

Office of Civic Innovation City & County of San Francisco



Impact Report 2020



SAN FRANCISCO
OFFICE OF
CIVIC INNOVATION

Year in Review

Twenty twenty has been a challenging year like no other — underscoring the value of outside-the-box thinking and the Office of Civic Innovation’s work. During this unprecedented year, OCI catalyzed new ideas to uplift communities and dug into City challenges. OCI has remained dedicated to its mission of building a more collaborative and inventive government responsive to the needs of all San Franciscans.

At a Glance: What OCI accomplished this year

Scaled Civic Bridge

This year OCI hosted multiple Civic Bridge cohorts and introduced a new four to eight-week sprint model to help the City meet the amplified needs of San Franciscans. Projects included building an equitable economic model to guide the City’s small business response to COVID-19, making Rent Board services more accessible, and developing an emergency childcare response plan to COVID-19. Learn more about Civic Bridge’s [impact](#).

Launched a new citywide initiative

In October, OCI launched the Learning Labs event series to share results and insights from its public-private innovation programs. The inaugural Lab featured guest speakers from Adobe and the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, who shared methodology and findings from their Civic Bridge project on communicating available City services for San Francisco’s homeless.

Welcomed a new Innovation Fellow to the team

[Mathew Larson](#) joined the OCI team as its newest Innovation Fellow. Mathew has a background in human-centered design and cross-sectoral partnerships and program management. OCI is excited to have him support its partnerships programs and lead the Learning Labs initiative.

Empowered a culture of innovation

OCI continues to build up the City’s culture of innovation through its work with the SFGov Innovators network, which brings together innovation teams from across the City to share insights and co-create solutions for public impact. OCI has also continued to spotlight City changemakers in its *Meet a Changemaker* [blog series](#).

Catalyzed civic engagement

Pre-shelter-in-place, OCI collaborated with Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services, Digital Services, and DataSF to create a resource to highlight [volunteering opportunities](#) for San Franciscans interested in contributing their skills and time to civic challenges. We look forward to furthering this effort once public health guidelines allow.



Pre-shelter-in-place, Civic Bridge partners from the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) and Gensler working on their housing project.

An aerial photograph of a city street featuring a prominent, winding road with a red-paved center. The road curves through a dense urban area with various buildings, including multi-story apartment complexes and smaller structures. Greenery and trees are interspersed among the buildings. The overall scene is a vibrant, high-angle view of a city's infrastructure and architecture.

Since its launch in 2015, Civic Bridge has partnered with **29 City departments** and **26 private organizations** to produce **55 pro bono projects**. More than **37,000 hours** have been volunteered — adding up to **\$5.48+ million** in pro bono contributions of new ideas and impactful deliverables for San Franciscans.

Civic Bridge: 2020 by the Numbers

11

Projects launched

\$1.23M+

Fair-market value of
pro bono work

10,704

Hours volunteered during
the program

78

Participants across
City staff & pro bono teams

“Civic Bridge allowed HSH to build much needed tools that would otherwise be out of reach. I have participated in similar projects before and this is by far the most comprehensive with the highest level of partner commitment and output.”

- Staff Member, Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)

2020 Civic Bridge Project Highlights

Improving housing permitting in San Francisco

Multiple City Departments + Google.org

Google.org Fellows worked with the Mayor's Director of Housing Delivery, San Francisco's Planning Department, and multiple other City departments to analyze and improve the current housing permitting process in San Francisco. During the six month, full-time extended Civic Bridge project, the Google.org Fellows helped the City measure, understand, and improve its [housing permitting process](#) to accelerate production and access to affordable housing in San Francisco.

Communication strategy for the City's homelessness services

Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) + Adobe

Adobe and HSH interviewed a cross section of San Franciscans to gain constituent insights to inform HSH's [communication strategy](#) and build better messaging for their public information campaign. Adobe also built HSH a [new website](#) and developed a website content strategy.

Residential treatment and transitional housing on Treasure Island

Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) + Gensler

Informed by virtual tours, interviews, research and help from TIDA and the non-profit One Treasure Island, Gensler created four possible building [designs](#) for transitional housing on Treasure Island. The designs were informed by transitional housing advocates, HR360 and Mercy Housing, to meet their programmatic needs for the housing complexes.

Emergency childcare centers in response to COVID-19

San Francisco Recreation and Park (SFRPD) + fuseproject

fuseproject used their strategic storytelling skills to comprehensively package SFRPD's innovative Emergency Child & Youth Care Program as a repeatable, scalable model for cities across the US to use. The [playbook](#) provides guidance on how cities can provide free, flexible childcare for parents working on the front lines of a health emergency - allowing frontline workers to focus on serving the community, with the knowledge their children are safe, healthy, and happy.

Designing an equitable COVID-19 response to better support small businesses

Office of Economic & Workforce Development (OEWD) + Harvard Business School Community Partners (HBS)

To ensure San Francisco's equitable economic and employment recovery in response to the Covid-19 crisis, OEWD and HBS built an equitable economic model to guide the City's small business relief efforts. The model includes a Workforce Theory of Change designed to significantly reduce unemployment, improve prospects for increased income and wealth, and contribute to a better quality of life for disadvantaged populations and communities of color in San Francisco. The HBS team also developed metrics for the City to use to track the effectiveness of its response.



Featured Project

Making San Francisco's Rent Board services more accessible

Partners: Rent Board & Civic Consulting Alliance

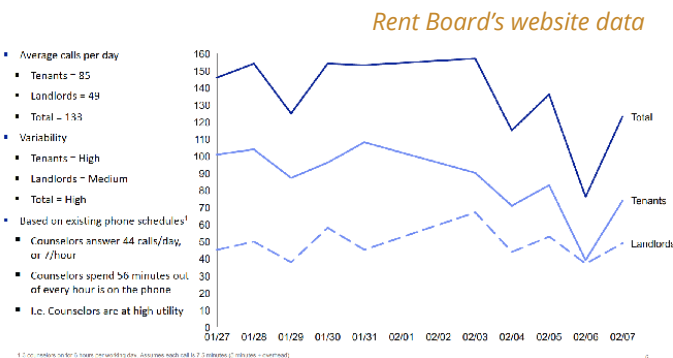
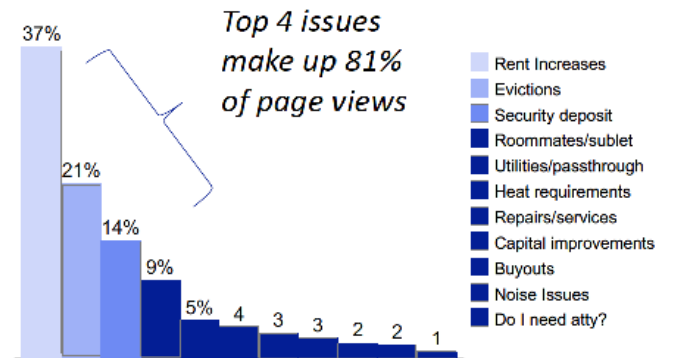
San Francisco's Rent Board protects tenants from unjust evictions and excessive rent increases, while assuring landlords fair and adequate rents. Over the years, City rent ordinances have grown complex and challenging to understand for renters and landlords alike. To help residents better understand their rights, the Rent Board teamed up with Civic Consulting Alliance on a Civic Bridge project. The impact? A user-friendly website laying the legalese out in clear language — making Rent Board ordinances and services more accessible to everyone.

This Civic Bridge project's team boasted many different skills; from San Francisco housing experts and the Rent Board legal team's understanding of City policy, to strategic thinkers and designers from Civic Consulting Alliance, to content strategists from San Francisco's Digital Services.

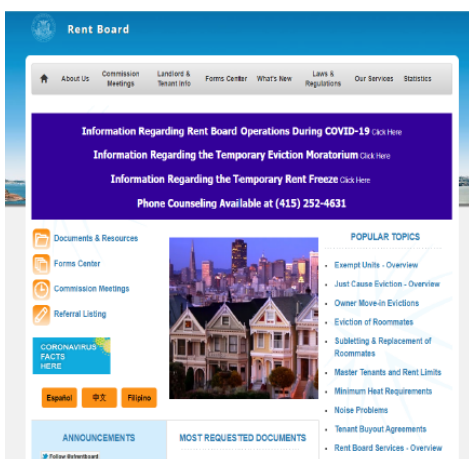
The team applied the Pareto principle (eighty percent of consequences come from 20 percent of causes) to the Rent Board's website and call volume data to see what issues rose above as major areas of confusion. Next, the team dug into common false assumptions and frequently asked questions to curate a collection of helpful content that sorted and addressed each topic more clearly.

The Rent Board lent their knowledge of the legalities, while the content strategists translated the technical specs into digestible descriptions and the designers carefully crafted the website's layout so residents can easily find what they need. All the while, project leads emphasized the website's goal and value to ensure the new tool would have a long and useful life under Rent Board care.

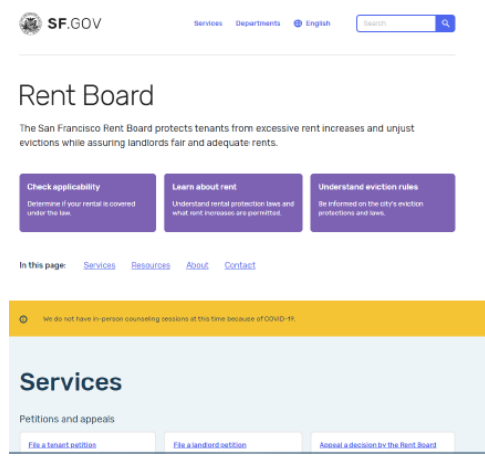
OCI's Civic Bridge program is all about collaboration — and recognizing that to go far, the community needs to go together. The Rent Board and Civic Consulting Alliance delivered a more meaningful tool thanks to teamwork: a [website](#) where residents can easily understand and exercise their rights.



Rent Board's Call volume by day



Old website



Updated website

Our Partners

The Office of Civic Innovation team ([Amardeep Prasad](#), [Jane Lim](#), and [Mathew Larson](#)) extends a hearty thank you to everyone who partnered with OCI this year! Their support empowers City collaboration, inventiveness, and responsiveness to San Franciscans. OCI also extends special thanks to this year's interns, [Livesey Pack](#) and [Eddie Whitfield](#), for all of their hard work. Twenty twenty is coming to a close with much appreciation and gratitude, and OCI looks forward to working with old and new partners in 2021!

Pro Bono Partners

Accenture
Adobe
Civic Consulting Alliance
fuseproject
Gensler
Google.org
Harvard Business School
Community Partners
Salesforce
Slalom
US Digital Response

City Department Partners

Committee on Information
Technology
DataSF
Department of Homelessness &
Supportive Housing
Department of Technology
Digital Equity Initiative
Digital Services
Mayor's Office of Housing &
Community Development
Office of Economic & Workforce
Development
Office of Racial Equity
Office of Transgender Initiatives
Rent Board
San Francisco International Airport
San Francisco Rec & Parks
Treasure Island Development
Authority