



Rendering by Robin Chiang

The **Better Streets Plan** will result in a street system designed to promote human needs for the use and enjoyment of these public spaces by all. It will prioritize the needs of walking, bicycling, transit use, and the use of streets as public spaces for social interaction and community life, following San Francisco's General Plan, Transit-First Policy, and Better Streets Policy.

The Better Streets Plan will result in streets where people walk and spend time out of choice—not just necessity—because streets are memorable, engaging, safe, accessible, healthy, attractive, fun, and convenient.

The Better Streets plan will result in streets that improve pedestrian connections and linkages among the City's nodes, hubs, destinations, transit system, and major land use centers.

The Better Streets Plan will result in a green network that enhances the City's long-term ecological functioning and people's connection to the natural environment.

Finally, the Better Streets Plan will result in improved street-based social opportunities, community life, access, and mobility for all San Franciscans, regardless of cultural identity, income group, neighborhood identity, or mobility level.

10 Elements of Better Streets

CIVIC QUALITIES

01

Memorable

San Francisco's streets will be designed to give the city and its neighborhoods a recognizable image and a means of orientation and understanding of the city.

- Design streets such that San Francisco will be recognized the world over for having great streets that set the standard for innovations in streetscape and pedestrian design.
- Design streets to improve the ability of residents and visitors to understand, imagine, experience, and learn about the city, including wayfinding and historical signs.
- Design streets to reflect and embody the unique character of distinct San Francisco neighborhoods and its diverse populations.
- Design streets to provide residents and visitors with opportunities for fun, excitement, surprise, exploration, and discovery.
- Design streets that enhance the human connection to the natural and built environments, and ties to San Francisco's history.

02

Supports Diverse Public Life

San Francisco's streets will provide opportunities for diverse experiences and encourage people to spend time engaging in social and recreational activities.

- Design citywide-serving streets in recognition of their role as civic spaces where residents have the opportunity to come into contact with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Design streets to incorporate opportunities for use as open spaces that can accommodate active and passive recreational activities for playing and relaxing.
- Design "ceremonial" streets (such as Market Street) to accommodate public events such as fairs, rallies, parades, and marches in recognition of their role as important democratic spaces.
- Design neighborhood streets such that they provide opportunities for stopping, sitting, talking, and interacting with neighbors.
- Design residential and neighborhood commercial streets to support neighborliness, by removing barriers to the free movement of pedestrians along the street.

03

Vibrant Places for Commerce

San Francisco's streets will be designed and managed as attractive and exciting destinations that encourage residents and visitors to walk to

Continued...

- Use streetscape improvements to support streets as destinations of choice, as well as necessity.
- Implement streetscape and pedestrian improvements in a manner that invests improvements equitably in neighborhood commercial districts across the city, with a particular focus on underperforming and underutilized districts.
- Design and manage streets to enable and encourage local businesses to use the public street environment through outdoor seating, mer-

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and use local shopping areas, rather than to drive to regional shopping centers.

chandise displays, and the like, while protecting pedestrian access and mobility.

- Manage streets to enable and encourage opportunities for flexible, informal, and temporary use of street space in commercial districts, such as vendors, kiosks, street musicians, farmer's markets, street fairs, or flexible parking arrangements.
- Design streets to maximize use of both sides of a shopping street by facilitating ease of crossing, and creating the feel of one continuous space rather than two disconnected environments.

04

Promotes Human Use and Comfort

San Francisco streets will be designed to prioritize the everyday needs of people and to support human comfort and enjoyment.

- Design streetscape amenities such as street crossings, street furniture, landscaping strips, and other elements to consider how people use spaces and to maximize human comfort, and not to deter people from using streets and sidewalks.
- Design streets to minimize ambient noise from vehicles by calming traffic, providing buffers between the sidewalk and automobile traffic, and using plantings and other methods to dampen sound.
- Design streets to create favorable microclimate conditions for pedestrians by reducing wind, offering opportunities for sitting or walking in sun and shade, providing welcoming and inviting lighting for pedestrians, and by offering shelter from rain.

05

Promotes Healthy Lifestyles

San Francisco's streets will promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging walking to daily and occasional destinations, minimizing pedestrian injuries, and helping to decrease major chronic diseases related to air quality and pedestrian activity.

Continued...

- Design streets to encourage walking to shops, restaurants, transit, parks and other recreational, social and employment destinations, in order to promote daily physical activity and help to decrease chronic diseases such as obesity and heart disease.
- Design streets to reduce pedestrian injury collisions and reduce the severity of pedestrian injuries when they do occur by calming traffic, creating intersections for convenient and safe pedestrian crossings, and reducing the incidence of speeding.
- Design streets to create attractive and safe pedestrian routes from neighborhoods to important cultural and civic institutions, such as schools, libraries, senior centers, and museums.
- Design streets to improve ambient air quality and help to decrease chronic diseases such as asthma, by providing alternatives to driving alone, and by including generous amounts of trees and other plantings.
- Design streets to promote high levels of pedestrian activity that encourage social opportunities and 'eyes on the street,' which has been

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05

shown to reduce violent injuries.

- Design streets to promote high levels of pedestrian activity that encourage social opportunities as well as physical activity, which has been shown to reduce social isolation and associated mental health issues.

PHYSICAL QUALITIES

06

Safe

San Francisco's streets will be designed to create a street environment that supports a high level of pedestrian safety and security.

- Design streets to reduce pedestrian injury collisions and fatalities.
- Design streets to reduce the severity of pedestrian injuries when they do occur by calming traffic, creating intersections for convenient and safe pedestrian crossings, and reducing the incidence of speeding.
- Design streets to ensure safe crossings for seniors, children, and persons with disabilities.
- Design streets to maximize personal security by creating well-used streets with high levels of pedestrian activity that encourage 'eyes on the street,' rather than through physically intimidating security measures that deter use.
- Design streets that maximize pedestrian safety and personal security at night by creating evenly-lit pedestrian-scaled lighting that makes the pedestrian visible, and avoiding elements that create dark corners with poor visibility.

07

Convenient Connections

San Francisco's streets will be designed to facilitate safe, accessible, and convenient connections among major nodes, hubs, destinations, transit centers, and major land use and activity centers.

- Prioritize improvement of streetscape and pedestrian conditions at locations with high levels of residential or employment density, or that otherwise generate a large number of people coming and going, such as hospitals, shopping centers, or community facilities.
- Prioritize improvement of streetscape and pedestrian conditions that connect neighborhoods and commercial districts to major transit centers, so as to encourage greater use of transit.
- Prioritize improvement of streetscape and pedestrian conditions at locations that experience high levels of pedestrian congestion.
- Utilize urban design of streets, as well as wayfinding and signage, to create visually identifiable pedestrian routes between major activity hubs and centers.
- Support off-street paths that connect streets to parks, water features, and greenways.

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08

Ecologically Sustainable

San Francisco streets will be designed as a green network, enhancing the City's long-term ecological functioning.

- Design and maintain streets as green corridors that use tree canopy and ground level landscaping along streets to link larger open spaces and wildlife habitats.
- Design and maintain streets to reduce downstream flooding and untreated wastewater overflows into the Bay and ocean by minimizing excess pavement, increasing permeable surface area, and using the best available technologies and designs in ecologically-based storm-water management.
- Design and maintain streets to ensure the health of street trees and other plantings by providing ample room for trees to grow and appropriate irrigation.
- Design and maintain streets that employ best practices in resource efficiency and conservation in construction materials and energy systems.
- Design streets to use durable, sustainably harvested, re-used, and/or recycled materials for paving, street furniture, and other streetscape elements that take into account the materials' life-cycle costs.
- Design streets to maximize benefits from the urban forest, including shading, wildlife habitat, and air quality improvements.
- Design streets that minimize localized contributions to global warming by using less resource-intensive travel modes such as walking, bicycling, and mass transit.

09

Accessible

San Francisco commercial streets will be designed for ease of use and access to destinations for all populations, particularly those with visual or mobility impairments.

- Design streets that achieve best practices in universal design to create clear, easy, and unobstructed connections between all destinations for all users.
- Design streets to promote access and enjoyment for seniors, youth, and people with visual or mobility impairments.
- Create a citywide pedestrian network that will help to connect activity centers, and identify and remedy gaps in pedestrian accessibility to destinations.
- Implement streetscape and pedestrian improvements in a manner that invests improvements equitably in neighborhoods across the city, with a particular focus on historically underinvested districts.

10 Elements of Better Streets

10

Attractive Inviting, and Well- Cared For

San Francisco's streets will be beautiful, create an engaging visual impression, appeal to senses of sight, smell and sound, and encourage a sense of ownership and civic pride in streets that is reflected in streets' physical appearance and level of activity.

- Streets should be generously planted with trees and other vegetation appropriate to the street, microclimate, and context of the built environment.
- Adopt a replicable and easily maintainable design palette for streets that results in a consistent and distinct San Francisco look but can be tailored to individual neighborhoods.
- Design streets that have high-quality materials for street furniture, paving materials, and light standards, but balance materials cost with the need to spread improvements across the city.
- Design and manage streets so as to minimize visual clutter from signage, signals, utility infrastructure, and other non-designed streetscape elements.
- Design street lighting that recognizes the special needs of pedestrians, results in a safe, inviting and aesthetically pleasing nighttime environment for all users, and minimizes glare and light loss to the night sky and into neighboring buildings.
- Manage streets to enable and encourage opportunities for community stewardship, volunteerism, and local adoption of street care.
- Provide adequate maintenance for streets such that they reflect a high level of plant health, cleanliness, and repair.
- Design and manage streets to allow for individualization and the ability for community members to take ownership in the look of the street, for example by providing opportunities for public art or community plantings.

Process and Implementation Goals

01

Education and Outreach

Provide education and outreach to community members, decision makers, and City staff about street design and pedestrian issues.

- Create and implement a program to educate pedestrians and drivers to increase their knowledge of how to share the road safely and courteously and be aware of their legal rights and responsibilities.
- Create and implement a program to educate San Francisco residents on the health benefits of walking.
- Create and implement a program to develop increased expertise in city agencies and community organizations on how to create great street spaces.
- Create and implement a program to increase awareness of pedestrian access requirements during construction.

02

Enforcement

Reduce parking and traffic violations that negatively effect pedestrian safety and comfort through enhanced enforcement of laws and regulations.

- Create and implement an enforcement program to reduce the incidence of traffic violations impacting pedestrians.
- Create and implement an enforcement program to reduce the incidence of sidewalk obstructions.
- Create and implement an enforcement program to improve compliance of pedestrian access requirements during construction.

03

Monitoring

Create a monitoring program to accompany all programs, policies and procedures stemming from the Better Streets Plan.

- Create and implement performance measures and gather baseline data to assess Better Streets Plan goals and policies.
- Create and implement a program that evaluates performance measures that includes periodic reporting on how well plan goals are being met.
- Create and implement a method to update codes, standards, and procedures as necessary based on the reporting of performance evaluations.
- Incorporate new and innovative best practices into the Better Streets Plan as they become available.

Process and Implementation Goals

04

Maintenance and Management

Develop an inclusive maintenance program for streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure that uses available resources effectively and efficiently.

- Create and implement a program that coordinates, streamlines, clarifies, and rationalizes the roles and responsibilities of various City agencies for the work and maintenance of the public right of way and considers potential realizations of cost efficiencies.
- Maintain street infrastructure in a manner that optimizes life-cycle resource use and costs, taking into account resource extraction, long-term maintenance, and replacement and disposal costs.
- Create and implement a maintenance strategy that uses an asset management system, taking into account long-term costs in decisions about maintaining, repairing, replacing, or upgrading street infrastructure. This includes timely and preventative maintenance rather than deferred maintenance.
- Create and implement a program to identify, use, and keep up to date with best available technologies, techniques, and materials for street maintenance.
- Accompany all street infrastructure projects with a long-range maintenance plan.
- Create a program to engage the community in the daily maintenance and long-range stewardship of streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Improve department transparency and educate the public about the actual costs of maintenance by creating a program to monitor and report on maintenance costs.
- Analyze and mediate areas where design and maintenance needs are in conflict to resolve real and perceived barriers to new or untried designs, technologies, or materials.
- Develop institutional expertise on street maintenance by creating and implementing an education and training program for agency staff responsible for street design and maintenance.
- Continually monitor and update maintenance plans to ensure appropriate, efficient, and consistent maintenance systems and strategies.

Process and Implementation Goals

05

Planning, Design, and Construction

Develop an inclusive process for planning, design, and construction of streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure and use available resources effectively and efficiently

- Establish effective communication with residents, merchants and other stakeholder groups in planning, design, and construction of street improvement projects.
- Create a program for consistent dissemination of project information and education about project benefits and impacts to the public about street improvement projects.
- Establish processes for quality control and implementation strategies for design and construction of street improvement projects.
- Identify and realize potential cost efficiencies for planning, design, and construction by coordinating geographically overlapping projects among City agencies.
- Update, revise, make consistent, and simplify City specifications and design standards relating to streetscape and pedestrian improvements, and disseminate this information to relevant agencies and staff.
- Identify and use best practices, innovations, and technologies from urban design, transportation planning and engineering, and keep up to date on ideas, techniques, and materials.
- Establish a process for review and acceptance of design by operations and maintenance staff, and a process for resolving conflicts over design and maintenance that addresses real and perceived barriers to new or untried designs, technologies, or materials.
- Create design templates for street improvement projects that serve a variety of functions and integrate elements such that designs meet numerous goals simultaneously.
- In design and planning of street improvement projects, select materials and designs that optimize life-cycle costs, taking into account resource extraction, long-term maintenance, and replacement and disposal costs.
- Create a process that enables and encourages neighborhoods to tailor street design projects to their individual neighborhood, and determines which elements should be standardized and which elements can be customized.

Process and Implementation Goals

06

Institutional Coordination

Foster greater coordination and collaboration among City agencies to result in more well-designed, timely, and cost-effective planning, design, and management of street infrastructure projects.

- Coordinate, streamline and clarify department roles and responsibilities regarding the planning, design, and management of street infrastructure in a manner that eliminates redundancies, rationalizes roles, and considers the particular expertise and specialization of each agency.
- Clarify and simplify City codes, standards and regulations regarding streetscape and pedestrian design and maintenance and make them consistent with City policies such as the General Plan, Transit-First Policy, and Better Streets Policy.
- Educate City staff regarding the applicable processes and standards for street design, including any changes that come from the Better Streets Plan process.
- Coordinate priorities about capital streetscape and pedestrian projects across City departments.
- Streamline regulatory processes to facilitate and encourage community members to make streetscape improvements in their own neighborhoods.

07

Funding

Create a plan for ensuring adequate funding for planning, capital and maintenance improvements of streetscape and pedestrian improvement projects

- Create a structure to identify and seek out potential funding sources so as not to miss out on potential funding opportunities.
- Create a prioritization program for street improvement projects Citywide, and to link projects to the funding source for which they are most competitive.
- Identify funding deficiencies and tie them to potential new funding sources or more efficient use of funds.
- Identify policy changes that can lead to increased funding for street improvement projects.
- Identify synergies among geographically or thematically overlapping projects to increase funding eligibility and efficient use of funds.
- Create a structure to ensure effective communication with funding agencies to maintain relationships for future funding opportunities.