



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Memo to the Historic Preservation Commission & Civic Design Review Committee

MEETING DATE: MAY 20, 2019

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Date: May 20, 2019
Case No.: 2014.0012E
Project: **Better Market Street Project**

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Recommendation: **Reivew and Comment**

SUMMARY

The project sponsor, San Francisco Public Works (Public Works), proposes to implement the Better Market Street Project in coordination with project partners, including the Citywide Planning Division of the San Francisco Planning Department (Planning Department), San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA). The proposed project would redesign and provide a program of transportation and streetscape improvements to a 2.2-mile-long corridor on Market Street between Steuart Street and Octavia Boulevard. The project is currently in the Environmental Document and Preliminary Design phase. This memo provides an overview of the project and an update on design work completed to-date.

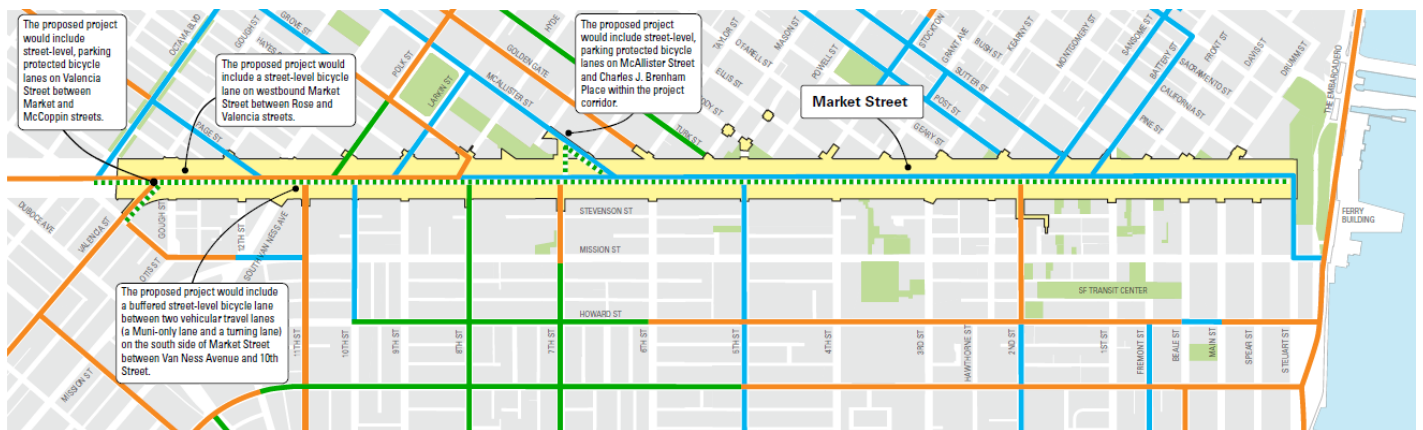
BACKGROUND

Much of the infrastructure on Market Street is currently at the end of its useful life and large-scale rehabilitation work is necessary to maintain mobility, accessibility, and a state of good repair. Infrastructure improvements must also be made to accommodate the City's anticipated growth in demand and services. San Francisco must improve and upgrade Market Street's existing street, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure. The street has the City's highest per-mile average collision rate; San Franciscans are more than 10 times more likely to be hit by a car while walking on Market Street than the average city street. According to 2016 Vision Zero data, Market Street, specifically the parts in the Civic Center and South of Market (SOMA) neighborhoods, has the highest vehicle-pedestrian and vehicle-bicycle collision injury density. Market Street is among the slowest corridors in the Muni transit system (4.9-5.8 mph), primarily due to conflicts between different modes of transportation. These conflicts also contribute to an accident rate (67 Muni/auto collisions and 53 Bike or Ped/auto collisions on Market for the period 2012-2013) that is higher than the statewide average for this type of facility. The purposes of

the project are to make Market Street safer for all modes of transportation, to optimize transit capacity and speed, to enhance its streetscape design and to upgrade its aging infrastructure.

PROJECT AREA

Market Street is San Francisco’s premier boulevard and an important regional transit corridor. The Better Market Street project will completely reconstruct 2.2 miles of the corridor, from Stuart Street to Octavia Boulevard and the portion of Valencia Street between Market Street and McCoppin Street. It also includes portions of streets that intersect Market Street, four off-corridor intersections, and the entirety of Charles J. Brenham Place. See map below for reference. Shaded areas on the map are project limits for design work.

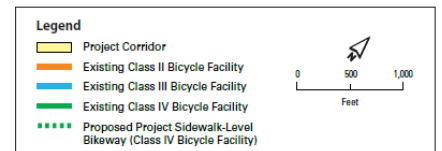


Notes:

- Planned bicycle facilities noted in this figure are planned by MTA and included in the cumulative analysis.
- Market Street is shown wider than map scale for clarity.

Bikeway Definitions:

- Class II Bicycle Facility - Bike Lane
- Class III Bicycle Facility - Bike Route
- Class IV Bicycle Facility - Separated Bikeway



HISTORIC DESIGNATION

The historic built environment includes the eligible Market Street Cultural Landscape District, which includes streetscape components such as the sidewalk, roadway, and plaza areas in the public right-of-way that were designed as part of the Market Street Redevelopment Plan designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and completed in 1979.

Several other historic and conservation districts intersect with or are adjacent to the project corridor:

- Civic Center Landmark District (includes the Civic Center National Historic Landmark, Civic Center National Register, and Civic Center Article 10 Landmark districts)
- Market Street Theatre and Loft National Register Historic District
- Uptown Tenderloin National Register Historic District
- Market Street Masonry Historic District (City of San Francisco Article 10 local designation)

- New Montgomery-Mission-Second Street Conservation District (City of San Francisco Article 11 local designation)
- Kearny-Market-Mason-Sutter Conservation District (City of San Francisco Article 11 local designation)
- LGBTQ Tenderloin Historic District (eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources)
- San Francisco Auxiliary Water Supply System (eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historic Resources)
- San Francisco Cable Cars National Historic Landmark

PROJECT TIMELINE

Summer 2010-Fall 2019	Planning and Environmental Review
Spring 2019-Spring 2020	Phase 1A (5 th Street to 8 th Street) Detailed Design
Summer 2020-Summer 2022	Phase 1A (5 th Street to 8 th Street) Construction

PROPOSED DESIGN

The project would introduce changes to the roadway configuration as well as private vehicle access, traffic signals, surface transit (including San Francisco Municipal Railway- (Muni-) only lanes, stop spacing and service, stop locations, stop characteristics, and infrastructure), bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, streetscapes, commercial and passenger loading, vehicular parking, and utilities. The project would also change traffic configurations on adjacent streets that intersect Market Street to both the north and the south.

Key elements of the proposed project are briefly summarized below:

- Protected cycling facility along length of the corridor to attract bicyclists of all ages
- Replacing sidewalk bricks to improve accessibility
- Private vehicular restrictions to reduce conflicts with Muni
- Wider and longer transit boarding islands and ADA accessible curb ramps and streetcar access ramps (“mini-highs”) at all F-line (historic streetcar) stops
- Muni-only lanes
- New F-Line track loop at McAllister and Charles J Brenham to allow additional streetcar service between Powell and Fisherman’s Wharf
- Full repaving of roadway including base repair
- Replacement and upgrade of traffic signals
- Utilities replacement and upgrade including water, sewer, power, traction power substation, and overhead contact system (OCS)
- Planting new and replacement trees with improved subsurface conditions to improve overall health of the urban forest on Market Street

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

The project team intend to preserve the design of the street as a linear plaza designed with places of interest within walking distance of each other so that a walk down Market Street is not one static experience, but one designed with the pedestrian user in mind with a nod toward neighborhood identity and one that celebrates the unique geometry of Market Streets intersections.

This project proposed to re-use granite curbing and utilize the use of modular pavers and the regular spacing of street trees and street lights as a unique and unifying elements of the streetscape.

Paving

There are many constraints to consider in any proposal to repave Market Street's sidewalks. One of the goals for the project is to provide an accessible sidewalk that identifies Market as the city's pre-eminent ceremonial street. The project formed a Pedestrian Realm Focus Group in 2013 and conducted a study of the issue resulting in this report which in the end recommends the replacement of brick paving on Market Street due to its wide paving joints which can cause vibrational issues to wheelchair users and the issue of slip resistance, the bricks tend to be slippery particularly when it rains.

The Better Streets Plan recommendations that ask that new complete streets projects use paving designs to help distinguish sidewalk use zones.

San Francisco Public Works has recently adopted new paving standards for the city's rights of way that call for minimum paver sizes in Paths of travel and points out that paving at corners must have joints no less than 18" apart in any direction as there can be numerous paths of travel at street corners.

The project team has been studying various paving patters including full size mock-ups of proposed pavers and patterns. Graphic and visualization of the paving patterns will be shown in the presentation.

Lighting

The project will preserve and/or refurbish the iconic Path of Gold lights on Market Street. Upgrading luminaires to energy efficient LED which will also serve to provide better color rendering. A pilot of this luminaire replacement has been installed on the first block of Market Street. Overhead electrical systems may trigger the replacement of poles with larger poles which would, in turn trigger a recasting of decorative bases for the lights in a larger scale. The artwork on these bases called the Winning of the West appears on a list of offensive art so recasting these bases would create the opportunity to revisit this artwork.

Urban Forestry

A working group of experts in the field of arboriculture and urban forestry was formed to discuss tree selection and best practices specific to Market Street, and that group has been meeting for the past year. The group selected seven species of trees for Market Street and that list has been vetted by Public Works Urban Forestry and the San Francisco Urban Forestry Council.

Factors to consider include building in diversity in species and variety in order to better prepare for unknown changes in climate or pests and diseases that might come along in the coming years.

In addition, we see the tree selection as a way to highlight neighborhood identity, environmental conditions or wayfinding.

The project team is studying the following 4 proposals for tree planting based on the tree species selected:

- Replant with Platanus trees but to use 5 different varieties, one in each neighborhood.

- Select a different species of tree in each neighborhood.
- Plant evergreen trees at corners and deciduous trees elsewhere. Corner intersections tend to be the windiest spots on Market Street and evergreen trees can help to mitigate that wind better than deciduous trees.
- Plant accent trees at curbside bus stops. This could be a way of incorporating wayfinding into the planting palette allowing users of the street to locate bus stops at a glance.

NEXT STEPS

The project is approaching 60% design for Phase 1A and is looking to seek input on the urban design elements including paving, lighting, and urban forestry, prior to beginning of final design. For more information and to stay up-to-date on the latest project updates, please visit: <http://www.bettermarketstreetsf.org/>

REQUIRED COMMISSION ACTION

This item is being presented for informational purposes only. No formal action by the Historic Preservation Commission and the Civic Design Review Committee is required.

RECOMMENDATION: Review and Comment
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