



FISHERMAN'S WHARF

PUBLIC REALM PLAN

DRAFT DOCUMENT-SUBJECT TO CHANGE | MAY 2010



SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Chapter 1



Introduction

The Planning Department initiated the Fisherman's Wharf Public Realm Plan at the request of Supervisor Aaron Peskin. The Fisherman's Wharf Community Benefit District (CBD) had recently completed a comprehensive community vision plan and wished to build upon the momentum by formalizing their vision in an official City plan. Goals and long-term outcomes were defined in the community vision plan, but specific interventions were not. Because of this demonstrated community consensus for improving the Fisherman's Wharf area, Supervisor Peskin and the Department agreed that it was timely to prepare this public realm plan for Fisherman's Wharf.

Work on the plan began in December 2007. The plan was to contain five elements, including: 1) Redesign for Jefferson Street; 2) Streetscape Plan for the remaining streets; 3) Parking and Circulation Plan; 4) Open Space Plan; and 5) Urban Design Guidelines

for public and private development. There were to be minor zoning adjustments, but not a wholesale rezoning. It was anticipated that the plan would take 12 to 18 months to complete.

To augment its work on the plan, the Planning Department, with the assistance of a grant from the San Francisco Bay Trail Program, hired Gehl Architects to conduct a study of pedestrian activity in the Fisherman's Wharf area and to prepare recommendations for a series of interventions that would improve the quality of the pedestrian and bicycle environment in Fisherman's Wharf. Fisherman's Wharf remains San Francisco's most popular destination, but insufficient investment over a number of years has left the area in great need of upgrades and improvement.

FISHERMAN'S WHARF COMMUNITY VISION

This plan benefited from a strong community commitment to the planning process and involvement in developing the plan itself. As part of its community visioning process, the CBD had convened a two-day charrette with merchants, property owners, residents, City agencies and other stakeholders to articulate a vision for the Wharf area in general, and Jefferson Street in particular. Planning has built upon this vision and its associated goals as it formulated the Public Realm Plan and its recommendations.

The community's vision for Fisherman's Wharf states the desire to provide a world-class experience to visitors and locals alike by reinvigorating connections to, and providing authentic interactions with the Bay and the working waterfront. The community vision expresses a strong desire to make Fisherman's Wharf a favorite destination of San Franciscans. This would entail an improved pedestrian environment, new and revitalized open spaces, better connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, and a richer interpretation of the Wharf's historic context.

A redesigned Jefferson Street plays the central role in the reinvigorated Fisherman's Wharf. The community vision prioritized better management of automobile traffic, including occasional street closures, fewer cars, widened sidewalks, and a safe two-way bicycle route through the area along the Bay. To reconnect the Wharf to the water, the community plan envisions streets and open spaces that orient towards the Bay and provide new opportunities for visitors to stop and enjoy the views of the water.

THE PROCESS

Fisherman's Wharf is a community of longstanding traditions and family-owned businesses with rich histories in the wharf. The numerous plans attempted, but never adopted, in Fisherman's Wharf are a testament to the difficulty of reaching broad support for improving the Wharf. In undertaking the Fisherman's Wharf Public Realm Plan, the Planning Department believed that for any plan to be successful it would have to establish and then maintain a strong and long-term presence in the community, and would have to work closely with individuals, key stakeholder groups and the community at large. It also believed that the outreach process would need to be more intensive and personal than traditional outreach efforts; the resulting process was one marked both by large community events and by numerous small meetings that took place in individual businesses, in walks through the neighborhood, and a great many

discussions at the CBD's office and elsewhere. For awhile, even, the Department moved into an office offered to the Department in the Cannery complex. It was only through such efforts, in addition to the strong partnership with the CBD and a number of key stakeholders, that the Department was able to achieve a substantial level of support for the plan it developed with the community.

DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

Chapter 1 is this introduction. Chapter 2 provides a summary of existing conditions. Chapter 3 discusses the neighborhood vision for the public realm, including a design framework to assist in future decisions regarding street improvements and new development. Chapter 4 lays out the preferred design for Jefferson Street and presents the policies and guidelines that will help the community achieve its desired goal for a renewed street environment. Chapter 5 provides the street design guidelines for the remainder of the streets in the plan area, using guidelines established in the City's Better Streets Plan. Complimenting the streetscape design guidelines, Chapter 6 presents the urban design guidelines for public and private development. Chapter 7 presents the parking and circulation plan that will underpin many of the public space improvements. Chapter 8 discusses plans for specific improvements, as well as policies for area's open space network in general. Finally, Chapter 9 discusses implementation strategies, funding and first steps.





Chapter 2

NO ONE FISHERMAN'S WHARF

FRESH COOKED CR

CHOWDER 8oz CUP	\$3.90	BEER
CRAB & SHRIMP BREAD BOWL	4.75	WINE
HOT SOUP	3.25	SODA
MIN Sourdough BREAD	4.00	SHUFFLE
MIN Sourdough BREAD	2.00	EATING V
SOUDOUGH ROLL	1.50	FILE PACK

**TAX ON APPLICABLE IT

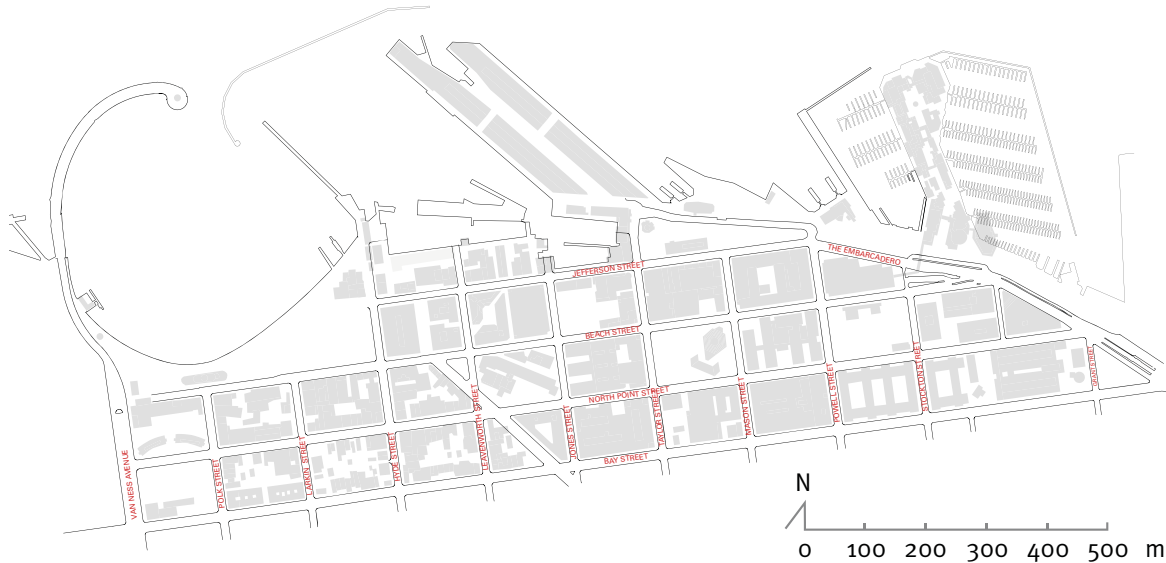
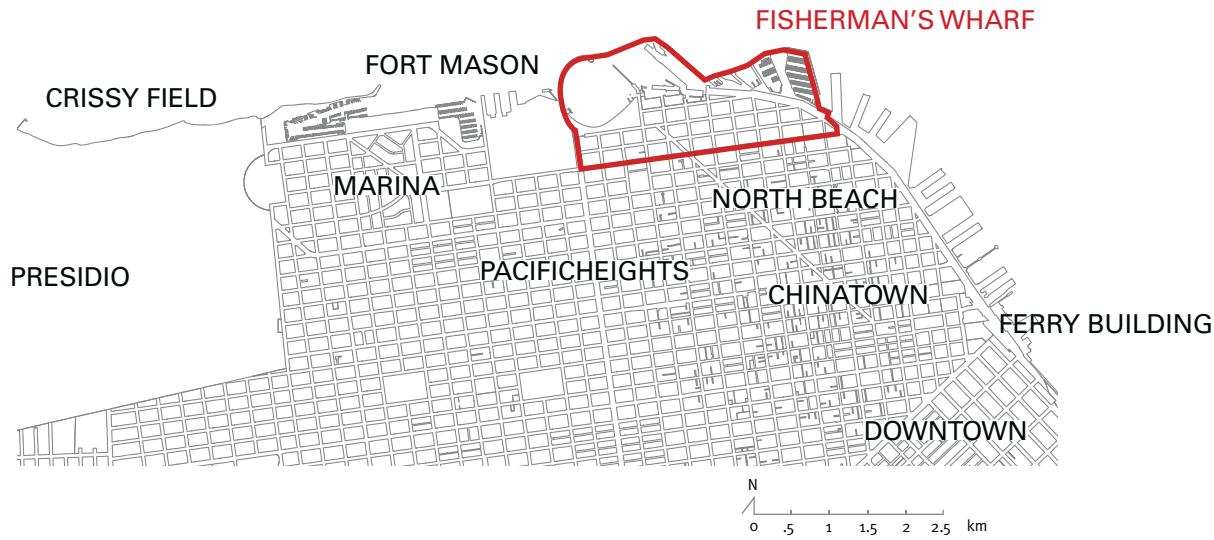
Existing Conditions

INTRODUCTION

Improving the condition of the streets, buildings and open spaces in Fisherman's Wharf is the most important motivating factor for completing the Fisherman's Wharf Public Realm Plan. For a variety of reasons, from the spontaneous development of much of the area in the 1950s, to its historic and continued use as an industrial and commercial area on the waterfront, to the extended period of little improvement, Fisherman's Wharf generally looks in ill-repair and lacks any coherent vision for its built environment. This state extends to its streets, open spaces and buildings, alike, with few exceptions. Over time, Fisherman's Wharf oddly has lost much of its relationship to its most spectacular asset, San Francisco Bay.

2.1 NATURAL SYSTEMS

Fisherman's Wharf occupies one of the most dramatic landscapes in the city. At the terminus of the valley between Telegraph and Russian hills, Fisherman's Wharf enjoys views both back to the city and its northern hills, and also out to San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and the North and East bays. Built almost entirely on fill, – the original shoreline extended inland nearly to Chestnut Street– today's Wharf bears little resemblance to its earlier state.



2.2 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

The streets of Fisherman's Wharf have a unique character and feel that reflects their dynamic history. Until the 1950s, much of the area between Jefferson Street and Bay Street was owned by the [Southern Pacific Railway] and was defined by two lines of the San Francisco Belt Railroad that ran along what are now North Point and Jefferson streets. Then, when the land was sold and developed in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, little thought was given to the qualities that would create an enjoyable place. The architecture was almost uniformly poor, and most buildings turned their backs to the street. Despite the growing crowds attracted to the Wharf's mixture of seafood, waterfront, ferries and other visitor destinations, the streets south of Jefferson remained some of the least inviting paths anywhere in the city.



There are few major historic resources in the area, but those that do exist are notable. The historic buildings to the south of Jefferson Street share some architectural similarities, with brick facades and large arched windows defining their outward appearances, but differ more so with respect to size and architectural style. (See Map 3.x.)

Ghirardelli Square was the location of Ghirardelli's chocolate factory, before being redeveloped into an urban retail mall in the 19xxs. The property has recently undergone substantial redevelopment and now contains a mixture of housing, retail and restaurants.

The Cannery and Argonaut Hotel were the first re-use of a former industrial site in America. The facility opened in 1969, having been a Del Monte's cannery for years. Initially successful, today retail suffers because the outmoded retail spaces do not meet the needs of contemporary stores.

The Otis Elevator Company building at the corner of Grant and Beach streets, listed in the National Register of Historic Places since 1999, is the area's final historic building built out of brick. Originally built as a manufacturing facility, it is now houses commercial offices. These three buildings suggest a future architectural style for an area that is notable for its lack of quality architecture. The large industrial sashed windows, deeply recessed and providing a strong shadow line, are rhythmically spaced, with the largest openings at the ground floor. Typically 6-storys with high ground floors, the buildings have a distinct bottom, middle and top , a high level of architectural detailing – especially around the main entrance – and a typical horizontal frontage dimension under 200'. These details will provide the basis for guidelines for new development that would be compatible with the best of the old.

The National Maritime Museum of San Francisco and Maritime Park is a product of the Works Progress Administration. Completed in 1939, it is in the Art Deco style. A major retrofit of the building is nearly complete, and the Museum should be open to the public in 2009.

North of Jefferson Street, Fish Alley remains the historic heart of Fisherman's Wharf, while the restaurants along Taylor Street embody perhaps the most memorable scene. The scale on the north side of Jefferson Street is small and dominated by board and baton construction. Remaining consistent with this style will be the basis for successful infill development north of Jefferson Street.





2.3 IDENTITY

The name Fisherman's Wharf evokes the image of a waterfront destination where one can see, hear and smell an active fishing fleet, eat at seafood restaurants and buy fresh seafood, and find opportunities to get close to the water. From the hills above the Wharf, one can see many of these elements, but once one descends to Jefferson Street, the experience is more mixed.

The historic restaurants are there, but are somewhat isolated by a large parking lot which forms the main foreground view of the restaurants for those on Jefferson Street. The fishing boats are there, too, but observation shows that most visitors do not know how to find them. Views of the water are obstructed by parking lots, tour buses, and cyclone fences, while the paths that would lead to the fishing fleet are in poor condition and generally uninviting. The "heart" of the Wharf, the intersection of Jefferson and Taylor streets, is marked by a tired sign and a very small corner plaza pressed up against a parking lot. The perception is that Fisherman's Wharf is a collection of individual destinations with no center or heart, despite the proximity of a number of compelling destinations. The public realm does little to ameliorate or unify this seeming congeries of uses.

The Embarcadero/Powell Street intersection is particularly problematic. Pier 39 is by far the most popular destination in Fisherman's Wharf, and a logical point from which to explore the Wharf's other attractions. The path from Pier 39 to either The Little Embarcadero or Jefferson Street is incoherent and disorienting, and dissuades tens of thousands of visitors during the summer peak season from taking the walk.

Another point of disconnection is between Jefferson Street and Ghirardelli Square, which is the second largest destination in Fisherman's Wharf and has more than twice as many visitors as the third-ranked destination, The Cannery. Strengthening the connections between both Pier 39 and Ghirardelli Square and Jefferson Street represents a major opportunity to significantly increase the number of people visiting Jefferson Street without having to bring an extra person to the Wharf.

The shopping along Jefferson Street has less to do with the area's roots in San Francisco's fishing industry. Instead, it blatantly caters to visitors with numerous t-shirt shops, camera stores and faux antique shops. One can still buy crab chowder or a shrimp cocktail from the historic crab pots along Taylor Street, but there is almost nowhere for someone to sit, take in a view of the bay and enjoy his meal. Much work needs to be done to refocus the public spaces on the area's roots and to provide the spaces visitors could use to spend time and enjoy the atmosphere of Fisherman's Wharf.

The area south of Jefferson Street lacks a coherent identity, despite having a large number of hotels and approximately 1500 hotel rooms. The challenge centers on retrofitting or replacing buildings that are better suited to a suburban setting than an urban one. The overwhelming majority of ground floors, for example, lack an active frontage and are very likely to be solid blank walls, garages, garage entrances, service entrances or surface parking lots. There is little to attract or comfort the pedestrian. As buildings near the end of life are replaced, great effort must be extended to ensure these mistakes are not repeated. Simple improvements would have a substantial effect

on the quality of the pedestrian experience and result in a much more active streetlife in this area.

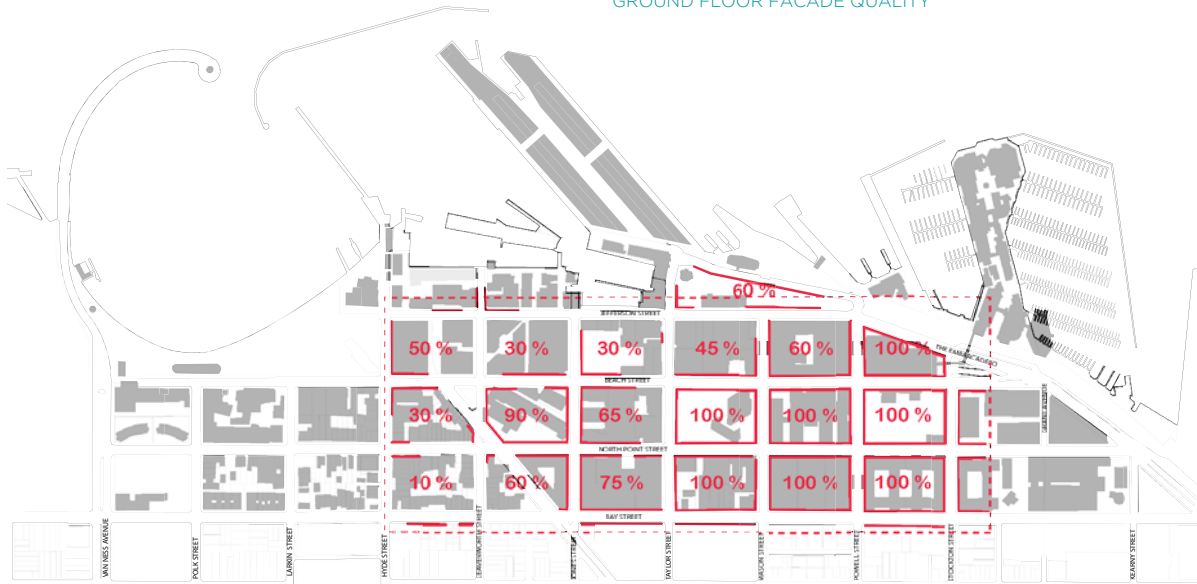
The identity of Fisherman's Wharf would be improved by expanding the diversity of functions in the area to include more residential development beyond that found west of Columbus Avenue and south of Beach Street. Local residents typically bring new demand for different stores and services that would add to the Wharf's richness. Residents also use the area's open spaces at times when there are fewer visitors, maintaining an active public realm throughout the year. Finally, residents bring a sense of ownership and stewardship to an area that visitors do not, which translates into a better maintained and better cared for neighborhood.

2.4 CONNECTION TO THE WATER

Despite being located on the water, Fisherman's Wharf offers few opportunities to see and experience the water and even fewer invitations to do so. Pier 39's East and West plazas provide good views, but the pier itself largely turns its back on the bay, with blank walls along the ground-floor for most of its perimeter. Moving west, Jefferson Street offers only one opportunity to see boats and a visitor would have to be very observant to find the path leading to the fishing fleet. It is not until Hyde Street Pier that a visitor can easily walk out to the water and enjoy the spectacular views back towards the city and out across the bay. Of course, west of Hyde Street, Maritime Park and City Pier bring people to the shore and the water itself.



GROUND FLOOR FACADE QUALITY

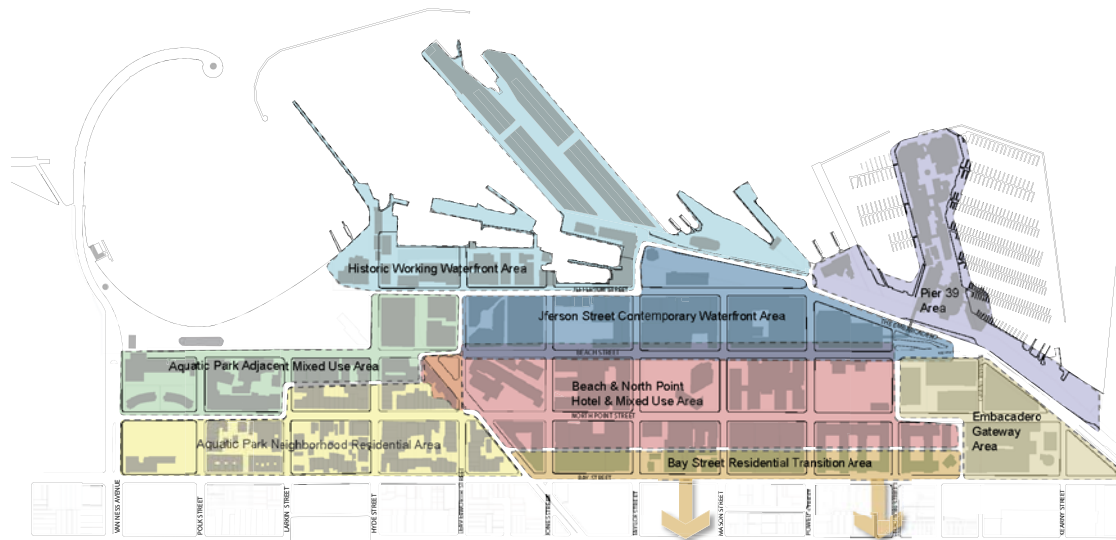


2.5 STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Many people walk as a way to get from home to the store, or from the bus stop to work; however, some of our most rewarding experiences as a pedestrian take place when we stop and spend time in the public realm, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of an engaging street or district. This is especially true in Fisherman's Wharf, where there is so much to see and do as one walks along The Embarcadero and Jefferson Street.

Walking is also about stopping and engaging in other types of activities, whether recreation, cultural or social, that add a tremendous amount to the overall experience of being in a place. For those who have come to experience a district like Fisherman's Wharf, to look and shop and eat and take in the views, walking is the only really viable means of moving about. The following analysis looks at Fisherman's Wharf through the lens of the pedestrian and evaluates how well the Wharf provides opportunities for people to stop and engage in what's around them.





PEDESTRIAN DISTRICTS IN FISHERMAN'S WHARF

PEDESTRIAN CHARACTER

Fisherman's Wharf has eight districts with distinct pedestrian characters. The two most well known pedestrian districts are Jefferson Street and the Pier 39 area. The Embarcadero Promenade extends from Pier 35 to Powell Street, although The Port is now undertaking a plan to extend it two blocks west to Pier 45 along The Little Embarcadero. The third district, west of Pier 45 and along the water's edge, has no coherent pedestrian network; it includes Fish Alley and at some point could provide a very attractive and highly desirable route along the water. The fourth

district lies south of Jefferson Street and stretches from Columbus Ave in the west to The Embarcadero in the east. This is where the majority of hotels are and hence will be referred to as the Hotel District. The last district extends south of Aquatic Park between Columbus Ave and Van Ness Ave, with Ghirardeli Square being the primary focus, and will be referred to as such. Jefferson Street is the only pedestrian route that runs the length of Fisherman's Wharf and will be discussed in detail, along with the proposed design, in the next chapter. The remaining districts are discussed briefly below.



Pier 39 Area

Pier 39 and The Embarcadero Promenade has the most coherent design aesthetic of any pedestrian district in Fisherman's Wharf. It also has the single largest destination in the area and not surprisingly has more people walking along it than any other district in Fisherman's Wharf.

There are relatively few glaring problems with the pedestrian environment in this district, although there was observed a near total lack of any stationary activity in the East Plaza, which is surprising given the tens of thousands of people who walk past every day. The other major challenge is how to better integrate two-way bicycling facilities into this stretch of The Embarcadero; the informal shared space option chosen by the overwhelming majority of tourists on bicycles appears to work fairly well, but the space in front of Pier 39 needs to be rethought so that the interaction between the modes is more orderly and comfortable.



Historic Working Waterfront Area

Walking along the water ranges from difficult to impossible through this part of Fisherman's Wharf, and yet it remains the historic heart of the district. The incomplete pedestrian network is partly explained by the area's continued use as a light industrial zone, with numerous fish processors located on Pier 45 and a very active fleet of fishing boats in the commercial harbor. Regardless of the constraints, this area remains one of best opportunities for Fisherman's Wharf at once to improve its attractiveness as a destination and to strengthen the linkage to its historical roots.

Indeed, what has distinguished the Wharf from other parts of San Francisco's waterfront is its proximity to the water and the relative ease of access in some parts. Many parts of the city's waterfront are now embracing the Bay much more emphatically, and Fisherman's Wharf should begin to find ways to do so itself. Much of the foundation is there, but a concerted effort on



the part of the City and the local businesses will be required to successfully open up the water's edge as a place to promenade and experience one of the few active fishing fleets left in Northern California.

The Hotel District

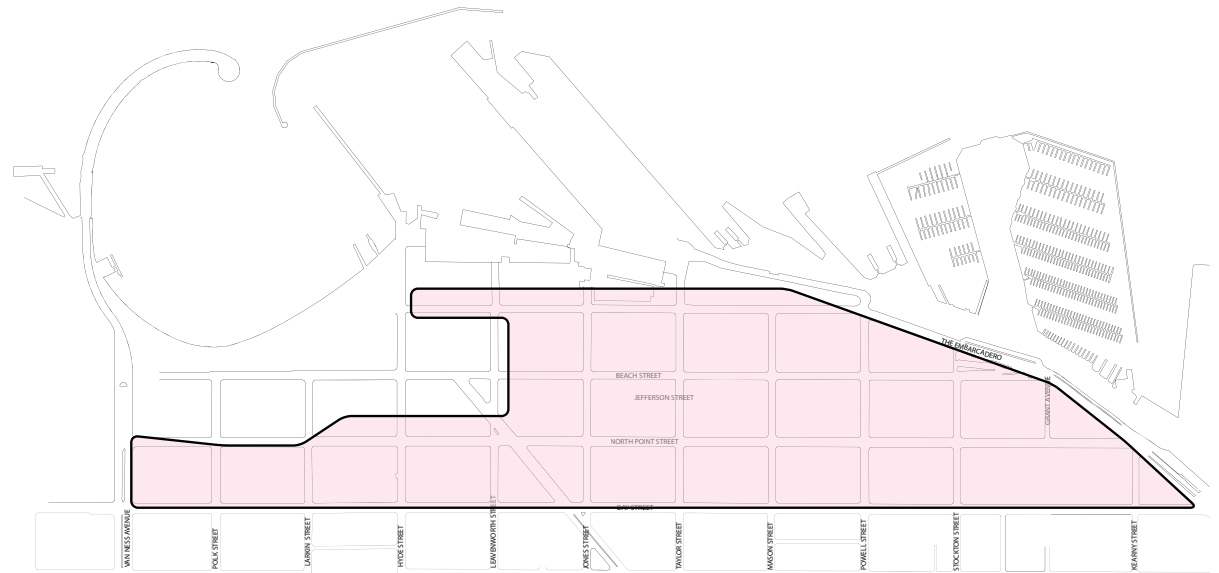
The streets in this district predominantly feel like staging grounds for the tourist destinations along Jefferson Street and provide few incentives for either visitors or locals to walk there, let alone pause and enjoy their surroundings.

Many of the area's hotels are accessible from Beach Street, which provides the opportunity to build a stable pedestrian base and create a vibrant walking district with restaurants, entertainment and retail. This potential, in combination with its immediate proximity to Jefferson Street, makes Beach Street a high-priority street for pedestrian improvements and the near-term augmentation of the pedestrian network.

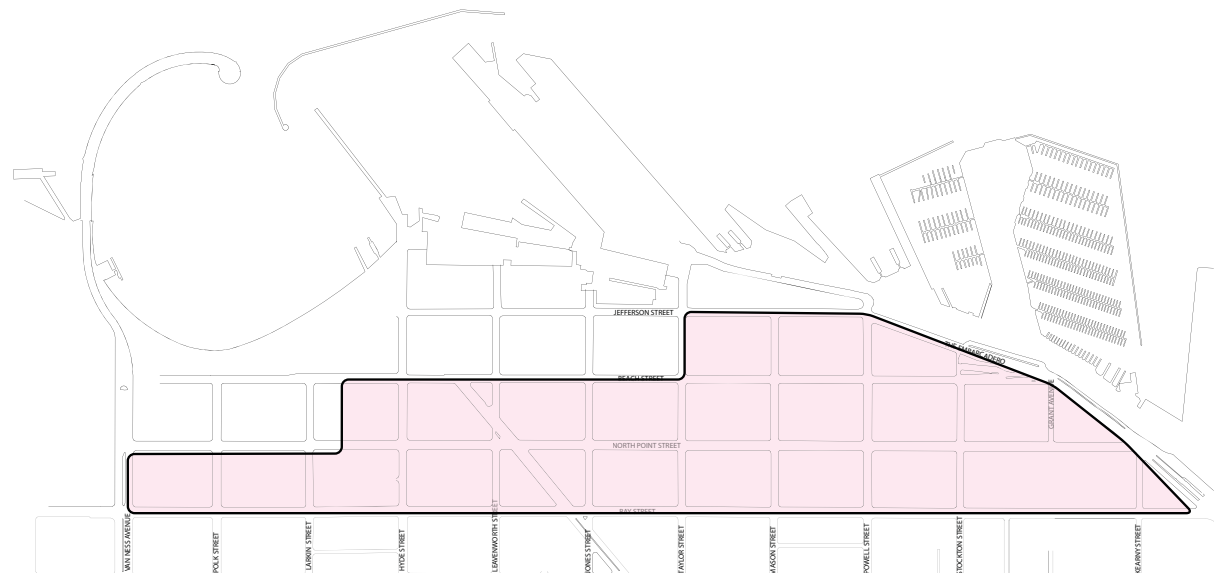


North Point resembles Beach Street in that it does not extend beyond Fisherman’s Wharf and primarily serves as a local access street. The notable exceptions are the planned bike lanes that will connect The Embarcadero with Polk Street, thereby closing a gap in the city-wide bicycle network, as well as a number of important regional and local bus connections.

The district’s sidewalks are particularly narrow and offer some of the least inviting pedestrian routes in Fisherman’s Wharf. There are entire blocks of blank facades from hotels, ground-floor parking garages and large-scale commercial development. The intersection of North Point, Columbus and Leavenworth is particularly daunting and represents a major barrier between Fisherman’s Wharf and the adjacent North Beach neighborhood and commercial zone. This intersection represents a significant liability in any effort to better connect Fisherman’s Wharf to the rest of the city; indeed, the entire Columbus Avenue



AREAS THAT LACK PUBLIC SEATING



AREAS THAT LACK CAFE SEATING

corridor will need to be addressed if serious progress is to be made on re-knitting the north-south pedestrian and bike connections with the rest of the city.

As one walks south along any of the streets from Taylor Street east, one is struck by how quickly North Beach begins, with its unique texture of small shops and restaurants tightly integrated with residential buildings. This proximity is deceiving, in large part because of the unattractive pedestrian environment, and represents a major opportunity to knit Fisherman's Wharf back into the surrounding city fabric.

Ghirardelli Square District

This is a small district, barely eight blocks in size, and straddles one major arterial (Bay Street) and one transit street (North Point Street). Most of the buildings are older, small and either residential or mixed-use residential, although notable exceptions include a school playground, The Fontana Towers, the Williams-Sonoma headquarters and Ghirardelli Square. The topography rises rapidly from Beach Street to Bay Street, offering stunning public views to San Francisco Bay, but also acting as a barrier for pedestrians.

Beach Street west of Columbus, with its impressive views towards the Bay from the sidewalk, the small-scale retail, Aquatic Park on its north side and the San Francisco Maritime z and Ghirardelli Square near the street's terminus, is much more attractive to pedestrians than almost any other street in Fisherman's Wharf.

Narrow sidewalks and clutter from street vendors detract from the walking environment, however, and Aquatic Park's design should be reconsidered and the opportunity taken to enhance the park's attractiveness. The anticipated extension of the historic streetcar along Beach will complicate an already chaotic street and will need careful planning to ensure pedestrians remain the focus of the street's design.

The remaining streets differ little from each other in character, with minor exceptions. Topography plays a significant role on Bay Street. In addition to confronting the steep slope west of Columbus, pedestrians and cyclists have to contend with the large and unappealing intersection of Bay and Columbus streets. This is a large intersection, and the least appealing intersection in the plan area. The size of the intersection is exacerbated by weak development on three of the four corners, and the inwardly facing Marriott Hotel on the fourth. Bay Street also is the area's only east-west through street.

The north-south streets are all of a similar character to each other; they are all 70' in width, 45' from curb-to-curb with two travel lanes, two parking lanes and 12.5' sidewalks. None are memorable walking routes although Hyde Street, with the cable car and some intriguing shops and restaurants, is quaint and does offer some charm.



2.6 SPACE FOR PEOPLE IN THE WHARF

The City engaged Gehl Architects to guide a detailed study of pedestrian activities and behavior in Fisherman’s Wharf. The study collected data on the number of people walking from 8 AM to 10 PM, the age and gender distribution of pedestrians, and the number of people in public spaces engaged in “stationary activities” by the time of day and type of activity. The result is a robust picture of how many people use the streets and open spaces in Fisherman’s Wharf, when they are there, what they are doing, and their general demographics.

We can draw a number conclusions from this data. First, there is a dramatic difference between weekdays and weekends in the number of visitors and where they visit. Second, Pier 39 and the stretch of The Embarcadero in front of Pier 39 is by far the most popular pedestrian destination of Fisherman’s Wharf. By extension, there appears to be significant opportunities to draw pedestrians from the more popular destinations to those with lower pedestrian numbers. Finally, despite enormous volumes of pedestrians along many blocks, the dramatic shortage of open space and places to stop, sit and take in the scene results in far fewer people engaged in stationary activities than one would expect, given the nature of the place and the number of people there.

Weekday Pedestrian Movement

During the week, daytime pedestrian traffic is highest surrounding Pier 39. Along Jefferson Street, the block closest to Aquatic Park has the highest volume, with the number of people declining as one moves east. Of the north-south streets, Hyde, Jones and Taylor are the most heavily used, likely because of the cable car and streetcar facilities located there.

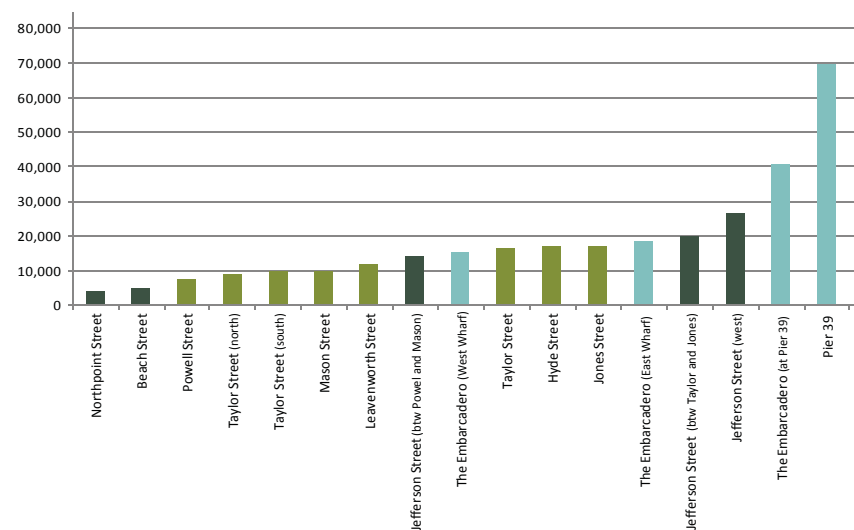
The evening presents a different picture, although the Pier 39 area still clearly dominates. Jones Street now has more people than any stretch of Jefferson Street, as visitors return to the downtown via the F-line streetcar, while the first block of Taylor Street as numbers comparable to Jefferson.

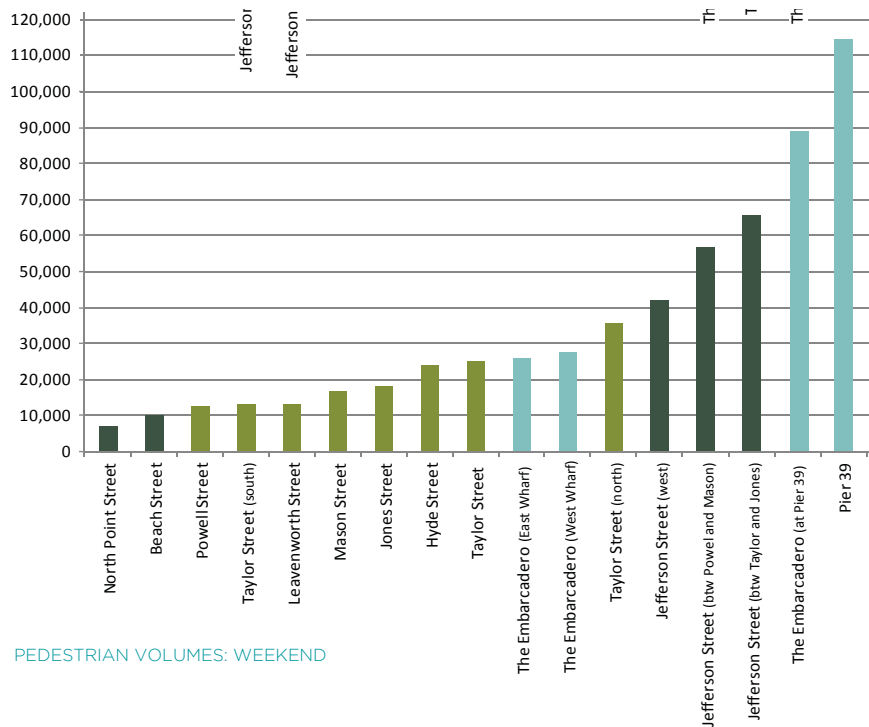
Weekend Pedestrian Movement

The weekend pedestrian movement data highlights the extent to which Fisherman’s Wharf is a destination for visitors rather than locals. Almost twice as many pedestrians were counted on the weekend as on a weekday (593,000 versus 310,000), with the northern streets by far the busiest.

Pier 39 has almost 75 percent more pedestrians than the next highest block, which is Jefferson Street between Taylor and Jones (113,000 versus 65,000). Interestingly, the center of gravity has shifted noticeably to the east, with the central and eastern block of Jefferson Street receiving more pedestrians than the western block, which is opposite to the weekday pattern. This pattern persists into the weekend evening, with Jefferson Street remaining far more active than any of the north-south streets.

PEDESTRIAN VOLUMES: WEEKDAY





PEDESTRIAN VOLUMES: WEEKEND

Stationary Activities in Fisherman's Wharf

Gehl Architects argues that a clear measure of the quality of the public realm can be described as the product of **Number of People x Time Spent**. That is, the optional “staying activities” that occur in the public realm are the key to city quality because these activities are the most sensitive to the quality of a public space, and depend most heavily on how attractive the “invitation” is to stop and spend time. Said another way, a busy street with lots of people walking but no one stopping is evidence of an anemic public realm that does not fulfill half of its public role.

The number of people engaged in stationary activities increases significant on weekends, with approximately twice as many people counted. The distribution of people is extremely uneven, with the spaces associated with Pier 39 accounting for approximately 75 percent of all stationary activities counted in 10 public plazas, parks and street segments across the Wharf on both weekdays and the weekend.

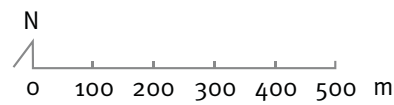
During the week, on the central two blocks from Leavenworth to Mason, Jefferson had 7 percent of all stationary activities and the Aquatic Park had 8 percent. On the weekend, the percent for Jefferson Street increased to 9, while Aquatic Park fell to 5 percent. Clearly, beyond Pier 39, Fisherman's Wharf needs to do much to invite people to stop and spend time enjoying the sights, sounds and smells of the waterfront.



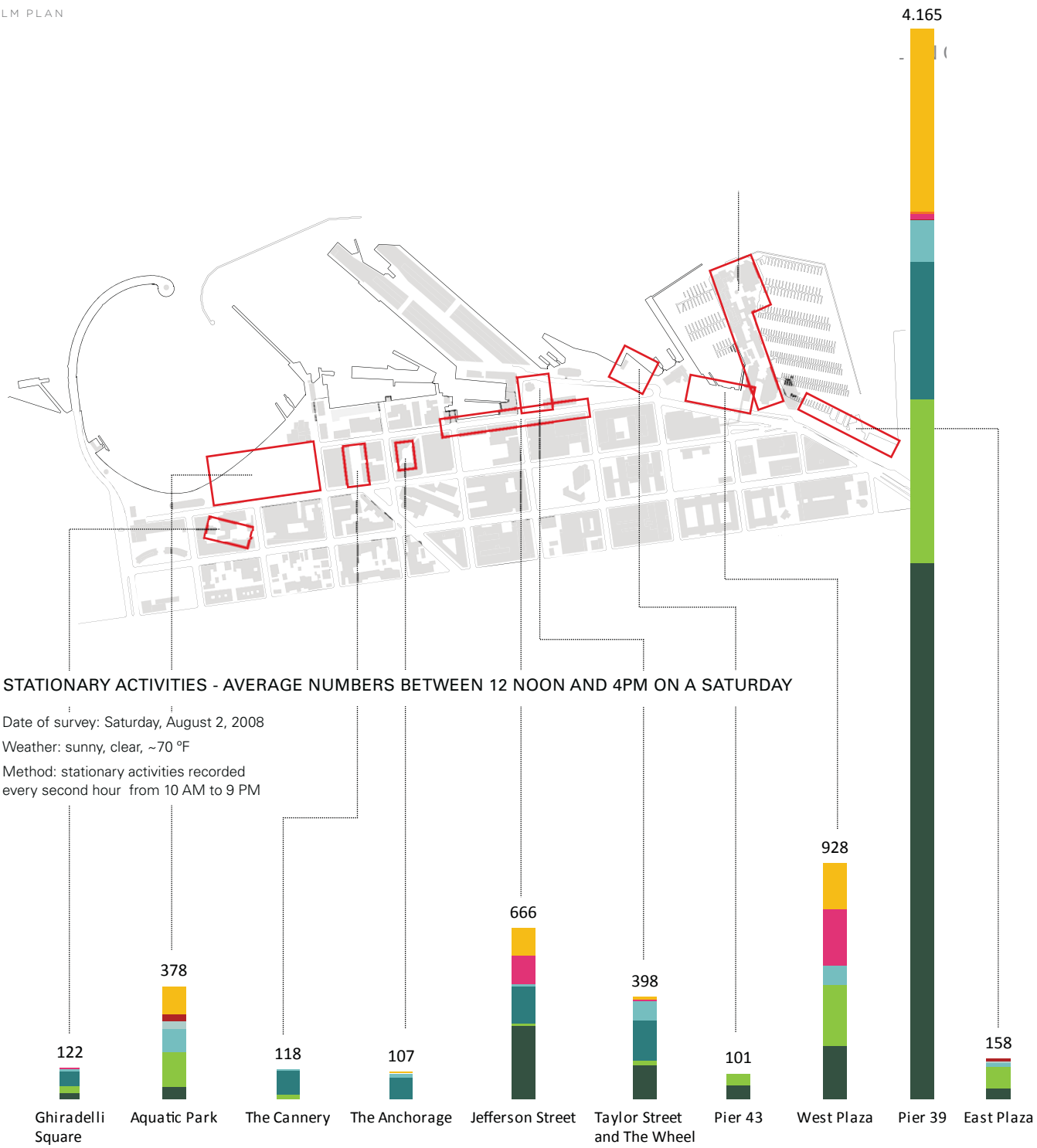


STATIONARY ACTIVITIES - AVERAGE NUMBERS BETWEEN 12 NOON AND 4PM ON A WEEKDAY

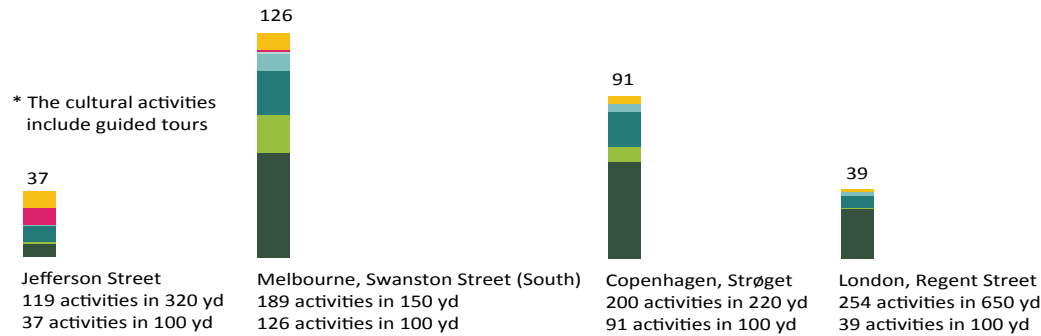
Date of survey: Wednesday, July 30, 2008
 Weather: sunny/fair, later fog, 60-65 °F
 Method: stationary activities recorded every second hour from 10 AM to 9 PM



- Standing
- Sitting on benches
- Sitting caféchairs
- Sitting on secondary sittingpossibilities
- Lying down
- Children playing
- Cultural activities
- Physical activities
- Commercial active permanent



AVERAGE NUMBER OF STATIONARY ACTIVITIES BETWEEN 12 NOON AND 5 PM /YARD



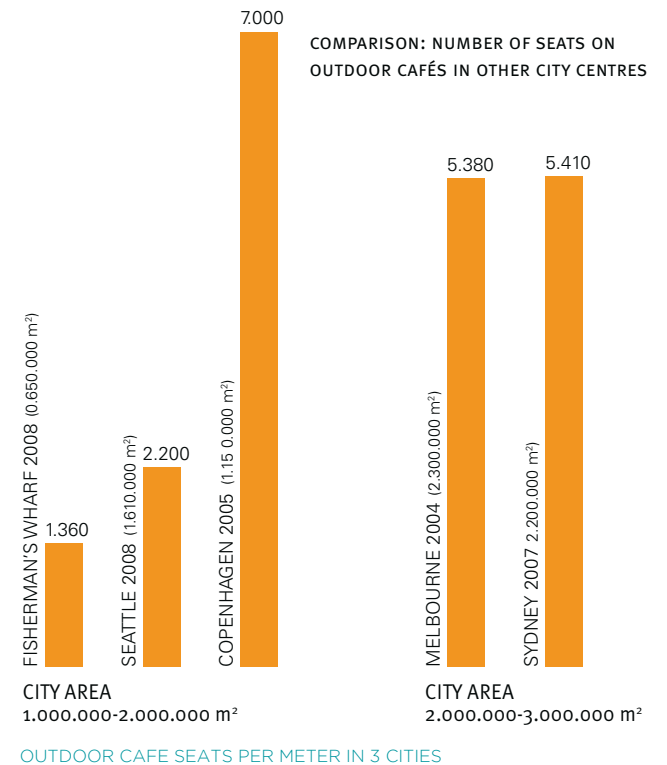
Comparing the number of stationary activities on Jefferson Street to several other major pedestrian streets around the world, we find that Jefferson is similar to streets that, while filled with people walking, are unidimensional in their public space character. Regent Street in London, England, for example, has an average of 39 activities per 100 yards, and Jefferson Street has 37. Swanston Street in Melbourne, by contrast, has 126 activities per 100 yards, and Strøget in Copenhagen has 91. Jefferson should aim to achieve similar numbers.

Melbourne was able to turn around Swanston Street and create an inviting space for people by widening sidewalks, planting trees and other landscaping, using high quality materials, installing seating, upgrading frontages and bringing in more residents. These strategies would work for Jefferson Street, as well. It is notable that Swanston Street also has a streetcar running down it.

Seating in the Wharf

One of the most striking things about Jefferson Street is the near complete absence of public seating. This is in part due to the narrow sidewalks, but even in spaces that offer the opportunity, such as the corner of Taylor and Jefferson, few seating options are provided. The exceptions, once again, is Pier 39, Aquatic Park and Ghirardelli Square.

The distribution of café seating is somewhat more even, with many restaurants placing tables and chairs out front. The number of seats per meter, however, is still almost one-sixth or less than comparable waterfront destinations that Fisherman’s Wharf should be aspiring towards.



2.7 COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE

The incoherent quality of the commercial signage in Fisherman's Wharf deserves special attention. While variation across merchants can be attractive, there is little overarching theme to the area's signage that identifies it as being wharf-like, or in anyway associated with the location of San Francisco's historic fishing fleet.

Beyond the lack of reference to the physical and historical context, the variety and choice of signage technologies further adds to the visual cacophony along the street. Therefore, adopting signage guidelines that result in greater harmony will be key to improving the overall visual appearance of Jefferson Street, in particular, and the Wharf in general.



2.8 TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

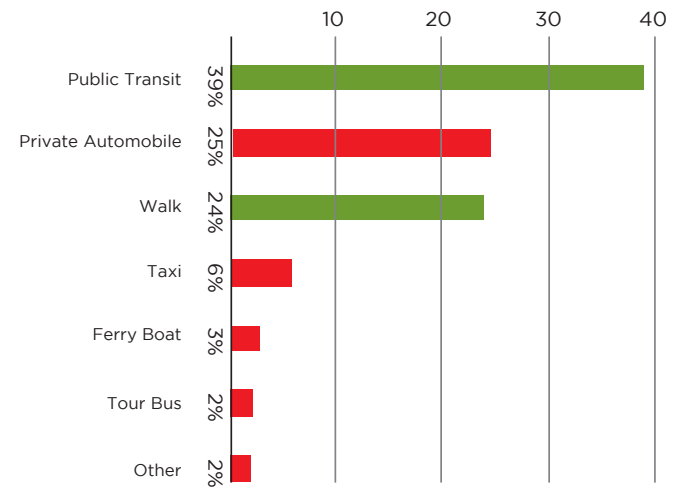
Fisherman's Wharf is a highly walkable and easily accessible destination, with approximately 40% of visitors arriving by transit and 25% by walking. Despite the enormous number of parking spaces in Fisherman's Wharf, most visitors do not arrive by private automobile, a fact that should be reflected in how the streets are designed. As the discussion of the pedestrian network above highlighted, however, the opposite is the case and most often pedestrians are forced to trudge through some of the least engaging pedestrian environments in the city.

The F-line runs eastward along much of Beach Street, taking transit users back to downtown San Francisco, but few people board the streetcar along this stretch, and virtually none disembark. In addition to the F



line, five bus lines converge on the final two blocks of North Point and travel along it before it terminates at Van Ness Ave. Important lines include the 30 Stockton that connects the Downtown, through Chinatown, to Fisherman's Wharf and the Marina, and travels on North Point Street in both directions. Other lines that converge on North Point include the 10, 19, 20, and 47. Service is proposed to be improved by changing to articulated buses during the day to reduce crowding. The new 11-Downtown Connector is proposed to travel in both directions along North Point Street from Powell Street to Van Ness Avenue.

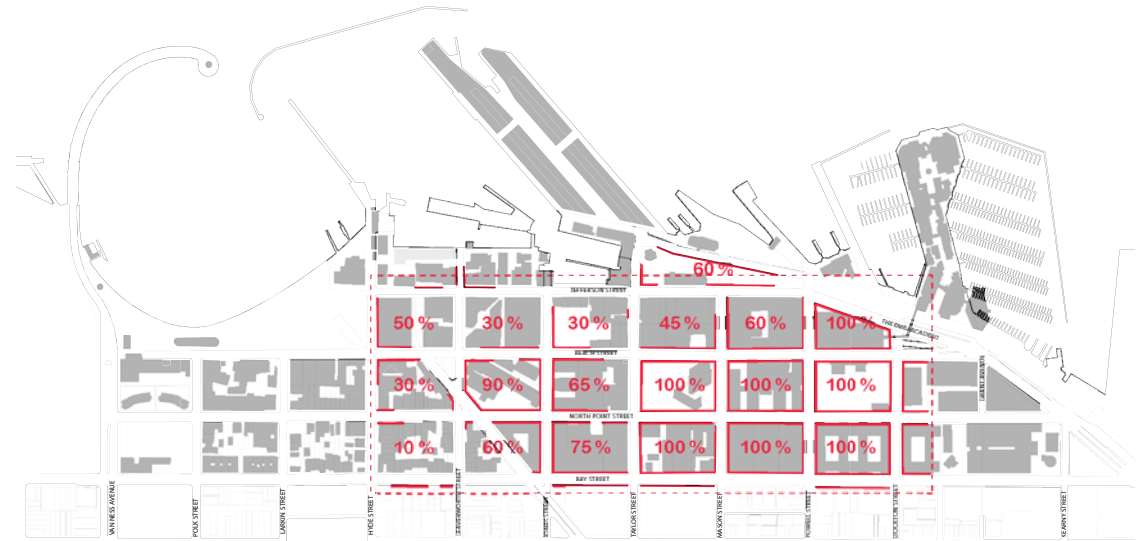
Illustrating Fisherman's Wharf potential connectedness to the surrounding neighborhoods, within a 15 minute walk one can reach North Beach, Chinatown or Fort Mason - an amazing variety of destinations.



2.9 BUILT FORM AND CHARACTER

Buildings contribute to the quality of the pedestrian experience in a number of important ways. They house shops and services that attract people; they are aesthetically pleasing from a distance and frame the pedestrian realm in either an attractive or unattractive manner; and they engage the pedestrian through their ground floors.

Few buildings in Fisherman's Wharf provide either an attractive framework for the pedestrian, and beyond Jefferson Street few blocks are consistently lined with retail shops, restaurants, or galleries. Many of the hotels in particular undermine the quality of the pedestrian environment through blank walls along sidewalks, porte cocheres, and the use of unattractive materials. These challenges are not isolated to the hotels, but given the number and size of the hotels, they have a tremendous bearing on the quality of the walking experience in Fisherman's Wharf.



POOR QUALITY FACADES



MAJOR CHALLENGES

1. WEAK LINKS TO THE WATER.
2. INACTIVE WATERFRONT.
3. POOR PEDESTRIAN LINKS TO ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS.
4. POOR CONDITIONS FOR WALKING AND CYCLING.
5. UNINVITING AND POOR STREETScape.
6. LACK OF PUBLIC SPACE HIERARCHY AND NETWORK.
7. FEW ATTRACTIONS FOR LOCALS.
8. LACK OF DISTRICT IDENTITY.



SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES

The Gehl Architects Study identified eight major challenges that should be addressed. Some deal with the physical environment, while others focus on the district's character and the mix of shops and the nature of destinations. Not all can or should be addressed by this plan, but they do need to be acknowledged.

All these challenges can be addressed. Some solutions will require substantial investments, such as rebuilding Jefferson Street at the premier destination in the Wharf, to improving the quality of the ground floor facades, which can be done incrementally over time as new buildings are built or new tenants move in.

Below are summarized the key strategies for building a more attractive and economically robust district.

Visions to Reinvigorate the Wharf

From these challenges, the major visions for an improved Fisherman's Wharf will entail an incremental set of improvements prioritized according to importance to the district and availability of funding. Again, the strategies for success will require a combination of improvements to the physical environment, to the programming of space and to the type and nature of destinations offered at the Wharf. The solutions fall into four broad categories; each will be addressed in the following chapters. They include:

1. Creating a waterfront district;
2. Creating a walkable district;
3. Creating a diverse district; and
4. Creating a strong district identity.

Creating a Waterfront District

First, efforts should be made to strengthen connections to the waterfront, both by creating and enhancing views to the waterfront and by improving routes to the waterfront. Second, there should be an uninterrupted waterfront path extending the full length of the Wharf. Third there should be more Bay-related attractions, activities and functions along the water's edge.



Making the Wharf More Walkable

The overall pedestrian environment needs improvement, and the north-south connections to adjacent neighborhoods in particular. Cycling is perceived as a compliment to walking, with the ease of getting off to check out something that catches one's eye, and conditions should be improved to be attractive to a full range of cyclists. Finally, accessing off-street parking needs to become more efficient, allowing on-street parking to be converted to pedestrian and plaza spaces.

Increasing Diversity in the Wharf

The area lacks a plan for creating a hierarchy of open spaces that are designed to meet a diversity of users, needs and activities. Creating spaces that serve the needs of people of all ages, recognizing that the very young and the more elderly have needs distinct from others. Increasing the mix of functions throughout the area would serve the dual benefit of expanding the scope of The Wharf to beyond Jefferson Street and allow for uses that could possibly cater to a broader demographic base.

Strengthening The Wharf's Identity

The intersection of Taylor and Jefferson Streets is the natural heart of Fisherman's Wharf. There are other increasingly important destinations to the east and west and therefore Jefferson Street and The Embarcadero should be designed at the link that ties the Wharf together. To do this, emphasizing important "episodes" or nodes along, either the primary gates to Fisherman's Wharf or important local destinations, would offer visitors regular and distinct experiences. A second strategy must be improving the ground floor facades, which are almost universally poor once one is off of Jefferson Street.

The remainder of the report details the specific designs, policies and programs that would help bring these visions to fruition.



Chapter 3

Jefferson Street



Jefferson Street is the key corridor in Fisherman's Wharf and must become the link that binds an increasingly diverse and dynamic Wharf together. It runs through areas of different characters, from well-maintained places to those less cared for; however, it remains, along with the Embarcadero Promenade, the element that ties the district together. Improving the pedestrian character of Fisherman's Wharf begins with fixing Jefferson Street.

“Walking is first and foremost a type of transportation, but it also provides an opportunity to spend time in the public realm. Walking can be about experiencing the city at a comfortable pace, looking at shop windows, beautiful buildings, interesting views and other people. Walking is also about stopping and engaging in recreational or social activities because you have planned them or because you were tempted to as you walked along.”

Report by Gehl Architects, 2009.

There are six clear goals that the Jefferson Street design strives to achieve:

Jefferson Street

First, widen pedestrian footpaths along the entire length of Jefferson Street where the existing streetcar tracks allow. The current sidewalk width is entirely inadequate for the volume of pedestrians to even walk comfortably and fails to provide such essential pedestrian amenities as a variety of seating opportunities where people can have a place to stop, rest and take in the vibrant scene. Related to this would be an effort to clear the many items that clutter the sidewalk, such as commercial displays.

Spaces for People

Second, create more places for recreation, both active and passive, along Jefferson Street that appeal to a greater diversity of users, from children to the elderly, singles to families, and locals to international visitors.

Heart of the Wharf

Third, strengthen the clear sense of a center or “heart” on Jefferson Street. The natural location, at the intersection of Taylor and Jefferson streets, could easily be improved by widening sidewalks on Taylor Street and expanding the inadequate plaza that is currently the home for the iconic, if tired, Fisherman’s Wharf sign.

Better Cycling Facilities

Fourth, improve the confusing and unsafe cycling conditions through the corridor. The growing demand for recreational cycling needs to be recognized and the Jefferson Street design needs to help accommodate this demand.

Connections to the Water

Fifth, improve the connections to the water throughout Fisherman’s Wharf, including opportunities along Jefferson Street. The most important opportunity on Jefferson Street is the edge along the inner harbor where the historic fishing fleet moors and where the sport fishing and bay tour boats are located; this sidewalk could be widened in anticipation of the historic streetcar line being extended into Fort Mason.

Gateways

Sixth, emphasize the progression through Fisherman’s Wharf by creating a series of gateways, including at either end of Jefferson Street, to mark the transition from one sub-district to another. While the entire length of Fisherman’s Wharf, from Pier 35 in the east to Fort Mason in the west, remains a very walkable distance, the sense of transition from one area to the next would add interest to the walk and allow the community to highlight the distinct set of attractions available in each.

Prioritize Pedestrians

Seventh, rationalize right-of-way allocation across modes to better reflect the number of people traveling by each mode. The large presence of cars on Jefferson Street detracts from those qualities that bring people to Fisherman's Wharf in the first place, while contributing little that is positive to either the experiential qualities of Jefferson Street or to the businesses that operate there. Efforts should be made to encourage only those drivers who need to be there, thereby dramatically reducing the detrimental effect the current levels of traffic have on the approximately 65,000 people a day who walk along Jefferson Street during a typical summer weekend day.

3.1 PROPOSED JEFFERSON STREET DESIGN

Jefferson Street is first and foremost a route used by pedestrians, and its design needs to reflect this fact. Jefferson Street is also the primary pedestrian and cyclist link through the neighborhood and its role in the route hierarchy needs to be emphasized.

Businesses will continue to need access for deliveries, loading and drop-offs for customers who cannot walk very far, but this is a relatively small number of vehicles, especially in light of the over 60,000 people a day who walk down Jefferson Street on a typical summer weekend.

The vision for Jefferson Street is not to eliminate vehicular traffic, although the design will allow the

community to easily close the street for important times and events and create an attractive pedestrian space, but to allow vehicles to move slowly down the street at speeds that are safe for all pedestrians, regardless of mobility needs. This "Pedestrian Priority Street" will allow for the harmonious coexistence of all modes of travel, but clearly place its emphasis on walking.

The most important design movement to achieve these goals is to remove curbs from as much of the street as possible and to create a single, shared surface that visually reads more as a floor of an outdoor pedestrian room so that drivers understand they are entering a pedestrian space where they must give way to people walking and cycling. There will be signage clearly stating this hierarchy, but the design speaks much louder than any sign.



A key idea underlying the proposed design is that Jefferson Street cannot be all things to all users, and that its current orientation towards the private automobile has to be reversed. There simply is not enough space to give each mode its individual and mutually exclusive space and still meet the needs of the most important and most numerous user - the pedestrian. This is strengthened by the fact that Jefferson is a dead end street and need only provide local access.

PROPOSED JEFFERSON STREET DESIGN





1. Western terminus of Jefferson Street and intersection with Hyde Street; entrance to Aquatic Park and Hyde Street Pier.
2. Outdoor seating for restaurants.
3. Significantly widened sidewalks.
4. Safe pedestrian zone and clear demarcation between vehicle zone.
5. New pedestrian amenities.
6. Widened platform with seating; could possibly include new step-down plaza towards boats on the western end.
7. Special intersection design emphasizing "heart" of the Wharf.
8. Gateway to both Jefferson Street, highlighting the special nature of the street.
9. Gateway to Little Embarcadero, announcing entrance to the historic restaurants.
10. Improved landscaping around edge of the parking lot to buffer against the visually unattractive approach to Taylor Street restaurants.

The pedestrian zone will be richly landscaped with appropriate plants and trees, diverse and generous seating, and vendors and performers so that drivers will also be reminded, through the sheer number of pedestrians along the edge, that they must pay close attention and move slowly down the street.

The proposed design prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists in seven key ways:

1. Substantially pedestrian widen the footpath.
2. Substantially upgrade design, including higher quality materials, consistent street furniture, public art, lighting and other amenities that will make the spaces more attractive places to visit and spend time.
3. Create attractive, landscaped spaces for people to stop and sit on a public bench or at a table in front of a restaurant.
4. Narrow street crossings and give pedestrians priority, such as by using raised crosswalks, whenever practicable.
5. Strengthen connection to the water by widening the pedestrian area adjacent to the historic harbor and potentially creating a pedestrian space that steps down towards the water.
6. Calm traffic so that cars move more slowly and predictably.
7. Provide dynamic parking signage at key vehicular access points. Signage will direct traffic to the garages, the majority of which are located off of Beach and North Point streets, while maps and signage in the garages will direct pedestrians to the attractions on Jefferson Street.

3.2 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Tour buses should be prohibited from using Jefferson Street, as their noise and smell greatly undermine the very qualities visitors come to Fisherman's Wharf to enjoy. These unintended externalities are born by both visitors and the businesses located along Jefferson Street, while the tour bus operators alone benefit from driving their customers down what will become an ever more beautiful, dynamic and vibrant street. The City will work with the relevant agencies to ensure the tour bus operators have sufficient space on adjacent streets to pick up and drop off their customers.

This plan strongly recommend prohibiting Scooters and similar vehicles from Jefferson Street, as they are loud and intrusive and similarly degrade the experience of pedestrians and others users of Jefferson Street. Indeed, there is a strong contradiction between the sizable investment required to improve Jefferson Street for pedestrians and a decision to allow such vehicles to drive down the street.

Other than these two uses, other users, such as pedicabs, horse-drawn carriages or other similar modes, should not be prohibited from using Jefferson Street.

3.3 NEXT STEPS FOR THE DESIGN

There remains a number of important decisions to be worked out as the changes to Jefferson Street move towards construction, including whether commercial deliveries on Jefferson should be limited to AM hours, with PM deliveries being accommodated by expanded commercial loading zones on the adjacent north-south streets. This would affect how wide the vehicular zone on Jefferson Street would need to be, since during the peak traffic period there would not be delivery vans blocking the right-of-way.

Other details to be worked out include how many commercial parking spaces will be needed on the north-south streets. There may also be some small variations in the design from one block to the next, depending on the adjacent businesses, their particular needs and preferences. How best to accommodate café seating outside of restaurants, for example, also needs to be discussed further and a consistent design palette created. These discussions can begin once the proposed design clears environmental review.





