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Founded by three black trans women

in 2017 as Compton's Transgender Cultural District, The Transgender District is the first legally recognized transgender district globally. Originally named after the first documented uprising of transgender and queer people in United States history, the Compton's Cafeteria Riots of 1966, the District encompasses six blocks in the southeastern Tenderloin and crosses over Market Street to include two blocks of 6th street. In 2016, the City of San Francisco renamed portions of Turk and Taylor to commemorate the historical contributions of transgender people, renaming them "Compton's Cafeteria Way" and "Vikki Mar Lane" respectively.

This diverse urban region of the city's Tenderloin District has held a documented, ongoing presence of transgender residents since as early as the 1920s—with the Tenderloin known as a "gay ghetto" during the 1930s to the 1960s- before the birth of the internationally renowned Castro District in San Francisco. This area is home to San Francisco's first LGBT bar, various community spaces, gathering sites, and hotels with cultural significance for the broader transgender and queer community in the Tenderloin.



Mission

The mission of the Transgender District is to create a thriving urban environment that fosters the rich history, culture, legacy, and empowerment of transgender people and its deep roots in the southeastern Tenderloin neighborhood. The Transgender District aims to stabilize and economically empower the transgender community through ownership of homes, businesses, historical and cultural sites, and safe community spaces.

The Transgender District 1460 Mission St, Suite 103 San Francisco, CA 94103



Community Advisory Council

The Transgender District's Community Advisory Council (CAC) is the world's first Transgender Cultural District's official ambassador. The CAC engages with community leadership to implement their vision on broader neighborhood enrichment efforts such as placemaking, cultural events, and more.

The CAC is comprised of trans and non-binary community members, stakeholders, and service providers. Council members help the Transgender District by providing outreach assistance to community members regarding programming, overseeing and participating in projects and special events. By collaborating and strategizing with the CAC, we aim to create and implement important and impactful work for the communities we work to uplift.

2020 Year in Review

As our nation continues a tumultuous journey in a COVID-19 world, the Transgender District continues to create impactful, safe, and accessible programs. This year, we continued our engagement in local and national dialogues, and efforts to recognize, uplift, and stabilize the QTBIPOC community. The District continued filming our visual stories project by platforming Trans and GNC stories of resilience and tenacity. Additionally, the District hired two new staff members with a depth of experience in the QTBIPOC communities. In doing so, the District successfully pivoted into the digital realm to effect real change, create opportunity, and heal our community.

The Transgender District launched several community programs and partnerships addressing emotional, physical, and spiritual needs in and beyond the Tenderloin. With the COVID-19 Relief Fund's closeout, the project provided on-the-ground support in the Tenderloin for folks who lacked access to personal care products, prepared food, and COVID-19 testing. Our program impacted over 250+ individuals throughout an afternoon, with over 70+ Tenderloin folks getting tested through collaborative planning with key organizations such as *San Francisco Public Health Department* and the *Horizons Foundation*, and partnering with generous local and national businesses such as *Piano Fight* and *Deciem The Abnormal Beauty Company*. These folks were majority BIPOC identifying, with 24% reporting as Transgender or Non-binary (a percentage representing 12x the general population ratio of Trans/Enby persons to Cis-persons).



Finally, we expanded programming despite economic uncertainty. This past year brought about innovative brainstorming and planning that has led to our current, active efforts outlined below. With the hiring of two new staff members, we can now put into steady action the vital labor of launching these initiatives, pre- and-post the New Year of 2021. As always, The Transgender District pushes to combat a world that aims to disenfranchise the Trans community with wellness, safety, and love at the center of our practice.

Data Results

Tenant Protections

The District works to support, create, and facilitate efforts and initiatives that address transgender houselessness, and identify resources to house the transgender community stably. To address these barriers regarding housing in the District, community members suggested several options.

The most prevalent comment regarding the District and the Tenderloin neighborhood focused on the changing economic environment. The vast majority of the community criticize the District and the Tenderloin's ongoing gentrification, pushing transgender people out of the District. To address the issue of gentrification, community



members suggested two avenues. First, they would like to see the City focus on creating more affordable housing that takes the deep poverty into account to implement policies that match the residents' actual needs. Second, community members adamantly

"The City needs to find a way to balance the gentrification and the needs of lowincome people in the District." want the GEO group to leave the neighborhood and give back the building they occupy without hesitation. Taking back the building for the community means space for trans services and development for the community.

The community members who reside in SRO's focused on issues revolving around safety and harassment. Community members discussed many incidents with SRO management and employees' lack of respect and humanity toward its transgender residents. It is imperative that SRO's require training on proper interactions and responding to tenants'

needs. Lastly, many transgender residents are also living with a disability. Mobility issues, especially, create everyday problems. Residents in the neighborhood need more housing with better accessibility.

Overarching Perspectives on the Transgender District

100% of interviewees

- Trans District should create more relationships and community input with other districts and other marginalized folks (e.g., Indigenous)
- Address the poverty, drugs, and uncleanliness of the District
- Importance of the District is immeasurable
- Need less police presence and address impacts of gentrification
- City should include more trans people making decisions

80%

GEO group needs to go; take back the building and use for trans services and development

100%

Need to create more affordable housing that actually meets people's needs acknowledging majority lives in poverty

75%

SRO's need training on how to interact with and respond to trans tenants

90%

Resist gentrification which pushes trans people out of the District and the Tenderloin in general

30%

Advocate for disability issues and create housing to accommodate



Economics and Workforce Development

We continue to implement a multi-prong economic empowerment strategy that fosters real-time, immediate employment opportunities for transgender people with

"We need more opportunities beyond entry-level jobs in nonprofits."

multiple self-sufficiency and sustainability barriers. At the end of 2020, in partnership with GoPaladin and Code Tenderloin, the Transgender District launched the first

Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program. TGNC BIPOC were centered and supported at a national scale. The District offered the first cohort free business classes, business tax filings, a full brand new suit, website creation, and a seed grant to support each individual's project launch.

Input from community members highlighted creating and maintaining connections and alliances with private businesses, non-profit organizations, and the City to meet the community's needs. Besides creating more job opportunities, there is a need to invest in professional development to help incubate career development and advancement for transgender people. One way to address these issues would be to create mentorship programs with businesses, non-profits, and the City. Another example is to have job fairs that focus specifically on transgender people.

Other opportunities focused on entrepreneurial efforts. Community members need the ability to find investment in transgenderowned and operated businesses, and in general, having entrepreneurial opportunities. With the vast majority of transgender people in the City living in poverty, such efforts are difficult to navigate, never mind finding the networks to find investors or loans. Regarding economic opportunities for transgender youth, suggestions for creating new while simultaneously improving current opportunities and networks for internships with various organizations.

Economics and Workforce Development

100% of interviewees

Work with tech and other private businesses as well as non-profits to increase hiring of trans people

80%

- Invest in professional development for trans people
- Create networks for internships for trans people

- Create entrepreneurship opportunities for trans people
- Create more businesses owned/operated by trans people
- Find ways to uplift possibilities for trans youth

70%

- Create opportunities for trans-specific job fairs
- Create mentorship programs with businesses and non-profits

Arts and Culture

All interviewees mentioned three specific needs regarding furthering the impact on arts and culture for the Tenderloin/ Transgender District community. First, there is a need to demonstrate and inform the public on transgender history. One solution suggested is to create spaces for art exhibits, such as funding artist storefronts. Additionally, community members see a need to develop a mentorship program for budding artists to assist with navigating the intricacies of creating, networking, and funding their art.

Second, more community events need to center on transgender people. A suggestion is to create events highlighting and awarding transgender people who are not "celebrities." Instead, these events need to center

the unsung, everyday work of transgender people whose efforts to uplift the transgender community rarely go recognized or celebrated.



"It is inspiring to see trans life being held up as something intrinsically valuable, worthy of attention. This is a first." Lastly, there should be additional events promoting intercultural community ties between transgender and cisgender people. Community members emphasized that the District needs to bring events to the people across the City, not just within the Tenderloin district, to increase overall involvement and investment.

Arts and Culture

80% of interviewees

Need spaces for art exhibits/artists storefronts

65%

Create a mentorship program for budding artists

100%

- Needed to demonstrate and inform trans history
- More community events specific to trans people

100%

More community events inviting all people not just trans people

65%

Create events highlight and awarding regular trans folks and the work they do for the community

30%

Bring events to the people; not just within the district to gain more overall involvement and investment

Cultural Heritage Conservation

We actively work with historical preservationists, the San Francisco Planning Department, and California State Senator Scott Wiener's office to identify, evaluate, and document buildings and areas of the District with significant cultural and historical assets



to the transgender community. We also promote the legacy of transgender culture in the District through oral history and storytelling, in addition to partnering with archival institutions and museums that possess cultural artifacts related to transgender culture.

The vast majority of the community input focused on preserving the aesthetics and community feeling of the District. Indeed, most of the ideas were to leave the buildings as they are and not replace them with "modern" buildings. Additionally, every person mentioned designating several culturally significant to transgender history in the City, specifically for the District. Two specific locations, Compton's Cafeteria and Aunt Charlie's, were mentioned the most. However, these two were not the only locations community members would like to consider.

There were three innovative suggestions for cultural preservation for the District. Community members would like to see more focus on visual ways to highlight the history of the transgender community. One way to do this, from their perspective, would

be the creation of a walking tour. Additionally, there was consensus that there should be a focus on archival efforts to preserve the histories of the transgender community, which could be both web-based and location-specific. Lastly, there was a long-term goal that looked at the expansion of the District beyond San Francisco. Community members want the District and the City to recognize that transgender history goes beyond the District and the City's borders. Creating sister Transgender Districts would strengthen the message that transgender lives are integral to the entire country's history and beyond.

"Preserve the historic building fabric. The residential hotels, ghost signs, diners, dive bars. The District will lose its soul if it's all glass-box high-rises."

Cultural Heritage Conservation

75% of interviewees

Leave the building aesthetics/don't destroy and build "modern" buildings

100%

- Several buildings important to trans history and culture need legacy status
 - Compton's Cafeteria
 - Aunt Charlie's

Create a walking tour/tourism highlighting the history of the trans community

60%

Archival efforts to preserve histories

30%

Work with other cities in the U.S. to create more trans districts

Cultural Competency

As the transgender community is marginalized and disenfranchised—both in San Francisco and worldwide we are creating an environment that affirms the lives and authenticity of transgender people living in a world that consistently tells us we should not exist. The broader goal in our efforts focuses on urban beautification, placemaking, art, and cultural affairs. As we build the infrastructure for a thriving cultural district, we also are making a re-imagined world in which transgender people are socially, culturally, and economically empowered, and genocide against us is eradicated.

The overwhelming focus for community members is the

and poverty for the transgender community. Within such foundational education and trainings need to include the history of, and challenges to, transgender people's lives.

Such endeavors should also simultaneously find ways to partner with businesses and organizations to implement hiring policies that reflect the diversity of the community. In other words, businesses and organizations in the City of San Francisco's should have employees reflect the demographics and diversity of its residents.

historical and ongoing problems with cultural competence when interacting with businesses and organizations

throughout the City. Interviewees see a need for the District to continuously partner with and reach out to businesses and organizations to assist with implementing culturally driven, culturally competent training, courses, and policies. A major part of this education should focus on an intersectional pedagogy which emphasizes the intersections of racism, transphobia, sexism,

"There needs to be more culturally competent training for businesses and nonprofits that emphasizes the intersectionality of racism, transphobia, sexism, and poverty for trans people."



Cultural Competency

90% of interviewees

Need to acknowledge intersectionality of racism, transphobia, sexism, and poverty for better outcomes

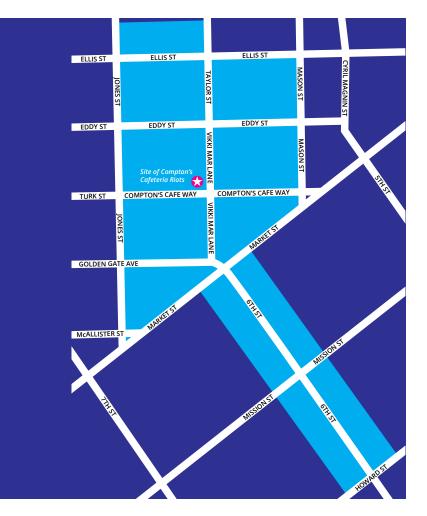
100%

Continue partnering with and reaching out to organizations and businesses for culturally driven/competent trainings, courses, and policies

Work with employers to have their organization is reflective of the community

75%

Educate on history and challenges for trans people to get buy-in



Land Use

We participate in policy meetings with various San Francisco City and County government agencies to help shape and guide regulations, tools, and programs (such as zoning and land use controls). We focus on promoting and protecting safe spaces and commercial enterprises for the transgender community in policy meetings. With the City of San Francisco's Department of Public Works and San Francisco Municipal Transit Agency, The District continues to implement our placemaking and urban beautification efforts such as, maintaining crosswalks, increasing trees and green spaces, increasing clean, safe restroom access, and more. These ongoing urban beautification efforts work to enrich the lives of longtime residents of the Tenderloin as a reverse gentrification model. This past year, in collaboration with the City, the District cemented visual acknowledgment of the vital importance of transgender people in the Tenderloin and beyond by painting street light poles and placing banners with the colors of the transgender flag.

The main focus for land use amongst our community members centered both space for rest and relaxation and creating transgender-owned and/or -operated businesses catering to basic needs.

First, there is consensus on creating more physical spaces that allow for rest, relaxation, and community-building in the District. Everyone agreed that there is a severe lack of parks or trees. These green spaces fill the need for community engagement and community-building beyond bars and SROs. Additionally, to increase visibility of the District and the transgender community's historical contributions to the US and beyond, there is a

need for creating a museum and other tourist attractions.

Community members want the City and the District to find ways to support the creation of businesses focused on basic needs and goods, such as grocery, boutique stores, clothing, hair/nail salons, pharmacies, and health and mental health services. All of which are lacking in the neighborhood. Along these lines, suggestions included spaces such as coffee shops and a community center for education/workforce development and creating and maintaining community.

"We need more green spaces, like parks, for the community. There's nowhere in the District to hang out."

Lastly, many community members want to see the District expanded to include all of the Tenderloin, which would then encompass many of the historically important businesses and establishments relevant and important to transgender people in the City.

Land Use

100% of interviewees

- Severe lack of green spaces/parks with trees
- Create a museum and other tourist attractions
- Need spaces outside of bars and SROs for community engagement and community building
- Support creation of businesses focused on basic needs and goods: grocery, boutique stores, clothing, hair/nail salons, pharmacies

Create spaces such as coffee shops and community center for education/workforce development and create/maintain community

80%

Expand the district to all of the Tenderloin

40%

Need mental health/healthcare services in the district

Trans Empowerment

In the latter part of 2020, we added a seventh work area according to the ways we have activated programming throughout our first years of operations. Transgender [and Gender Non-conforming] Empowerment represents programs that work towards creating equity in the lived experiences of TGNC folks in the Tenderloin and beyond. It exists as direct and multilayered actions that work to improve the livelihoods of TGNC people at large. Trans Empowerment programming strives towards the uplifting of the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of our community.

Much of our 2020 Trans Empowerment programming was in response to the dire needs of the TGNC BIPOC community during the pandemic. Our launch of the COVID-19 Relief Fund in Summer of 2020 worked towards widespread mutual aid for our oft marginalized community. Furthermore, our continued efforts to create a local testing activation aimed towards vulnerable populations had a profound impact on the TGNC community in the Tenderloin.

COVID-19 Relief Fund

In partnership with the *San Francisco Human Rights Commission*, the Transgender District was the first LGBT nonprofit project to launch a mutual aid/cash grant program specifically for Transgender and Nonbinary people at the early onset of COVID-19 pandemic.



In the COVID-19 Relief Fund...

>54%

of recipients self-reported as Black/African American Transgender Women living at or below the Federal poverty line

550+

direct cash grants were awarded to trans and nonbinary people

30+

nonprofits and coalitions across the United States have replicated our program's model from the Transgender Law Center and the Marsha P Johnson Institute—to local efforts such as the Office of Transgender Initiatives and TAJA's Coalition

COVID-19 Testing Activation Site - TL Love

The Transgender District and its partners created direct impact for over 250+ participants in the TL, providing prepared food and care packages for folks, as well as COVID-19 testing and PPE.



Findings... from a pool of 69 respondents (all of whom took COVID-19 tests)

24%

self-identified as Transgender or Non-Binary

24%

were in some way unhoused, with another 24% living in SRO housing

75%

were BIPOC-identifying, with 28% reporting as Black or African American, 14% reporting as Hispanic/Latino, and 9% reporting as Native American

70%

were above the age of 40, with 24% of that amount reporting an age of 55+

73%

reported that they were not currently employed, retired, or disabled and unable to work

Events

PLURALS

The first art exhibition produced by the Transgender District, PLURALS, was a two-person queer art show combining Joel Gregory and KC Crow Maddux's work, using layering to expand the trans vernacular visually. It examined and explored gender, artistic media, historical art forms and humor. Ellis Martin curated the exhibition.





Non-binary Chat

The District held our virtual empowerment space for Nonbinary individuals (Non-Binary Chat) every three weeks with the support of a trained mental health worker and a special guest Q&A by notable non-binary activist and artist Alok V. Menon.

Visual Storytelling Project

The project completed filming our second cohort of visual stories featuring the stories/journeys of trans people with deep roots and connections to the Tenderloin neighborhood. The project serves as a digital empowerment effort to expand the narratives that exist for transgender people beyond our disparity—with each storyteller sharing their journey to a broad audience as a Master Class on living boldly and in your authentic truth.

After completing filming our second cohort of visual stories, we launched our second social media campaign via YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram to promote our cohort's compelling stories. This digital empowerment series expands the narratives that exist for transgender people beyond our disparity—with each storyteller sharing their journey as trans and/or gender non-conforming individuals in the District. With 4 of the 8 posted on these streams thus far, we've already hit nearly 10k views for our cohort. Our videos have reached over 21,000 people, according to Google analytics.



Winter Gala

We launched our virtual, 100% free Winter Gala in partnership with House of Tulip to celebrate and uplift our trans and GNC community during the holidays. With a diverse group of TGNC and LGBTQ+ allied performers on a local and national scale, we tallied engagements of over 17k+ in a month. Funds raised from this event went to the District and the partnered organization to bolster our work regarding TGNC Affordable Housing.





Black Trans Lives Matter Mural

On August 23, 2020, the Transgender District, along with community members across the City came together to paint a Black Trans Lives Matter mural outside the Compton's Cafeteria. The site in front of Compton's Cafeteria was chosen specifically to recognize and honor the transgender women who rose up against the transphobia they experienced at the establishment in 1966. The event collaborated with local artists Xara Thustra, Sen Mendez, and Kin Folkz to create the mural at the intersection of Turk and Taylor.

Transgender Day of Remembrance (Trans Awareness Week)

In mid-November, alongside our partners at SF Community Health Center and local cultural practitioners, we held a public demonstration and rally to kick off Trans Awareness week and honor the Transgender Day of Remembrance. The event created the ability for folks to meet, socially distant and outdoors, to rally in front of City Hall and march to the heart of the District—all to call out in honor, celebration, and mourn our trans + GNC siblings lost to violence. We provided ample PPE and worked with public safety cooperatives to ensure the safety of all demonstrators.



Looking Toward 2021

As we continue to focus on continuing the foundations set in this previous year, we are heartened by the tenacity of the transgender community to continue to uplift and support one another, even through a pandemic and a year-long lockdown.

Much of the programming and events in 2020 was able to address many of the suggestions and needs of the community. For historic, art and cultural preservation, and land use, the District physically landmarked the contributions of the transgender community with the addition of the flag poles and mural. Furthermore, we are continuing to advocate for the removal of the GEO group in the District to reclaim the historically important building to the transgender community. We were able



to make headway on tenant protections through our continuous efforts to work with the City to find solutions for balancing the intersectional needs of the transgender community with the ever-growing gentrification of the neighborhood.

To address the issues surrounding economic and workforce development, we began our entrepreneurship accelerator program to provide trans/GNC people an environment that mentors and assists with implementing their dreams for a trans-owned and operated business. To address the ongoing, traumatic experiences with a lack of culturally competent City services and policies, the District continues our conversations with the mayor of San Francisco and the City's various services and departments.

In 2021, the Transgender District will focus on the continuation of our regular programming as well as expanding our outreach and



community engagement. Currently, we are in the process of implementing several initiatives. For example, we were able to launch our housing initiative early in 2021. We continue to plan the policies and practices to address the immense need to house transgender people while also balancing the fact that space, currently, is limited. We plan to convene several town halls, as well as conducting larger interviews and surveys, with community stakeholders and community members, to map out the policies and programming needed to meet the needs of the transgender community going forward in 2021 and beyond.

Appendix: 2020 CHHESS Report Community Strategizing

Purpose

The CHHESS Report serves as the COMMUNITY STABILIZATION plan for both the District and its community members.

Process

The CHHESS process allows the broader community to build a roadmap of priorities for their community. The Cultural District Advisory Board coordinates with city departments to ensure alignment and feasibility of policy strategies. The final report is ultimately reviewed and approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Data Gathering Methods

- 1) In-depth Interviews = 20
- 2) Focus Groups = 3
 - i) Date: April 22, 2019
 - ii) Date: Oct 23, 2019
 - ii) Date: August 19, 2020
- 3) Town Halls
 - i) Date: February 19, 2020
 - ii) Date: February 20, 2020
 - iii) Date: March 18, 2020
 - iv) Date: October 26, 2020

Interview and Focus Group Protocol Transgender District

Demographics

- 1) What is your age?
- 2) What is your ethnic background?
- 3) What is your gender identity?
- 4) What is your sexual orientation?
- 5) What pronouns do you use?

General Questions

- When you walk around the TL, how would you describe it?
- What do you do when you're in the TL?
- What do you think makes the District unique and special?
- What do you like about the TL?
- What do you not like about the TL?
- What do you see as the importance of the District to the neighborhood as a whole?
- What would you like to see preserved in the District?
- What are some changes you'd like to see to stabilize, strengthen, and help grow the District?
- What are changes in the past few years you think are negative?
- What are changes in the past few years you think are positive?
- What opportunities would you like developed to support the District's goals?
- With the things you've mentioned so far, what are the one or two most important changes you'd like implemented for the District?
- Would you want to expand the District? Why or why not?
- What would you want to include if the District was expanded?
- Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Historic Preservation

- What would you like to see preserved in the District?
- What historic buildings?
- Businesses?
- Organizations?
- Traditions?
- Arts and events?
- District aesthetics?
- What has worked in your experiences dealing with historic preservation efforts?

- What has worked in your experiences dealing with historic preservation efforts
- What has not worked?

Tenant Protections

- What are some ideas you have for how we can protect tenants and affordable housing?
- What are some ways you know have worked from your experiences dealing with tenant protections?
- What are some things that did not work?

Arts and Culture

- What are some ideas you have for creating opportunities for more art/artists and cultural representation?
- What sorts of ways do you envision this can be achieved?
- What sorts of issues have you encountered for creating these opportunities?

Economic and Workforce Development

- What ways do you think the District can promote jobs?
- What about bringing tourism?
- What about economic opportunities?
- What are some ways, in your experience, have been successful?
- What sorts of issues have you run into for creating more economic and workforce development?

Land Use

- What types of regulations do you think would help support business and industry in the District?
- What about programs to support business and industry?
- How have you accomplished this in the past?
- What were some hurdles?

Cultural Competency in City Services and Policies

- How can the District promote culturally competent City services?
- What are some types of policies you think can be implemented?
- What types of narratives do you think are important for the District to promote?

- How do you think these things can be accomplished?
- In your past, what have been hurdles to accomplish these changes?

Transgender District CAC Focus Group Survey

Demographics

- 1) What is your age?
- 2) What is your ethnic background?
- 3) What is your gender identity?
- 4) What is your sexual orientation?
- 5) What pronouns do you use?

General Questions

- What industry do you work in?
- Who is your employer?
- What is your job title and duties?
- Are there any trans people within your work organization?
- Do you do any work regarding trans inclusion in your work or industry?
- If so, can you describe the work you've done?
- Can you describe what sorts of responses you've received for trans inclusion from your work organization?
- What sorts of policies have you been able to implement, if any?
- What is your expertise in relation to the Transgender District?
- What are some ways you would like to provide your expertise for the Transgender District?
- Are you currently a part of any other trans-specific groups or organizations?
- If so, can you talk about why you decided to join?
- If so, can you describe the work you've done with these groups or organizations?
- Have you been a part of any other trans-specific groups or organizations in the past?
- If so, can you talk about why you joined?
- If you are no longer affiliated with the group(s), can you talk about why?

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