promotions to join our watering crew, showcasing the program's commitment to nurturing and finding job placements for the future stewards of San Francisco's urban forest.

Sidewalk Gardens and Partnership with SF Parks Alliance

Strolling the streets of San Francisco is a little more delightful thanks to our partnership with the San Francisco Parks Alliance to install new sidewalk gardens on some of the City's new "slow streets." Slow streets are low-traffic, shared streets intended to eliminate cut-through traffic and make people feel safe walking, biking, scooting, and using mobility devices in the street.

This collaboration has already resulted in 31 sidewalk gardens on Page Street, Golden Gate Avenue, and Lyon Street. The work was made possible by a Watershed Stewardship Grant from the Community Challenge Grant program and by the participation of about 80 volunteers.



31

**GARDENS
ON STREETS**



2,250

**SQUARE FOOT
OF CONCRETE
REMOVED**

"San Francisco's slow streets are safe and welcoming places for people to walk, bike, and roll, and we love to enhance their appeal by adding sidewalk gardens with native and pollinator-friendly plants," Alex Mokhtari-Fox, Sidewalk Gardens Program Manager (pictured below), said.



Community Outreach

Our community outreach efforts focus on educating residents about the climate, environmental, and health impacts of trees and building support and excitement for the trees planted in the community. We've been planting and caring for the trees in these communities for years, and the cumulative impact of our work has transformed many streets in San Francisco. District Supervisors Chan, Peskin, Engardio, Preston, Dorsey, Mandelman, Ronen, and Safaí attended our Community Plantings in their districts. The Community Engagement team had a presence at a number of community events and programs throughout San Francisco, such as Outside Lands and New Beginnings.



12

COMMUNITY/
TABLING EVENTS



5,177

POSTCARDS /
DOOR HANGERS
DISTRIBUTED

“Some of the streets in our neighborhood have completely been transformed. Areas that had nothing but concrete have been turned into tree canopy, and the neighbors have really appreciated your work. So I want to thank Friends of the Urban Forest for the amazing work that you do to keep our city green.” –District 11 Supervisor Ahsha Safaí (pictured below speaking to our volunteers)



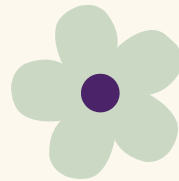
2,038

EMAILS /
PHONE CALLS



Community Education

Our **3rd Annual Treevia** event was in person and open to all for the first time! We had 11 teams compete for the title of "UNSTUMPABLE." It was a tough competition, and in the end, the "Hen of the Woods" team, formed by the Bureau of Urban Forestry, won.



Friends of the Urban Forest hosts **Guided Walks** led by experts from the field to cultivate an appreciation for and engagement with San Francisco's urban forest. Our hope is that stories of our neighborhoods and their trees and gardens will connect people with their urban environment and inspire them to become stewards of it.

OF GUIDED WALKS: 7

OF PARTICIPANTS: 166

In 2023, we also produced a **short documentary** about the origin story of our community partner Mission Verde. Concerned residents came together to form Mission Verde to protect and nurture trees in the Mission's Latino Cultural District. It has become a model of how communities and City officials can partner to enact meaningful change. We held a screening event at Brava Theater on 24th Street, followed by a **panel discussion** with Carla Short, Director of Public Works, and the Mission Verde founding team.



Corporate Partnership

One of our most impactful initiatives is our Corporate Partnership program, through which we collaborate with companies that share our values of environmental stewardship, sustainability, and community engagement. These partnerships extend beyond mere financial support; they represent a shared commitment to building greener, healthier cities for all. Our corporate partners understand that investing in trees and green infrastructure is not just about beautifying neighborhoods; it's about creating more resilient, sustainable urban environments for future generations. By aligning their values with ours, these companies demonstrate a profound dedication to making a positive impact on the world around them.

Through our Corporate Partnership program, companies benefit from team-building opportunities and enhanced employee retention while investing in our city's green infrastructure, a critical component of vibrant, thriving communities.

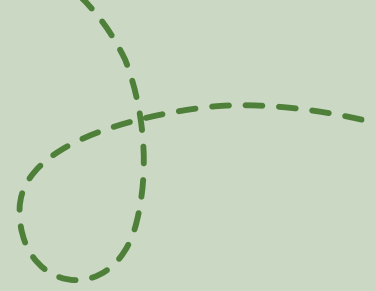
In April, we partnered with The Golden State Warriors, Johnson Controls, Inc., and SentinelOne for a special Earth Month planting in the Excelsior neighborhood. Together we planted 35 trees to expand the tree canopy in one of San Francisco's southern neighborhoods, which is susceptible to climate change.



CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS: 246

TOTAL CORPORATE PARTNERS: 24

Corporate Partner List



DIG IN \$2.5K

- Albourne
- Tidewater
- EYRC
- DocuSign

PLANTING HOPE \$25K

- Farallon Capital
- Angel's Envy
- Temasek

BRANCH OUT \$5K

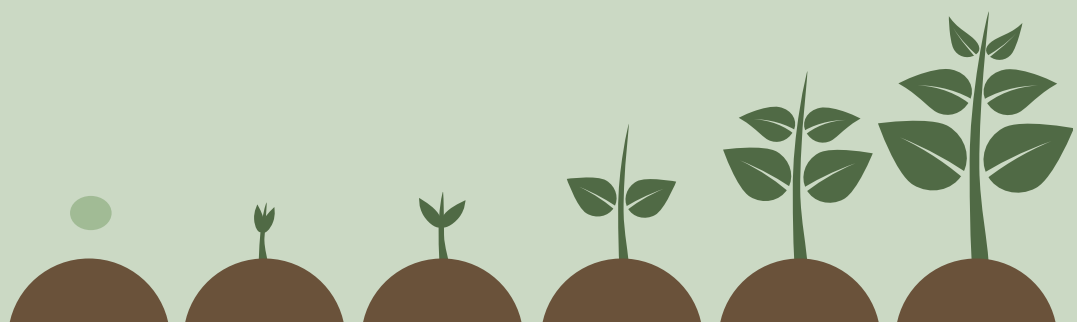
- Figma
- Github
- IVP
- Accenture
- AT&T
- Sheppard Mullin
- Forbright Bank

FOREST FEAST \$50K +

- Bank of America
- Arbor Day Foundation
- One Tree Planted
- BMO
- Boxed Water

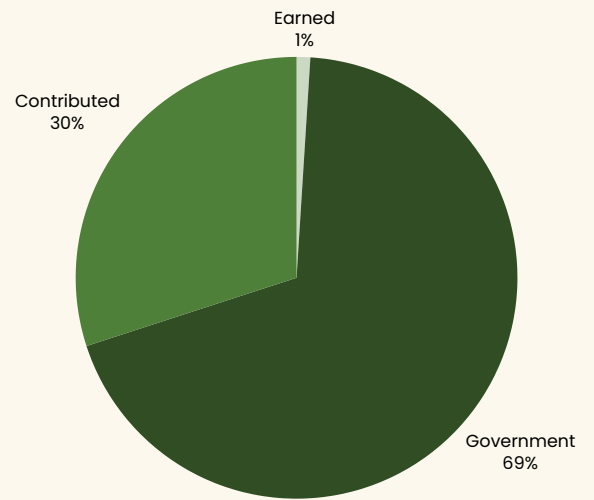
SPREADING ROOTS \$10K

- Golden State Warriors & Johnson Controls
- SentinelOne
- Bloomberg
- GIC

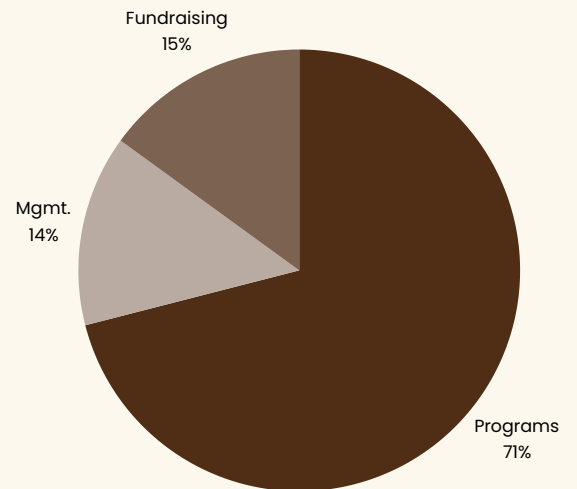


Financials

Revenue:	Amount:	%Revenue
Contributed Revenue (Fundraising)	\$ 1,264,030	30%
Government Grants (Programs)	\$ 2,917,845	69%
Earned Revenue	\$ 36,046	1%
Total Revenue:	\$ 4,217,921	



Functional Expense	Amount:	%Revenue
Programs	\$ 3,299,016	71%
Management & General	\$ 663,236	14%
Fundraising	\$ 692,757	15%
Total Expense:	\$ 4,654,192	





Our Mission:
Connecting people with nature and each other by planting and caring for San Francisco's trees and gardens.



Support our work



friendsoftheurbanforest.org
info@fuf.net

