



CHAPTER

7.0

IMPLEMENTATION

Achieving the vision of the Better Streets Plan will rely on the ability to effectively fund, build and maintain improvements, and to sustain improvements over time.

CHAPTER

7.0

IMPLEMENTATION

- 7.1 Identifying Priorities
- 7.2 Maintenance
- 7.3 Funding
- 7.4 Enforcement
- 7.5 Education and Awareness

7.0

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation strategies and recommendations in this chapter will be developed in the coming months as part of the on-going Better Streets Plan process

The Better Streets concepts presented in this document will not happen overnight: they require time and money to build, an understanding of which areas or conditions should be prioritized for improvement, and a plan for on-going management and maintenance of streetscape and pedestrian features.

To implement the vision of the Better Streets Plan, the City must consider how to make these improvements happen, and how to sustain improvements over time. Identifying desired street design concepts is merely the first step to making them real; the City must also identify strategies for on-going funding, efficient and effective maintenance practices, education and awareness campaigns, and enforcement of traffic and parking regulations to benefit pedestrians.

This chapter describes specific topics to be covered and preliminary ideas about implementing Better Streets improvements. These strategies and policies will be developed in the coming months as part of the Better Streets Plan process.

Other next steps, such as building demonstration (pilot) projects, and conducting a study of institutional change relating to street design, are described in Section 1.3: Moving Forward. In addition, some specific proposed next steps are called out in Chapter 3: Goals and Policies.

▼ Guerrero Street (courtesy of San Jose/Guerrero Coalition)



7.1 Identifying Priorities

To help implement the Better Streets Plan, the City should identify priority criteria for pedestrian and streetscape improvements. The list below represents a preliminary set of priority criteria, based on existing City policies in the San Francisco General Plan and elsewhere.

This list will be refined and expanded as the plan progresses.

- **Areas with especially high collision/crash rates:** Pedestrian safety is a prime objective of the Better Streets Plan. Areas with high incidences of pedestrian safety issues should be prioritized for improvement.
- **Transit Hubs:** San Francisco is a “Transit First” city, with large volumes of commuters, visitors and residents traveling around the city on public transit. Pedestrian volumes are concentrated at major transit hubs (stations, bus stops, transfer points, transit centers, and regional transit facilities), and stress levels are often high as complex transit connections are often made. Improvements should be prioritized at and around key transit locations to enhance the experience and safety of walking to a transit trip, supporting the City’s Transit-First Policy. .
- **Schools, child care centers and senior centers:** The areas around these facilities are more likely to be populated by pedestrians of age-specific vulnerability. Application of Better Streets Plan recommendations in these areas will help ensure that the vulnerability and exposure of these populations is given more attention, and encourage walking as a safe mode of travel by these populations.
- **Neighborhoods with sub-standard infrastructure:** As neighborhoods develop at different rates and with differing land uses, certain neighborhoods are in greater need of high-quality infrastructure investment than others. Streetscape and pedestrian improvements should be prioritized in these areas to ensure more equitable distribution of resources, both geographically and economically.
- **Areas with high population densities and/or intense mixes of land use:** Areas of concentrated land use and population, such as downtown or commercial areas, generally produce higher numbers of pedestrian volumes, as more people are inclined to walk as a primary mode of travel..
- **Areas with significant regional and local destinations:** Similarly, people are attracted to large centers of regional and local activity, such as tourist destinations, recreational facilities, large institutions and cultural attractions in San Francisco. These institutions are often dependent on the pedestrian networks that link them to transit facilities and/or concentrated points of origin, and often these people are unfamiliar with local travel patterns and the city’s overall landscape.
- **Areas of ecological connection or concern:** Streets can serve as green corridors through the city, connecting larger parks and open spaces with a swath of green, and providing habitat for small wildlife. Particular areas may also be prone to flooding or other environmental issues. Streets that provide these connections or have significant environmental issues should be prioritized for improvements.
- **Streets that are important to the city pattern:** The San Francisco General Plan identifies streets that contribute to the city pattern—streets that are most useful in creating a distinctive urban design and recognizable image for San Francisco, clarifying routes for travelers, and contributing to the overall legibility of the city as a whole.
- **Opportunities to leverage other projects:** The City has limited funding to make streetscape and pedestrian improvements. This funding should be leveraged by piggy-backing on existing capital infrastructure projects, such as re-paving projects or utility upgrades.

7.2 Maintenance

When contemplating the pieces that must come together to make great streetscapes a reality, it is easy to overlook the more intangible functions of management and maintenance. Yet those twin functions will determine San Francisco’s ability to not only deliver streetscape improvement but also sustain them into the future.

Many of the streetscape design concepts described in this plan go beyond the standard streetscape treatment given to San Francisco streets today, requiring different or additional maintenance than current practice provides. This is not to say such features are difficult or impossible to maintain—indeed, the concepts shown in this document are used by cities throughout the country today. Rather, the City must consider its maintenance practices as a whole to incorporate new desired street designs, and explore innovative maintenance practices to address them.

This section identifies potential areas of investigation to develop innovative maintenance approaches. Maintenance recommendations will be further developed in the coming months.

Primary areas of investigation will include:

- identifying and developing alternative funding sources for street maintenance, such as community benefit districts, parking benefit districts, private ‘adopt-a-street’ sources, and the like
- exploring and developing community stewardship models and programs
- clarifying streetscape and sidewalk maintenance responsibilities between property owners and the City, and exploring programs that enable the City to take on maintenance of these features to take advantage of economies of scale
- considering life-cycle costs of streetscape materials and designs, and accounting for full costs and benefits of streetscape improvements. For example,

stormwater management features may add routine maintenance in the short-term, but may require less infrastructure costs to the City in the long-term.

- exploring opportunities for long-term, dedicated maintenance funding associated with capital projects
- minimizing deferred maintenance so as to spend more on routine maintenance than on rehabilitation or reconstruction. Experience has shown that it is usually most cost-effective to allocate funding to routine maintenance; this extends the life of infrastructure while helping to delay or prevent the need for more costly rehabilitation or reconstruction.

7.3 Funding

In order to implement the ideas of the Better Streets Plan in a systematic manner across the city, a commitment to fund street improvement projects must be made, a significant investment in our streets must be a priority for the City, and a continuous funding source should be identified. Capital planning efforts must account for “Complete Streets” projects, taking into account all travel modes, ecological, and design features. The City should aggressively pursue federal and state grant opportunities for Better Streets projects. New funding sources, such as public/private partnerships, developer requirements, bond measures, and others, should be considered.

The City should also look for opportunities to combine and create synergies among capital street improvement projects, such as by matching curb ramp funds with curb extension projects, merging traffic calming, greening, and stormwater projects, or prioritizing streetscape improvements when major capital work (e.g. sewer upgrade, repaving) will take place.

Funding concepts and strategies will be further developed in the coming months.

7.4 Enforcement

Effective enforcement of applicable regulations is a key component of ensuring that Better Streets Plan ideas can be effectively implemented, to promote pedestrian safety and sidewalk accessibility. The term ‘enforcement’ includes traffic and pedestrian safety laws (found in the California Vehicle Code and San Francisco Transportation Code), with a focus on speeding, pedestrian right-of-way violations, and sidewalk parking, as well as Planning Code and Public Works Code violations such as sidewalk obstructions, required front yard landscaping, and others. ..

Working with the San Francisco Police Department and other agencies as appropriate, the Better Streets Plan will develop enforcement strategies and recommendations in the coming months.

7.5 Education and Awareness

Finally, education and awareness campaigns regarding pedestrian safety and activity are key to successfully implementing Better Streets Plan ideas. Strategies and recommendations should address the unique populations within San Francisco. Many off-the-shelf materials address a national audience and may exclude different cultural populations, or simply not feel relevant. Education policies and campaigns should:

- focus on conditions which affect high-risk populations, which in San Francisco especially include seniors, children and the disabled, as well as on streets and routes which carry heavy and speeding traffic, including many streets in low-income residential areas
- focus on schools by developing a comprehensive Safe Routes to School Program. Safe Routes to School is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to bicycle and walk to school. Safe Routes to School provides a variety of important benefits to kids and their communities, including improved health, reduced traffic congestion, better air quality, and enhanced neighborhood safety.

- continue to build community capacity of neighborhood and community groups to advocate for pedestrian improvements in their neighborhoods and citywide through mini-grants and technical assistance, especially as the long-term recommendations from the Better Streets Plan come into fruition
- use media campaigns as an adjunct to community-based awareness campaigns, rather than as stand-alone tools. Media campaigns can help change and reinforce community norms and values, in the context of ongoing education and policy interventions that have visible community support
- secure long-term funding streams for educational and encouragement efforts need in order to conduct long-range efforts
- involve community groups, activists, residents and public agencies. Long-term involvement by these groups is necessary for priorities to be set, plans implemented, interventions reviewed and problems resolved.

Specific education and awareness recommendations and strategies will be further developed in the coming months.