

# Angel Alley

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## Proposal Narrative

### Executive Summary

Angel Alley is a 300ft long street-side beautification project in Dogpatch, located in the Central Waterfront area of San Francisco. The site is overgrown and trash-filled, contributing to safety and environmental problems. Despite these problems, it already is a pedestrian gateway to our local main street, which has outdoor seating restaurants and community gathering places. Pedestrian traffic on Angel Alley is expected to grow over 10 times when new housing developments and a pedestrian walkway just south from it are completed. The project budget is large-scale with 25% committed matching comprised of cash and in-kind contributions. The project is lead by professional project managers with a 60-person strong community work-group behind it. Project goals are safety, pedestrian and bike friendliness, environmental protection, community building, greening, support to city planning, and honoring local history. Project plans include building a retaining wall, planting over 500 xeriscape cacti and other succulents, adding lighting, and creating inviting seating areas with artistic center pieces.

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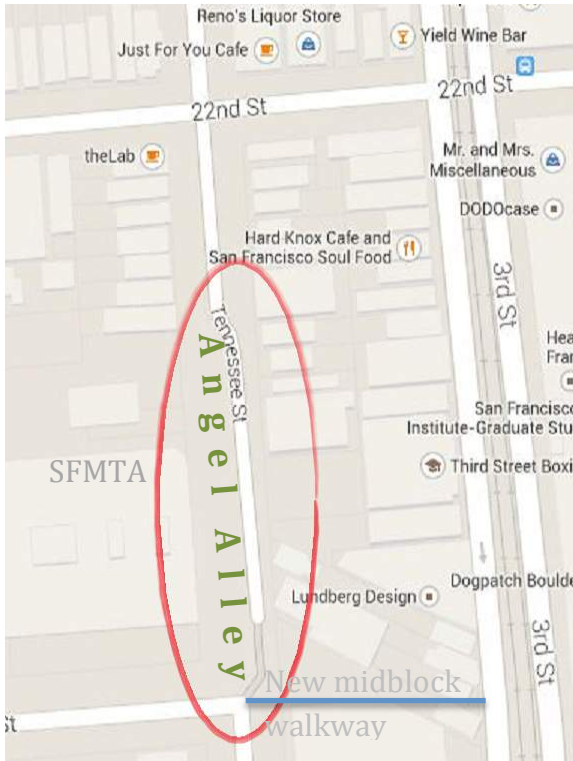
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## Project Site

**Location of the project.** Angel Alley is located east of Potrero Hill and south from AT&T Park. It is located in the heart of Historic Dogpatch along the 1100 midblock section of Tennessee Street, bounded by 22<sup>nd</sup> Street to the North and Tubbs Street to the South. This is where the road ends for vehicles but it is a favorite pass through for many pedestrians, bicyclists, strollers, skateboarders, and dog walkers. The beautification site is located on the western side of the street adjacent to the fence of SFMTA Woods Maintenance Yard. Bus maintenance takes place on the backside of the project site. See Attachment: Map.



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**History of the site.** Dogpatch is a historical neighborhood of Victorian worker-class homes. In 1857, one of the pioneering industries in Dogpatch was a rope-making factory called San Francisco Tubbs Cordage Manufactory. Because the long rope factory sliced four blocks diagonally, it created a situation where houses in this section of Tennessee Street change from being perpendicular to Tennessee Street to being diagonally situated. The peculiar setting has further been reinforced by historic Hells Angels clubhouse, which is located at the end of the Alley creating an open yard and dead end. The unsystematic lot structure has left a green space to west side of the street, which is now the site of this proposed greening project.

**Current situation: Before pictures.** According to SFDPW, Angel Alley is an unapproved street with maintenance belonging to SFMTA. Angel Alley is about 300 feet long and adjacent to a 30 feet high Muni fence. It is located on the backside of MTA's operations, and is a site for trash and debris. It has a sampling of overgrown bushes providing hiding places for people lingering and sleeping in the vegetation and in parked cars. The sloping side of the site is eroding and cars illegally park on top of tree roots. Since there is no street lighting and the vegetation is overgrown, it provides a haven for drug dealing and threatening activity at night. There are no streetlights, and after sunset, it is a site where police are called from time to time. However, during the day the location is pedestrian and bike friendly and serves as a lunch spot for local workers. Below are current photos and dimensions of the site:

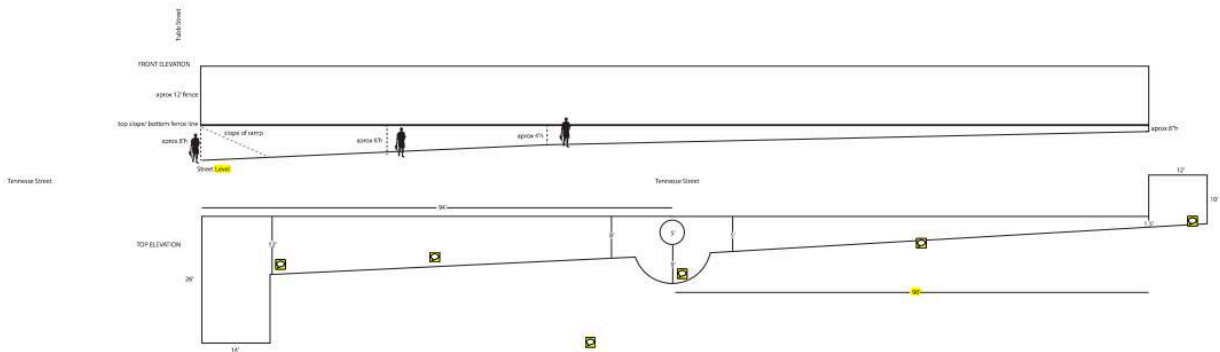


All current site photos by Vanessa Ross Photography



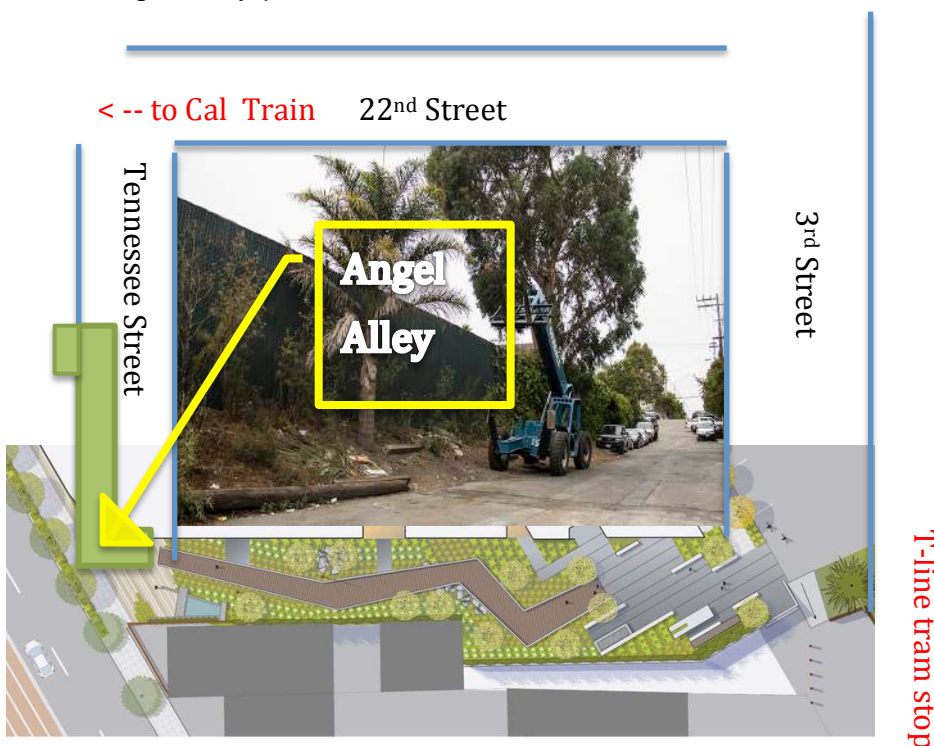
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**Future.** This alleyway will become an important pedestrian and light traffic gateway. After the completion of several large housing developments in Dogpatch, thousand of new residents will be moving to an area that used to be home for less than 3000 people. One of the largest new housing developments is located just south from Angel Alley at 1201 Tennessee Street. The new development includes a planned midblock walkway to 3rd Street as required by the Planning Department. That midblock walkway will connect to Angel Alley and make this section of Tennessee Street a preferred pathway to 22nd street – the heart of Dogpatch. There will be an increased flow of people walking and riding through Angels Alley on their way to and from the Muni T-Line to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street CalTrain stop, or enjoying our local restaurants and shops.

Below is a drawing showing how the upcoming approved midblock walkway will make Angel Alley part of the connection from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street:



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## Capacity

**Who we are.** We are a group of neighbors living and working in Dogpatch. We are passionate and motivated to see Angel Alley beautified. The project is lead by Dr. Sari Stenfors, who is specialized in organizational behavior and Dr. Kristin Swanson, who is specialized in environmental sciences. The project group has a Board, which includes Susan Eslick, Dogpatch Neighborhood Association VP. More than sixty people and six local businesses are actively contributing to the efforts of getting this project off the ground and finishing it successfully. Our fiscal sponsor for the project is San Francisco Parks Alliance. We are using David Fletcher, principal of Fletcher Studio, as our landscape architect. He has designed many green projects in the city, but most importantly for this project, he has designed the connecting green-space, midblock pathway and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Green TrustSF green plan. Our contractor is CatMex Maintenance, which has an outstanding performance record in completing park projects. For more information, please see Attachments: Sari and Kristin Bios, Parks Alliance MOU, Community sign-up sheet.


**What we have done before.** Angel Alley is our group's first project. However, Kristin and Sari are seasoned project managers and the group of neighbors has tremendous experience in community projects. Group members have worked on other Dogpatch beautification projects, such as Tunnel Top Park, Progress Park, and the newly completed Dogpatch Playground. We are actively using other San Francisco beautification projects' networks and learning from their successes and difficulties. Parks Alliance has had great success with many similar projects. For more information, please see Attachment: Parks Alliance List of Projects for Last Three Years.

## Community Need

**Prior community efforts.** The project site is an eyesore, and safety and environmental problem. The neighborhood has put much effort over the last eight years to clean up and stabilize the grounds. Neighbors have contributed time to cleaning, weeding, planting trees, shrubs and bulbs, building retaining features and watering. However, these sporadic efforts without an overall plan have not led to a lasting impact. To improve the area successfully, we need a proper landscape design, improvement work plan, organized beautification efforts, and timely maintenance.

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**Why this is urgent now.** We have observed on average a total of between 95 -115 pedestrians, dog walkers, children, and bicyclists traveling along Angel Alley during the weekdays. In addition, Muni workers at the Wood Maintenance Yard and local employees relax and eat their lunch on our stoops during the workday. Within the next 3-5 years the Planning Department has approved five large residential projects in the area increasing apartment unit count in Dogpatch by over 1500. Even more housing projects are planned for Dogpatch. This together with the midblock pathway south of the project will mean that Angel Alley will see about 10 times the amount of traffic there is today. We need to make Angel Alley a safe site. In addition, there are no new open spaces planned for Dogpatch, and Angel Alley will provide a much needed green relaxation space.

## Community Building

**Our mission.** The mission of keeping Angel Alley safe, free of debris, and graffiti unites our group. We are all interested and committed to boost community spirit, and beautify this urban space in Dogpatch. We want neighbors and visitors to feel safe and to be surrounded by an attractive landscaped garden.


**Doing together.** The project is being planned and implemented together by the local people and local businesses. Dogpatch is known for its diversity and creativity. We are drawing from these resources and have already created strong community involvement with active meet-ups and discussions face-to-face and online. We are open to different points of views and will stay open throughout the project duration and after. We embrace new ideas and learning from each other. Community members have approved and contributed to the initial designs for Angel Alley in various meetings with the neighborhood association, greening groups, local bars, restaurants and other meeting places. After the project is completed, Angel Alley will be enjoyed and maintained by the residents and businesses working together. The project design has two different seating areas with artistic centerpieces for visitors and locals to enjoy together.

## Community Involvement

**Angel Alley community's roots.** Community-led activities have taken place on this site for almost a decade. The initial community members, mostly people living along Angel Alley, have worked together with SFMTA to get proper fencing in place, arranged for annual cleaning, installed railroad ties to keep erosion in better control, and planted palm trees, citrus, bamboo, cacti and succulents. Three years ago we planted over 500 bulbs. The results of all these prior efforts

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have not made a big enough impact. Two years ago, it became evident to the community that efforts need to be boosted, community involvement spread, more forward looking design created, and proper plans made to stabilize ground. We have introduced the project to the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association to different local greening meetings, and to local HOA meetings. In addition we have been active on the neighborhood websites and created an on-line sign-up document for the project. A much larger base of community support is now established and we are ready for action.

**Community is the core.** This project would not be possible without the support of our community. Community efforts are led by the project team and the board. Three volunteer work weekends are planned and volunteer groups have been created to do maintenance quarterly. In addition, time sheets for volunteers to work on their own will be distributed. So far, volunteers have offered over 800 hours of labor for the first year of the project. Over 60 individual people and seven organizations have signed up. Original organizations supporting the project are still involved – such as Olle Lundberg’s architectural office and HAMC (Hells Angels Motorcycle Club)– and more have joined – such as Knickerbocker (local developer) and SPARC (San Francisco Patient and Resource Center). Also, we have participated in other community greening projects, such as Progress Park and Pennsylvania Street Gardens to learn from their experiences and get feedback on our plans. Project organizing is digital and on the internet, which will create a documentation trail, and make it easy to keep tabs on project steps, new ideas, plan changes, volunteer hours, donations and in-kind gifts.

## Design and Impacts

**Design: After pictures.** The new design has 30” gabion retaining walls along the side and in tiers where there is a grade change. All trees currently on the site will be kept, but the bushes and shrubs will be removed to create visibility. Boulders and rocks will be added to encourage sitting on them, but to discourage sleeping. More than 500 new cacti and succulents will make the site as close as possible to xeriscape. We have engaged a permaculture specialist, who has been consulting us on the design. The existing big eucalyptus tree will get a half circular retaining wall to keep the root system healthy. There will be wooden seating at the eucalyptus tree and by the north end gathering area. We will build a solar powered recycled water feature as the focal point to that area. Adding trashcans and solar powered string lights, Tivoli lights, treelights, uprights and

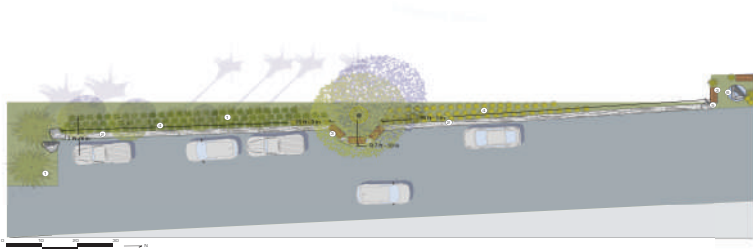


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motion detector flood lights will add to safety and cleanliness. All existing parking along the side will be kept.

Below is the landscape architect's plan, which the community has approved. There are also inspirational concept photos, of what the site will look like when it is ready. For closer look at the design, please see Attachment: Garden Design.



PLAN AND AERIAL



Angel Alley  
GRANT APPLICATION  
08.25.14





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**Impact and focus.** This project multiplies our efforts to create significant impact and positive progress in our community in seven focus areas:


**1. Safety.** We want to create an environment where the police do not have to be called so often and people feel safe. The project will install lights, clean up the trash, and create visible areas by reducing bushy vegetation and dark corners. In addition, a more orderly design with retaining walls will clarify car parking area and provide spaces for people to sit and relax.

**2. Pedestrian and bike friendliness.** The new pedestrian midblock walkway will make this part of Tennessee Street the best connection from CalTrain and 22nd Street to 3rd Street light rail stop and to the (planned) Blue Greenway. The area already sees many pedestrians and bikers, and we would like to welcome more. Organizing the setting by placing rocks on corners, new light fixtures, and cleaning to get rid of nails that puncture tires will help. We will add refuse containers for dog waste and trash. Retaining walls will help minimize dirt getting on the street.

**3. Community building.** Angel Alley leads to 22nd Street, which is the hub of Dogpatch. We would like to promote the positive atmosphere on 22nd street by enhancing the surroundings, and drawing more people towards 22nd street. We

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also believe this will help 22nd street merchants by creating open space for their customers to enjoy a moment with friends - perhaps with a take-out lunch or a cup of coffee.

**4.Environmental concerns.** On the other side of the property are the Muni bus washing, repair and maintenance stalls. Buses are washed all day and night long. We are working together with MTA to stabilize the saturated ground and to take control of the soil erosion problem. We will build a bio-guard to keep any possible hazardous waste from spreading and stabilize land to stop erosion with burlap netting and plant roots. We will be using permaculture principles and are eager to see green oasis emerging out of brownfield land. The plants we will be planting are xeriscape and/or very low maintenance natives to minimize watering needs. There used to be many birds and insects on this location, but the current development has scared them away. One of our goals is to bring back the birds.

**5.Beautification and greening.** There is very little green space in Dogpatch and no new green spaces planned despite all the new developments. This project will attempt to maximize green space, while maintaining all current parking spaces. We will build retaining walls and raised beds to have more area to plant succulents and cacti. There will also be two locations with seating and a (recycling and solar operated) water feature to create a relaxing atmosphere. We will have solar powered string lights to make the space welcoming at night.

**6.Honoring Dogpatch history.** This particular corner of Dogpatch has a rich and wonderful history. This is where square lots turn into diagonal lots because of the historic rope factory. The Hells Angels clubhouse across the street is also an important part of the Dogpatch identity. San Francisco City Walk tour stops at the Eucalyptus tree to tell tourists about our history. We will have a mural or an artistic piece to celebrate at the exact spot of the tour to spread this valued history.

**7.Complementing and supporting city development projects and neighborhood association goals.** Our project complements the Eastern Neighborhoods re-zoning by adding much needed green public open space. It will also create another pedestrian and bike friendly pathway adjacent to the Blue Greenway and to CalTrain 22<sup>nd</sup> stop. Angel Alley connects light rail and train commuters, nature lovers, sports enthusiasts, pedestrians and bikers from 22nd Street to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street midblock pedestrian pathway. It will also contribute to

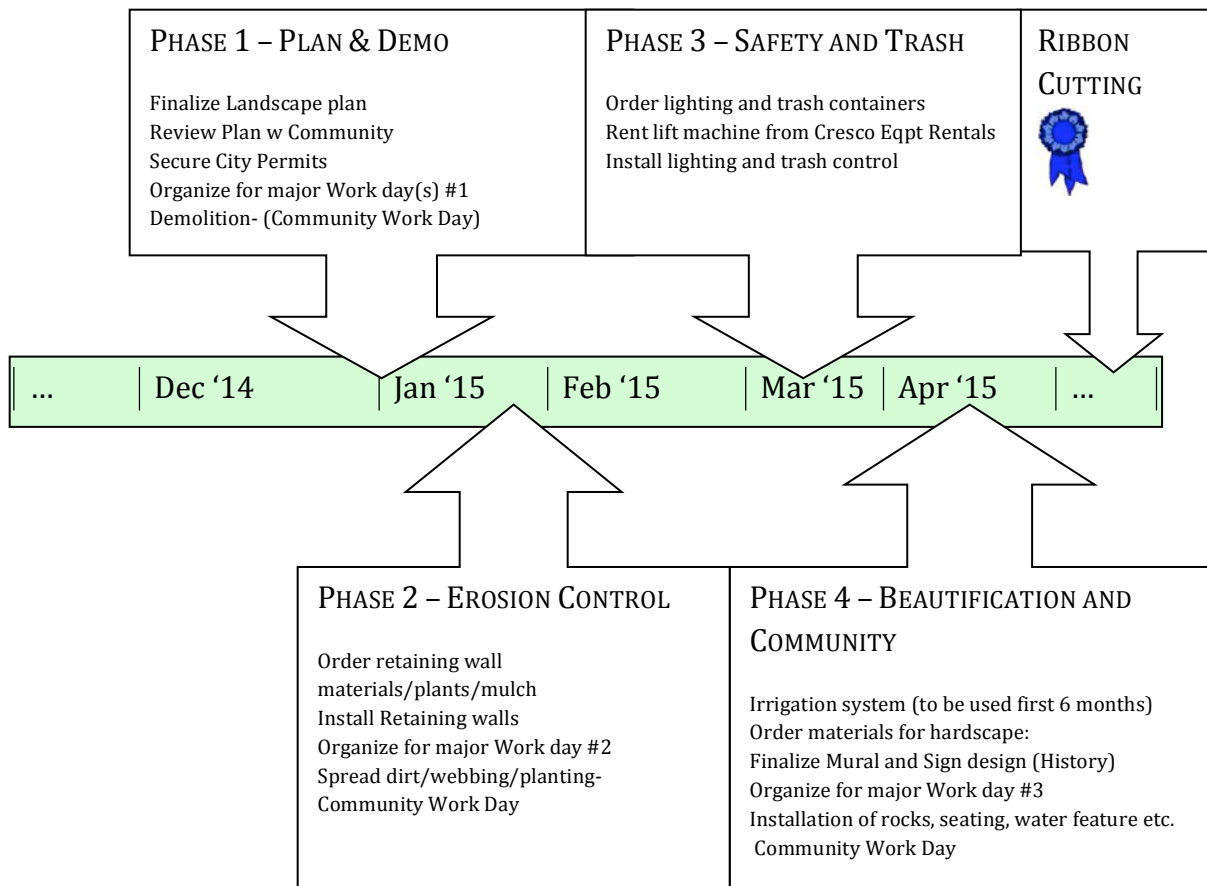
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supporting 22<sup>nd</sup> Street as a vibrant community hub for Dogpatch, as depicted in city and neighborhood plans. Our design is unifying but yet unique to this historical spot. Our landscape architect has created the midblock walkway and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street greening plan, and our design follows the same principles and creates a seamless fit to these other green projects.

## Work Plan and Schedule

**Ready by summer 2015.** We are aiming to complete the re-hab of Angel Alley prior to our new neighbors move in. Project will take about 4 months to complete. We plan to start the project as soon as possible after the grant decision. Angel Alley project group will oversee and manage the project itself. Permits are taken into account, and our project requires only new building permit from DBI and possibly a permit for taking over parking space during some days. General overview of the timeline is below. Major milestones and project phases are described in detail in Attachment: Work Plan.





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## Uniqueness

The landscape design reflects the local history and project includes a mural highlighting the historic aspects of the site. Local artist will collaborate in creating the mural, which will depict a collage of historical aspects of the site. For more information see our focus areas no.6 and no.7 on page 10.

## Sustainability

**Ecological principles.** The design will use re-used and recycled materials where possible. Natural sustainable materials are used as much as possible, such as the gabion retaining walls. Lights are solar powered LED lights and water feature will be solar powered, and it will be using recycled water. We use permaculture principles and have xeriscape plants. Water will be needed for irrigation in the beginning, but irrigation will be kept to minimum.

**Maintenance plan.** Maintenance for the next five years. Our group will continue maintaining the site as we have before. We have 310 hours of work commitments for the first year maintenance. Community support is very strong and expected to keep that way. MTA has a crew that cleans up the site once a year. In addition, the new design will be easier to maintain than the current situation. To cover future costs, this site will be part of the Green Benefit District program, if it gets implemented.

## Partnerships

We have several different types of partnerships: For the design and work on the site we are partnering with Fletcher Studio, John Panelli Design, Lundberg Design and CatMex Maintenance. SF Parks Alliance is our fiscal sponsor. For donations we are grateful to Knickerbocker LLC, who is our main business sponsor. For in-kind contributions we have been partnering with Recchiuti Confections and The Lab Café, SPARC, and Hells Angels MC.

## Budget

This is a large-scale project with total cost of \$66,900.00, The project team has commitments for cash and in-kind pledges for \$16,780.00. The community has pledged over 800 hours of labor, of which 490 hours will be used for the construction phase and rest left for first year maintenance. Cash and in-kind pledges are 25% of total, and CCG request is \$49,310.00. For details, please see Attachment: Budget.

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## **Risk Management**

This project is low risk but several precautions are taken to preempt and plan for possible challenges.

**Minimizing controversiality.** Neighbors have been very supportive and unanimous about the need for Angel Alley improvements. However, we are aware of issues that can be controversial. Parking is one of those issues, and our design makes sure that access to parking is not compromised. Issues that we have control over will be negotiated and discussed within the community. Issues that we have little control over, such as not all residents agreeing to influx of more people. This project caters to larger amount of pedestrian traffic, but at the same time provides green space for relaxing. We will do our best to come up with creative solutions to cater to different needs. Another issue could be that Hells Angels MC is located at the end of Angel Alley, and although the HAMC has been very diligent in maintaining the end section of our alley and Dogpatch has a history of being proud of Hells Angels being local, there may be people that could disagree on a joint gardening project. We will be transparent in our decisions and communication, and open to discussions and improvement suggestions. The project will set up an online website to help with communication.

**Timely reporting and transparent use of funds.** Our fiscal sponsor is SF Parks Alliance. They are known for excellent handling of funds and help with reporting and networks. Our project is managed on-line and much of the raw material for reporting will be automatically collected.

**Keeping the project on track and project management.** The project managers are very experienced, and the project has a board to assure everything is taken into consideration. Delays can still happen, but our timetable allows for them. If problems do occur network of people who have done similar projects will be consulted.

**Avoiding accidents.** Safety is an important issue, and we will take safety precautions. We will have a volunteer safety expert to check our site. Parks Alliance provides insurance for volunteer work.

**Securing long-term upkeep of the site.** We have a solid plan for the next five years and different options for the longer-term future. Long-term solutions will be assessed after the project is completed.