

Chapter 5



Parking & Circulation

Vehicular access remains very important in Fisherman's Wharf, although there are two underlying facts that should be used to guide circulation and parking policies. First, only about one-fourth of all visitors to Fisherman's Wharf arrive by car. Second, three of the four east-west streets are not through streets, but primarily provide local access. The obvious caveat is the important transit roles played by parts of Jefferson, Beach and North Point streets.

The implication of these facts is that circulation policy should be focused on moving vehicles to vacant parking spaces as quickly as possible, and not moving vehicles through the area as quickly as possible. Under this scenario, speed is not an important outcome, but rather efficiency as measured by the minimum distance and time necessary for someone to find a parking space.

There are a number of additional issues that circulation and parking policy will need to address. First, future action should result in fewer cars using Jefferson

Street; too often people drive down Jefferson under the false impression that there is readily available parking when in fact there is very little, and what is there fills up early in the day. Second, there is expected to be substantial growth in the number of visitors to the Northeast Waterfront from such developments as The Exploratorium and the new International Cruise Ship Terminal. Further development of the piers will likely result in even more visitors to the area.

There is no more capacity in the road network to accommodate future private automobile trips and the future economic prosperity of both Fisherman's Wharf and the entire Northeast Embarcadero will depend upon finding more efficient and higher capacity modes to carry the majority of new trips. This implies increasing transit service, improving bike facilities so that cycling becomes a major transportation mode through the corridor, and co-locating destinations so that walking constitutes a larger share of total trips.

5.1 UNDERLYING CITY POLICIES

There are three City policies that guide the design of our streets: The Better Streets Policy, Complete Streets Policy, and the Transit First Policy. These policies collectively prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists and transit over the private automobile and emphasize the public space role streets play within San Francisco. These policies also encourage City staff to study and incorporate the best practices from around the world in how San Francisco designs its public rights of way, recognizing that many streets have too much space allocated to vehicles and not enough to pedestrians.



5.2 PARKING MANAGEMENT POLICIES

The goal of this plan is to develop a set of coherent parking policies for the Wharf that result in the more efficient use of the existing parking facilities and reduce the uncertainty of visitors searching for parking. The Community Benefit District could pilot a number of initiatives that would increase the level of coordination amongst operators, which at this point largely operate very independently and not necessarily in concert with the success of the larger Fisherman's Wharf business community.

Wayfinding for Parking

The City, through the SFMTA, has developed a proposal for better parking signage in Fisherman's Wharf that targets the two most important vehicular approaches to Fisherman's Wharf, The Embarcadero and Van Ness Avenue, and aims to direct the majority of motorists to routes that offer the greatest number of parking options, primarily Beach Street and North Point Street east of Columbus Avenue. Once on these streets, drivers will be directed to those garages with the greatest number of available parking spaces through dynamic signage with real-time parking information.

Pricing and Parking Demand

Parking pricing would be an effective and necessary tool to optimize the use of existing parking facilities, for both on-street and off-street parking. The

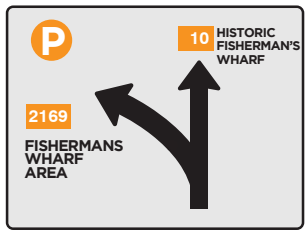
current flat-rate pricing schedule used by many operators favors commuters and discriminates against short-term visitors, the group that should in fact be accommodated.

Moving to an hourly rate schedule that ideally varies pricing by time of day, length of stay and/or day of the week would increase parking turnover and thereby increase the number of spaces made available for visitors to Fisherman's Wharf, without having to build a single new space. This would mean more visitors, more revenue potential for all businesses in the Wharf and a happier visitor base since parking would be easier to find and more affordable for those staying only a few hours.

The Fisherman's Wharf CBD should explore establishing a Parking Management Plan that can begin to bring the various stakeholders together to discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by such a plan. The benefits would be substantial for the Wharf overall and the reservations expressed by some operators can very likely be addressed easily.

The City has already begun to look at on-street parking, including adjusting pricing, increasing the length of stay in some locations and increasing the number of payment options to improve convenience. Fisherman's Wharf has been identified as one site for a pilot program to test new parking technology under the SFMTA's SFpark Smart Parking Management Program. More detailed information is available at <http://www.sfmta.com/cms.psfpark/sfparkindx.htm>.

PROPOSED DYNAMIC SIGNAGE DESIGN



3 Gateway Signs



12 Wayfinding Signs



26 Garage Signs



5.3 CIRCULATION POLICIES

Fisherman's Wharf offers a unique set of vehicular conditions that together help direct needed improvements to circulation in the district. The majority of streets are not through streets, hence they have little burden to carry heavy volumes of through traffic, with the exception of Bay Street and to a limited degree North Point Street. Rather, the streets primarily provide access to specific properties and to allow visitors who drive to Fisherman's Wharf to access parking facilities and hotels quickly and efficiently.

The active commercial fishing fleet and the number of fish processors on Pier 45 continue to need heavy truck access, but that is limited to the very early hours of the day and do not overlap with the times when the majority of visitors come to Fisherman's Wharf.

Diverting Traffic from Jefferson Street

Beach and North Point Streets should accommodate a greater proportion of vehicles that approach from the south along The Embarcadero, while Jefferson Street should accommodate fewer. This is not anticipated to result in a significant net increase in traffic volumes on those streets for two reasons. First, even during peak hours, there are fewer than 500 cars per hour traveling down Jefferson Street. Second, an independent report on the parking and circulation conditions in Fisherman's Wharf by Nelson\Nygaard concluded conservatively that 30 percent of the vehicles on Jefferson Street are either lost or circling for parking that largely does not exist there. This is substantiated by analyses of other areas with a similar visitor base where drivers searching for parking substantially increase levels of congestion and the time spent driving in traffic. Confronted by the high all-day parking rates, many drivers choose to look for on-street parking in the hope of finding one of the less expensive spots, thereby unnecessarily contributing to congestion. Parking behavior studies indicate that removing the approximately 80 on-street parking spaces will result in an appreciable decrease in the number of vehicles circling on Jefferson Street.

Indeed, the difficulty of finding parking in general throughout the Wharf – which is a significantly different issue than the amount of parking available – places a heavy and unnecessary burden on all the

area's streets. Helping drivers locate the nearest vacant parking space will relieve a substantial weight from the area's streets and intersections, allowing for the cars that formerly continued down Jefferson Street to be diverted at Beach and North Point streets with minimal effects on traffic on those streets.

To complement the dynamic wayfinding signage, a number of key intersections should be redesigned to provide visual cues for motorists to choose routes along which there are the greatest number of parking facilities, bypassing Jefferson Street unless there is a particular destination in mind. The two most important intersections are The Embarcadero at North Point Street and The Embarcadero at Beach Street. The latter in particular has a large number of demands placed on it that limit its efficiency to move private vehicles, bicycles and public transit through it and pedestrians across it, and is sufficiently complex that a separate planning process is recommended to properly address the design challenges.

Finally the residential streets west of Columbus Avenue should be protected from through traffic and enhanced as public spaces for residents. This means adopting intersection designs that communicate the message to drivers, many of whom are visitors to the nearby Ghirardelli Square and unfamiliar with the neighborhood, to drive slowly and respectfully. See Chapter 4 for details.

5.4 HISTORIC STREETCAR EXTENSION

The proposed extension of the historic streetcar along Jefferson Street, which will turn up Leavenworth Street and continue out Beach Street to the Fort Mason tunnel, will introduce a number of challenges related to both parking and circulation that will be dealt with separately by the City and Federal agencies that are undertaking the extension. As noted in Chapter 3, the proposed design for Jefferson Street will be able to accommodate the extension, should funding be found.





Chapter 6



Urban Design Guidelines

The urban design guidelines for Fisherman's Wharf address a distinct lapse in the quality of the built form. As discussed in Chapter 2, the existing conditions of much of Fisherman's Wharf is very poor and could be vastly improved as properties are upgraded or developed over time.

The guidelines fall under six headings:

- Site Design and Orientation
- Building Mass Articulation
- Ground Floor
- Façade Treatment
- Parking and Access
- Open Space

Each section is organized by providing an overview of what will be covered and defining any uncommon terms used in the guidelines. The guidelines themselves follow, and many are illustrated with either photographs or sketches that show best practices .

SITE DESIGN AND ORIENTATION

Sophisticated site design helps to resolve problems posed by such variables site constraints, community needs and public policy. In San Francisco, the challenge is often ensuring that design solutions result in a high quality pedestrian experience.

- 1.1 Orient building elements, such as main entries, lobbies, windows and balconies to face streets, public parks, plazas and open spaces to help ensure a consistently high volume of pedestrians, strengthen the visual and physical connection to the street, and reinforce community character.
- 1.2 In general, non-residential buildings should be built to all property lines facing public rights-of-way. (Exceptions are noted below.)

Some set back areas may be developed to accommodate active uses such as building entries, seating and outdoor dining or display areas. Portions of retail facades may be recessed between 5 and 10 feet to accommodate these uses.

- 1.3 Residential buildings may be set back from sidewalks up to ten feet to accommodate building entries, stairs, porches, small gardens and landscaped areas.
- 1.4 For larger developments, provide variety along a block through design of frontages, but remain consistent with the area's overall urban design by not mixing radically different materials, construction methods, bulk, massing and articulation.



BUILDING MASSING AND ARTICULATION

Massing and articulation describes the relationship of a building's size and shape to both 1) its visibility in the larger cityscape and 2) its impact on immediate surrounding natural features and development. Massing and articulation also addresses building spacing, rhythm, and level of detailing. These factors help relate a building's physical form to the type of human activity that happens within and around it.

- 2.1** All new buildings should include a clearly articulated base.

Differentiate the function and form of the sidewalk level of the building from the rest of the building by using elements including, but not limited to, different exterior materials, awnings, signs, cornices, projections, setbacks and large windows. Horizontal architectural design articulation should be incorporated between the ground floor and 2nd story levels. A minimum 6" projection is suggested.

- 2.2** For buildings with a sidewalk frontage greater than 100 feet, consider using upper floor setbacks to reduce mass.

- 2.3** Building facades that face the public realm should be articulated with a strong rhythm of vertically articulated elements. This is especially important for large development sites with long facades

Provide repeating vertical articulation on new buildings, especially those with large frontages, to achieve visual interest necessary to sustain pedestrian interest and activity. Fenestration with landscaping, texture and shade/shadow help establish complimentary horizontal and vertical scales. Avoid undifferentiated massing (blank surfaces) longer than 25' on residential streets/alleys, and 40' on all other streets.



- 2.4** Building façades should include three-dimensional detailing; these may include bay windows, vertical changes in plane, cornices, belt courses, window moldings and reveals to create shadows and add interest.

The long undifferentiated facades of many modern buildings provide little or no visual interest for pedestrians and their uniformity in design undermines the quality of the public realm.

- 2.5** Rooflines, shape, surface materials and function should be well integrated within the building's overall composition, be visually distinctive, and should include elements that create skyline interest. Roof forms should be drawn from the best examples in the area.



Green roofs that allow rainwater infiltration, provide natural habitat to small birds and insects, and improve the visual quality of roofs from surrounding hillsides are strongly encouraged on all parcels.

- 2.6** Locate and screen rooftop mechanical equipment, penthouses, and other components to enhance the views from surrounding hills. To that end, green roofs and the like are encouraged.
- 2.7** Building form should celebrate corner locations. Special design elements and architectural features such as towers, copulas, awnings, marquees, gables, and “turrets” are encouraged



and special entries should be used strategically at street intersections and near important public spaces.

Corners are special locations in our street network, located at the point where the street visually opens up to new vistas and the pedestrian has the opportunity to choose a new route. Many cities, San Francisco included, highlight the importance of intersections by allowing slightly higher heights, often through the use of special architectural features, such as towers, copulas or turrets.

- 2.8** Mixed-use buildings with ground-floor shops should be built to the sidewalks in order to create an interesting and inviting walking environment. Some set back areas, up to approximately one-third of the building's frontage, may be developed to accommodate building entries, seating and outdoor dining or display areas. Portions of retail facades may be recessed as little as 3 feet and as much as 8 feet to accommodate these uses.
- 2.9** Establish and require height limits along alleyways to create the intimate feeling of an urban room.

GROUND FLOOR DESIGN

A building's ground floor design and use have tremendous impact on the street level pedestrian experience. The design of a building's ground floor can do much to encourage activities that begin to define public life on the street. For this reason, building design should emphasize the quality of materials and level of detailing found at the ground floor over those found on upper floors.

One way to further support walking is to ensure new buildings are designed with active ground floors, regardless of use. Residents coming and going from individual entrances to each unit, transparent ground floor commercial spaces and activities that spill out onto the sidewalk all contribute to a convivial and neighborly street.

3.1 Active pedestrian-oriented uses should be provided within the first 25 feet of the lot depth on all frontages except where garages and utilities access are required, to create an enlivened, safe, engaging and attractive pedestrian environment.

3.2 Ground floor commercial uses, when designed well, can be important activators of the public realm and should be strongly encouraged along Taylor and Beach Streets, as well as all north-south blocks between Jefferson Street and Beach Street.

- Design ground floor commercial facades to be at least 75% transparent to allow a clear view inwards to an active space from the street. This fenestration cannot be tinted. Post-construction alterations, such as retail displays, should not prevent a clear view.

- Locate retail entrances at corners where feasible.
- Ground floor retail spaces should have at a minimum a 14', ideally 17', floor-to-floor height.
- Ground floor retail use should be directly accessible from the street at the grade of the sidewalk onto which it fronts.

3.3 Large commercial uses, such as a grocery store, should be wrapped by other commercial uses where possible.

The large floor-plates of contemporary supermarkets present special challenges for maintaining a pedestrian-oriented street design; often they result in long stretches of unattractive streetscapes. The preferred design would wrap as much of the large commercial use with active uses as possible.



- 3.4** Commercial and storefront entrances should be easily distinguishable from residential entrances through the use of recessed doorways, awnings, transparencies, changes in color and materials, and alternative paving.

Architecture that clearly distinguishes between the different functional roles of commercial and residential entrances improves the building's legibility, making it easier to navigate to the desired destination.

- 3.5** Building projections and recesses, along with variations in materials and color and other architectural design features, should be used to emphasize pedestrian entries and de-emphasize garage doors and parking.

One element of defining the regular rhythm of a pedestrian-scaled building is to emphasize the importance of pedestrian entries, which offer a glimpse into the more interesting private realm on the inside. Conversely, garages almost always deaden streets, whether in downtown commercial districts or along residential streets and should be kept to an absolute minimum in terms of number and width.

- 3.6** Primary building entries to common spaces and lobbies may be set back from the street facing property line, though no more than 5' from the street facing façade; and if set back, should be no wider than 15' at the property line per individual entry.

- 3.7** Elements or features generating activity on the street, such as seating ledges, outdoor seating, outdoor displays of wares, and attractive signage are encouraged for all mixed-use buildings.

Similar to the residential transition zone described below, design elements that invite a passer-by to stop, sit or engage with the building's edge enhance the public life of a street.

- 3.8** Residential units on the first and second floors should generally be directly and independently accessible from the sidewalk, rather than only from common lobbies, and should be designed to maximize the amount of visual and physical connection with the street.

PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE



The best residential streets in the world most frequently have regularly spaced entrances to either the ground floor units or central vertical lobbies for apartments. These doorways generate activity, provide for individualization of buildings, and therefore visual interest for pedestrians, and, in the case of setbacks with landscaping, a transition zone where the resident can plant, maintain and otherwise occupy the space, providing an important level of activity along the street.

- Stoops, porches and landscaped areas at residential entries are strongly encouraged in order to create a positive relationship between the building and the public sidewalks as well as provide ample visual interest for passing pedestrians.
- The individual entrances to ground floor residential units should be set back 3 to 5 feet but no more than 10 feet from the street-fronting property line.
- First floor residential units are encouraged to be above the sidewalk level such that the windowsills of these units are above pedestrian eye level to maintain the units' privacy.
- In low- to mid-rise buildings, upper story units should connect to a lobby entry that opens directly onto the public way. Where possible, units should not be accessed only from an interior courtyard.

3.9 Integrate universal access for all people within the building's overall design concept. Ensure that features aimed for achieving universal access are compatible with the architectural and historical integrity of the structure.

3.10 Place utility vaults and access panels in driveway curb cuts so as to prevent blank building frontages and to ensure that sidewalk planting opportunities for street trees and landscaping are not limited.

Where necessary, frontages used for utilities, storages, refuse collection and other activities should be integrated into the overall articulation and fenestration of the facade, or be masked by landscaping or other design features where active uses are not possible.



FACADE TREATMENT

The specific design features of building façades help to reinforce and enhance the pedestrian experience. Use of high-quality materials, appropriate colors, rich detailing, and placement of appropriate elements at both residential and retail entrances contributes to a sense of an enlivened pedestrian environment. The following guidelines set the minimum standard for the choice and use of high-quality materials.

- 4.1 Use an integrated, consistent range of materials, colors and design elements for each building, including, but not limited to, construction materials, roofs, entrances, and window, door, sign and lighting systems.
- 4.2 High quality building materials should be used on all visible facades and should include stone, masonry, ceramic tile, wood (as opposed to composite, fiber cement based synthetic wood materials), precast concrete, and high grade traditional hard coat stucco (as opposed to synthetic stucco that uses foam).
- 4.3 Minimize use of synthetic stucco or spray-on stucco on building frontages.
 - For all buildings, the use of stucco is prohibited on any detailing or projecting element such as belt courses, window trim or cornices.

- 4.4 A minimum window reveal of 2" is required above the ground floor to provide shadows and visual interest to pedestrians from the street.

For the majority of low- and mid-rise buildings, window reveals produce a visually more engaging surface that changes as the sun moves across the facade. The absence of window reveals tends to produce cheap-looking surfaces that contribute little to the visual interest of a building facade.

- 4.5 Integrate new business signs and their components with the building's overall design concept and materials palette; they should not overwhelm the building's façade with either color or size and should be oriented toward the pedestrian.

Too frequently, stock business signs are installed on buildings with little or no regard for the architectural style or materials used. This results in an incoherent visual landscape that is unpleasant to look at. Business signs should be designed to meet the needs of pedestrians, and not vehicles, which means smaller and with greater attention paid to design details and materials.

- 4.6 Integrate exterior light fixtures, including custom light fixtures consistent with the overall design concept, into the building's overall design.

Similarly, the design of the lighting systems should be consistent with the building's architecture and materials, in addition to providing the level of lighting necessary for safe and attractive sidewalk or public space.



[PHOTO OF QUALITY MATERIALS]

PARKING AND ACCESS

How automobile storage is accommodated can have tremendous negative effects on the quality of the pedestrian environment. Long stretches of blank walls that hide podium parking, and excessively wide and/or unnecessarily numerous garage entrances severely detract from the attractiveness of a street from the pedestrian's perspective. The following guidelines should be followed when designing car storage facilities.

- 5.1** Off-street parking should create minimal physical and visual disruption to the pedestrian environment. On commercial streets, off-street parking should be discouraged, and in some cases prohibited.
- Where a building has two frontages, locate parking entrances, loading docks, bays, and auxiliary entrances on the secondary street, and minimize their visual impact on the neighborhood. For more details, see SF Planning Code 155(t).
 - If provided, off-street parking should be accessed via side streets or alleys where possible.
 - Loading, service and access to building utilities should be provided using the same access points as parking garages.

- Curb cuts are prohibited on Jefferson Street and discouraged on Taylor Street.
- New surface parking is prohibited between the sidewalk and the fronts of buildings.
- Parking, loading and garage entries should be recessed to diminish their visual presence and to provide façade shadows.

- 5.2** No more than 30 percent of the width of the ground floor or 20 feet, whichever is less, may be devoted to garage entries or blank walls.

The undifferentiated ground floor is perhaps the most inhospitable edge a building can provide the sidewalk and should be avoided under any circumstance. Very many stretches of blank wall (or similar edge) will completely undermine the appeal of that street to pedestrians.



5.3 At or above grade parking is discouraged. Where at or above grade parking is necessary, it must be wrapped with a minimum of 25' of active use at the ground floor.

- At or above the ground floor, parking shall be entirely screened from the street.
- Allowable active uses include residential, retail or office, and must be on both the primary and secondary street frontages, except for the minimum frontage required for building utilities and parking access.
- Existing parking garages should reduce their negative impact on the street by converting at least their ground floor to active uses.

5.4 Minimize the negative effect of parking and garage entrances on pedestrians by limiting the number and width of openings and architecturally integrating them into the building or landscaping.

- Minimize the number of entrances and exits in parking structures. There should be no more than one entrance 20' wide per frontage.
- Residential garage door widths should be no more than 8' in width. For development with more than 20 units, a separate door for ingress and egress is allowed, but each door must not exceed 8' and should be separated by at least one foot.

5.5 Design hotel, office and residential lobbies to be accessed directly from the curb and not from porte cocheres.

Porte cocheres are inappropriate for an urban and pedestrian-oriented district; they detract from the visual quality of the sidewalk and diminish pedestrian safety by increasing the number of conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles accessing the building.

5.6 The City shall prohibit new surface parking lots and explore ways to encourage retrofitting existing surface parking lots and off-street loading areas San Francisco Green Landscaping Ordinance (Ordinance Number 84-10).



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/16801915@N06/3335120115/>



OPEN SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

Common private open space for occupants of residential buildings in San Francisco should provide a high degree of safety, accessibility, and level of privacy. They are valuable play spaces for children, a setting for “backyard” gatherings, and an extension of interior living areas. Common private open spaces within residential developments are intended to compliment the area’s larger network of public streets and open space, but not substitute for them.

- 6.1 Incorporate seating opportunities in new development. The design of planters and low walls can provide safe, comfortable places where people can stop, socialize and rest. Integrating large windows adjacent to plazas and gathering spaces improves the site’s attractiveness to visitors and provides more opportunities for community interaction. Sidewalk dining spaces are encouraged, but should not conflict with other sidewalk uses.
- 6.2 Common open space at ground level should be designed to be visible from the street, using views into the site, tree-lined walkways, or a sequence of design elements to allow visual access into the space, even when the space is not publicly accessible.
- 6.3 Common open space should be designed as usable surface area, containing both landscaped and hardscape areas. Landscaped green and/or garden space should comprise a larger proportion (more than 50%) of the common outdoor area where possible.
- 6.4 Develop rooftop terraces, gardens, and associated landscaped areas to be both attractive common private open space, including if viewed from hillsides above, and effective stormwater management tools that reduce runoff and limit water usage.



Chapter 7



Public Open Space

INTRODUCTION

Fisherman's Wharf has too few open spaces for the intensity of use it receives. At the same time, there remains a number of opportunities for new and/or refurbished open spaces in key locations. This chapter highlights those opportunities and suggests a priority for improvements.

7.1 PIER 39

Existing Conditions

The properties associated with Pier 39 have the highest quality open spaces in the Fisherman's Wharf area. They are well-maintained and attractively landscaped; they are, however, overdue for a redesign to better meet the needs of visitors today.

East Park, located between piers 35 and 39 along the water-side of The Embarcadero, is in the greatest need

of redesign. The public space analysis demonstrated that despite tens of thousands of pedestrians and hundreds of cyclists moving through the space each summer day, virtually no one stops to enjoy the views, to rest, picnic, play or in any way engage with the open space. Given the lack of open space opportunities in the area, existing open spaces need to be more than visual open space - they need to provide meaningful opportunities for passive and/or active recreation, depending on each space's location.

West Park, located between Pier 39 and The Little Embarcadero, is used by many more people for a diversity of activities. This is likely in large part due to the Blue and Gold ferry service operating from this space, but also because the design affords more attractive seating opportunities and a number of kiosks that help define the space as something more than a transportation route. It also has a more intimate feel, being framed on one side by the Pier 39 garage, despite how unattractive the garage is, and the buildings at Pier 41 on the other side.

East Park Recommendations

East Park is the gateway to Fisherman's Wharf and its design should celebrate this role with appropriate design and signage. The Gehl Report strongly recommends creating a public space hierarchy in Fisherman's Wharf based on three principles: 1) active edges create better spaces; 2) spaces with different characters better serve the public's needs; and 3) the spaces should be connected in a network.

Based on these principles, Gehl recommends adding building mass to the west side of the Embarcadero to define a strong and active edge to East Park, punctuated by two significant open spaces at the east and west ends of the park.

Planning recognizes this would be a long-term improvement that would require other changes, including the reorientation of the street and open space hierarchy to prioritize people along the waterfront.

In the near- to medium-term, possible improvements include defining a number of sub-areas within East Park, some of which could be framed and activated by small and appropriately designed buildings that contain an information center, small cafe, bike rental space, public restrooms or similar uses that cater to visitors to the area. The outdoor seating would need to be protected from the prevailing winds while maximizing sun exposure to maintain a comfortable experience. The space is large enough to allow for moderately-scaled events hosted on a periodic basis. The redesign should consider ways to accommodate such an event space.

The bi-directional multi-use path should be formalized and better defined to accommodate cyclists by improving signage and installing appropriate delineators between pedestrians and cyclists. The public space study found that cyclists who were visiting the area (as demonstrated by their rental bike) tend to ride slowly through the park, while local cyclists tend to ride in the roadway at greater speeds.

West Park Recommendations

West Park should be rethought as a space, but within the list of open space priorities, it does not rise to the top. The Gehl Report, however, does recommend a number of long-term changes that should be explored further, including:

1. Limiting vehicular access along this stretch of The Embarcadero to between 10 PM and 10 AM;
2. redesigning the street as a pedestrian plaza;
3. extending the Bay Trail through the area;
4. wrapping the Pier 39 garage in active and attractive uses; and
5. realigning The Embarcadero to strengthen the built edge across from Pier 39.

As discussed earlier, the report recommends moving the F-line from Jefferson Street to Beach Street to consolidate public transit infrastructure on one street versus three streets (Jefferson, Jones and Beach streets, with Leavenworth potentially added to the list if the historic streetcar extension is built) and to reorient the water's edge to people space.



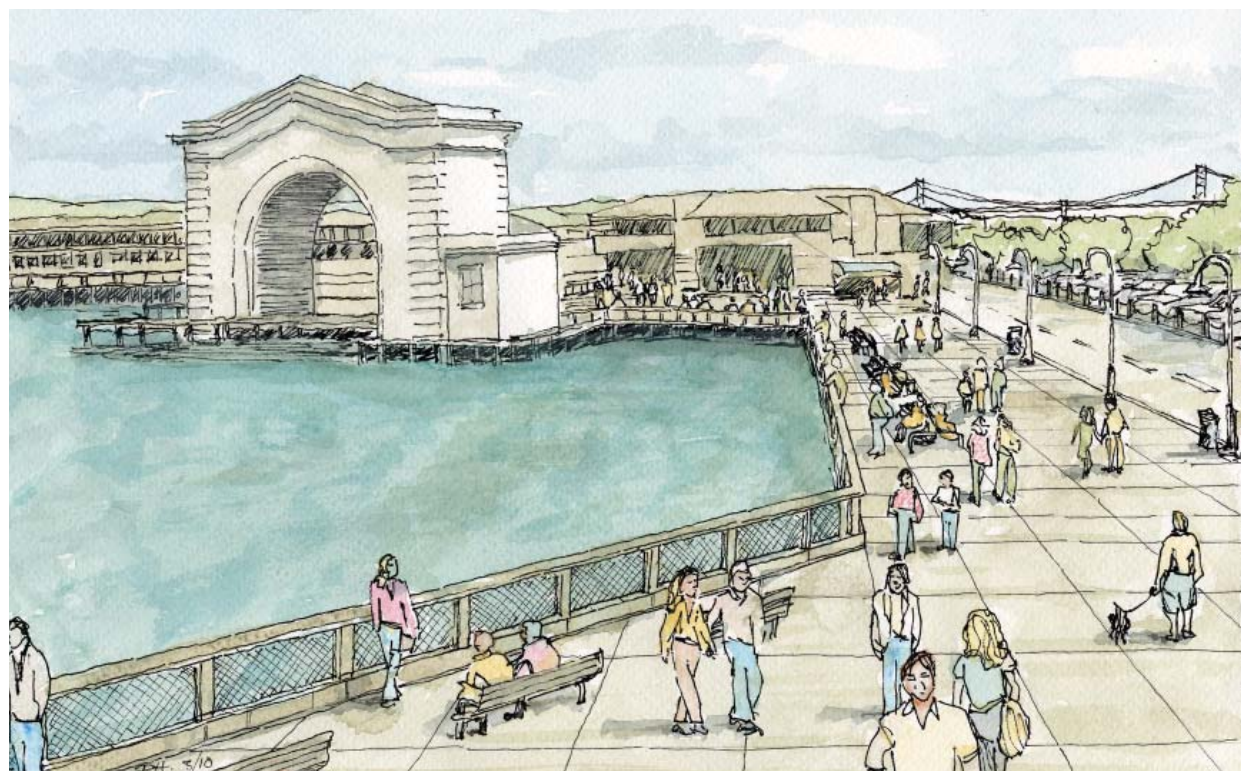
The benefits of this change include greatly simplifying the operation of Jefferson Street, expanding the boundary of Fisherman's Wharf south to Beach Street, thereby creating a more diverse and therefore attractive district, and providing pedestrians and cyclists a greater sense of comfort and safety as the travel along Jefferson Street.

7.2 JEFFERSON STREET AREA

Triangle Parking Lot, The Little Embarcadero and Taylor Street

The space defined by Jefferson Street, Taylor Street and The Little Embarcadero lies at the heart of Fisherman's Wharf. Widely regarded as a major opportunity for new open space and potentially additional development, the block will remain as a surface parking lot for the foreseeable future.

When circumstances progress and a discussion about what could be built there is taken up, the Gehl Report recommends a combination of new plazas and edge-defining buildings that would frame the pedestrian environment on both Jefferson Street and along the water's edge. The northeast corner of Taylor and Jefferson Streets would become the revitalized heart of Fisherman's Wharf with a public plaza that would provide space for seating, periodic event space, and daily performance space. A second building should be considered to the north of the Boudin Bakery building to frame the water's edge and the new plazas created to the east and west. Finally, a new building should be considered at the eastern corner of the block to properly define the entrance to Jefferson Street.



Aquatic Park and Jefferson Street

Aquatic Park, while prominent within the public space network for its size and proximity to the water, does not perform well as an open space. The clear majority of users, for example, are standing around waiting for the cable car, while relatively few are using the park as open space to sit, play and take in the views of San Francisco Bay. The space needs to be substantially refurbished; this plan recommends a series of smaller steps, with reevaluations after each successive one.

The first priority is to engage in a community design process to turn the stub of Jefferson Street into a public plaza. Currently, the street is used primarily for parking and for access to the two swim and boat clubs located there. The parking use is unfortunate given its immediate proximity to the beach and the street's role as a major pedestrian and cyclist connection to Fort Mason and the northern waterfront beyond.

Important goals include providing uninterrupted visual and physical access to the beach; creating a new pedestrian plaza as a gateway between Fisherman's Wharf and Fort Mason; creating a connection between the MUNI cable car turnaround and the beach; and maintaining sufficient vehicular access to the swim and boat clubs. Further, the parking needs to be carefully managed to ensure the clubs have enough access to affordable (the amount to be determined through the community design process) parking within an easy walk, including access for handicapped members.



CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR AQUATIC PARK PLAZA

7.3 OTHER PRIORITIES

Joseph Conrad Square and Columbus Avenue

Joseph Conrad Square is the final priority space for improvement. The park is underutilized and remains poorly connected to the surrounding streets and buildings. The result is a heavy use by the homeless, which further discourages use by visitors to Fisherman's Wharf. There has been strong interest by neighbors to refurbish the park to serve the needs of locals.

The refurbishment of the park should include the final block of Columbus Avenue, which terminates at Beach Street. Currently, there is nothing to mark the northern terminus of one of the most important streets in San Francisco, which is anchored by the Transamerica building to the south. Given its location, this block of Columbus Avenue provides a redundant traffic purpose and the City should be strongly consider turning it into some form of pedestrian plaza. There are a number of cafes, restaurants and pubs lining the western edge of the street that could help activate the new space, while opening up a connection between the street and the park. The delivery needs of the businesses could be accommodated in the morning, as is done along numerous stretches of Broadway in New York City or the innumerable pedestrian streets throughout major and minor cities across Europe to great success.

The park itself should be reoriented to serve the needs of locals, while still offering visitors the opportunity to stop and rest during what can otherwise be an intense and busy experience to Fisherman's Wharf. This could include a creative interpretation of public art that also provides a play space for children, or a fountain or similar water feature. Successfully breaking down the vertical barrier between Beach Street and the park will likely prove to be critical to its future success.

Finally, the eastern edge of the park suffers from the poor quality architecture evident across the street that fails to hold the edge, either visually or by providing an active ground floor. Rather, blank walls and surface parking lots on the east side of Leavenworth Street weaken the park and therefore should be addressed whenever that property is redeveloped.



JOSEPH CONRAD SQUARE



CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR JOSEPH CONRAD SQUARE AND COLUMBUS PLAZA



Chapter 8



Next Steps

PUBLIC REVIEW OF DRAFT PLAN (through September 2010)

The public is encouraged to review and provide constructive advice via written comments, email or telephone on how the plan should be improved. Alternatively, Planning will work with neighborhood groups to organize forums for members to review on comment on the Draft Plan.

The draft plan will be reviewed by other City agencies to ensure conformity with City standards.

FINAL DRAFT PLAN

Planning will come back to the community in September to review changes made to the plan, based on community feedback and technical review by other City agencies.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (through December 2010)

Environmental review has commenced and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2010.

FUNDING AND ADOPTION (2011)

Once the plan receives environmental clearance, it will become eligible for a number of grant-based funding sources.

Concurrently, the plan will move through the adoption process, including being reviewed by the Planning Commission, Port Commission and the Board of Supervisors.