

# Robbery Roulette

Chances are, if you're not careful, you'll get mugged

BY TOM CARTER

**T**HE bad news is the Tenderloin has more robberies per square block than any of the other nine police districts in town. The good news is — as violent as robberies can be sometimes — they're not getting any rougher and the number is down. If a projection holds, robberies will be down 27% this year from last.

Still, the vulnerable poor, elderly and disabled residents, with few dollars on them, cautiously navigate streets day and night in the city's poorest and most densely populated neighborhood looking over their shoulders, hoping their number won't come up in the roulette of robbery probability. Everyone who hasn't been robbed knows someone who has. Sometimes it's brutal.

A Central City Extra study of the Tenderloin's 64 robberies during a 90-day period March 12-June 9 shows that among the 24 intersections comprising the TL police district, only one, at Mason-O'Farrell, didn't have a robbery within a half block of it. The

Jones Street corridor from Market to O'Farrell had 12 robberies in or near it, the most of any street.

Those who fecklessly brandish iPhones and laptops as they pass through the Tenderloin have every reason to be cautious, too. The items are prime

booty for desperate people pulling "opportunistic robberies," which most are, police say. Even if victims aren't injured, a mugging still makes a haunting, indelible memory that can shake confidence in the security of the community, as the attempt on me did.

Never get overconfident about your ability to walk safely through the Tenderloin. That's my personal rule now.

I was a victim of an attempted bodily force robbery May 26 on my way from Market and Seventh streets to the police community meeting at the Jones and Eddy station. Going up Jones, I took a detour east on Turk to ask some questions of the Tenderloin Liquors owner. Walking on Turk's north side, I saw the usual crowd in the middle of the 100 block.

I've walked the TL six years. I know where the idlers congregate, how they act, when to be casually evasive and when to cross the street. It helps that I'm a nimble, former high school point guard, a lifelong tennis player and in denial of my 70 years.

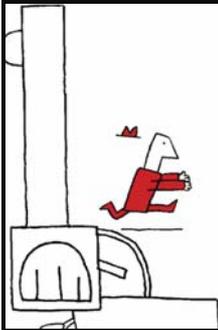
It was around 6 p.m., sunny and pleasant with normal street and sidewalk traffic. I was walking through maybe eight people, quickly, with longish steps, head slightly down, eyes fixed ahead, concentrating on questions I'd soon ask the store owner. Suddenly, just past the Camelot Hotel, a man who had been leaning against the wall to my left

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## SRO MAILBOX LAWSUIT

P.O. plans to derail it

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On pace to 6-year low

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# CENTRAL CITY

# EXTRA

SAN FRANCISCO

## PROPOSITION D



GOOGLE EARTH

Proposition D would create a special district for the 2-block-long, 2-short-block-wide area outlined above, allowing signs on Market Street that promote the central city's theater and arts district.

# Marketing mid-Market

Special district that would OK a slew of signs makes ballot

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

**W**ARFIELD Building owner David Addington gleefully described his July 1 trek to City Hall to three Central City Extra reporters sampling wurst at the just-opened Showdogs designer hot dog eatery — which

he co-owns — how he'd marched over to the Elections Department, five days before the deadline, with his Mid-Market Special Sign District ballot initiative, 12,000 supporting signatures strong, accompanied by an enthusiastic entourage of 20 kids and teachers from the Rescue Mission's City Academy summer program.

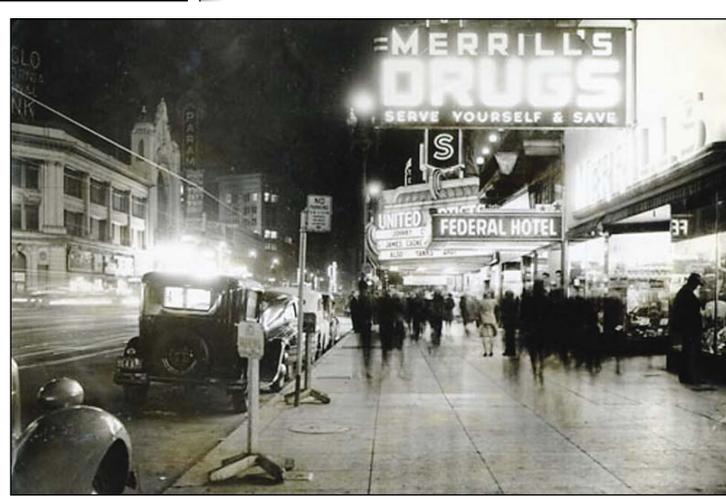
He'd spent several years, he said, working to bring general advertising back onto Market Street from Fifth to Seventh streets, returning the central city stretch to its former glory days as a theater district. The kids were part of the march because if the initiative passes in November, Tenderloin and South of Market youth groups like theirs stand to get up to 40% of sign advertising revenue for arts and education programs.

Addington's ebullience for the special district hasn't dimmed since then, but reality has crept in as opposition to it mounts. The initiative, Proposition D, has become yet another version of politics — as usual — for Market Street. Only four years ago, a San Francisco Business Times story, "Market St. developers hope to turn seedy to artsy," chronicled the Mid-Market PAC's 10-year effort to transform it from Fifth to 10th streets.

The Redevelopment Agency approved the PAC's plan and the Planning Commission said it conformed to the city's General Plan, but it met organized neighborhood resistance, was panned by Supervisor Chris Daly for not enough affordable housing, and died in committee.

Addington and Carolyn Diamond, Market Street Association executive director, were prime movers in the PAC. She joined as Prop. D co-author in June.

"I do think this is a controversial issue,"



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Seventh and Market was ablaze with lights and nighttime activity in 1943.

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