

# 1 Urban Form, Public Space and Streetscape

1.1 Overview	3
<b>Section I. Urban Form and Structure</b>	
1.2 The Context of Market Street	11
1.3 Urban Form and Structure	19
<b>Section II. Public Space and Streetscape</b>	
1.4 Pedestrian Realm	87
1.5 Open Space Destinations	112
1.6 Streetscape Elements	127
1.7 Signage and Wayfinding	137

View of Market Street from Twin Peaks, circa 2007



# 1.1 Overview

A great street helps make and define a city and its urban form. It helps people to act and interact to achieve in concert what they might not achieve alone. Accordingly, better streets are accessible to all; are easy to find, get to, and navigate; and offer inviting spaces to linger. Streets come alive when people who occupy the adjacent buildings and neighborhoods are able to use the street on a daily basis for more than just circulation. A street can unlock memories or offer expectations of places pleasant to see or visit. The street is more than the sum of movement of goods and services, people, and transit; streets have symbolic, ceremonial, social and political roles to play. In 1967, the City of San Francisco spent millions to turn Market Street into a great street. More than two decades later, they took the next dramatic step, trading in the looming elevated highway structures along the Embarcadero and Octavia for first-rate city streets. Now, the stage is set to return attention to Market Street, encourage its evolution, and implement a new vision for San Francisco's most important street.

The first section of this chapter studies the urban form and structure of Market Street. These are defined through Market Street's history, pattern of streets and juxtaposition of grids, varied block structure, transportation systems, diversity of open/public spaces, land uses, and building forms. The examination of this combination of the broader physical patterns/urban form that structure the City and the downtown serves as a way to understand

the character and identity of Market Street.

The second section of this chapter specifically catalogues and studies the streetscape and public realm spaces and elements of Market Street, including street and sidewalk width, transit interface, open space destinations, sun and wind characteristics, and streetscape elements (trees, furnishings, paving, lighting, etc.).

Key opportunities and challenges are outlined based upon the analysis. These are accompanied by key findings and considerations that should be addressed in the creation of design alternatives for Market Street.

This chapter was developed based on a review of a substantial amount of data collected for the Better Market Street project; previous planning reports for the City; current GIS data as provided by various City and County agencies; and field reviews and surveys. Public input gathered from open houses and other outreach contributed to the assessment of existing conditions. Planners, urban architects, landscape architects, traffic engineers, and many other professionals worked collaboratively to document the broader urban design conditions and issues. The information contained in this chapter will be valuable as the project evolves into the design stage, when applicable best practice treatments are considered for the urban design framework and various concept design alternatives for Market Street.

The Urban Design Chapter is organized into two main sections:

## **Section I. Urban Form and Structure**

**History/Context/Identity:** Briefly reviews the history of Market Street and how its identity has been shaped. This includes not only how Market Street has been transformed, but also how urban design visions for the larger city have also directly influenced the design of the street.

**Transportation Interface:** Describes how transportation has been critical to the region and to the evolution and identity of Market Street.

**Land Use Distribution:** Discusses the overall distribution of land uses along the entire length of Market Street and how they impact level of activity and identity.

**Districts:** Identifies and studies the various districts that have emerged along Market Street over time, as well as the elements that define the character and identity of each.

**Block Structure:** Investigates the ways in which the grids that define Market Street (two very distinct block structures) regulate many aspects of urban design, such as quality of the urban fabric and building types, and create interesting asymmetrical conditions that could be used for new public space opportunities.

**Streetwalls:** Discusses the different amounts of enclosure the streetwall provides.

**Open Space:** Examines Market Street's connections many distinct public/open spaces along its length and how Market Street functions as an open space, and outlines notable opportunities for improvement.

**Views and Landmarks:** Describes how views and landmarks are important to the pedestrian on the street and how they help to structure the street and influence the various district identities.

**Topography:** Studies how the slope of Market Street contributes to its identity.

## **Section II. Public Space and Streetscape**

**Pedestrian Realm:** Discusses the various sidewalk typologies and conditions that exist along the length of Market Street. Also reviews the unique conditions at transit portals and plazas and how they impact the quality of the pedestrian realm.

**Open Space Destinations:** Documents the condition of various plazas along Market Street and discusses their potential to activate the street.

**Streetscape Elements:** Focuses on basic streetscape elements and how they contribute to the image and identity of the street as a whole.

**Signage and Wayfinding** – Discusses the typologies and characteristics of signage/wayfinding on Market Street and outlines opportunities for improvements.

## **Section I. Urban Form and Structure**

# Key Findings

## Historical Context / Identity

Market Street is both a major city street and place and a significant regional destination. The street has been central to the identity of San Francisco since 1847, when Jasper O'Farrell formally laid out the street grid of San Francisco. As evident in Market Street's early history and its location, it was the primary street of San Francisco—a center of activity (both pedestrian and transit) for the city and region, with major destinations and memorable places along its length. Both the visual features and the service characteristics of the street evolved with the City, influenced by the port, the gold rush, the waves of immigration, finance and commerce, entertainment and civic pride. Over time, a variety of distinctive districts grew up along Market Street, such as the theatre district at mid-Market and the financial district, which continue to affect the street's identity.

Today, Market Street is the backbone of San Francisco's public transportation system, a major bicyclist commute route, and a major retail portal, and it serves a population well beyond the City. However, as the City has grown, destinations such as the Mart and numerous theatres have closed or moved away from Market Street and left places and districts along the street in a state of needed revitalization. In recent years, major new investments have brought and now promise a new vitality which may help resurrect a positive identity for Market Street within the City and Region: the removal of the freeways at Octavia and

the Embarcadero, the revitalization of the Ferry Building, the Westfield Mall and Bloomingdales. Throughout its transformations, Market Street has continued to serve as the major place for parades and civic celebrations and protests.

## Transportation

The network of transportation services passing along and across Market Street plays an extremely important role in defining the experience of this urban place in ways both positive and negative – populating the streets and sidewalks, and offering extraordinary city- and region-wide mobility, but also necessitating physical accommodation in the streets and along the sidewalks, and at times and places that present challenges to safety and interface among modes. Market Street is the backbone of the City's transit system and is the center of BART's regional transportation system. In addition to providing connections to both of the region's major airports (SFO and OAK), Market Street is an important gateway for locals, regional visitors, and tourists.

Per the preliminary transit data (discussed in greater detail in the **Transportation / Circulation Interface** portion of **1.3 Urban Form and Structure**), the majority Muni and BART riders are travelling either to the Civic Center or the Financial District. (These areas have the highest concentration of employment density in the City.) Future investments in transit (the Van Ness BRT, the Central Subway, and Transbay) will have

tremendous impacts on future land uses and pedestrian activity along Market Street. The impact of the Central Subway will be especially significant, particularly where it is documented that it will take below ground a majority of riders who currently populate the street level. Together, these projects will create both impacts and opportunities in terms of general pedestrian on-street activity.

Market Street, while predominantly a transit-/ pedestrian-oriented street in the east/west direction, has a great deal of cross traffic, and is affected by peak flows to and from the Bay Bridge. This creates a difficult environment for pedestrians at certain intersections.

## Land Use Distribution

Market Street contains a diversity of land uses with various degrees of intensity, but the primary land use along Market Street is for commercial/ office activities. Some of the inactivity found on Market Street is the result of a lack of substantial quantities of the variety of land uses that can promote an active street life, provide more eyes on the street, and in turn extend the daytime/nighttime life of certain districts along Market Street.

It is critical to leverage the new housing projects proposed along Market Street, particularly given their easy access to transit. Consideration of differing land uses, integrated with transit and street design, can help define more mixed-use neighborhoods along Market Street and in turn create more urban life on the street.

## Districts

Districts play a powerful role in Market Street's past and its future. Market Street is a long downtown street that manifests variety in character and image as it passes through a number of distinct districts. Each district has its own architectural character, building grain, pedestrian activity, diversity of land uses, and destinations. However, many of the City's more vibrant and more memorable destinations (Union Square, Yerba Buena) are not directly on Market Street, and so many people visiting these destinations do not have reason to stay on the Street.

Landmarks and view-sheds help people understand where they are and give character to each district. Preserving and enhancing key views allows pedestrians to experience the topography of the city and its other landmarks. The design of Market Street can augment these advantages through changes, both subtle and more substantial, to street furniture, paving, sidewalk width, tree types, etc., to enhance each district's particular character and set of relationships to surrounding buildings.

For the future design of Market Street, a careful balance must be struck between providing a continuity of expression (strengthening the perception of Market Street as a unified street) and allowing variety and adjustments that harness the distinct qualities and conditions of each district.

## Block Structure

The layout of different street grids to the north and south, while providing prominence for Market Street, also divides the City and makes cross-circulation difficult. The figure ground and block diagrams show a relentless series of triangular blocks on Market Street's north side, which affect building design, pedestrian movement, and streetwall character. The more regularized blocks on the south side provide a more continuous streetwall, but in turn the longer blocks allow for much larger building footprints and building grain.

An important consideration for the design of Market Street will be to understand and create an appropriate balance between the north and south side of the street, particularly as related to the grain of development, spacing of storefronts and openings, and having a consistent building streetwall that is proportionate to the street.

## Streetwall

An urban streetwall is the pattern created by the building façades and frontages that line a street; the best do so in a consistent manner. Many quantitative and qualitative characteristics help to define the streetwall. These include height, length of frontage of each building, transparencies, and continuity.

The streetwall along Market Street varies substantially, in particular due to the extreme range in building heights from the Financial

District to Octavia/Market. Frontage and building placement are the most consistent components as buildings, by their placement, hold the street edge. This variation in building heights along with the angled blocks to the north, provides an important differentiator in comparison to many traditional urban streets and main streets around the world, which generally have more consistency in these characteristics.

The streetwall should define a key sense of enclosure along the entire of length of Market Street. The streetwalls along Mid-Market and near Octavia suffer from a low height-to-width ratio (height of buildings to width of street) not conducive to street definition or sense of urbanity. Minimum heights for future infill projects should be considered to strengthen that part of the streetwall.

## Intersections

The variety in physical orientation and operation of intersections along Market Street calls for an integrated understanding of transportation and urban design characteristics. Many intersections, while they are complicated and create pedestrian conflicts with vehicles, are also Market Street's unique defining features, and are key to wayfinding.

Some intersections along Market Street provide interesting opportunities for place-making, additional public space, and landscaping or public art. Although these intersections have challenged

geometries, they offer chances to strengthen both sense of arrival and north-south connectivity, help bring into focus distinct landmark buildings and structures, and, where the transportation analysis will allow, may provide opportunities to close off portions of streets, not only to increase pedestrian safety, but to create viable public spaces (see *Better Streets Plan* for further information).

## Open Space

The Market Street study area contains a number of public plazas and smaller spaces that are underutilized, lacking the amenities, orientation, landscaping, or visibility that would create conditions for people to seek out and linger in these places. Many problems are due to the paucity of street furniture and lack of pedestrian activities occurring directly on Market Street. Much insight into these issues was gained through the Public Life Public Space study and an on-the-ground inventory of spaces. These issues are further articulated and analyzed in **Chapter 1.5 Open Space Destinations**.

Missing from Market Street are effective and inviting connections to some of the City's nearby larger open spaces. Physical and visual links to the Civic Center and to the Embarcadero are reasonably successful, but awareness of Yerba Buena Center and Union Square, as well as the linking system of bay-front parks and cross-city green connectors is virtually absent on Market Street. Future plans, from the elevated Transbay park to the citywide network of bikeways, will add potential open space/linking opportunities.

Market Street is the most direct way to unite many of these key spaces and other open spaces. The Recreation and Open Space Element of San Francisco's General Plan states that "opportunities to link key open spaces within the city should be a primary concern for planning to ensure the future livability of the population". Previous major urban design studies for the City, going back to the Burnham Plan of 1906, have envisioned Market Street as a critical link for connecting many places of the City's open space network.

## Approach to Market Street from Side Streets

Though many people arrive directly to Market Street from transit (particularly from underground modes), side streets are constantly in use, as when visiting adjacent neighborhoods or going from one district to another across Market Street, and are not always welcoming. Different streets have diverse qualities of approaches; this in turn influences and reflects the success of certain portions of Market Street relative to others. The design of Market Street should be informed by a broader understanding of how people approach Market Street from the surrounding areas.



## Key Opportunities

- Seize the myriad opportunities in the current design process to simultaneously improve mobility and the urban experience of Market Street.
- Create new destinations directly along Market Street as a way to enhance its identity and activate the pedestrian realm. Establish Market Street as a major public/open space for the City's public realm.
- Redefine the allowable program for underutilized sidewalks to enhance public life along Market Street.
- Develop greater diversity and more balanced distribution of land uses along Market Street to promote urban vitality.
- Build upon Market Street's importance as a transit backbone/destination by taking advantage of the proposed new transit infrastructure investments (Van Ness BRT, Central Subway, and Transbay).
- Redefine Market Street's character west of 5th Street by leveraging new projects and initiatives in the Mid-Market and Civic Center areas.
- Build upon the street's unique asymmetrical character, and reclaim intersections as urban spaces with better pedestrian-oriented crossings.
- Augment linkages to the immediate surrounds, with the understanding that the success of Market Street as a draw for pedestrians from adjacent districts will depend upon the quality and accessibility of adjacent streets that connect directly to Market Street.
- Take full advantage of many of the City's key landmarks, topography, and views that are visible from Market Street.
- Reinforce and redefine the City's civic character, rich history, and memorable identity through acknowledging the unique character of the grids, honoring the various districts that Market Street traverses, building upon its architecture and historic resources, and infusing the street with new uses and destinations.
- Review current zoning as it pertains to building height and streetwall development along Market Street, and amend as necessary to ensure better proportions (height to width ratios) for building development.
- Consider designating specific wide sidewalks and other under-utilized spaces along Market Street for the placement of public art.

## Key Challenges

- Safe and easy north-south connectivity across Market Street is lacking due to the block pattern and grid layout, and that in turn contributes to the isolation of districts that are directly adjacent to Market Street.
- Major destinations and nodes are near and off Market Street, but very few are directly on Market Street, contributing to the lack of overall public life on Market Street.
- Grid layout and block structure complicate traffic patterns and pedestrian movements.
- Ground floors of buildings in many areas of Market Street are of poor quality and lack activity that would encourage pedestrians to stay and linger, negatively affecting the street's overall character.
- Streetwall heights are inconsistent and, in a number of locations along Market Street, do not serve to provide an adequate sense of enclosure.
- Many streets provide uninviting approaches to Market Street, thus decreasing pedestrian activity and sense of safety.
- Due to the grid layout and other pedestrian obstacles, traversing Market from the Ferry Building to Octavia takes approximately 15 minutes longer on the north side than on the south.
- Land use distribution along Market Street is primarily commercially oriented, with few residential uses in many of the districts.



## 1.2 The Context of Market Street

Market Street has a rich history, multifarious personality, physical challenges, and tremendous unrealized opportunity. It is San Francisco's premier civic street. Market Street is a focal point for the city's commercial, ceremonial, and cultural life, and the backbone of the City and regional transit system. In recent years, several new or reconceived destinations (such as the Ferry Building and the Westfield Mall/Bloomingdales) have begun to attract people from all over the region, as well as international visitors.

The Financial District is the chief destination for people on transit in the region and is one of the major employment zones in the area. Other destinations that are off Market Street, such as SFMoMA, the Yerba Buena complex, and Union Square, attract both locals and tourists from all over the region and the world. The City is a major banking and finance center, and home to more than 30 international financial institutions, helping San Francisco rank eighteenth in the world's top-producing cities and ninth in the United States; the city also ranks thirteenth in the top twenty global financial centers (Wall Street Journal, July 2010, "Statistics.").

Despite all these positive urbanizing destinations and districts, Market Street still has limitations in becoming a true multi-faceted destination. While many portions of Market Street (such as the area between 4th and 5th Streets) promote and fulfill the promise of vibrant urban life, street segments such as Mid-Market and the Civic Center will require a

great deal of attention to land use, streetscape, and ground-floor activity (as confirmed by the Public Life Public Space Survey [Appendix A to the Better Market Street Existing Conditions & Best Practices documents and the urban form analyses performed for this report]).

Overall, the identity of the street is in flux, and the street doesn't function well as a destination for people or as a catalyst for urban life. Market Street's identity is intimately interwoven with the city's urban design history, and in particular its grid patterns. Plans for the future of Market Street, in order to fulfill the ambition that it become a world-class street, must both address citywide and regional goals and greater aspirations, and also respond to more localized conditions and needs.



Ferry Building



Union Square



Yerba Buena Garden

## Market Street and its role in the city and regional transportation system

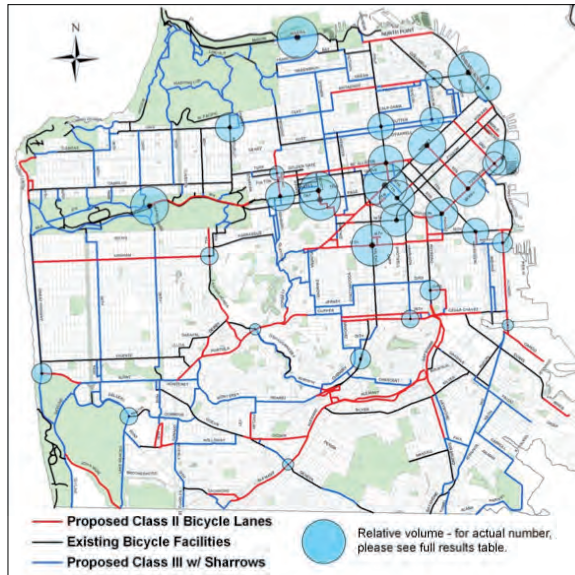
Market Street is the backbone for the city and regional transportation system. It is an integral part of the city's bicycle network.



BART System Map



San Francisco transit map (Danny Man)



San Francisco bicycle map



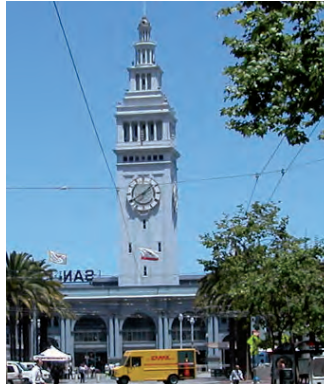
San Francisco cable car map

## Market Street as Destination and Memorable Place

Although Market Street still serves as San Francisco's front door and gateway, especially to and from transit, its physical character and ground-floor treatment (see **Ground Floor Use / Façades**), operational challenges, and lack of urban public life diminish its identity as a distinctly memorable San Francisco place and regional destination.

Visitors seeking an iconic "postcard" photo of San Francisco seldom choose Market Street (with the notable exceptions of the Ferry Building and the Powell Street Cable Car turnaround). Illustrating this point, a study of photographs taken and posted on-line demonstrates that the majority of tourists photograph "San Francisco" places off of Market Street, including Union Square and Pier 39. These popularly-photographed places are distinguished by vibrant public spaces and sidewalks, large crowds of people milling about, and a diversity of activities. They contribute in their particular way to the memorable nature of San Francisco.

Some places along Market Street, such as the Financial District and the Retail District between 3rd and 5th streets, contain some of the busiest pedestrian traffic in the City (see **Chapter 2.2 Pedestrian**). However, areas such as Mid-Market and Civic Center contribute to the perception that Market Street lacks identity, in that they in large part lack lively public spaces, attract fewer pedestrians, and offer a limited schedule of activities. These places detract from the memorable nature and identity of Market Street as a major place of activity for San Francisco.



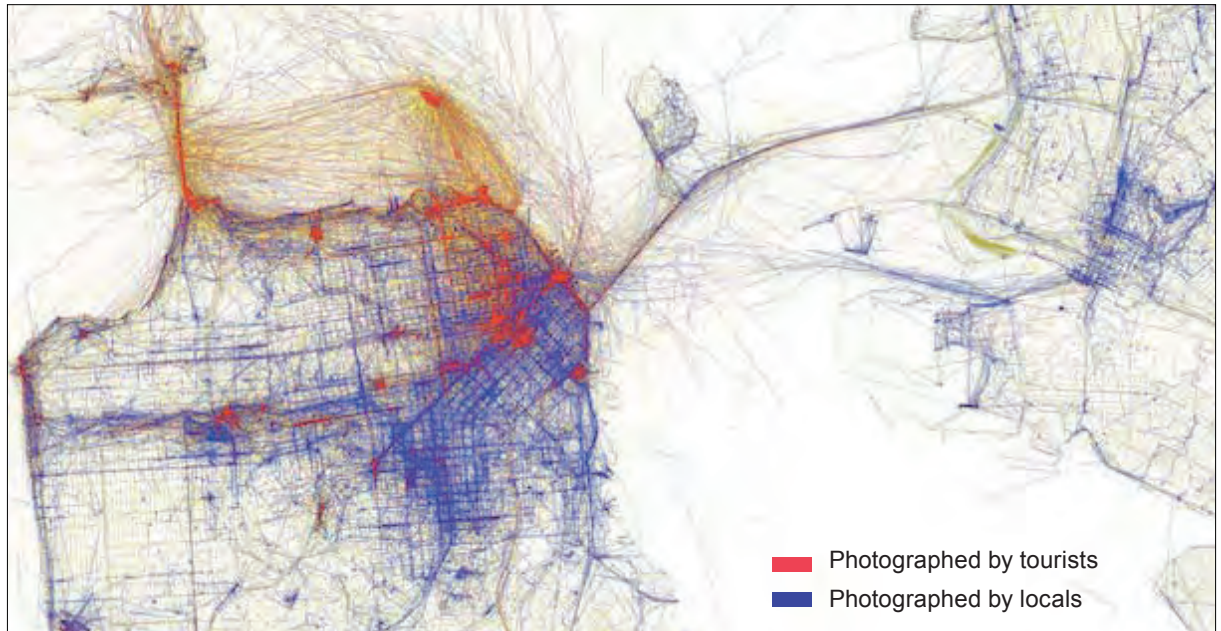
Ferry Building



Cable Car Turnaround on Market Street



Lotta Crabtree Fountain



Place most photographed (Eric Fischer)

Source: <http://missionlocal.org/2010/11/the-world-according-to-eric-fischer/>

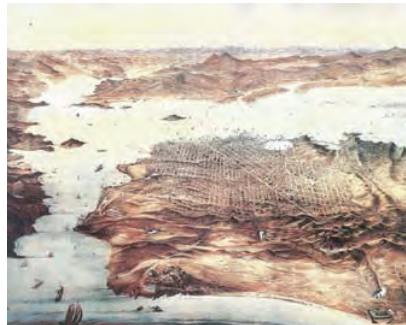
## Market Street Identity is Connected to its History

Market Street has played an important role in the history and evolution of San Francisco and its identity. From the beginning, Market Street symbolized San Francisco's vitality and hope for the future. Many of the City's main buildings and grand hotels lined the street, and it was a primary commercial and entertainment destination for many in the City. The streetcars that lined Market Street (both before and after the 1906 earthquake) reinforced the street's identity as a major destination and spine for the City. Although population was somewhat sparse in the outlying areas of the east bay, people still arrived via ferry from Oakland and points west to come to San Francisco.

Places like the Palace Hotel, the Ferry Building, Lucky Baldwin's, the Case Building, and major stores and movie houses were not only popular destinations but also memorable buildings providing a sense of place. The streetcars in turn responded to and helped to strengthen those destinations. The vast majority of buildings in existence today was established in the decades after 1906 and remains to this day with little change. Building typologies vary along the length of the corridor, but generally include large office and hotel buildings (Financial District), large commercial and retail buildings (Retail District), and large and small commercial buildings, movie houses/theatres, and residential buildings (west of Fifth Street).

In 1967, when BART was being built, more than two-thirds of San Francisco voters agreed to spend almost \$25 million dollars (equivalent to \$170 million in 2011) to help make Market Street a great street again. However, even with the wider sidewalks, plazas, and street trees then provided, Market Street, as seen in its whole length, is still struggling to regain the level of importance and status it held earlier in its history.

Figure 1.2.2: Timeline of Market Street history



Early Image of San Francisco



Market Street in 1905



Arch on Market Street

**1840 - 1860  
Citywide**

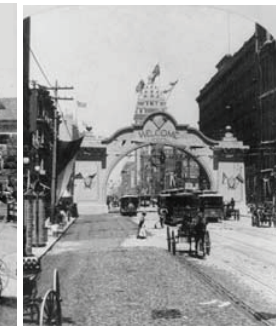


City grids and waterfront

**1860 - 1906 (Pre-earthquake)  
Transportation & Civic Pride**



Ferry Building



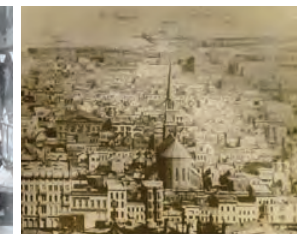
Arch on Market Street



Market Street wharf



Street View Along Market Street



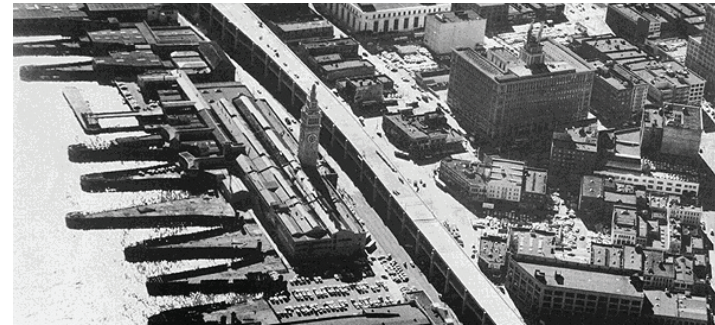
From Market to Mission



Streetcars in the 1920s



Streetcars on four tracks in the 1940s



Freeway separating Ferry Building from Market Street

## 1906 - 1950 (Post-earthquake) Transportation & Theatre District

## 1950 - 1970 Redesign



Theaters and hotels on Market Street



Construction of BART



Paving of Market Street sidewalks



Path of Gold Light Standards

## Transformation of Market Street - Theater at 980 Market Street

Lesser Nickelodeon 1909;  
 Grumman's, 1910;  
 Maio Biography, 1912-24;  
 Circle, 1924-32;  
 New Circle, 1932-39;  
 Newsreel, 1939-49;  
 Cinema, 1949-58;  
 Crest, 1958-78;  
 Egyptian, 1978-81;  
 Electric, 1981-94;  
 Crazy Horse, 1994-Current.



Newsreel, 1939-49



Crest, 1958-78



Crazy Horse, 1994-Current

## Transformation of Market Street - Streetscape and transportation



Circus on Market @ Powell



Great white way in 1937



Streetcars In 1942



BART construction 1970 4th @ Market



## Transformation of Market Street - Emporium (now Westfield) building through time



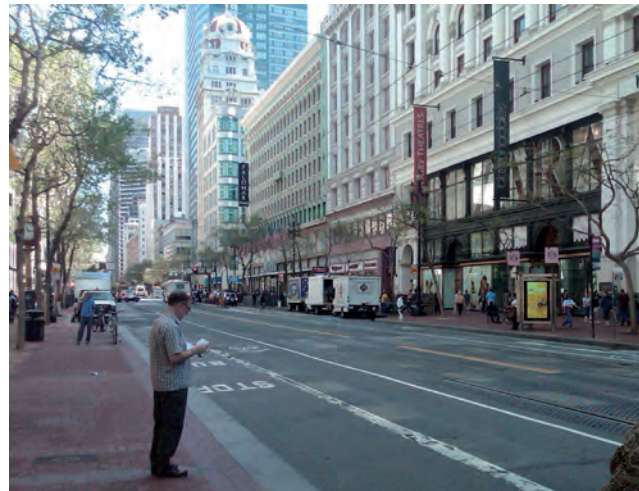
1915



1940s



1960s



2011

## A Place for Civic Pride and Celebration

Market Street is the place for major parades and civic celebrations in the City. These parades are usually regional draws, start near the Ferry Building on an entering street, and end at the Civic Center. Market Street is where civic groups make themselves known to the entire City. Over the years, such celebrations and introductions took fascinating and varied public forms, including an era in which archways and gateways were specially constructed along Market to celebrate key events. These acts enhanced and reinforced Market Street's identity as a central and civic celebratory space within the City as well as a political stage for protests, including worker strikes during the 1930's. In 2010, according to *The San Francisco Chronicle*, more than 1.2 million people lined Market Street to celebrate the San Francisco Giants winning the World Series. Coincidentally or not, that day marked the highest ridership day in the history of the BART system, with approximately 522,000 riders (*Bay Area Rapid Transit District Statistics 2010*). The Better Market Street project seeks to maintain and enhance this successful, ongoing aspect of life on Market Street.



Market Street During 1934 Strike



Archway on Market Street



Celebration of San Francisco Giants winning the World Series, 2010

## 1.3 Urban Form and Structure

As mentioned in the Key Findings section, the urban form and structure of Market Street is defined through its history, pattern of streets and juxtaposition of grids, varied block structure, transportation systems, diversity of public/open spaces, land uses, and building forms. Studying this combination of the broader physical patterns and urban form that structure the downtown and the City as a whole serves as a way to understand and analyze the physical character and identity of Market Street.

Market Street's role as the city's transit spine was foreshadowed in the 1840s, when surveyor Jasper O'Farrell, commissioned by Americans after they captured Yerba Buena (present day San Francisco) from the Mexicans, laid out Market Street as the grand promenade of the city. From the Embarcadero to Castro Street, Market is more than

100' wide. Market Street was aligned at a diagonal to the north-of-Market street grid, visually and physically connecting Twin Peaks to the waterfront. The south-of-Market street grid is much larger than the north-of-Market grid; the SoMa blocks between 1st and 8th streets are four times larger in area than the north-of-Market blocks (see **Block Structure** portion of this section), and eleven times larger than the 200'-square blocks (40,000 square feet) that give downtown Portland and downtown Seattle such a walkable scale. This first act of surveying defined the urban structure of the downtown and role of Market Street.

Market Street soon emerged as the city's primary ceremonial street, hosting parades and civic processions. It also became the city's primary transit street, first for cable car lines, and later for electric streetcar lines. Today, however, Market

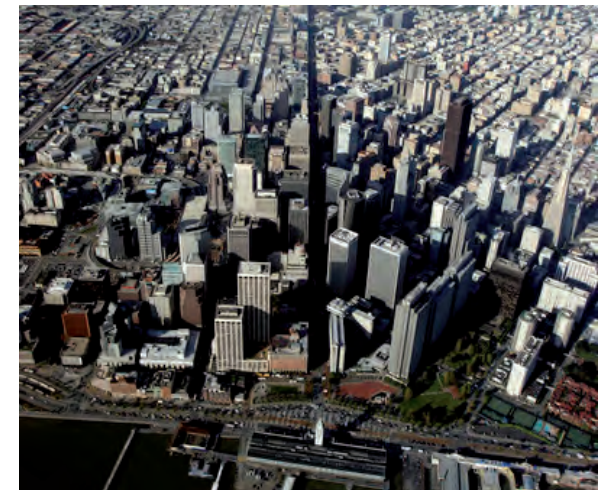
Street is not perceived as a center or catalyst for the districts it traverses, unlike similar streets of the same caliber and ambition around the world. Challenges include whole districts of buildings with no clear address on, or activation of, the street, as well as connectivity challenges across Market due to street-grid changes. The potential to realize Market Street's promise lies in understanding and taking into account the street's immediate context and urban organization—the adjacent districts and their relationships, the urban fabric, the street and block pattern, and the hierarchy of streets and public open spaces. The corridor's diversity of districts; the array of existing features including retail, cultural and entertainment venues, views, landmarks, and historic resources; and a number of proposed projects and initiatives can be captured to create a unique identity and renewed central public space in the heart of the City.



View of Market Street from Twin Peaks



Parade on Market Street



Aerial view of Market Street from bay-side perspective

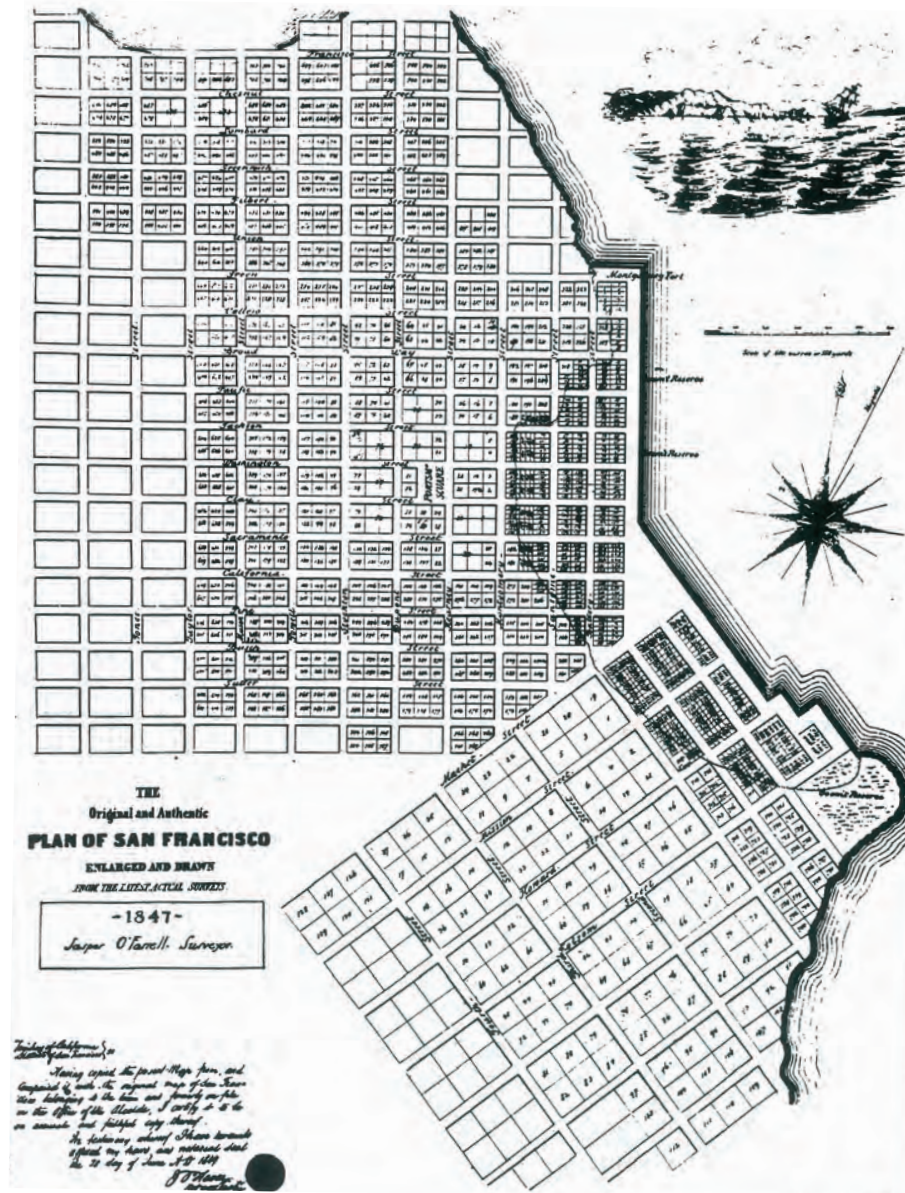
## Impact of Urban Design Visions

The formation of Downtown San Francisco and Market Street was the result of many forces, from land speculation, to policies for protecting and separating land uses, to myriad grand visions over more than a century of growth. Of particular note are two plans commissioned after the 1906 earthquake destroyed the majority of buildings along Market Street, and that still exert influence on developments along and adjacent to the corridor.

### Plan of San Francisco 1897

Jasper O'Farrell was instrumental in defining Market Street and the various grids that align with it. He established Market Street parallel to Mission Street at about 45 degrees from true north to connect on a diagonal line to the Mission Dolores. Instead of the 50-vara lots originally established in the northern grid, the blocks south of Market Street were given 100 vara, effectively preventing the streets defining these blocks from intersecting directly as they approached Market. Many reasons have been posited for this decision, but it was clear that O'Farrell believed that different uses would be placed on the two different grids (housing on the smaller grid to the north, and more industrial uses on the larger grid to the south), and that Market Street would serve as a "barrier" to the noise, dust, and pollution that these industrial uses and future uses would generate.

Plan of San Francisco in 1847 by Jasper O'Farrell



Over time, however, the larger south-of-market blocks—originally too large for residential development, which required more street frontage—were subdivided into smaller blocks by private developers for residential development. Today, many of these streets (e.g., Minna and Natoma) contain smaller live-work lofts and fine-grain residential development.

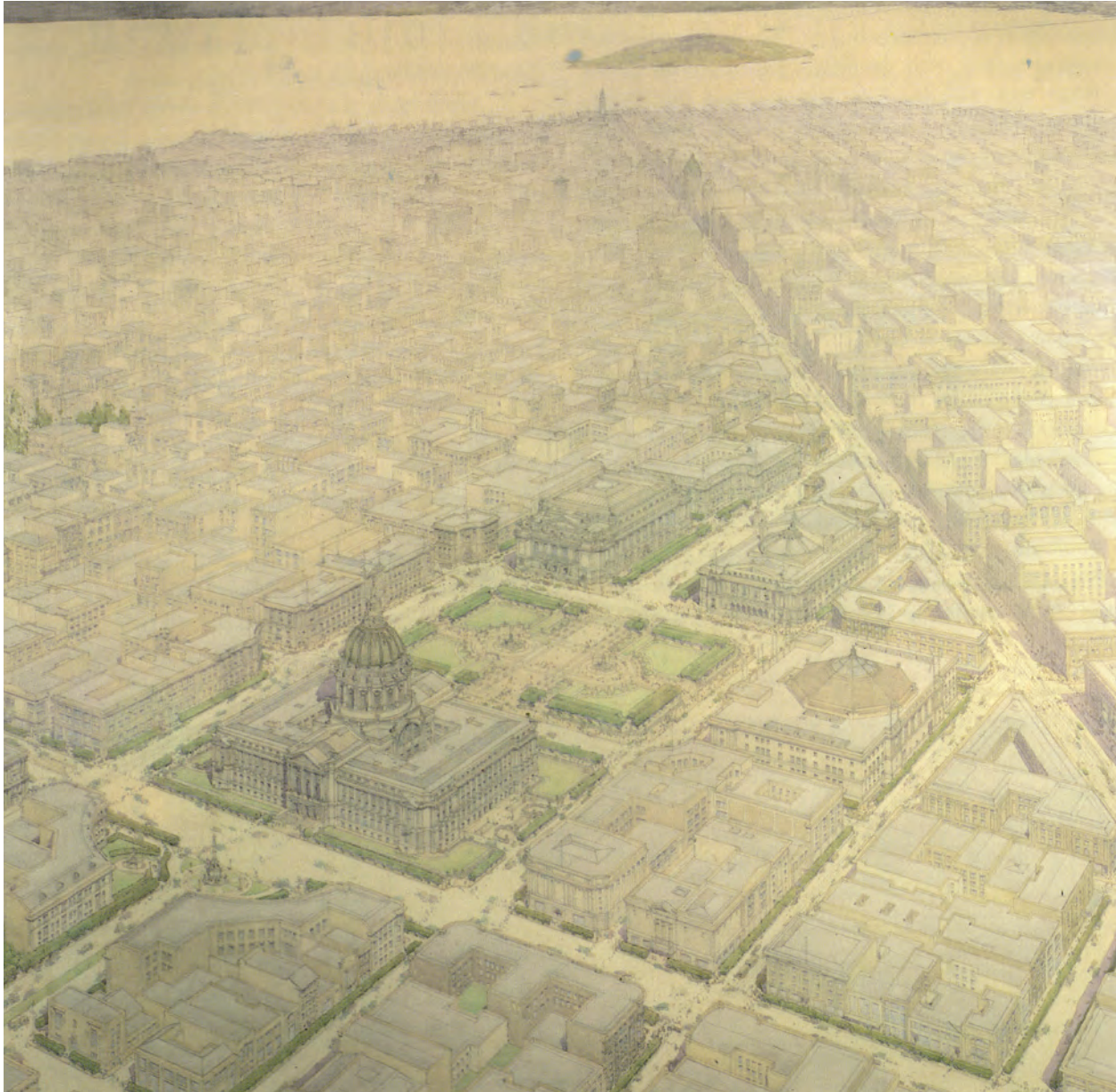
### 1906 Burnham Plan

In 1906 the Burnham Plan was presented to the City; it contained many ideas that would prove not only to shape reconstruction of the City of San Francisco as part of the City Beautiful movement, but also to present an attitude about the future direction of Market Street and its role in the City. Burnham's Market Street was key to the redesign of the Civic Center and served as an extension and a terminus of the Golden Gate Park panhandle. Other key public spaces were also to be connected to Market Street, and an immense obelisk and public space constructed at the intersection of Market and Van Ness. The definition of Market Street was to be in the finest Parisian tradition, and hold the streetwall with strict regularity (see figure at right). This idea continued forward through a number of iterations of the plan, as demonstrated in the Jules Guerin Civic Center illustration that depicts a consistent streetwall edge where the Civic Center faces Market Street (following page).

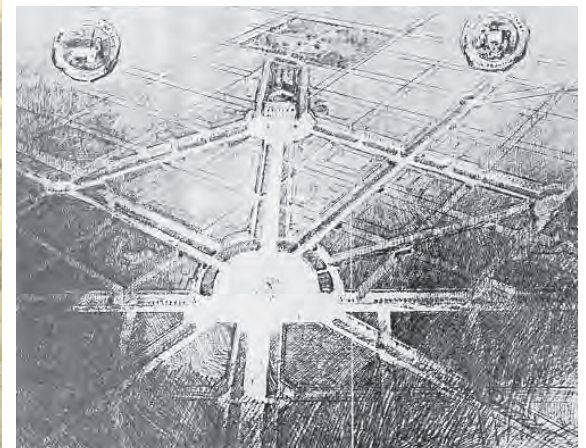
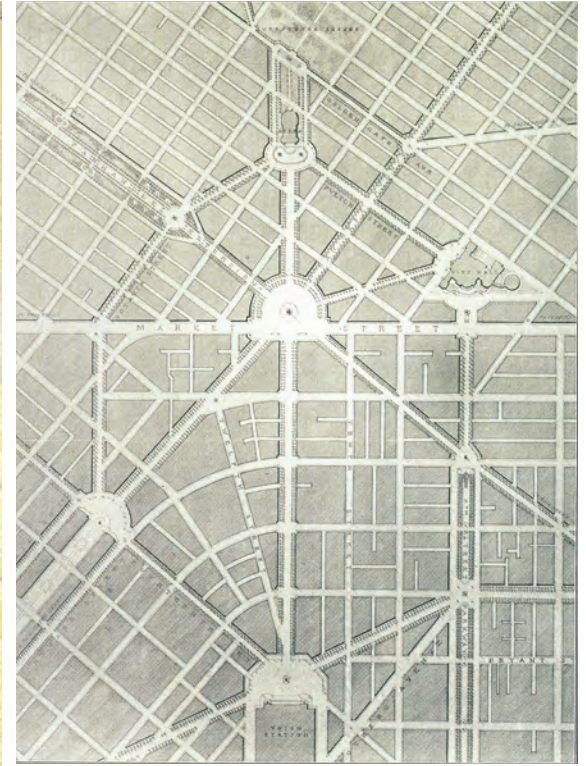
Burnham Plan in 1906



## Plan of Civic Center



View of Civic Center and Market Street - Jules Guerin, 1916



1906 Burnham Plan

## Transportation / Circulation Interface

The evolution of transportation/operations has generally led to changes in urban form along Market Street. Land uses and their intensities reinforced this relationship as access to mobility allowed for opportunities for greater commerce and in turn more people on the street. As the City grew, and the districts along Market Street became larger and the City more regionally interconnected, the transit network followed suit (ferries, subways, streetcars, etc.). Cyclists also use Market Street as a primary bike route, as it is a direct path to many destinations.

As both land uses and transit intensity/options change and affect the urban form and fabric of Market Street, new districts and destinations come into being. These relationships puts more pressure on the fixed space of the street as pedestrians, cyclists, and transit all require and compete for their own space. Using the design of Market Street to better integrate and serve transit operations, cyclists, and pedestrian safety, as well as to promote intensification of land uses and the vitality of urban life, is critical to its success.



Multiple transit modes on Market Street



Taxi on Market Street



Biking on Market Street



Walking, standing, and waiting for a Bus

## Transit Plays a Major Role in Market Street Identity and Experience

- Historically, people have used Market Street as a transit and circulation street. Its primary identity has always been as a transit connector (streetcars, bus lines, ferries, and subways) to other parts of the City.

- People's experience of Market Street depends greatly on their itinerary and transit mode choices.
- Improving travel modes and their interface is an opportunity to strengthen connectivity of districts and further activate the public realm.
- Creating a transit realm / public realm that is safe has always been a problem on Market Street.

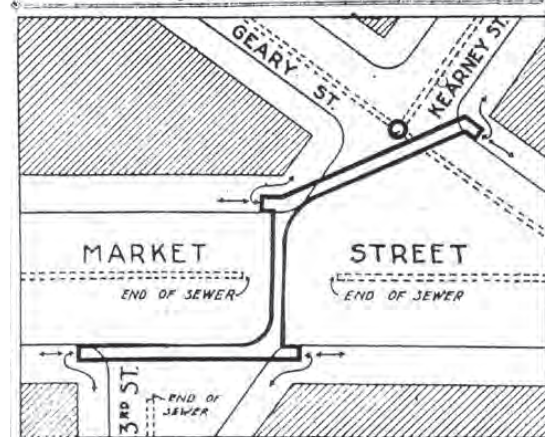
## Destinations Influence Transit Activity

Per the preliminary transit data, the majority of people using Muni or BART tend to go either to the Civic Center (north of Market Street) or the Financial District—the areas with the highest concentration of employment density in the City. In addition, AT&T Park, home of the San Francisco Giants, is another newer destination for both local and regional transit users, with transfers in the Financial and Retail Districts. Although the area between 4th and 5th streets is visited by many shoppers, the rest of Market Street has a much lower level of pedestrian intensity, despite sidewalk capacity for more activity. The area south of Market, from Van Ness to 6th Street, shows the lowest number of people using transit for their destinations in this area. Major new office/technology tenants anticipated for this area may serve to change that balance of destinations.

## Traffic and pedestrian safety newspaper articles (1917)

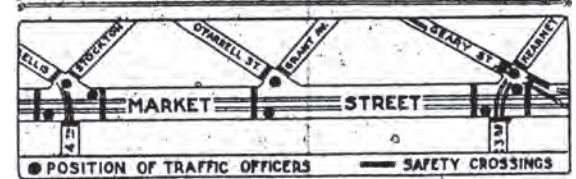
### Market St. Subway Planned May Solve Traffic Problem

MAP showing proposed subway for pedestrians under Market street from Third to Kearny, which is proposed as a solution of the traffic congestion problem. The fact that three sewers end at this junction makes the project more feasible than otherwise.



### Speed Causes Accidents Care in Crossing Streets

**SAFETY PLANS FOR 'DOWN-TOWN SECTION'**  
Diagram shows how citizens may save themselves injuries by obeying rules for crossing busy streets.



### Second Article on "Safety First" Deals With Speeders and Pedestrians,

**S**PEEDING on the city streets and State highways has become a serious menace to the life and limb of citizens. State records show that during three months the cause of 289 deaths and injuries of pedestrians and motorists was caused by excessive speeding. Do you, as a driver of an automobile, know the rate of speed which the law allows you to drive your vehicle? Below is the second of a series of articles on "Safety First" which "The Examiner" is publishing of educational value for pedestrians and motorists and should serve to lessen this evil. The first of the series, "Keeping Vehicles Away From Street Cars," was published yesterday.

## Market Street Is Challenged By North-South Traffic Flows and Lack of Differentiation

- Side streets are dominated by north-south vehicular traffic movement, particularly on streets with direct connections to the Bay Bridge. One-way streets (such as 9th and 10th) serve to increase speed of vehicles as they approach Market Street, and in turn diminish the pedestrian experience at these intersections and their approaches to Market Street.

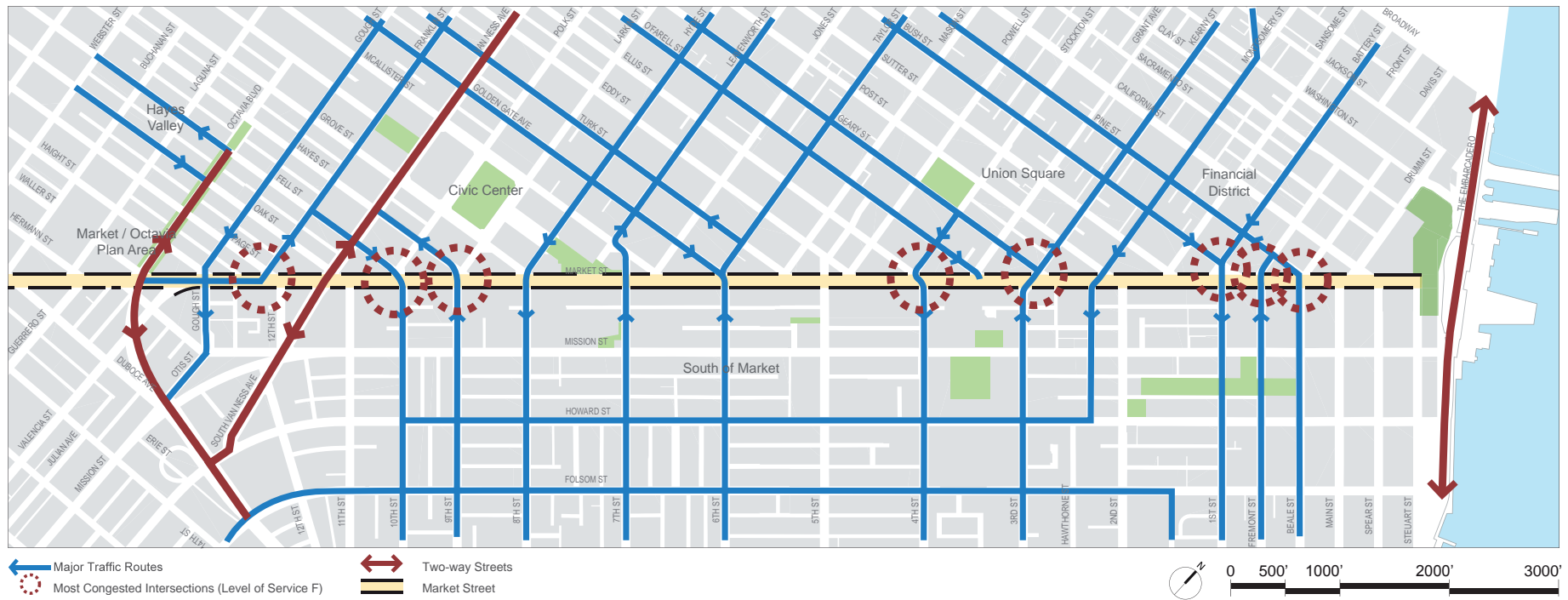


- Many streets that cross Market Street are dominated by vehicles. Efforts were made to make Market Street a great pedestrian and transit street, and only 14% of total vehicles on Market Street are cars. However, many of the cross-streets, especially the numbered streets South of Market and the north-south Tenderloin streets, are traffic funnels – primarily for vehicles – with three or four lanes of traffic

and narrow sidewalks. These streets can be challenging for pedestrians and cyclists, are inhospitable to neighborhood-serving businesses, and limit connectivity to Market Street. It should be noted that multi-agency teams are currently at work on traffic-calming strategies for some of these streets, and pilot projects may soon provide valuable information on potential solutions.

- Any redesign of Market Street will need to consider the proposed major transit investments of the Van Ness BRT, the Central Subway, and the Transbay redevelopment. Of particular note is that the Central Subway project will not have any direct access to Market Street, but will have underground connections to the Powell Street station. This is likely to draw transit passengers from the street level to below ground.

**Figure 1.3.1: Major traffic routes**



## Street Hierarchy

Understanding the street hierarchy and the various types of streets is critical to defining the quality and character of the area and the circulation patterns/connections around Market Street. This analysis takes into account various sources in the ongoing Transportation Study, including the circulation intensity of streets (see **Figure 1.3.1 Major Traffic Routes**); other documents as indicated in the Publically Accessible and Open Space Connection diagram (see **Figure 1.3.5**); and field observations. The analysis is summarized in the Street Hierarchy diagram (**Figure 1.3.2**). A selection of street views illustrates the hierarchy and range of streets.

The categories proposed for the street hierarchy are:

- **Citywide/Boulevard/Civic:** Major city-wide arterials (e.g., Van Ness Avenue and Market Street).
- **Key Circulation:** Major circulation routes (e.g., 9th Street and Battery Street).

## Citywide / Boulevard / Civic



Van Ness Avenue



Market Street

## Key Circulation Street

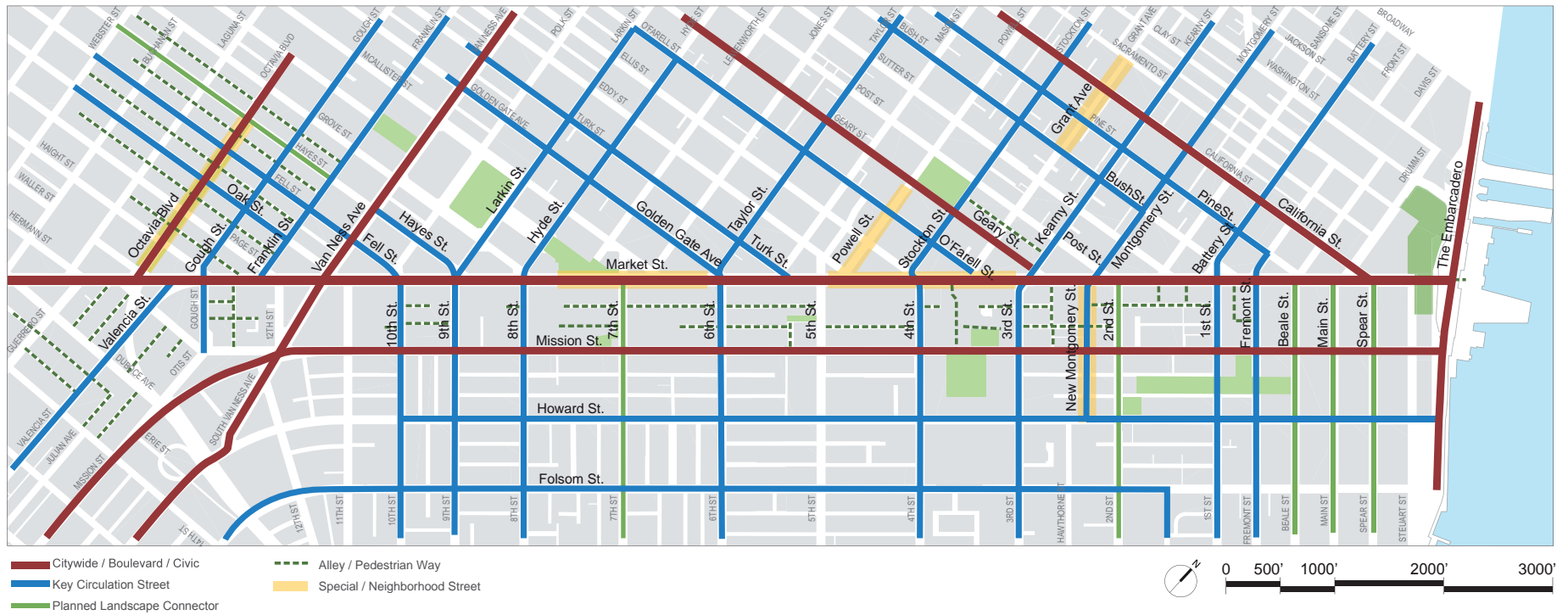


9th Street



Battery Street

**Figure 1.3.2: Street hierarchy**



## Alley / Pedestrian Way



Yerba Buena Lane

## Special / Neighborhood Street



New Montgomery Street

- **Landscape Connectors:** Streets that are designed to significantly calm and/or divert traffic, prioritize pedestrian and bicycle travel, connect to larger open spaces, and incorporate significant tree planting; include “Living Streets” where widened sidewalks accommodate formal open spaces and pocket parks (e.g., Spear, Main, and Beale Streets).
- **Alleys/Pedestrian Ways:** Narrow streets and pedestrian-only linkages (e.g., Yerba Buena Lane and Stevenson Alley).
- **Special/Neighborhood Street:** Streets or segments of streets that are iconic or contribute to neighborhood identity (e.g., Powell Street and New Montgomery Street).

## Key Findings

- Although Market Street lacks destinations and a consistency of destinations (see Figure 1.3.7), it is clearly a major citywide arterial crossed by a number of important north-south streets.
- Side streets are dominated by north-south vehicular traffic movements, and although some streets provide fairly direct connections across Market, their character doesn’t carry across the street.
- A good network of alleys and pedestrian ways complements the side streets south of Market.
- A limited number of “Special/Neighborhood” streets, such as Powell Street and Market Street in the Retail District, each with a unique building/street character and high level of activity, seem to create a strong neighborhood identity. The corridor and environs could benefit from more special streets to enhance street legibility, interest, and activity.
- Market Street can leverage key streets that connect to adjacent destinations and centers of activity.

## Land Use Distribution along Market Street

The land uses along Market Street are very diverse, and the balance among uses varies significantly along the length of the street. Some districts, such as the Financial District and Retail District, can be defined by the intensity of their respective uses. These uses also translate to building form (e.g., high rise for office, large floor-plate for retail such as Westfield Mall). The Financial District will undergo some transformation when the Transbay District plans are gradually realized. This major downtown development will substantially transform the area (currently primarily commercial/office) and will infuse the district with new residential programming that will require opportunities for recreation, shopping, and leisure, which Market Street could eventually provide.

The Mid-Market and Civic Center districts struggle against a number of factors that harm its livability and vitality. Some are related to larger shifts in the economy that have affected urban neighborhoods across the country, such as the decline of single-screen movie theaters, the relocation of back-office and support jobs from city centers, and the problems associated with chronic homelessness.

Commercial uses with ground-floor retail are prevalent along Market Street. Offices are the dominant use in both the Financial District and Mid-Market/Civic Center areas. The latter area has become even more markedly office-dominated in recent years, with the completion of the Federal Building at 7th and Market, and the San Francisco government's lease or purchase of some of the neighborhood's former back-office buildings. The problem with single-use neighborhoods is

that they are lifeless during parts of the day, and particularly at night, which can make them dull or even dangerous.

### Need for a Diversity of Uses

Market Street works best where uses are diverse, as is the case in the area between 2nd and 5th streets, where hotels, offices, shops, convention centers, art museums, cinemas, theaters, and housing provide a 24-hour mix of activities. This is also true along Upper Market, where dense residential neighborhoods and housing above shops keep the street active and safe, and sustain neighborhood-serving businesses. This mix is more successful in providing constant pedestrian activity and urban life.

Mid-Market would benefit from a greater diversity of uses, particularly housing. Local residents sustain the neighborhood-serving businesses—restaurants, shops, etc.—that bring life to the streets, which in turn draws in visitors. Most of San Francisco's most vital and interesting neighborhoods for shopping, eating, and drinking are in the midst of dense residential neighborhoods. Concomitantly, it is difficult to sustain retail and entertainment districts without nearby residents.

### Housing Can Add Urban Vitality

Market Street, from Van Ness to the Ferry Building, contains little residential use. The new housing developments proposed around the Market Street/Van Ness area will be an important improvement. The adjacent parts of the Tenderloin and SoMa have substantial quantities of housing. Many

areas, like 6th Street, have received the attention of the Redevelopment Agency and other social and housing agencies over the last decade, in an effort to improve residential capacities and introduce new and improved affordable and market-rate housing.

Residential hotels are an important part of the City's housing mix, and the massive demolition of hotels in the '60s and '70s exacerbated the city's housing crisis and homelessness problem. Although many privately-owned residential hotels lack any services or amenities, and may be dirty and dangerous, residential hotels with kitchenettes, public rooms, ground-floor lobbies, and on-site services can be convivial places to live. This lack of housing diversity is beginning to change, especially along 10th Street, where several apartment or condominium buildings, both affordable and market rate, are approved or under construction.

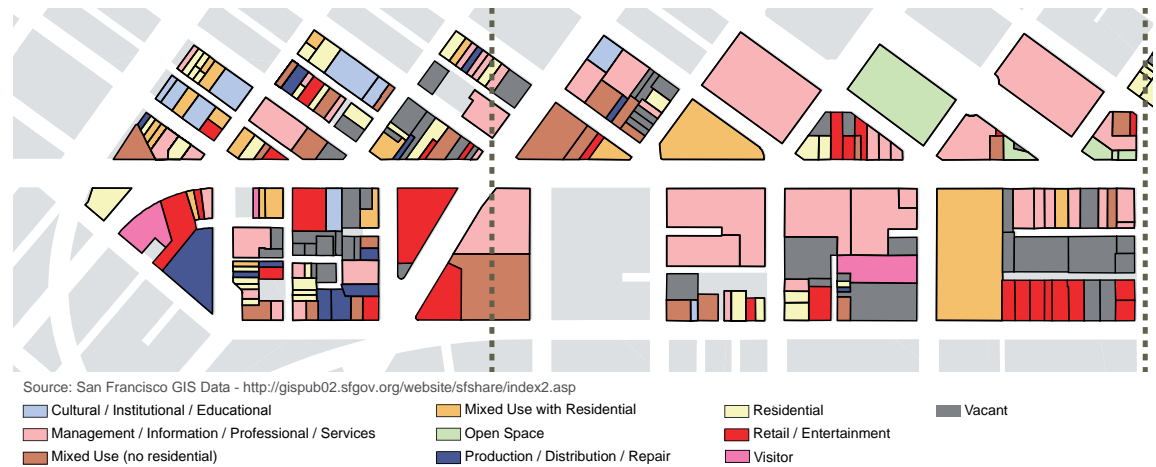
The Octavia Area contains Market Street's most diverse and varied set of land uses. It demonstrates the positive effects of matching diversity of use with a fine-grain physical pattern of narrow buildings, and that diversity is reflected in the character of the streetwall along Market Street. Though said character is favorable, the street still suffers from narrower sidewalks with adjacent traffic, closed storefronts, little street life or pedestrian amenity, and a large homeless and indigent population. The *Market/Octavia Area Plan* emphasizes the need for future development along Market Street to embrace this mixed-use urban strategy, including residential, ground-floor retail, live/work, and cultural/arts uses.

The charts on the following pages illustrate the land use distribution for each district.

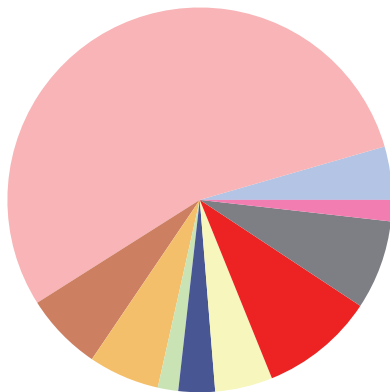
## Key Findings

- Some of the inactivity found on Market Street is the result of a lack of balance in mix of land uses that can promote an active street life, provide more eyes on the street, and extend the daytime/nighttime life of certain districts along Market Street.
- It is important to build on the new housing projects that are being proposed along Market Street, particularly given the easy accessibility to transit.
- Consideration of differing land uses and intensities, integrated with transit and the street design, can help to establish more mixed-use neighborhoods along Market Street.

Figure 1.3.3: Land use distribution

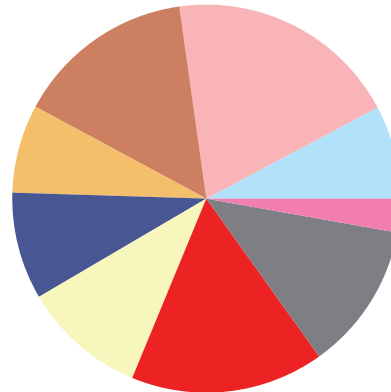


Market Street Overall



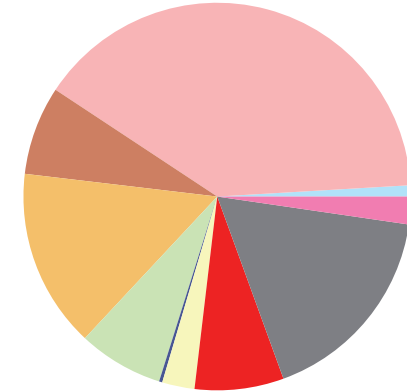
4.52 %	Cultural/Institutional/Educational
54.44 %	Management/Information/Professional/Service
6.58 %	Mixed Use (no Residential)
5.97 %	Mixed Use with Residential
1.72 %	Open Space
3.04 %	Production/Distribution/Repair
4.82 %	Residential
9.65 %	Retail
7.49 %	Vacant

Octavia



7.8 %	Cultural/Institutional/Educational
19.41 %	Management/Information/Professional/Service
14.92 %	Mixed Use (no Residential)
7.38 %	Mixed Use with Residential
8.92 %	Production/Distribution/Repair
10.35 %	Residential
16.13 %	Retail/Entertainment
12.29 %	Vacant

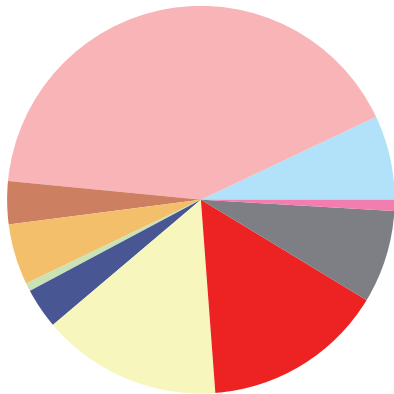
Civic Center



0.94 %	Cultural/Institutional/Educational
39.74 %	Management/Information/Professional/Service
7.42 %	Mixed Use (no Residential)
14.95 %	Mixed Use with Residential
7.07 %	Open Space
0.28 %	Production/Distribution/Repair
2.72 %	Residential
7.45 %	Retail/Entertainment
17.14 %	Vacant

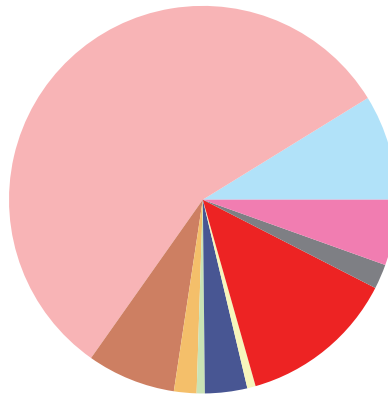


**Mid-Market / Tenderloin**



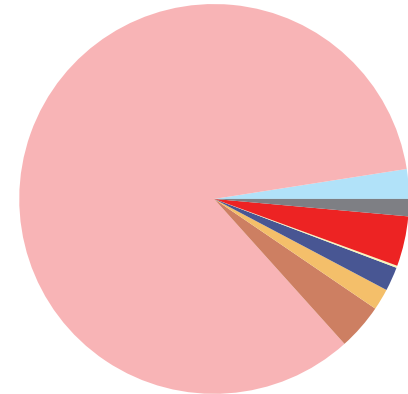
- 7.06 % Cultural/Institutional/Educational
- 41.37 % Management/Information/Professional/Service
- 3.59 % Mixed Use (no Residential)
- 5.08 % Mixed Use with Residential
- 0.69 % Open Space
- 3.38 % Production/Distribution/Repair
- 14.99 % Residential
- 15.17 % Retail/Entertainment
- 7.7 % Vacant

**Retail District**



- 8.82 % Cultural/Institutional/Educational
- 56.38 % Management/Information/Professional/Services
- 7.38 % Mixed Use (no Residential)
- 1.93 % Mixed Use with Residential
- 0.66 % Open Space
- 3.55 % Production/Distribution/Repair
- 0.66 % Residential
- 13.07 % Retail/Entertainment
- 2.08 % Vacant

**Financial District**



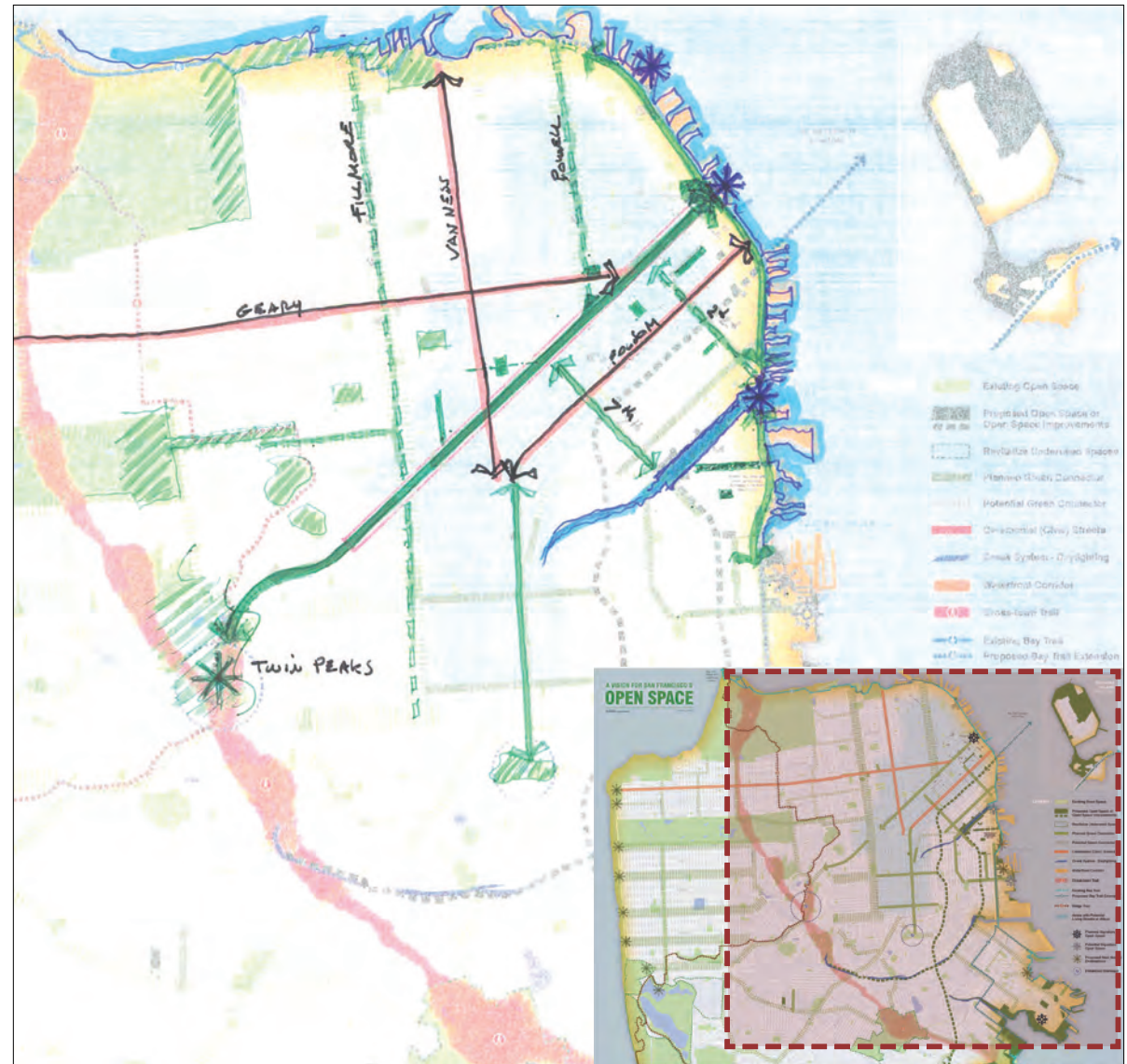
- 2.46 % Cultural/Institutional/Educational
- 84.2 % Management/Information/Professional/Service
- 3.87 % Mixed Use (no Residential)
- 1.73 % Mixed Use with Residential
- 1.97 % Production/Distribution/Repair
- 0.19 % Residential
- 4.19 % Retail/Entertainment
- 1.4 % Vacant

## Open Space Network

San Francisco enjoys many aspects of a world-class open space system, but is missing some critical links in the network. Spaces such as Golden Gate Park, Crissy Field, and Yerba Buena Gardens contribute to San Francisco's quality of life and the distinctive identity of the City. Market Street is strategically positioned in respect to that open space system, in that it connects many significant open spaces within the downtown and offers potential to improve and expand the family of spaces. Many elements of the original 1906 Burnham Plan for San Francisco suggest an integrated open space network that leverages Market Street's primary location within the City.

Market Street's public spaces, together with improvements along side streets, present an opportunity to strengthen the City's overall green network and simultaneously reinforce connections within and among districts. The *San Francisco General Plan Open Space Element* proposes that the City strive for a connected open space network, and suggests that this is essential for the livability and vitality of the metropolis. The *San Francisco Open Space Vision 2100* identifies Market Street as a major connector of the open space network (see **Figure 1.3.4**, at right). The *Better Streets Plan* suggests that streets that promote walking activities will also promote a healthier lifestyle for the City's residents. By enabling more recreational/daily exercise opportunities and destinations, Market Street can fulfill this promise. The *Better Streets Plan* also emphasizes a need for convenient connections between Districts and other centers of activity; Market Street's strategic location within the City can and should help accomplish this.

Figure 1.3.4: A vision for Market Street open space network





**Figure 1.3.5: Publicly accessible open space and connections**



UN Plaza



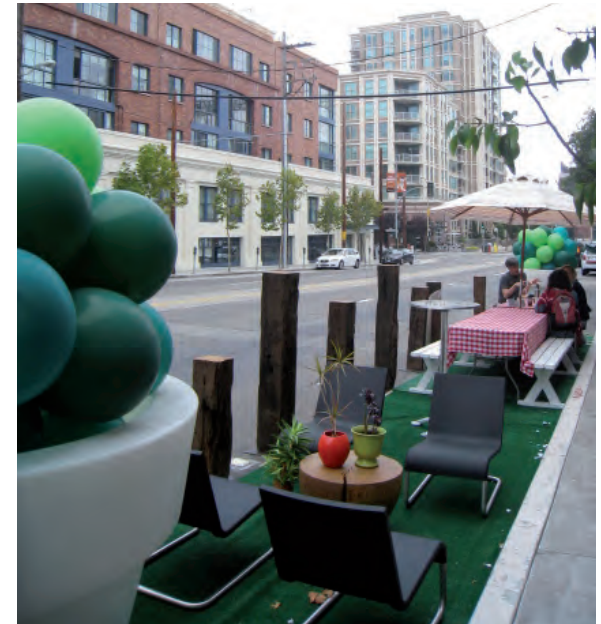
Hallidie Plaza



Crown Zellerbach Plaza

## Key Findings

- Market Street is identified as a significant connector of the City's open space network in *San Francisco Open Space Vision 2100*, which promotes the desire to link the Ferry Building/Waterfront to Twin Peaks.
  - As stated in the *Open Space and Recreational Element* of the *San Francisco General Plan*, not only supporting new open spaces, but creating links between open spaces is a necessity for the City if it is to provide a vibrant, civic-minded, livable place for its inhabitants. In this light, Market Street can use its strategic location to provide such a vital link.
  - Market Street has the potential to perform key ecological functions and promote biodiversity through inventive storm-water management strategies and the integration of habitat/planting materials.
  - Improved pedestrian and landscape treatment of identified key side streets and potential connectors could help realize a comprehensive open space network.
- Given the generous width of its sidewalks, Market Street could support new opportunities for recreational activities that enhance public life. (See **Best Practices ["BP"] Chapter 1 Public Space / Pedestrian Realm.**)
  - Opportunities also exist along Market Street for temporary public spaces and events such as "PARKing Day." These temporary facilities have had great success in other parts of the city, and could become a means to help activate and improve the open space along Market Street.
  - The *Market/Octavia Plan* establishes a system of civic streets and open spaces, and recognizes Market Street as an important functional and civic spine to be supported in its role as an important link between important spaces within the district.



PARKing day, 2010



22nd Street parklet, 2010

## Districts along Market Street

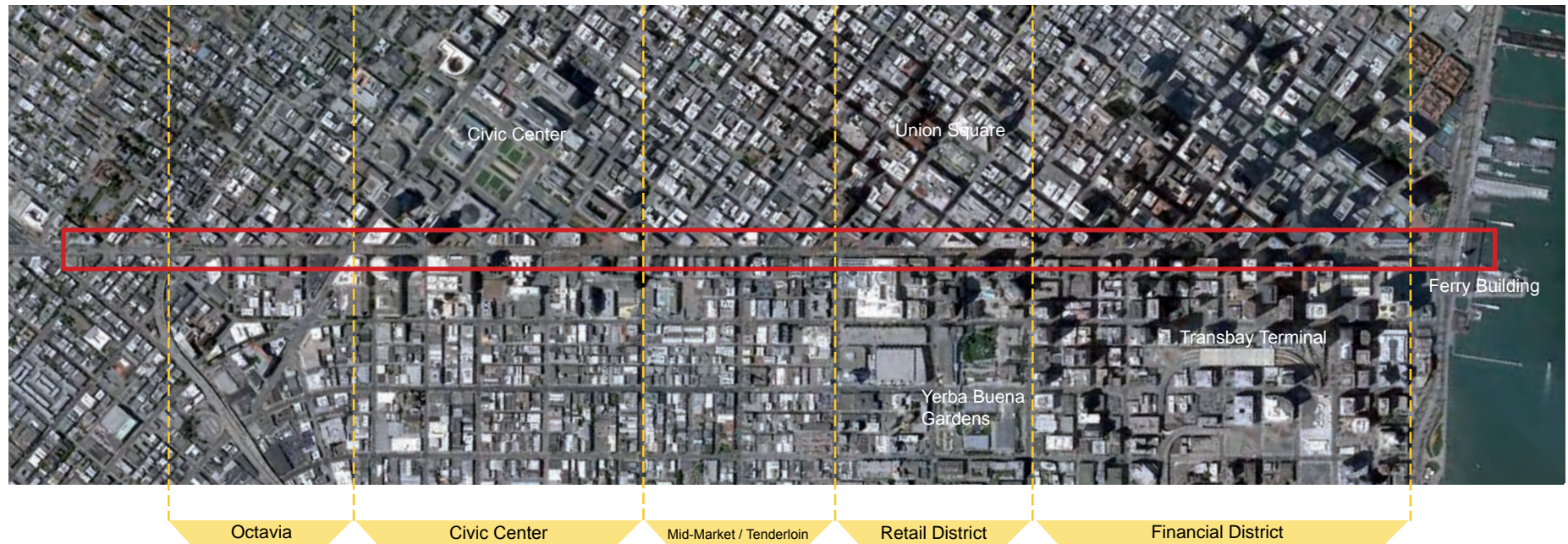
Clear identities for distinctive districts and neighborhoods can be a significant contributor to a successful City's urban structure. Residents often ascribe a particular personality to the places in which they themselves live and work, and look for similar indicators of identity throughout the City. Prominent architectural or open space features, memorable edges, and centers for activity enhance recognition of such distinctive districts

along Market Street. When successfully realized, these varied identities will tell the stories of Market Street, and provide essential orientation within a large and intense city fabric, making it visually and psychologically manageable.

Although Market Street is a continuous street, large-scale districts are already recognizable. Transitions from the Financial District to the Retail District to Mid-Market/Tenderloin are subtle, yet

discernable. Changes in land use, the height of the streetwall, the grain and scale of the buildings and their architectural qualities all contribute to experiencing the various districts/neighborhoods of Market Street as distinct from each other. Although the Ferry Building clearly and graciously terminates Market Street to the east, the western terminus at the top of Twin Peaks is more remote.

Figure 1.3.6: Key Districts along Market Street



## District Characteristics



**Octavia**

**Octavia:** This area along Market Street has a great deal of variety in architectural character. The narrow building-fronts reflect the narrow lot sizes and emphasize the fine-grain character of the district. The scale of the buildings, combined with the mix of uses, provides more of a neighborhood feel than other districts along Market Street. Smaller local places like Zuni Café continue to serve as primary nighttime destinations for locals and tourists alike. However, the extremely high volumes of traffic that crisscross the neighborhood and Market Street, the vacant lots and closed storefronts, and a large homeless and indigent population impact street life and vitality and detract from the pedestrian experience.

The *Market/Octavia Plan* emphasizes the recognition of Market Street as an important street, but also notes the need for Market Street to relate to the neighborhood through compatible uses and stronger adjacent street connectivity/activity.



**Civic Center**

**Civic Center:** Taller buildings punctuate the intersection of Market/Van Ness, but the district has low-rise buildings that help preserve view corridors to City Hall. Large-footprint, mid-rise commercial buildings dominate on the south side of the street. Key landmarks and destinations include the Civic Center, the San Francisco Main Library, the Federal Building, and the various arts/cultural destinations that exist around the Civic Center on and off Market Street. Large institutional buildings, many of which are historic, reflect these civic uses. New residential and commercial projects, including the future Twitter headquarters in the old San Francisco Furniture Mart building, will help revitalize the area.





### Mid-Market / Tenderloin

**Mid-Market/Tenderloin:** This district is the face of the Tenderloin on Market Street, with varied heights of buildings, spotty storefront occupancy, and vacant lots and buildings. Varied uses and boarded-up storefronts contribute to the overall depressed quality of the district. However, places like the Orpheum and the Warfield are key remnants and reminders of the prior history and identity of Market Street as an entertainment district. The area includes many small and large mid-rise commercial buildings and movie houses/theaters. The *Mid-Market Redevelopment Plan* (2010) proposes the establishment of a Central Market Cultural Heritage District for new arts and entertainment activities and restoration of historic buildings.



### Retail District

**Retail District:** This constitutes the main shopping district of the city, attracting locals and visitors alike to the myriad shops, department stores, hotels, and offices. The area is home to large- and medium-scale and medium-grain retail and commercial buildings and hotels, many built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and retaining their historic character, particularly along Market Street and north of the corridor. The district offers good connectivity between Union Square to the north, the heart of the Retail District, the Westfield San Francisco Centre, Moscone Center, and the Yerba Buena Arts District. Key landmarks and destinations include the Westfield Centre, the cable car turnaround, and Hallidie Plaza. Retail between 4th and 5th streets is seen as an urbanized center (see **Public Space Public Life Survey**) in terms of pedestrian use, crowding, and general activity in the area.

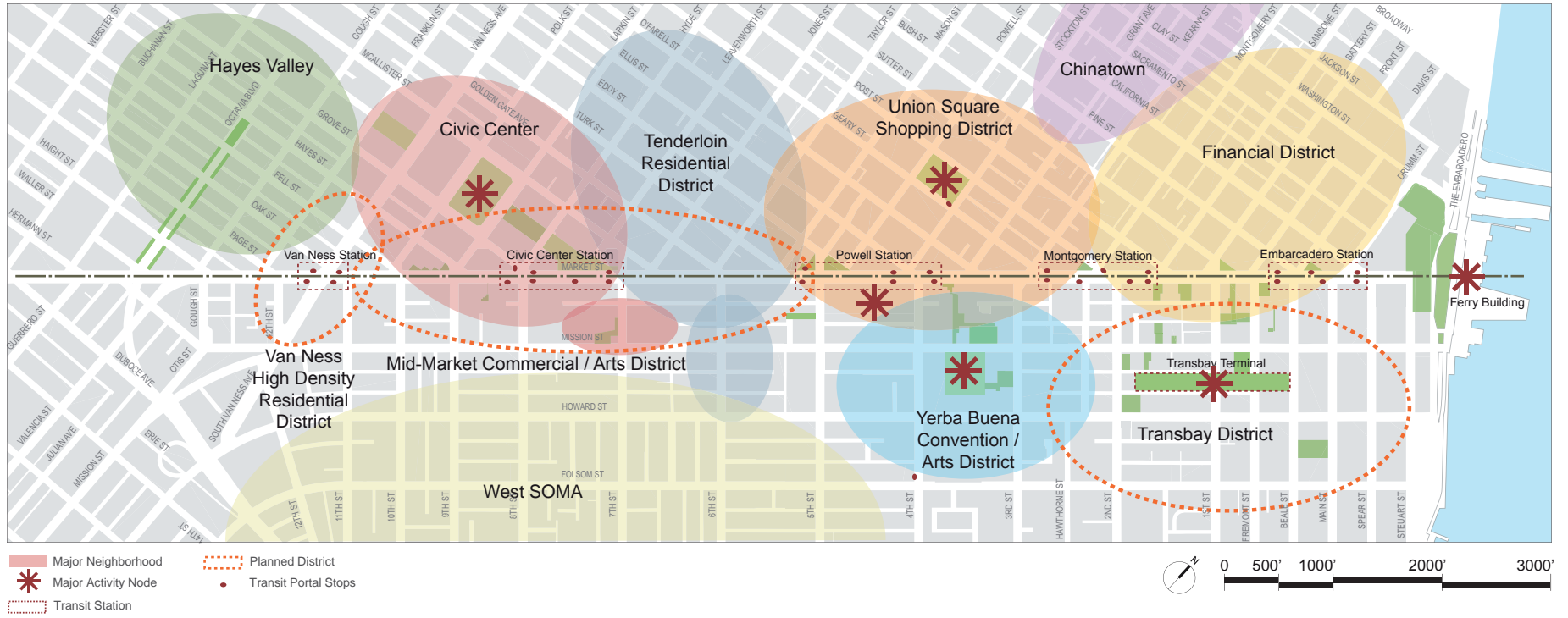


### Financial District

**Financial District:** This area is defined by tall commercial buildings and large-footprint buildings with long bases and large grain. It is the largest single destination for daily users of Market Street. Key landmarks include the Ferry Building at the terminus of Market Street, which is also a destination in its own right, and the Palace Hotel (at New Montgomery), which is a reminder of the Market Street from the past, when grand hotels lined the street.



**Figure 1.3.7: Districts and Centers**



**Figure 1.3.8: Nodes of activity and connections across Market Street**



## Key Findings

Although many of the districts have their own destinations along Market Street (such as the Ferry Building, Powell Street Cable Car turnaround, or Westfield Mall/Bloomingdales), many centers of activity and destinations are just off Market Street. These include:

- Transbay
- Union Square
- Moscone Convention Center
- Yerba Buena/SFMOMA
- Civic Center

Opportunities exist to create effective connections between these key destinations and Market Street, as well as across Market Street. As of July 2011, a redesigned and enhanced pedestrian connection between Union Square and the Westfield/Bloomingdales will be tested, and others, such as between the Civic Center arts/culture area and Yerba Buena/SFMOMA could be developed in the future.

The impacts of Transbay should be considered in relationship to the south of Market revitalization and how it will affect Market Street. Transit studies and land use and urban form analyses are still being conducted.



Transbay (Rooftop Park)



Moscone Convention Center



Union Square



Civic Center



## Emerging Synergies

The design of Market Street should take into account a number of upcoming projects and ongoing initiatives contemplated along or near the street, including private commercial and residential buildings, new entries and public spaces, and arts-oriented investments in existing and new buildings. These new neighbors, workers, stores, arts venues, and gathering areas promise increased

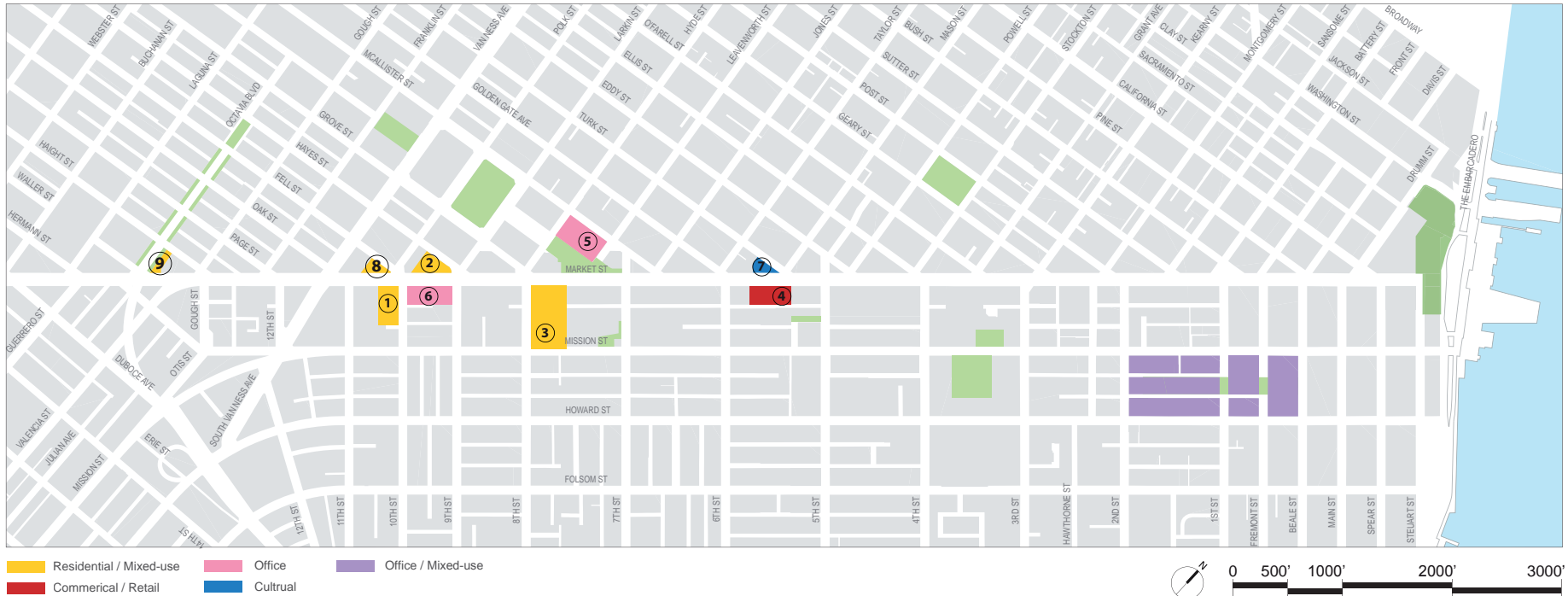
intensity of use and will contribute to the active urban life of Market Street (see **Figures 1.3.10 and 1.3.11**, next page). Fortunately, much of this new investment is concentrated in areas where the **Public Space Public Life Survey** found lower-than-urban levels of pedestrian use along unattractive frontages.

New transportation projects will also significantly impact the activity and uses along Market Street, creating more transit activity at the intersections of Van Ness/Market, 3rd and Market, and all of the streets and Rights of Way (R.O.W.) leading to Market Street from Transbay (see **Existing Conditions [“EC”]Chapter 2 Multi-Modal Operations**).

**Figure 1.3.9: Key transportation projects - planned & proposed**



**Figure 1.3.10: Key projects - planned & proposed**



Crescent Heights



Trinity Plaza



City Place Center

- ① Crescent Heights - Residential Mixed-use
- ② Fox Plaza - Residential Mixed-use
- ③ Trinity Plaza - Residential Mixed-use
- ④ City Place Center - Retail
- ⑤ 50 UN Plaza Historic Renovation - Office
- ⑥ Twitter Office
- ⑦ ACT 300-seat Theater
- ⑧ 1540 Market St. at Van Ness - Highrise Residential Mixed-use
- ⑨ Octavia Gateway - Residential Mixed-use
- ⑩ Transbay

**Figure 1.3.11: Major arts and cultural facilities - existing & planned**



Civic Center Auditorium



Orpheum Theater

- |                                   |                                 |   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| ① Herbst Theater                  | ⑨ Golden Gate Theater           | ⑱ Museum of the African Diaspora              |
| ② Open House                      | ⑩ The Warfield                  | ⑲ Yerba Buena Center for the Arts - Galleries |
| ③ Davies Symphony Hall            | ⑪ A.C.T.Theater (planned)       | ⑳ Yerba Buena Center for the Arts - Theater   |
| ④ Conservatory Center             | ⑫ Alonzo King's Lines Ballet    | ㉑ Mexican Museum (planned)                    |
| ⑤ Civic Center Auditorium         | ⑬ Museum of Craft and Folk Art  | ㉒ Zeum: SF's Children's Museum                |
| ⑥ Asian Art Museum                | ⑭ Contemporary Jewish Museum    | ㉓ Curran Theater                              |
| ⑦ Orpheum Theater                 | ⑮ California Historical Society | ㉔ American Conservatory Theater               |
| ⑧ The Art Institute of California | ⑯ Cartoon Art Museum            | ㉕ Mason Street Theater                        |
|                                   | ⑰ SF Museum of Modern Art       | ㉖ SF Jazz                                     |

## Block Structure

Market Street is characterized by a variety of block patterns that are manifestly out of the ordinary—visually, in paths of movement, in the location of front doors to buildings, and in the asymmetrical placement of bus stops. The result can be one of clarity—recognition of Market Street as unlike any other in the City—and confusion at the same time.

The two grids create a variety of changes that affect the experience of Market Street. These aspects of the Market Street experience range from the block sizes themselves (e.g., the varied walking time from one intersection to another) to the daily pattern of sun and shadow, to the orientation to City landmarks, nearby district activities, and memorable buildings. This grid change allows for all approaching streets to have a direct visual connection to Market Street and as such to reinforce Market Street as a visual marker in the downtown, especially for people new to San Francisco.

The location of Market Street within the dramatic topography of the City reinforces the street's role as a kind of “hinge” for the City, where northern and western hills transition to SOMA flatlands. The differentiation in block size and orientation, established when the street pattern was laid out in 1847 (see **Impact of Urban Design Visions**), seems to recognize this role. The South-of-Market blocks between 1st and 8th streets are the largest in San Francisco: 825' x 550'. They are four times larger in area than the north-of-Market blocks, which are typically 412.5' x 275'. The long 825-foot dimension is parallel to Market, with few perpendicular streets or alleyways to

break up those street-facing blocks. Such huge blocks create a superhuman scale on the street, especially where bulky buildings fill the block edges and interiors. Elsewhere in the study area, although not visible from Market Street, streets that run parallel to Market (such as Minna, Natoma, Stevenson, and Jessie) do break up the large SoMa blocks—but even these streets are discontinuous, especially in the Mid-Market area.

Not only the block sizes vary between north and south of Market Street; so do the street widths. Street R.O.W. are wider south of Market Street (approximately 82 feet) versus north of Market Street (approximately 69 feet). In general, the wider street imposes more of a burden on pedestrians (i.e., pedestrian crossing) than a narrower street. However, the crossing of intersecting streets south of Market is at a right angle, whereas the angled crossing of streets north of Market Street, though they have narrower R.O.W., creates other challenges to pedestrians (e.g., extra-wide crossing, interruption of pedestrian desire lines, etc.), as summarized below.

### Block Sizes Contribute to Building Pattern and Grain

The existing block pattern generally allows for much larger building floor-plates on the south side of the street, while the north side, with smaller triangular blocks predominant (particularly west of 5th Street), has much smaller and finer-grain building patterns. The larger-footprint buildings do present problems of activating ground floors,

especially in certain areas of the Financial District, and west of 5th Street (see **Ground Floor Activity in EC Chapter 2.2 Pedestrian**). The triangular blocks are generally harder to fully develop, which is one reason why redevelopment of portions of Market Street has been difficult. At the same time, with revitalization of the corridor and the introduction of arts, entertainment, and public activity, these smaller distinctive sites may well offer opportunities for attractive and memorable designs to create more contemporary landmarks along the street.

### Parcel Sizes and Grain

The finer grain of Market Street's smaller parcels and – on a different scale – towers establish a generally vertical dominant rhythm, making for a rich streetwall pattern. However, a number of buildings establish a horizontal sequence, in particular in the Retail District. **Figure 1.3.3 Land Use Distribution** depicts Market Street parcels and buildings rhythm. (See also the **Ground Floor Facades Study** in **EC Chapter 2.2 Pedestrian**.)

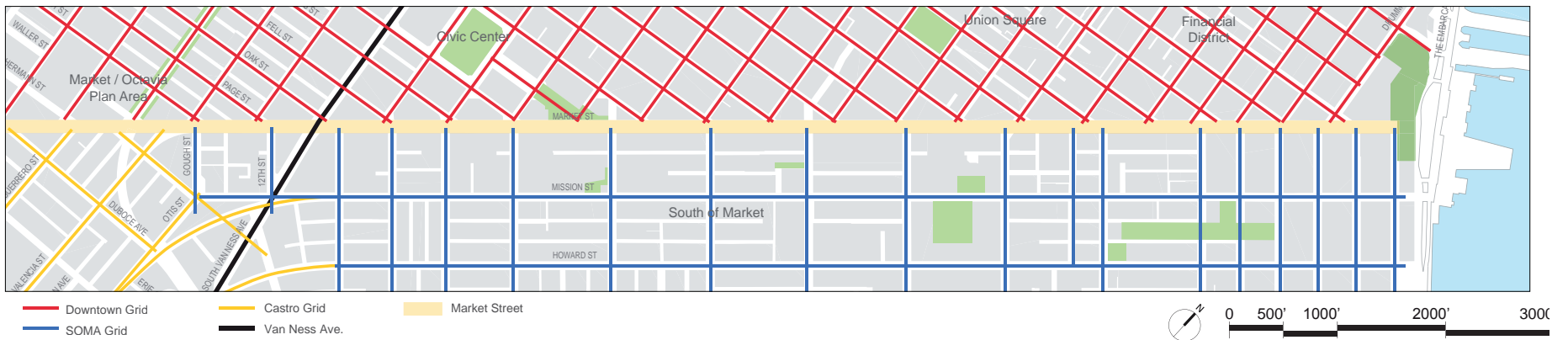
### 3 Different Grids Connect to Market Street

- Angled grid to north; block averages 250 x 300 feet
- Perpendicular SOMA grid to south; typical block 825 x 550 feet
- Angled Castro District grid west of SOMA; blocks vary in size

**Figure 1.3.12: Urban figure ground**



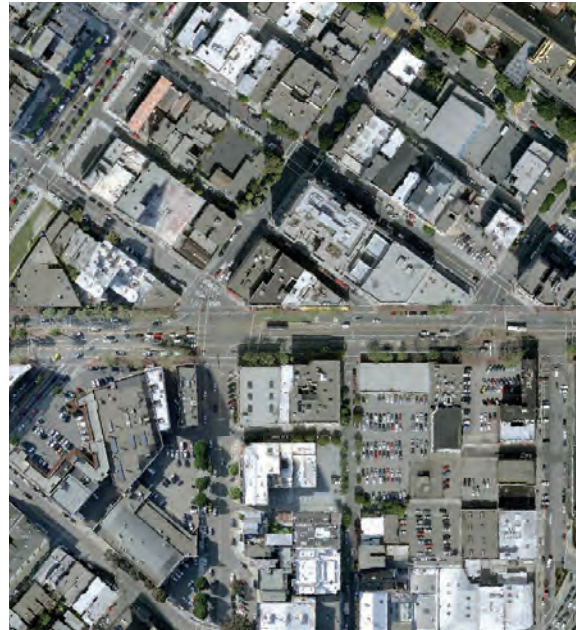
**Figure 1.3.13: Grids**



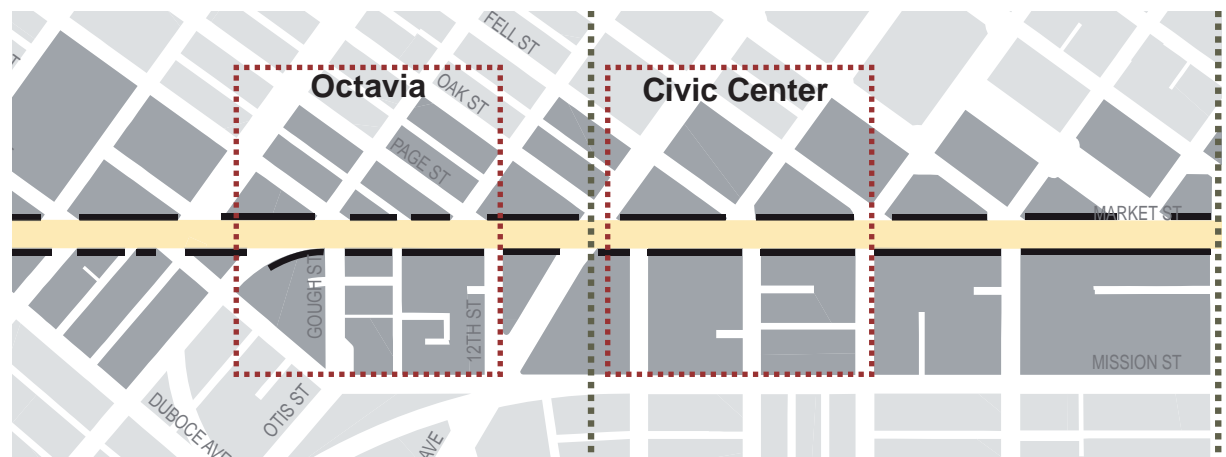
## Key Findings

- The differing block structure on either side of Market Street contributes to differentiation of building patterns and grain.
- Overall, there are limited points of direct connection between grids across Market Street.
- Many of the most-direct connections are intense traffic routes (see **Figure 1.3.1** and **EC Chapter 2.5 Vehicular Traffic**).
- Intersections at connecting points are further challenged by crossing geometries (see **BP Chapter 2.4 Corner Geometries**), which translate into more difficult connectivity between districts across Market.
- Points of connectivity are more frequent on the east side of the Financial District due to the tighter grid (more streets connecting to Market) and smaller block size on the south side.
- The northern triangular grids create unusual challenges for new buildings, especially in terms of building depth for retail, efficient parking, and footprint layout. This is primarily noticeable on Market Street south of 5th Street.
- Due to the irregularity of the blocks and the resulting complicated intersections and crosswalks, it takes approximately 15 minutes longer, on average, to walk the length of Market Street on the north side as compared to the south side, where the longer, more regularized blocks allow for easier pedestrian movement.

Octavia

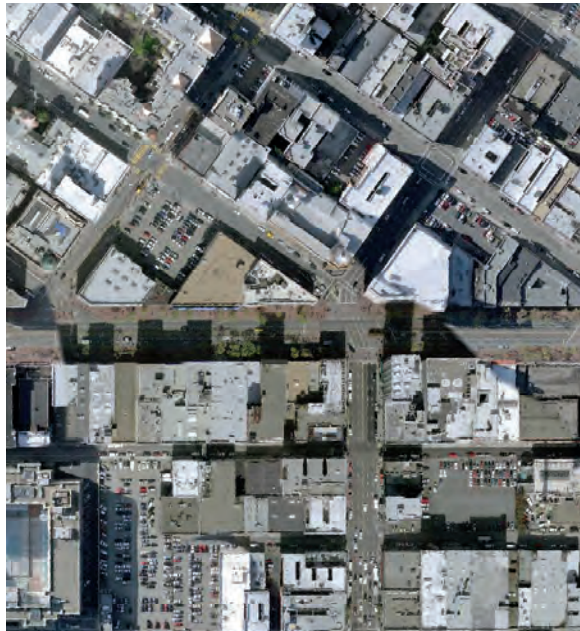


Civic Center



Block pattern

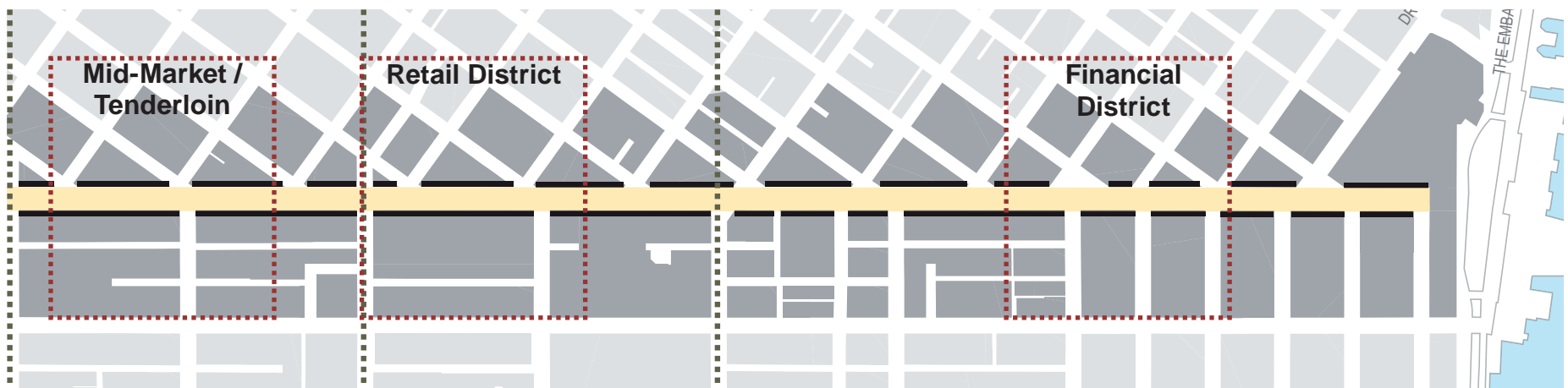
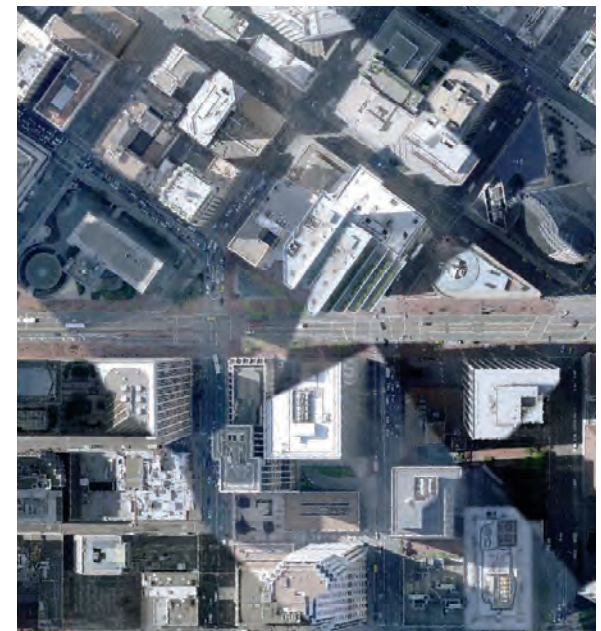
**Mid-Market / Tenderloin**



**Retail District**



**Financial District**



## Market Street is an Asymmetrical Street

Most internationally recognized great streets in regularly gridded cities build the elements of their memorable image upon the armature of symmetry in blocks—equivalent or similar sides and blocks with perpendicular streets resulting in similar block patterns on each side and orthogonal intersections. A few powerfully iconic streets like Broadway in Manhattan or the Diagonal in Barcelona cut diagonally through the regular fabric of their cities, creating irregular block patterns as they pass through. However, the irregularity of those streets occurs on both sides, and doesn't differentiate one side from the other as Market Street does.

As Market Street connects to various grids, different urban conditions resulting from the street's asymmetry arise. As illustrated in **Figure 1.3.14**, the asymmetry of the street's urban form involves various elements including street grid, adjacent blocks, urban space, plazas and public spaces, and views into side streets. The table below summarizes the analysis of these elements for the north and south sides:

**Table 1.3.1: Asymmetrical street analysis**

Element	North Side	South Side
<b>Street grid</b>	36- and 54-degree angles from Market Street	Orthogonal to Market Street (except south of Van Ness)
<b>Adjacent blocks</b>	Irregular shapes, frequent interruptions of streetwall. 500' long on average.	Regular, long blocks. 825' feet for central area 1st to 8th, smaller east and west of central area
<b>Urban space</b>	Irregular with "in and outs" created by angled intersections	Regular and consistent for the most part
<b>Plazas and public spaces</b>	Main plazas	Smaller public spaces and alley connections
<b>Views</b>	Many distinctive views to city hills	Fewer distinctive views. Most significant views in eastern side of Financial District toward Rincon Hill and Bay Bridge



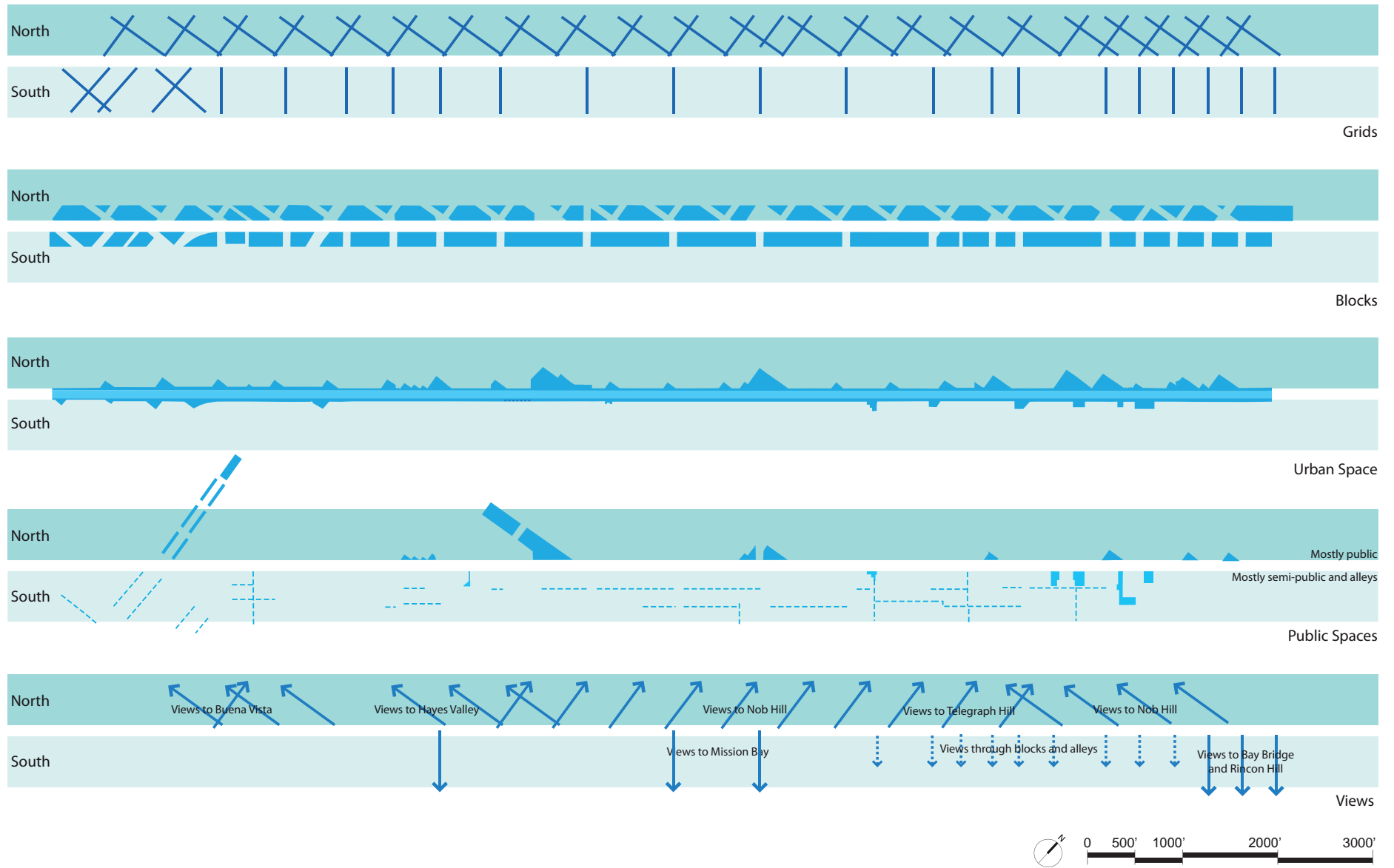
North side



South side



**Figure 1.3.14: Asymmetry**



## Key Findings

Market Street presents two very distinct sides: the north side is more discontinuous, with frequent intersections; the south side is more regular and consistent.

- The north side features plazas and public spaces; south side, smaller public spaces and alleys.
- The north side will generally get more sun over a longer period of time; the south side will benefit from afternoon sun.
- Views to the north (true north and west) are more distinctive than views to the south.
- The asymmetry of Market Street is a unique characteristic that will influence future design concepts, which should leverage the unique differences between the two sides (see **Figure 1.3.17 Intersections Typology**). This could potentially include taking advantage of visual relationships or creating new public spaces (utilizing the vacation of certain segments of streets that are adjacent to Market Street).



## Streetwall Analysis

A great street is delineated in a variety of ways; this includes the streetwall, as it defines the boundary of the street itself. Walls, landscape, and trees are all important factors in defining boundaries. For Market Street, buildings play an important role in defining the boundary and sense of enclosure for the viewer, as well as in fostering a feeling of urbanity—and a certainty that you are in the heart of the City.

Streets are physically defined in two ways: vertically, which considers height of buildings or walls or trees along a street; and horizontally, which generally refers to the length of space along which a building or element runs. In his book *Great Streets*, Allan Jacobs provides a systematic approach for studying these streetwall relationships as defined by a methodology of Hans Blumenfeld and H. Maertens, who are concerned with achieving human scale (and defining what human scale means in terms of successful streetwall). They conclude that an approximate ratio of 1:2 (height:width) is a generally good streetwall definition. (*Great Streets*, Jacobs. Pp. 277-8.)

This section examines the streetwall of Market Street in terms of frontage and building placement, building heights, and relative height of buildings to the width of street itself. Understanding these characteristics is important to assessing whether and how all the individual buildings, taken together, form a consistent streetwall that shapes the space, creates a sense of enclosure, and activates

the public realm. (This section is related to **EC Chapter 2.2 Pedestrian**, where there is further discussion of more qualitative criteria for ground-floor façades, including use, level of activity, and architectural character.)

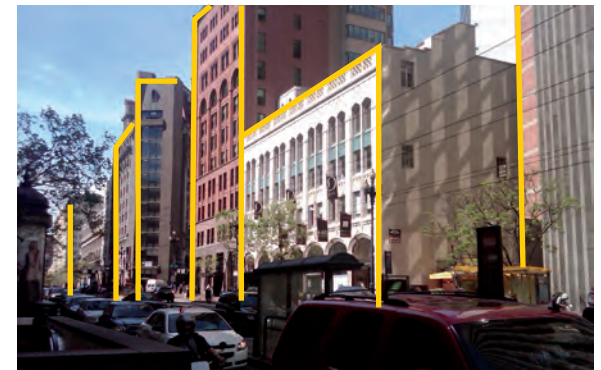
The three components considered in this analysis are:

- **Frontage and building placement:** Overall street frontage; focus is on building ground floors and placement of buildings relative to the block line and street ROW.
- **Building heights and rhythm:** Elevation and rhythm along the street created by individual façades (skyline and perceived texture)
- **Height-to-width ratio:** The relationship or proportion between the building height (H) and the street width (W). Ratio = H:W.

Each of these components have been analyzed and depicted in a series of diagrams featured in the following pages, also illustrated with site photos.



Frontage and building placement



Building heights and rhythm



Height-to-width ratio

## Frontage and Building Placement

The majority of buildings along Market are built to the lot lines and hold the street edge, particularly west of 3rd Street. In the Financial District, the street edge presents more irregularity and less continuity due to the smaller block pattern; building/tower placement and setback from the ROW; and associated plazas and public spaces.

The grids create a number of interruptions of the streetwall at intersections on the north side (see **Figure 1.3.15 Frontage and Building Placement**, below). The greater discontinuity of the north side and difference from the more continuous south side, creating two very different streetwalls, is one of the inimitable characteristics that sets Market Street apart from other great streets.

## Key Findings

- The continuity of the Market Street building frontage is affected by grid geometry and intersections on the north side. The south side maintains a consistent frontage.
- The difference between north and south frontage is a distinctive characteristic of Market Street.
- Future developments should strengthen the continuity of the street wall.

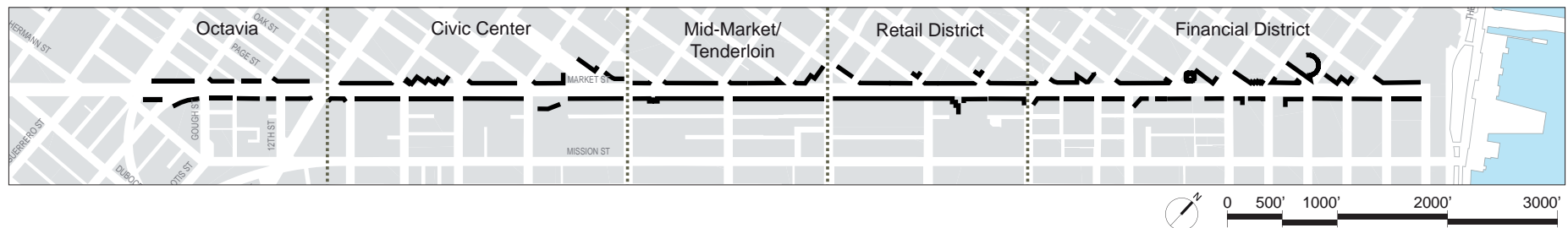


Continued Streetwall



Discontinued Streetwall

**Figure 1.3.15: Frontage and Building Placement**



## Building Height

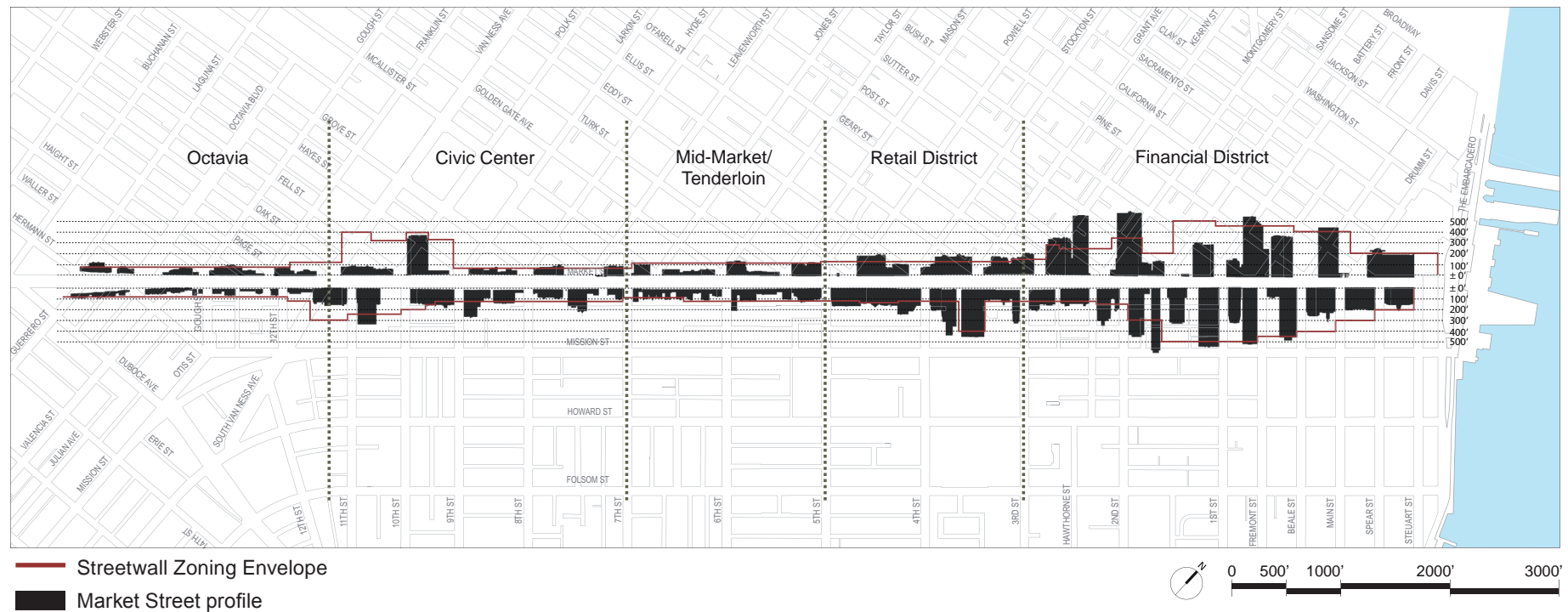
Market Street building heights present extreme variations. This is an important differentiator compared to many traditional urban and main streets around the world, which possess greater consistency in these characteristics. **Figure 1.3.16 Street Elevations**, below, illustrates the dramatic variations from west to east with heights ranging

from 25 feet in Octavia to greater than 500 feet in the Financial District. The Financial District and the Civic Center boast the greatest heights in the study area; variations are also present within each district. This characteristic is also illustrated by the cross sections examining street ratios on the next page.

## Key Findings

- Variation in building heights and façade rhythm exacerbates the inconsistency of the streetwall and contrasting skyline.
- This variety creates visual interest and neighborhood differentiation.
- The current zoning requirements reinforce the various districts as they are defined by building height.

**Figure 1.3.16: Street Elevations**

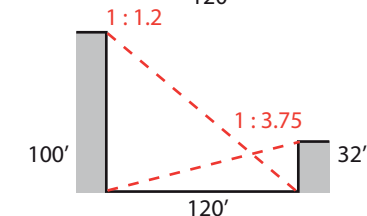
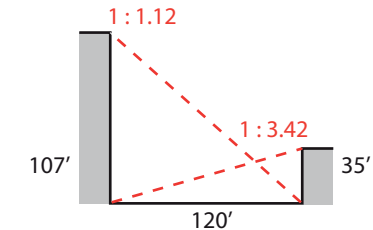
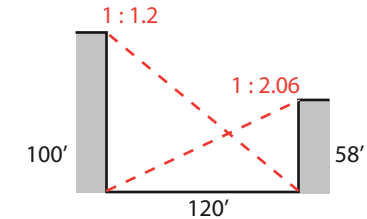
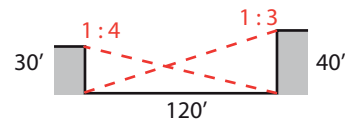
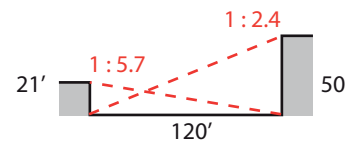
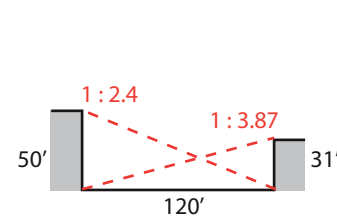
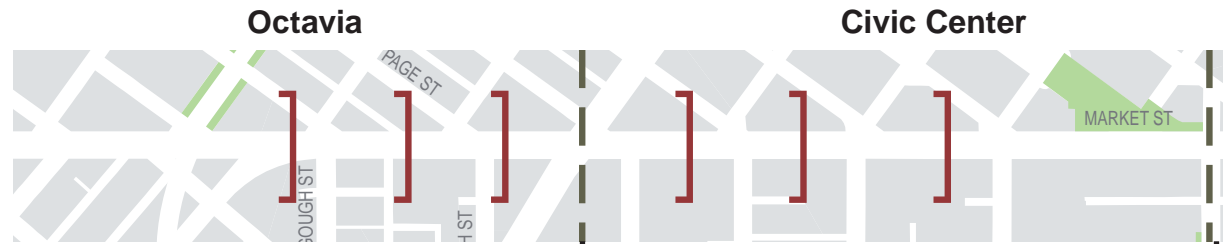


## Height-to-Width Ratio

The street height-to-width ratio analysis assesses the streetwall condition along Market Street corridor and estimates an average H:W ratio for each district. The average ratio is then compared with those of other great streets, and used to establish standards to better understand and manage the ways in which the streetwall itself can impact the urban quality and feel of the street.

### Methodology

- Cross-section samples:** A series of cross sections were taken at regular intervals along the corridor. Three cross sections were taken per district, except for the Financial District, for which five sections were needed to cover a longer stretch of street. The location of the cross sections was selected to reflect varied heights and conditions within each district.
- Ratios for each cross section:** Ratios are generated for each side of the street.

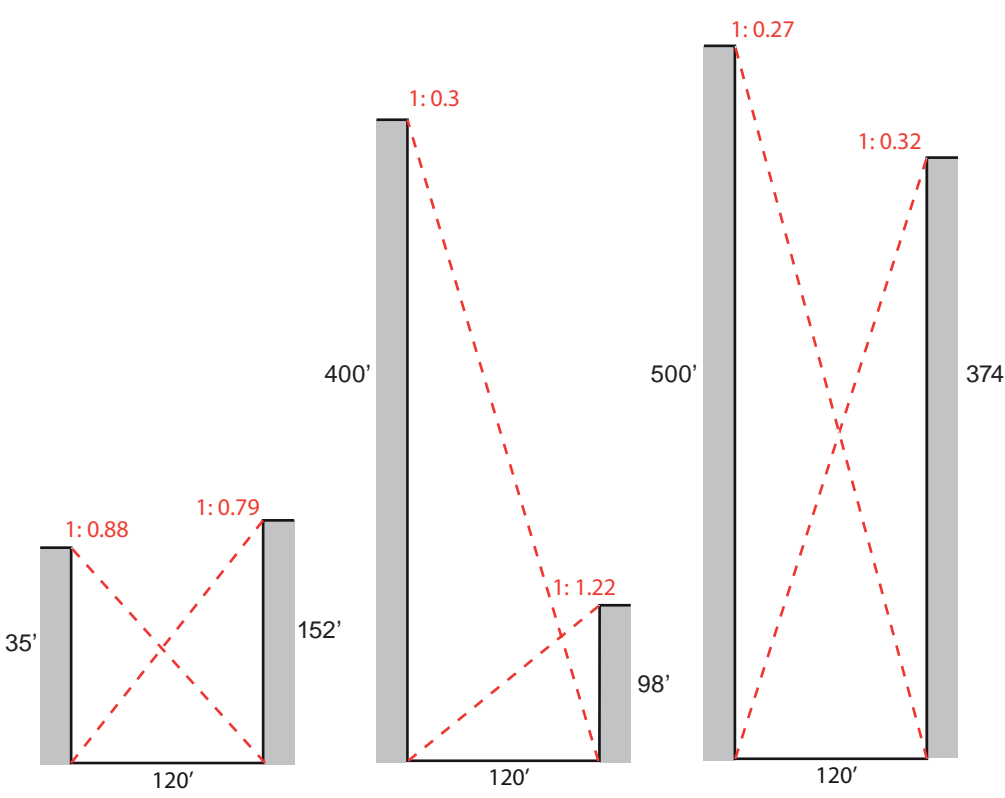
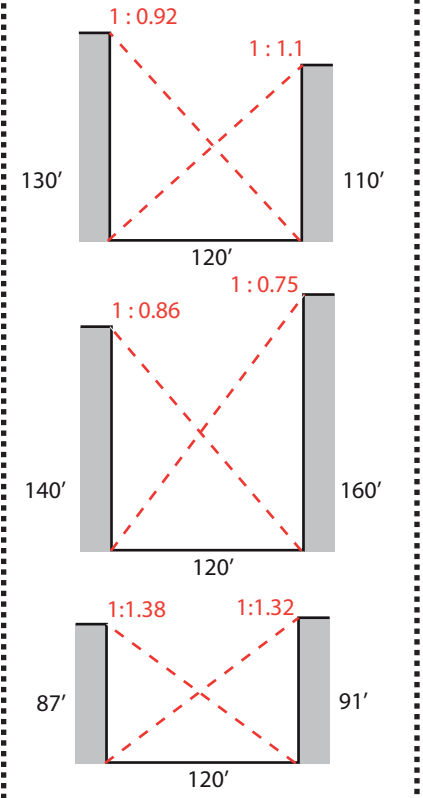
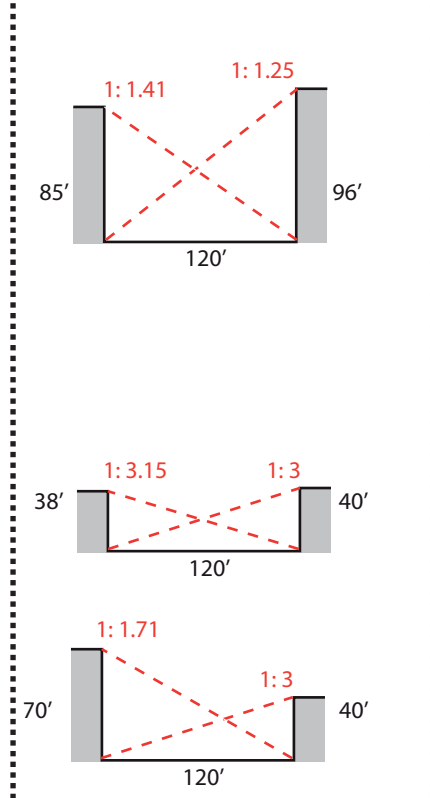


\* Note: this section is considered for the average ratio calculation but it is not shown on this page.

Mid-Market / Tenderloin

Retail District

Financial District



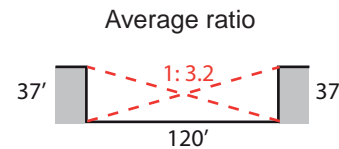
### Average ratio per district

The average ratio is the weighted average of all 6 ratios (10 for the Financial District) contemplated for each district. The districts' average ratios are depicted at right and illustrated with a street view on axis.

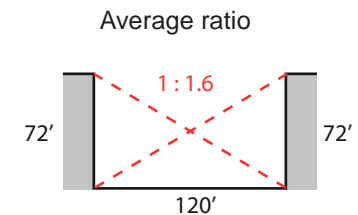
Octavia



Civic Center



**Octavia: 1:3** ratio in the area west of Van Ness, meaning buildings average a mere one-third of street width. The area provides transitions with western neighborhoods, and feels like a distinctive district, which is welcome; however, buildings don't provide sufficient streetwall definition, and the street does not offer a graceful transition to/from the Civic Center District.



**Civic Center: 1:1.6** ratio is close to mid-way between Retail and Mid-Market ratios. District includes a number of buildings with heights similar to the Retail District, particularly on the south side. The northern side substantially varies, adding low buildings to the mix. Two towers stand out from average. Infill projects such as Trinity Plaza will strengthen the streetwall and bring it closer to 1:1.



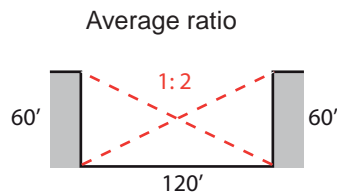
### Mid-Market / Tenderloin



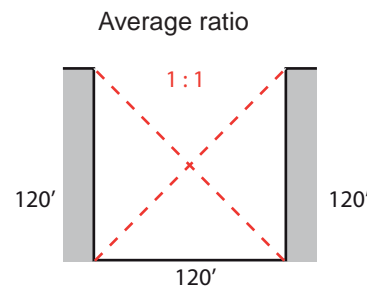
### Retail District



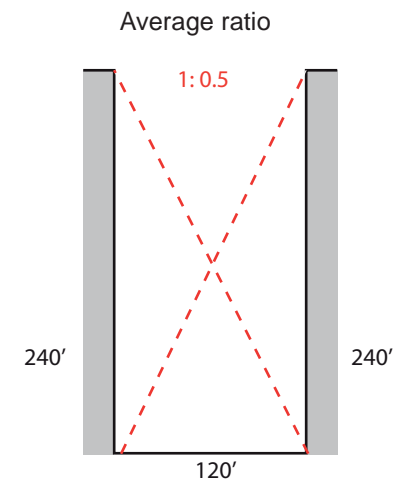
### Financial District



**Mid-Market: 1:2** ratio encompasses the great variety of heights, from 25 to 120 feet. Although the average is considered as a threshold for street definition (Great Streets, Alan Jacobs), many places feature a much higher ratio of 1:3. In such locations, the sense of enclosure and relationship with downtown is notably weakened.



**Retail District: 1:1** ratio reflects height limits ranging from 1:0.75 to 1:1.25. This ratio is comparable to Swanston Street and commonly is found in European cities. A 1:1 ratio seems to provide a comfortable and balanced street definition.

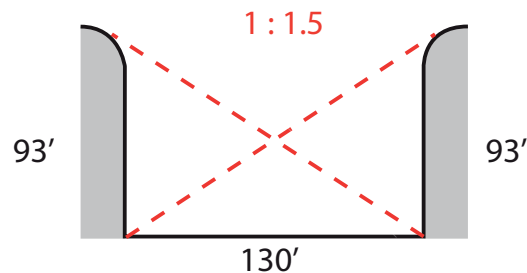


**Financial District: 1:0.5** ratio is comparable to that of Broadway, where heights are frequently twice the width of the street. However, it is important to take into account the discontinuity of streetwall due to grid geometries and related intersections, tower placement, and associated public spaces.

## Comparison with Other Great Streets and Standards

Several precedents and standards are used to put Market Street in perspective with other great streets and best practices. The comparison is summarized in **Table 1.3.2**, at right.

- Comparison with Broadway and Swanston Street from **BP Chapter 5 Great Streets**.
- Comparison with Brune Boulevard in Paris, which is 130 feet wide and features a new dedicated tramway line in the center of the ROW.
- Allan Jacobs' Great Streets threshold for street definition (referencing Blumenfeld and Maertens; Great Streets, Jacobs. Pp. 277-8).
- The comparisons indicate that a ratio that would ensure good urban street definition for a street of the caliber of Market Street should be at minimum 1:2 and ideally closer to 1:1.



**Table 1.3.2: Average ratio comparison summary table (from low to high)**

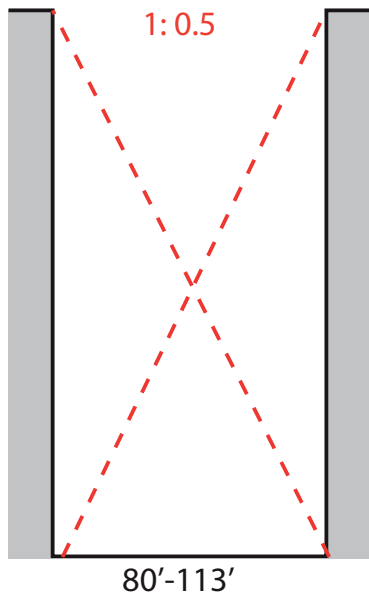
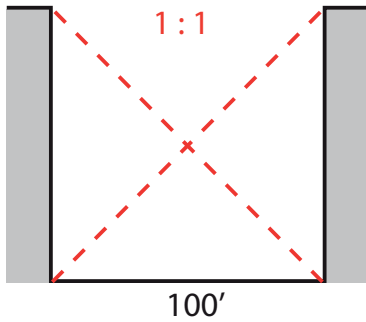
District	MS District Average Ratio	Broadway Average Ratio*	Swanston Average Ratio*	Brune Blvd Average Ratio*	Allan Jacobs
<b>Financial</b>	1:0.5				
<b>Retail</b>	1:1				
<b>Civic Center</b>	1:1.6	>1:0.5	1:1	1:1.5	1:2
<b>Mid-Market</b>	1:2				
<b>Octavia</b>	1:3				

\* The average ratio for Brune Boulevard is based on heights and building profile limits. Broadway and Swanston Street average ratios are based on an estimation of typical building heights samples observed in several areas of the street.

## Brune Boulevard in Paris



### Swanston, Melbourne

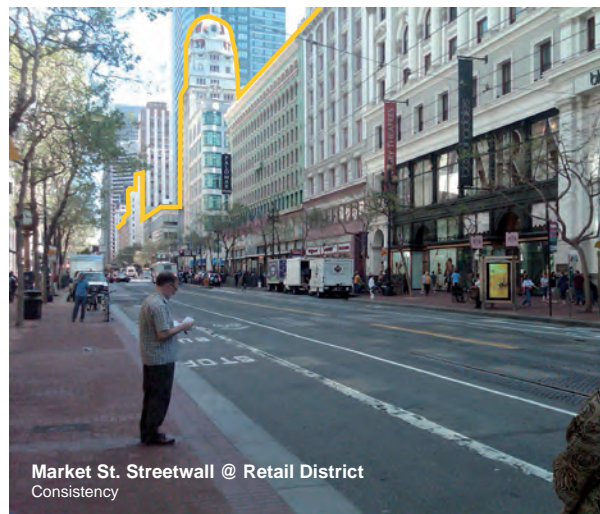


### Broadway, NY



## Key Findings

- Streetwall along Mid-Market and Octavia suffer from a low height-to-width ratio not conducive to street definition or sense of urbanity for Market Street. Any effort to address this condition must be balanced with the *Market /Octavia Plan*, which calls for a more neighborhood-y grain and scale of building development.
- Minimum heights for future infill projects should be considered to strengthen the continuity of the streetwall.
- Future streetwall design guidelines should be consistent within districts to add visual emphasis, clarity, and sense of enclosure.
- Future streetwall design guidelines should consider the potential changes in sun/shade character and overall climate/comfort of publicly accessible open spaces.

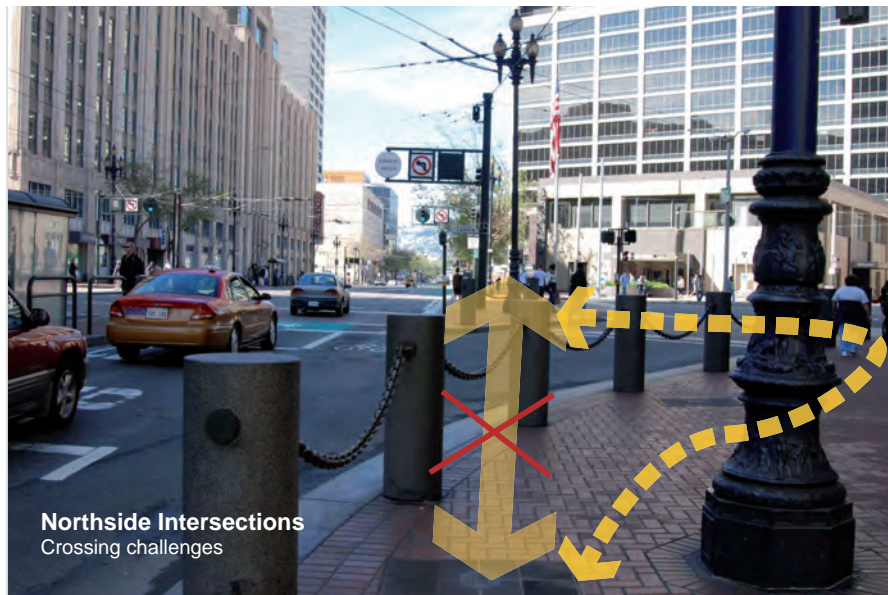


## Intersections Unique to Market

The intersections resulting from the grids joining at Market Street are unique features of the street. Although all intersections present specific characteristics, this analysis is focused on those with greater potential for improvement, leaving out major vehicle-oriented intersections such as Market at Van Ness and Market at Octavia; intersections already featuring a plaza; and more typical intersections such as orthogonal or “T” intersections. **Table 1.3.3** compares the intersections’ characteristics. **Figure 1.3.17 Intersection Typology** depicts the intersection types in section, and their locations on Market Street.

### Key Findings

- Intersections are some of Market Street’s unique defining features; they create unique juxtapositions of urban space and visual interest in differing building forms.
- Intersections represent opportunities for signature/identity spaces: place-making, additional public open space, landscaping, or public art.
- Attributes of each intersection and opportunities for redesign are to be further investigated on a case-by-case basis, in part depending on circulation options. Careful consideration should be given to potential transit-pedestrian conflicts or transit delays that may occur with any redesign of intersections.



**Table 1.3.3: Selected intersection analysis summary matrix**

Type	Morphology and Alignments	Views to Market	Sense of Arrival	Circulation Alignments and Connectivity	Pedestrian Connections	Opportunity to Reclaim Public Space	Other
<b>A</b>	Axial grids relationship	Main focal point on axis to south street	Stronger from north streets	Direct N/S connections – strong from south	Straight	Distributed – Depends on circulation intensity	
<b>B/B'</b>	Grid shift	Main focal point west-east diagonal	Stronger from south and NE	Indirect N/S connection – weaker connectivity	Diagonal or jogged	North-east corner – Depends on circulation options	Opportunity for greater sun exposure east side
<b>C</b>	Grid shift	Main focal point east-west diagonal	Stronger from south and NW	Indirect N/S connection – weaker connectivity	Diagonal or jogged	North-west corner – Depends on circulation options	Opportunity for greater wind shelter west side
<b>D</b>	North side grid abuts Market	South side provides backdrop to approaches	From north	No N/S connection	Diagonal or straight	Distributed – Depends on circulation options	Consider sidewalk on the southside for opportunities (views+pm sun); less foot traffic related to N/S movements

**Type A**

**Type A:** north grid diagonal streets join south grid street on axis or close to it

**Type B**

**Type B:** south grid street is offset to the east of the north grid diagonal streets

**Type B':** variation of B in Octavia District with Castro angled grid to south

**Type C**

**Type C:** south grid street is offset to the west of north grid diagonal streets

**Type D**

**Type D:** north grid streets dead end on Market



8th Street@Grove Street@Hyde Street



4th Street@Ellis Street@Stockton Street

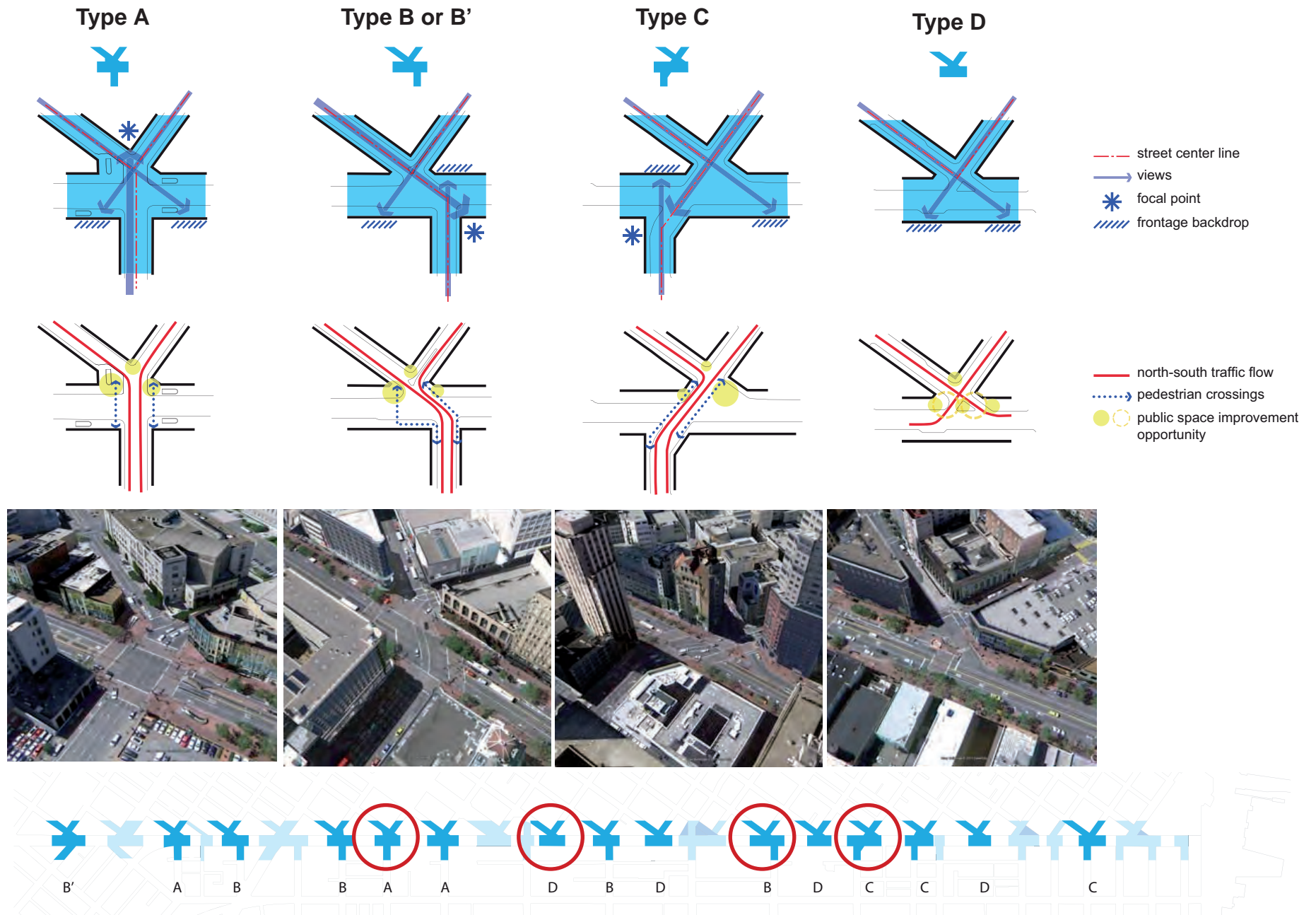


3rd Street@Geary Street@Grant Street



Mcallister Street@Jones Street

Figure 1.3.17: Intersection typology



## Ground Floor Uses / Façades

Transparent storefronts and building entries make neighborhoods safe by attracting pedestrians and providing ‘eyes on the street.’ Many of Mid-Market’s buildings have abandoned or boarded-up storefronts, and many of the office and public buildings have no storefronts at all. Upper stories, too, are often blank and lifeless. These qualities also affect the perception of the streetwall (in addition to height, frontage, parcel sizes and height-to-width ratio). A more detailed analysis of ground floor uses / façades may be found in **Chapter 2.2 Pedestrian**.

### Key Findings

The **Public Life Public Space** report includes a visual qualitative assessment of Market Street ground floors. Excerpts of this analysis are featured on this page. The **Public Life Public Space** methodology and criteria were used by the Perkins+Will team to complete **Figure 1.3.18** for the Octavia area.

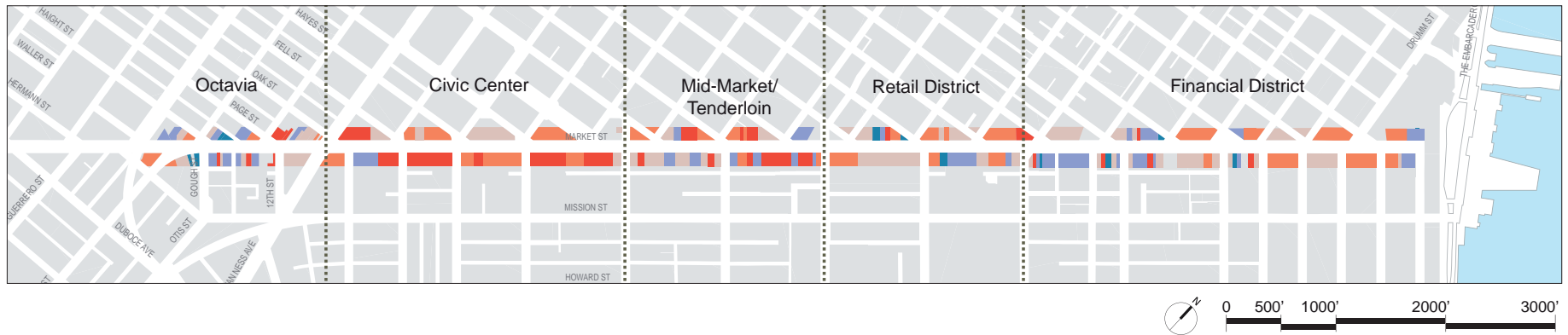


- |  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p><b>ACTIVE / ATTRACTIVE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small units, many doors (15-20/328')</li> <li>• Diversity of Functions</li> <li>• No closed or passive units</li> <li>• Interesting relief in frontages</li> <li>• Quality materials &amp; refined details</li> </ul> | <p><b>PLEASANT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively small units (10-14/328')</li> <li>• Some diversity of functions</li> <li>• Only a few closed or passive units</li> <li>• Some relief in the façades</li> <li>• Relatively good detailing</li> </ul> | <p><b>SOMEWHERE in BETWEEN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of units sizes (6-10/328')</li> <li>• Some diversity of functions</li> <li>• Only a few closed or passive units</li> <li>• Uninteresting design of frontages</li> <li>• Somewhat poor detailing</li> </ul> | <p><b>DULL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large units with few doors (2-5/328')</li> <li>• Little diversity of functions</li> <li>• Many closed units</li> <li>• Predominantly unattractive frontages</li> <li>• Few or no details</li> </ul> | <p><b>INACTIVE / UNATTRACTIVE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large units with few or no doors</li> <li>• No visible variation of function</li> <li>• Closed and passive façades</li> <li>• Monotonous frontages</li> <li>• No details, nothing interesting</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|---|---|



Attractive ground floor on Sidewalk      Unattractive ground floor on Sidewalk      Unattractive ground floor on Plaza

**Figure 1.3.18: Ground-floor façade quality**





## Topography

As introduced in the **Block Structure** section, Market Street is the “hinge” demarcating substantial topographic changes and transition between hills to the north and a generally flatter area to the south (see hinge diagram at right). This condition affects views from Market Street, as discussed in **Views and Landmarks**. Although Market Street itself doesn’t feature significant topography, the elevation changes along its length help differentiate the districts.

The general topography along Market is primarily flat, though there are sections where slope occurs. The Octavia area features a significant slope toward Van Ness, noticeable along building ground floors and at the street interface. Then Market Street rises slightly from Van Ness toward 9th Street. At 3rd Street, Market slopes down quite noticeably towards the Financial District until about 1st Street, then continues with little topographic change toward The Embarcadero.

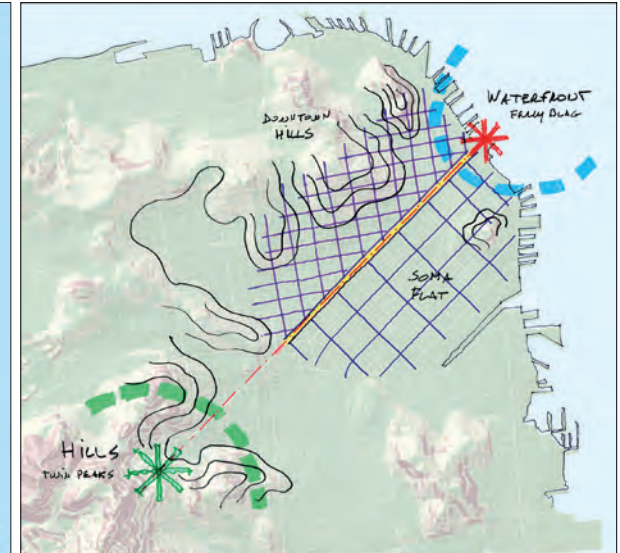
## Key Findings

- The topography around Market Street affects distant views from Market, and also from north side streets into Market.

- In the corridor itself, the Octavia area and the western segment of the Financial District feature the most-significant and noticeable slopes eastward, which create a sense of threshold or transition between adjacent districts.

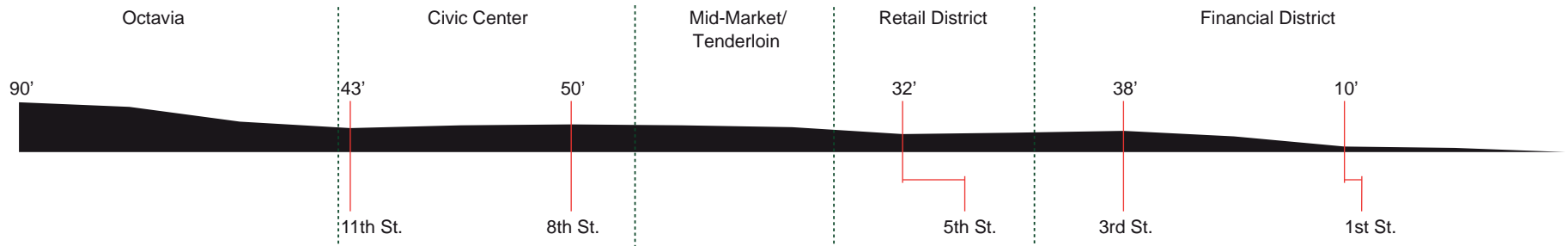


Topology of San Francisco



A “hinge” in the City

Figure 1.3.19: Topology of Market Street



## Views and Landmarks

### Market Street Offers a Range Of Views to City Landmarks, Historic and Other Significant Buildings

- Views to landmarks and the surrounding city serve to orient travelers on Market Street and to denote the special place that is San Francisco. Images at right illustrate the variety of existing views to San Francisco hills, landmarks, and civic buildings observed along Market Street. Views that have the greatest value are orienting views to surrounding hills and views to iconic or architectural landmarks, such as the Ferry Building, City Hall, and Twin Peaks.
- Market Street is a strong reference point and orienting feature in the City, offering iconic views to key features including the Ferry Building, the Bay Bridge, Twin Peaks and Sutro Tower, City Hall, and glimpses of the TransAmerica Building.
- Market Street offers views in all directions to city hills and neighborhoods: Nob Hill and Telegraph Hill to the north, Buena Vista and Twin Peaks to the west, and Rincon Hill and Mission Bay to the south. These views help differentiate the street's multiple personalities and the viewer's place in the city.



Octavia / Civic Center - green to green



Ferry Building clock tower from Market Street

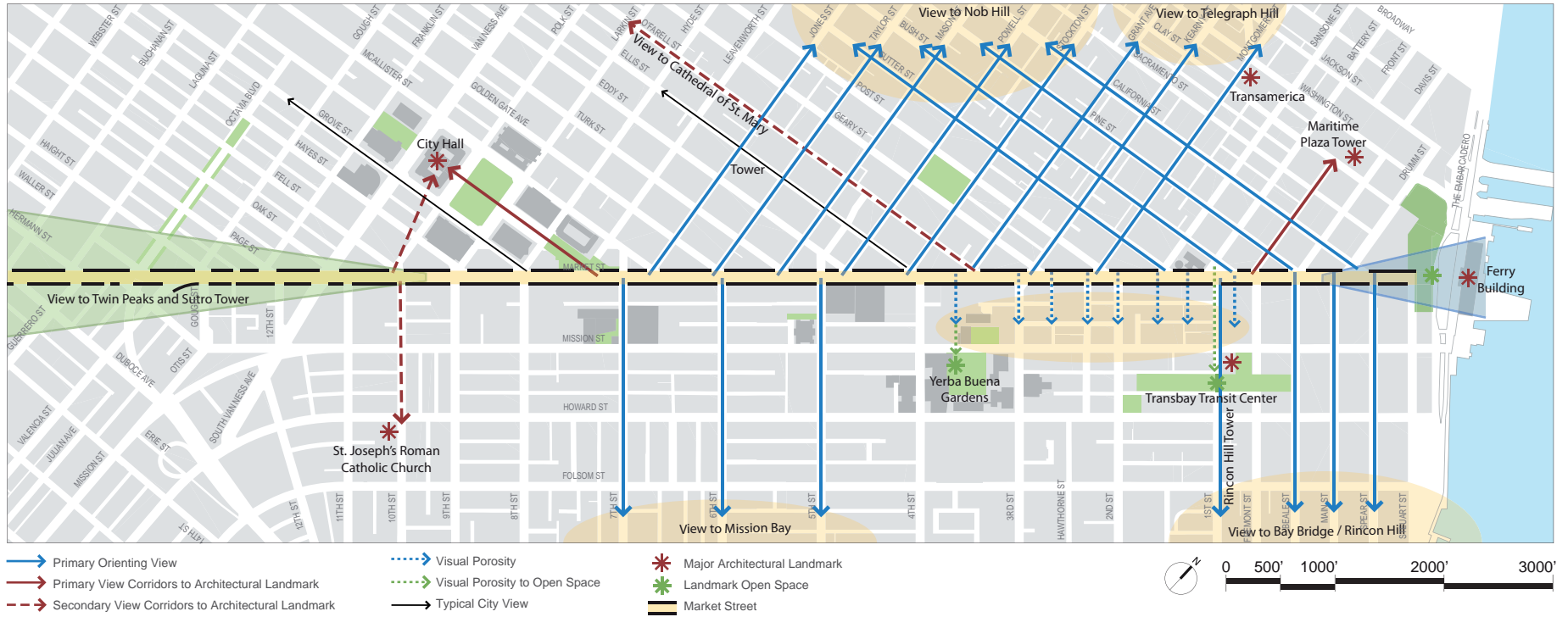


Market Street @ Jones - north-east view



View from Market Street to California Street

Figure 1.3.20: Views



- A number of views to historic landmarks or buildings of architectural interest punctuate the corridor. Clusters in the Civic Center and Financial districts provide especial appeal.
- The physical arrangement of the two grids coming together allows for spectacular views (particularly when one travels eastbound along Market Street) of the dramatic topography and urban fabric that defines much of San Francisco.
- The entire length of Market Street features important historic/culturally significant buildings that have become significant landmarks for way-finding, and which provide a sense of identity for the street.
- The Civic Center has a direct relationship to Market Street at UN Plaza, and indeed was originally planned and designed in the 1906 Burnham Plan to take full advantage of the site's adjacency to Market Street as the center of public life for the City.

## National Register of Historic Places

### Financial District



245 Market Street:  
PG&E Office Building  
and Annex



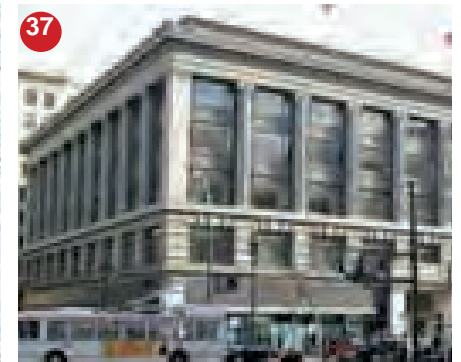
215 Market Street:  
Matson Building  
and Annex

### Retail District



735 Market St.

### Mid-Market / Tenderloin



901 Market Street: Hale Brother  
Department Store

### Mid-Market / Tenderloin: Market Street Theater and Loft District



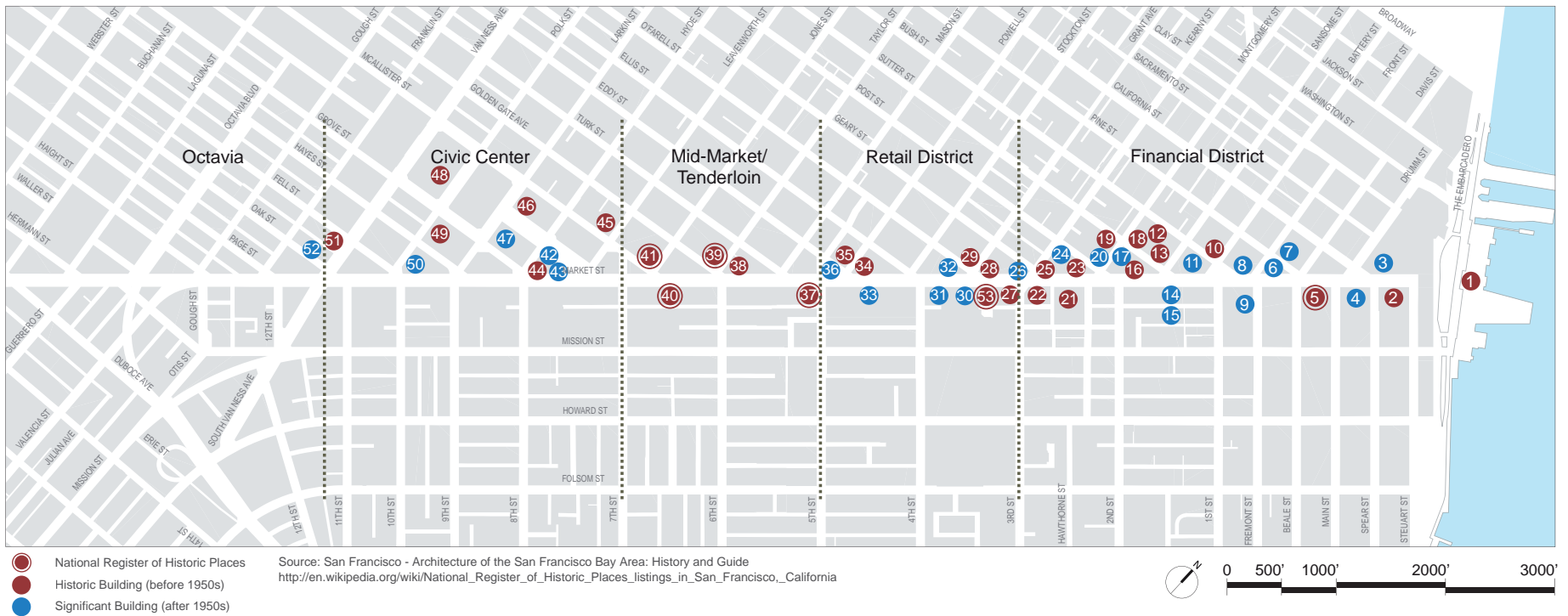
1 Jones Street: Hibernia Bank



1 - 35 Taylor Street: Golden Gate Theater

**Figure 1.3.21: Historic and significant buildings near Market Street**

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1. Ferry Building (1896)                        | 14. Chevron Building (1964, 1975)       | 27. Central Tower (1938)                         | 40. Forrest Building (1908)              |
| 2. Southern Pacific Building (1916)             | 15. Stevenson Place (1986)              | 28. Wells Fargo Bank Building (1910)             | 41. Hibernia Bank (1892)                 |
| 3. Hyatt Regency Hotel (1971)                   | 16. Hobart Building (1914)              | 29. Emporio Armani (1919)                        | 42. United Nations Plaza Building (1980) |
| 4. Federal Reserve Bank Building (1983)         | 17. Wells Fargo Building (1966)         | 30. Four Seasons Hotel (2001)                    | 43. United Nations Plaza (1978)          |
| 5. Matson Building (1921) / PG&E Company (1925) | 18. Title Insurance Co. Building (1930) | 31. Humboldt Bank Building (1906)                | 44. Orpheum Theater (1926)               |
| 6. 388 Market Street Building (1987)            | 19. Hunter-Dulin Building (1926)        | 32. Phelan Building (1908)                       | 45. William Taylor Hotel (1930)          |
| 7. 101 California Street Building (1982)        | 20. Crocker Center (1983)               | 33. Westfield SF Center (2006)                   | 46. Asian Art Museum (1916)              |
| 8. Shaklee Terraces (1982)                      | 21. Sheraton Palace Hotel (1909)        | 34. Flood Building (1904)                        | 47. Main Library (1996)                  |
| 9. Metropolitan Life Building (1973)            | 22. Monadnock Building (1907)           | 35. One Powell Street Building (1920)            | 48. City Hall (1915)                     |
| 10. Shell Building (1929)                       | 23. Mechanic's Institute (1909)         | 36. Hallidie Plaza (1973)                        | 49. Bill Graham Auditorium (1915)        |
| 11. Crown Zellerbach Building (1959)            | 24. SF Federal Savings & Loan (1986)    | 37. Former Hale Brothers Department Store (1912) | 50. Fox Plaza (1967)                     |
| 12. Standard Oil Co. Building (1922)            | 25. Chronicle Building (1889)           | 38. Fox Warfield Theater (1921)                  | 51. Masonic Temple (1910)                |
| 13. Citicorp Center (1910)                      | 26. Citizens Saving (1962)              | 39. Golden Gate Theater (1922)                   | 52. SF Conservatory of Music (2006)      |
|   |   |  | 53. 735 Market Street (no info)          |



## Approach to Market Street from Side Streets

Although a large number of people arrive directly to Market Street using transit and in particular from underground modes, many do have the opportunity to use side streets when visiting adjacent districts or going from one to another district across Market Street.

Approaches that are attractive and inviting improve the experience, and further entice people to spend time on or come back to Market Street. On the other hand, approaches that are unattractive or uninviting adversely affect pedestrian activity, discourage people from coming back, and prevent strong connections from or across Market Street to the surrounding districts and neighborhoods. “Inviting,” “Uninviting,” and “Neutral” are the terms used in this analysis to categorize approaches, as illustrated in the Approach diagram (Figure 1.3.22). Criteria used for the analysis are specified in Table 1.3.4, at right.

### Approach Criteria and Categories

The criteria used here focus on the quality of the side street itself. Some approaches benefit from pleasing views to focal points or attractive buildings, as shown in the pictures on the following page.

**Table 1.3.4: Approach criteria and categories**

Criteria/Category	Inviting	Uninviting	Neutral
<b>Overall streetscape</b>	Appealing streetscape Balanced proportions between roadway and pedestrian realm	Poor or not appealing streetscape Unbalanced proportions between roadway and pedestrian realm with overwhelming roadway width	Somewhere in between Mix of positive and negative elements
<b>Sidewalks, trees, and paving</b>	Comfortable walking zone Regular street trees Even paving	Narrow walking zone Irregular, unhealthy looking, or no trees Uneven paving	Somewhere in between Mix of positive and negative elements
<b>Building edges</b>	Appealing façades Clear sense of front on the street	Poor treatments and built-frontage discontinuity Edge feels like a “back”	Somewhere in between Mix of positive and negative elements
<b>Building ground – floors</b>	Ground-floor treatments address pedestrian scale Active / well-designed façades	Undefined, poorly treated, or discontinuous ground floor Doesn’t help activate the street	Somewhere in between Mix of positive and negative elements
<b>Building entries and curb-cuts</b>	Entries help activate street Limited service access and curb-cuts	Limited or absence of entries Service access not integrated or overwhelming Curb cuts frequency disrupt sidewalk walking zone	Somewhere in between Mix of positive and negative elements

## Approach Criteria and Categories: Examples

### Inviting



2nd Street



3rd Street

### Uninviting



9th Street



Hyde Street

### Neutral



Beale Street



Main Street

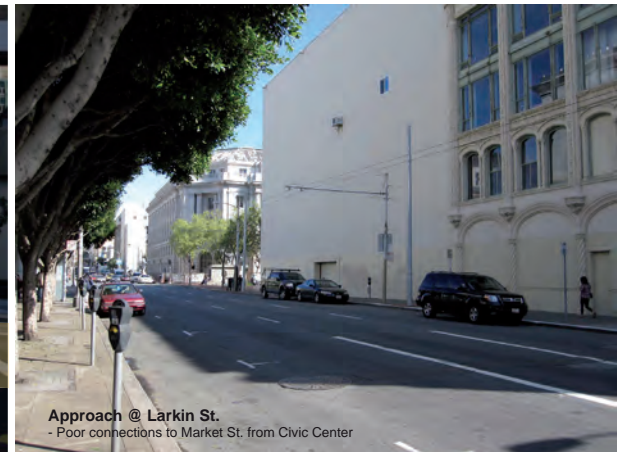
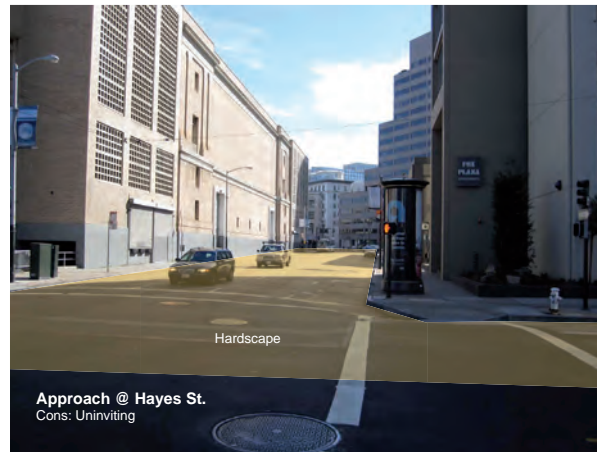
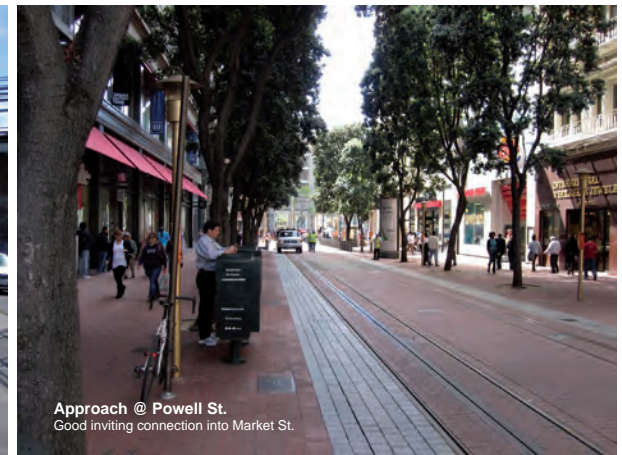
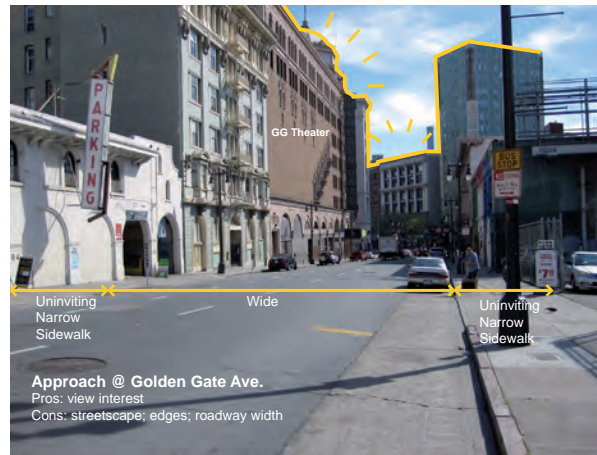
**Figure 1.3.22: Approaches to Market Street**





## Key Findings

- The Mid-Market, Civic Center, and Octavia districts suffer from uninviting approaches due to poor streetscapes and/or quality of building edge.
- The successful Retail District benefits in part from a number of more inviting approaches, particularly Powell Street, which feeds directly to the block between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- The Financial District includes a fair number of inviting approaches, but also includes some approaches of lesser quality (on the south side between Spear and First streets).
- A number of side streets have the potential to be improved and so to contribute to the emerging open space network.
- Framework plans and design concepts for Market Street should address side streets and identify streets to be improved in priority, with proposed character to support concepts.

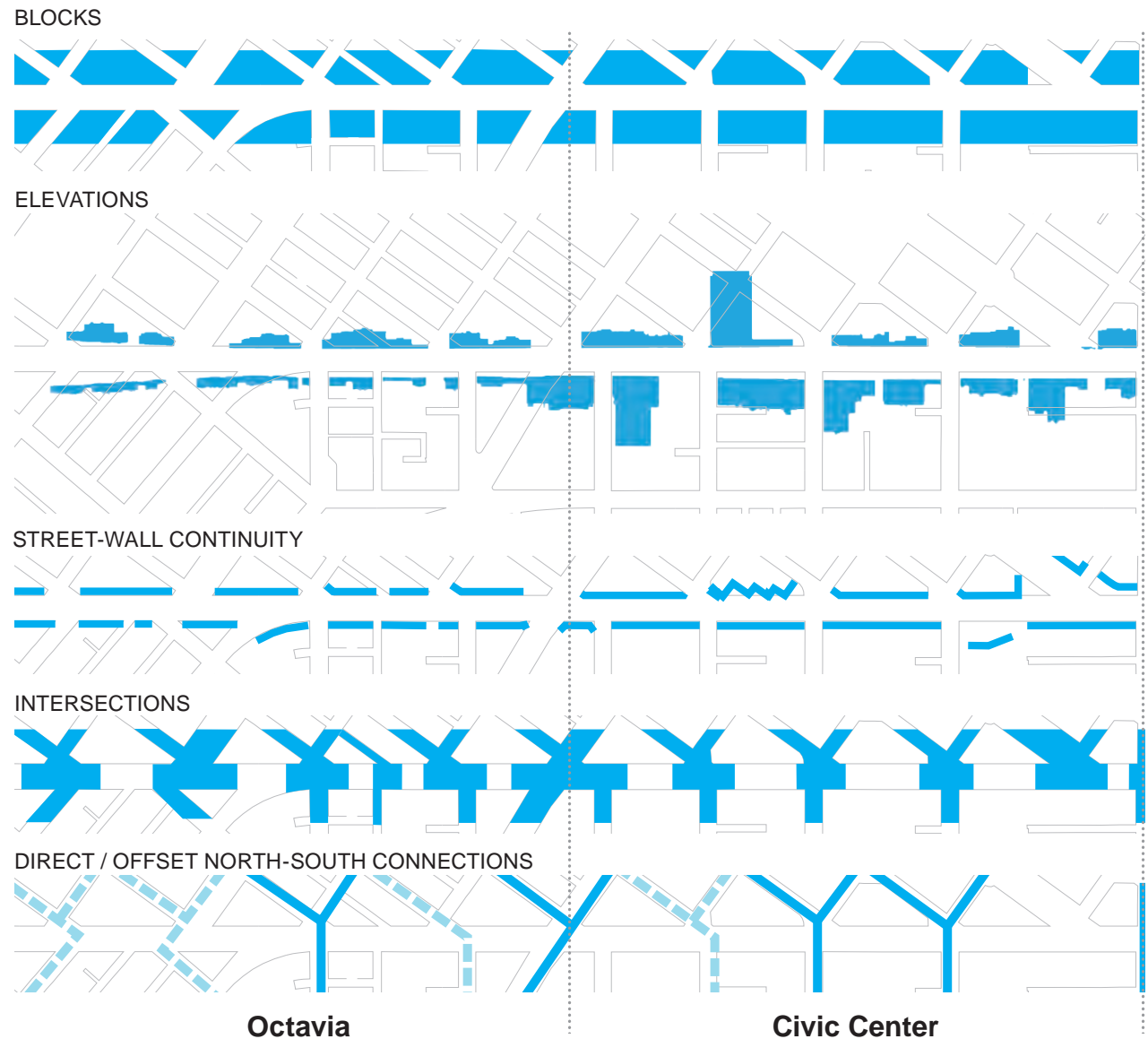


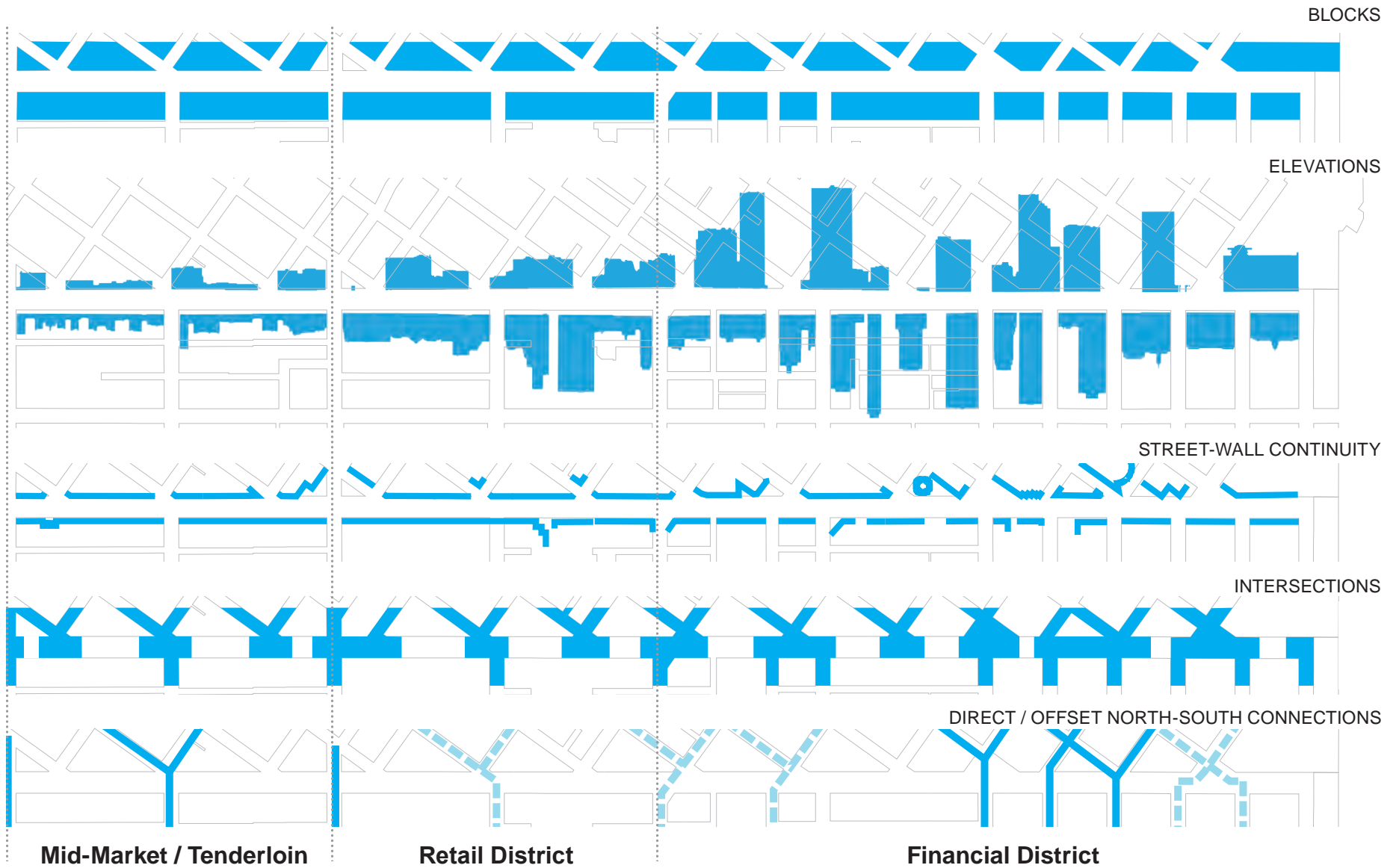
## Overlay of Analysis Diagrams

As part of the ongoing analysis and design effort as work progresses toward future design concepts, a compilation of analysis diagrams prepared for this study (**Figure 1.3.23**) allows anyone to understand the characteristics of Market Street, at any point along it, in regards to all key topics of analysis (e.g. building elevation, intersection configuration, open space, number of collisions, etc.).

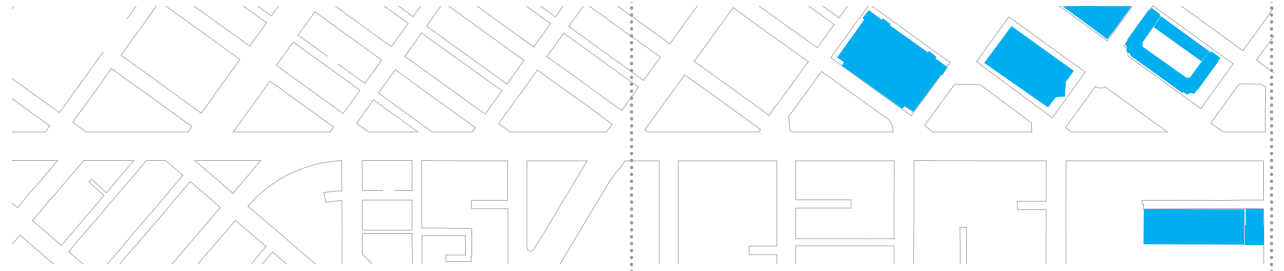
*Note: The comparative diagrams could also be displayed in a large poster format. This would allow for full comparison of analysis elements at one glance.*

**Figure 1.3.23: Overlay of Analysis**

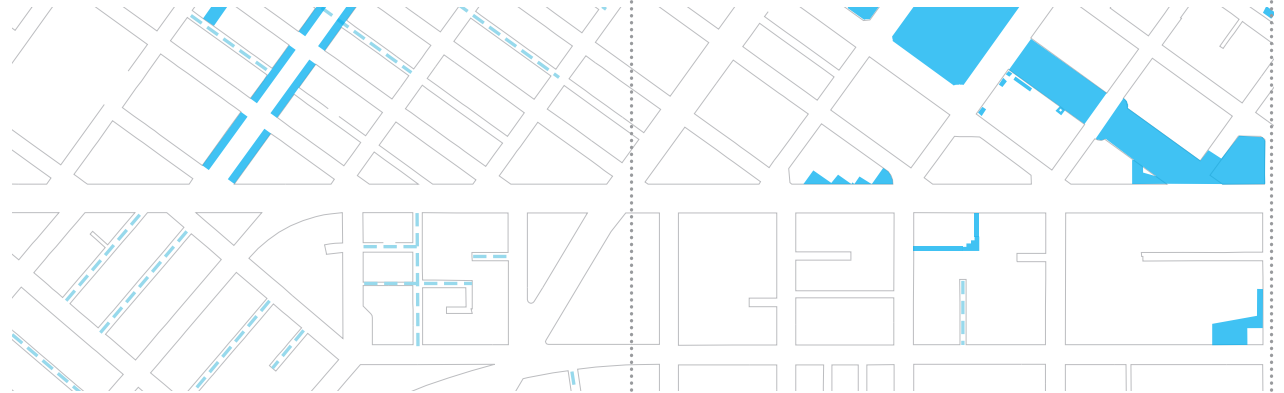




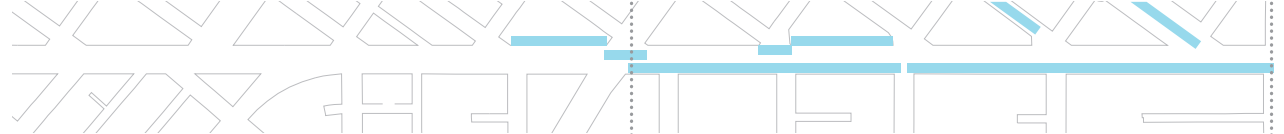
MAJOR DESTINATIONS



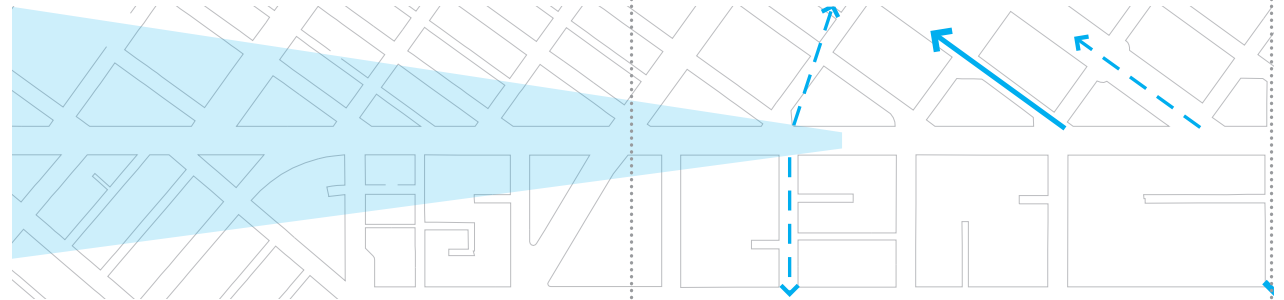
OPEN SPACE



PUBLIC PREFERENCE - SIDEWALKS AND PLAZAS

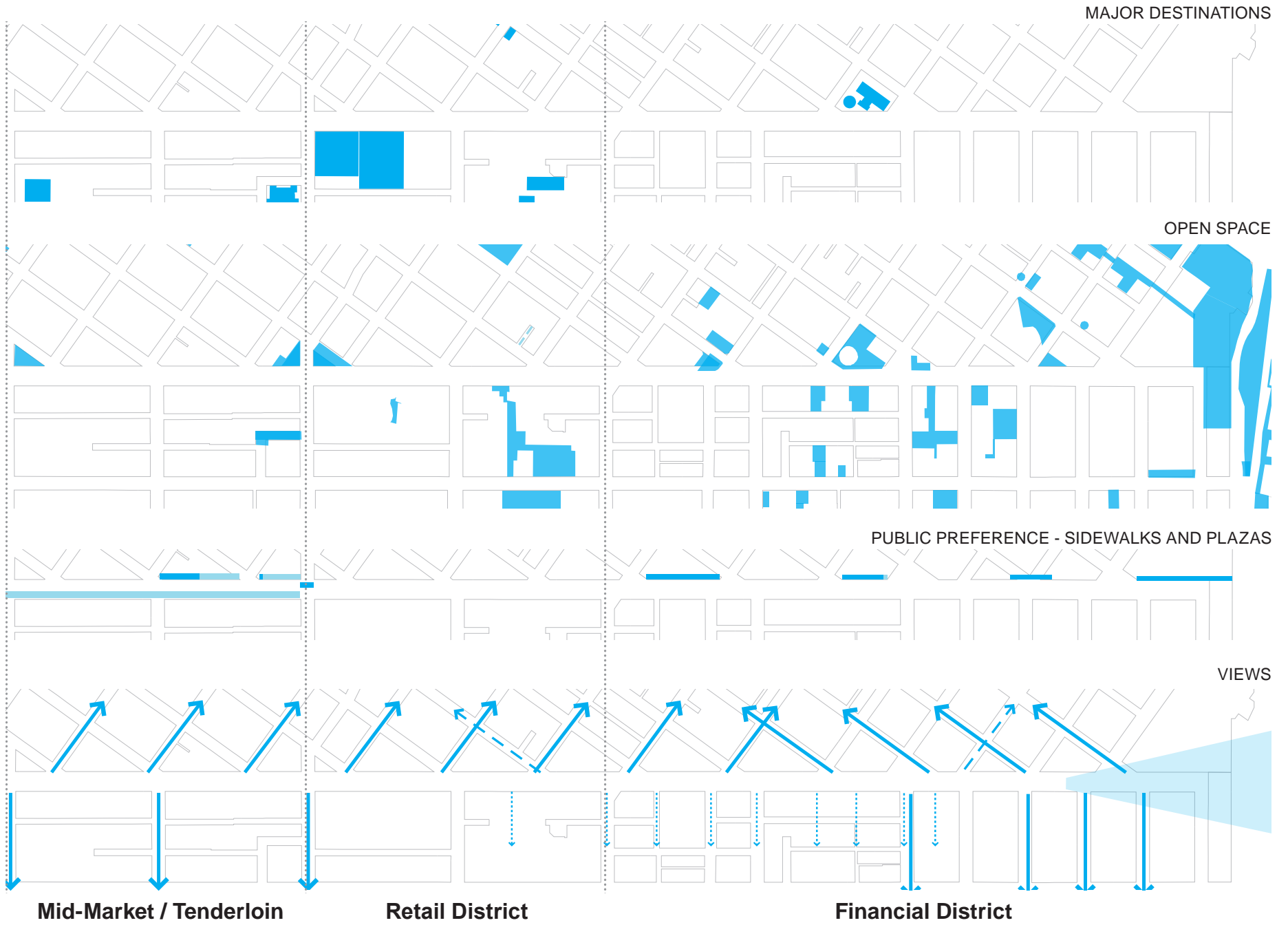


VIEWS

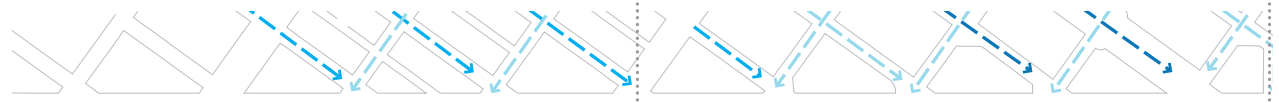


Octavia

Civic Center



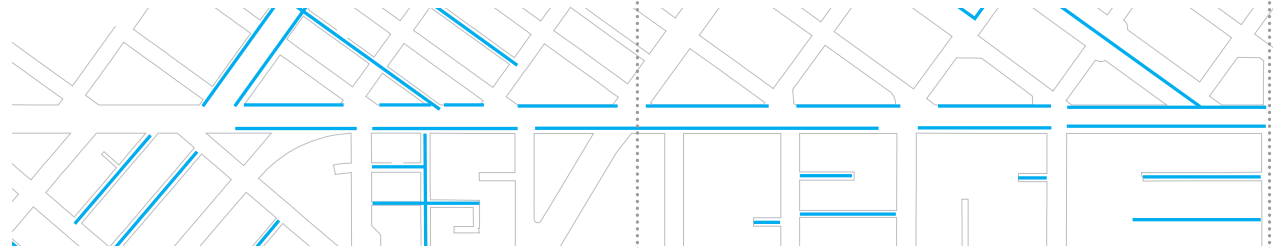
APPROACHES



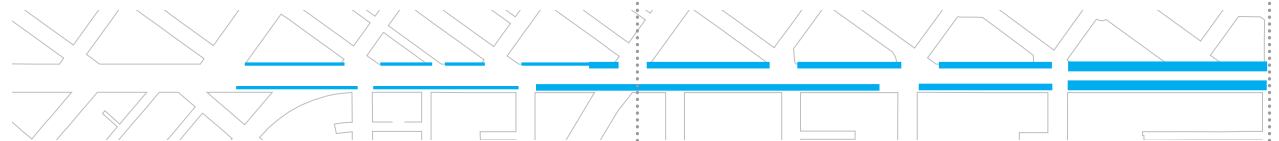
GROUND FLOOR ACTIVITY



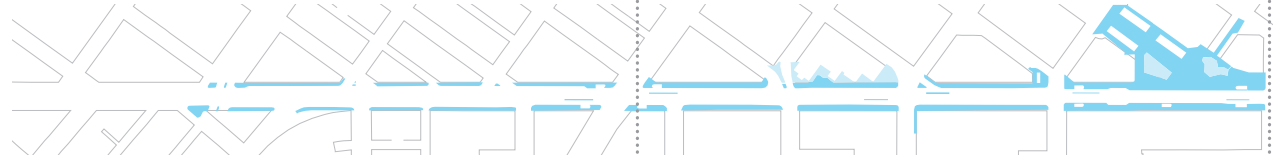
MAIN SIDEWALKS AND ALLEYS



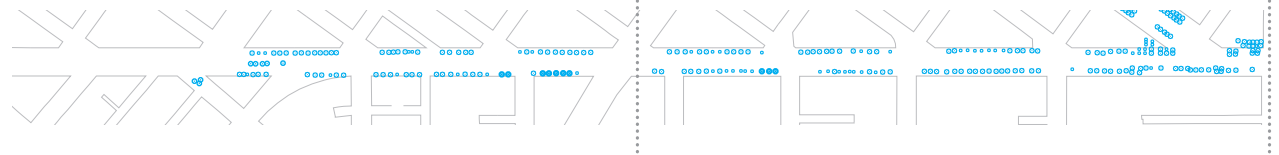
SIDEWALK WIDTH



BRICK LAYERING

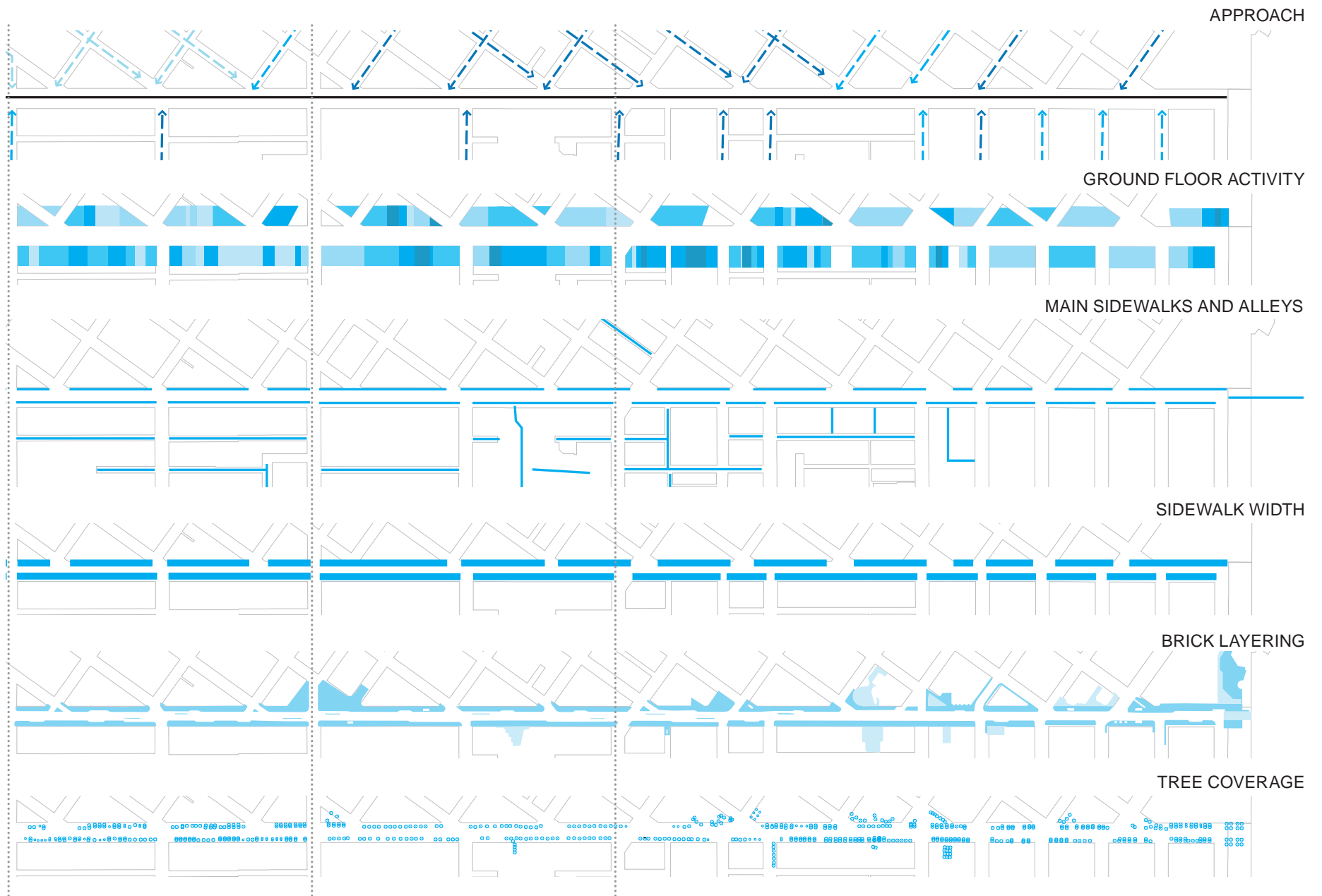


TREE COVERAGE



**Octavia**

**Civic Center**

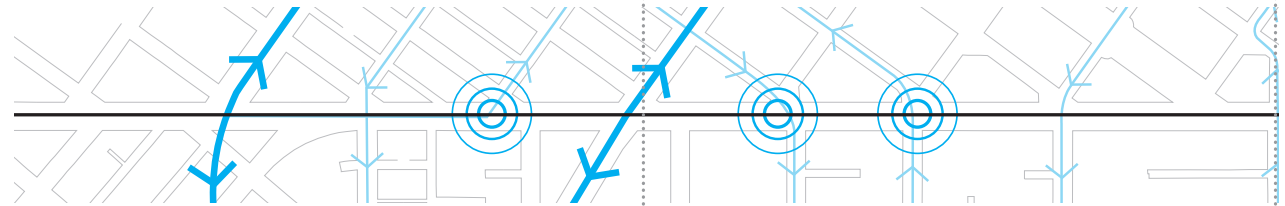


**Mid-Market / Tenderloin**

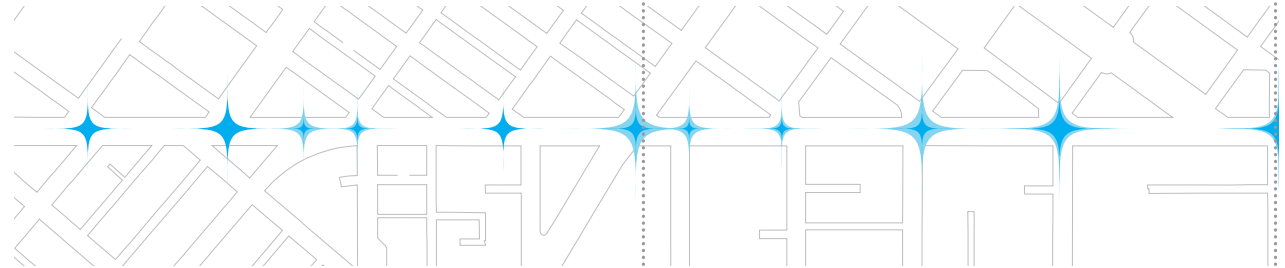
**Retail District**

**Financial District**

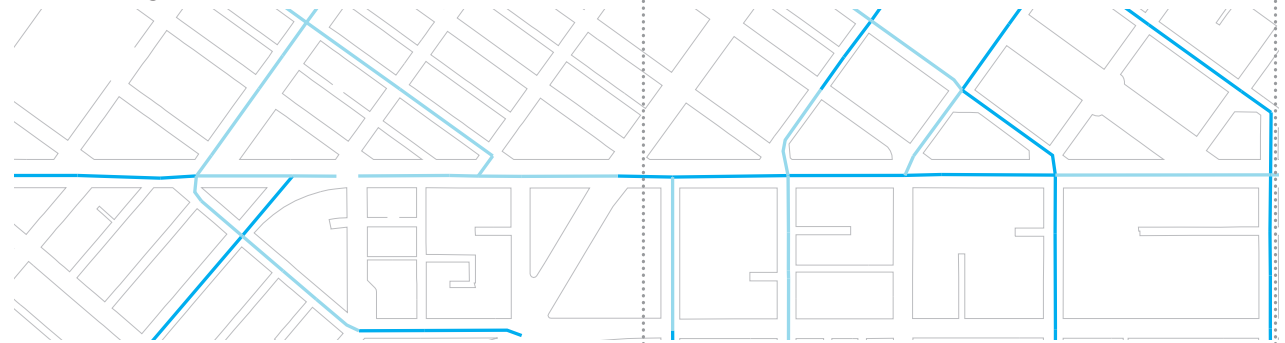
VEHICULAR PATHS



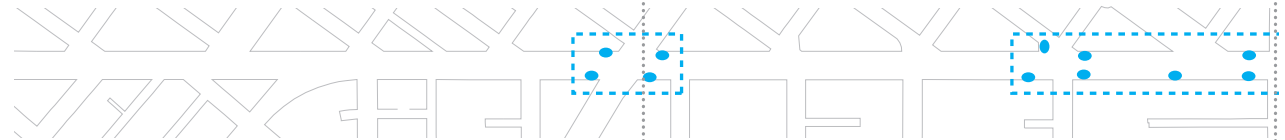
VEHICULAR COLLISIONS



BIKE LANES



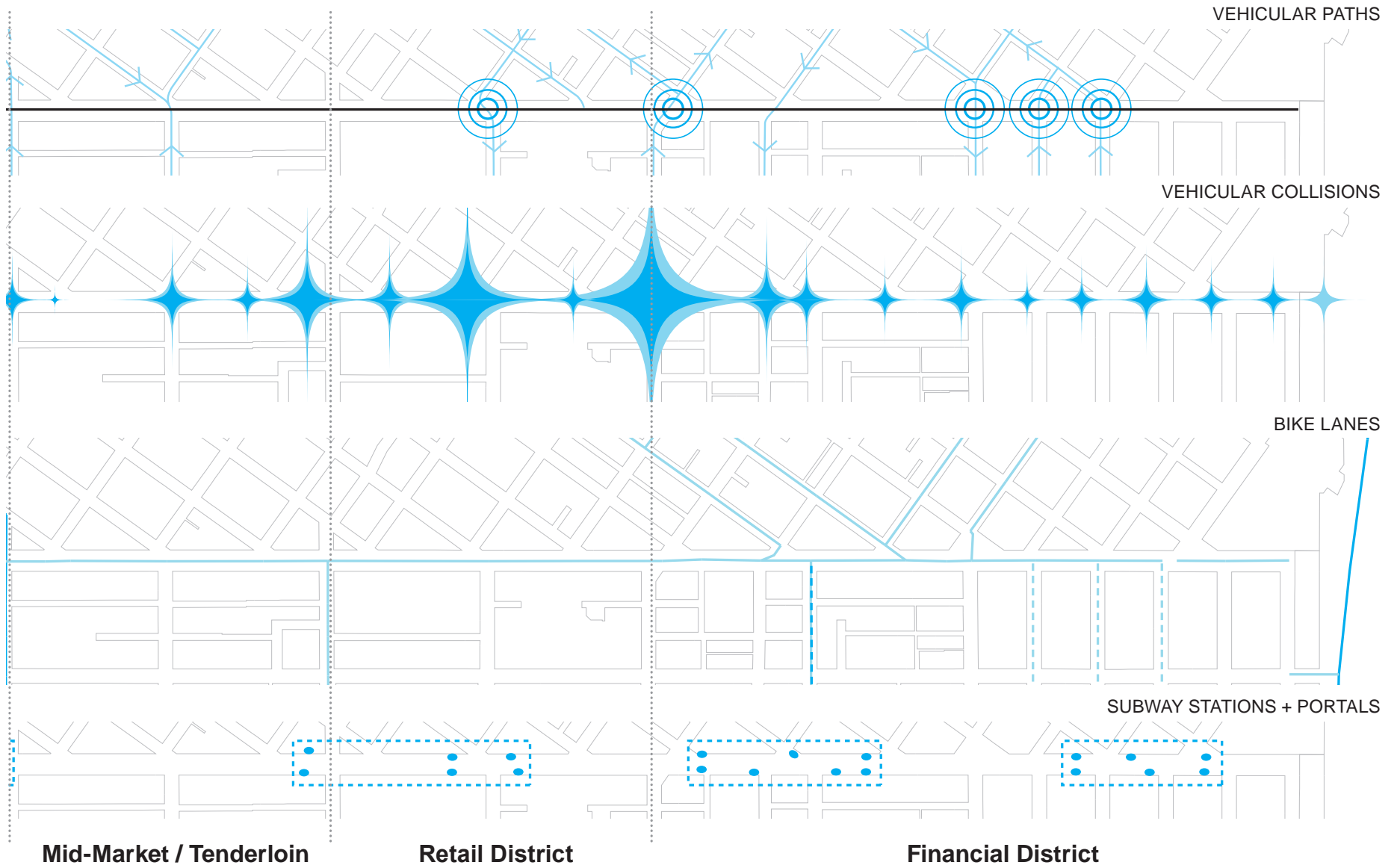
SUBWAY STATIONS + PORTALS



**Octavia**

**Civic Center**







## ■ Section II. Public Space and Streetscape ■



## Analysis

The pedestrian realm streetscape was analyzed to evaluate the quantitative and qualitative characteristics, including sidewalk dimensions and layout, gatherings spaces, furnishings, materials, trees and micro climate conditions.

The methodology included utilization of maps and base information provided by the City as well as field observations. Evaluation of sidewalk zone functionality was based on the best practices defined in the San Francisco Better Streets Plan. Evaluation of pedestrian activity is based on the Public Life Public Space survey. Evaluation of tree health is based on simple observation and does not include analysis of soils or horticultural conditions. Microclimate observations are based on empirical measurements of wind and computer simulation of solar patterns.

## Key Findings

- Sidewalks are generally wide for the existing level of pedestrian use. The exceptions are the zones between Octavia and 12<sup>th</sup> where widths are the minimum dimension to comfortably allow pedestrians to pass, and the area around Powell Street where use levels can be high. The perception of underused sidewalk area is exacerbated by the lack of seating and other furnishings, as well as the undifferentiated paving in the furnishing zone.
- Market Street is punctuated by larger plazas spaced at fairly regular intervals from Justin Herman Plaza to UN Plaza. These open spaces have the potential to become destinations and help activate the spaces in between them along Market Street, if they are improved to encourage more activity and gathering. The addition of one or more new large open space destination between UN Plaza and Octavia should be considered.
- Secondary plazas and gathering spaces, such as Mechanics Plaza at Battery Street, significantly help activate Market Street by creating social gathering spaces. Medium and small sized gathering spaces should be improved and added.
- Most existing large plazas are not currently designed to activate the street edge or integrate the plaza activities with the street activities.
- Sidewalk zones, including Edge Zone, Furnishing Zone, Throughway Zone and Frontage Zone are not articulated and should be improved to create better functionality, encourage social activities and create more visual interest along the length of the street.
- Trees are beneficial for character and microclimate where they are healthy. Many existing trees are in poor health.
- Transit riders constitute a large percentage of Market Street users, yet little is provided in terms of seating or other invitations to stay.

## Key Opportunities

- **Destinations:** There are several destination open spaces along Market Street that are well positioned to activate the various districts and segments of the street. These destinations have the potential to activate the street in the areas adjacent to them, and also between them as people are going to/ from the destination spaces. Many of the destination open spaces are not as successful as they could be (see below).
- **Adjacent public spaces:** There are many secondary and tertiary spaces along Market Street that can be improved to activate the street. Some of these spaces have great potential with favorable micro climates and vantage points. Many of them need to be developed with furnishings.
- **Sidewalk layout:** In most sections of Market Street there is ample room to add trees and furnishings without encroaching on pedestrian circulation. Seating areas are most successful when they take advantage of positive micro climate areas, have good vantage points (such as an elevated view), are adjacent to but out of the way of high traffic areas, and have a good mix of types of people around.
- **Trees:** Trees could be a very strong component to the identity of Market Street, and can contribute greatly to improving the micro climate and sustainability of the street.

## Key Challenges

- **Destinations:** The primary open space destinations: UN Plaza, Hallidie Plaza, Crown Zellerbach, Justin Herman Plaza do not engage and activate Market Street as effectively as they could.
- **Furnishings:** There are little to no furnishings along most of Market Street. A viable approach to durable and attractive furnishings must be developed. Furnished areas must be designed to attract a mix of people so that people feel welcome to pause along the street.
- **Materials:** The consistent brick paving along Market Street is successful in creating a memorable identity, but is tiring and relentless. More material variety is needed. This must be accomplished in a way that creates a strong overall identity.
- **Trees:** The wind, shade, constrained root conditions, and high level of human activity will be challenges to overcome in order to establish a successful urban forest on Market Street.
- **Micro climate:** some areas of Market Street are either shady and/or consistently windy. Wind protection should be considered. Sunny areas should be taken advantage of. Shady areas are more difficult to make inhabitable.
- **Lighting:** The lighting along Market Street is monotonous and uninteresting. The historic light fixtures should remain, but should be supplemented by a variety of other lighting ideas to create more diversity and a stronger identity for each district of the street.

# 1.4 Pedestrian Realm

*Sidewalks are generally wide for the existing level of pedestrian use. The perception of under used sidewalk area is exacerbated by the lack of seating and other furnishings, as well as the undifferentiated paving in the furnishing zone.*

- Sidewalk widths and zones vary along Market Street. Variations can be summarized into 5 types, as illustrated in the following pages.
- Sidewalk zones are underdeveloped and undifferentiated. The Furnishing Zone is typically under utilized.
- Several unique conditions occur at transit portals and plazas. These conditions are addressed in other sections of this document.

## Sidewalk Typologies

- The following zones are defined by changes in the sidewalk dimensions or conditions. These zones do not always correspond with the urban design districts.
  - Octavia – 12th (16 feet / single tree)
  - 12th-8th (26 feet / single tree)
  - 8th-5th (35 feet / double tree)
  - 5th-Montgomery (35 feet / single tree)
  - Montgomery - Stuart
  - (Asymmetrical, 335.5 feet/ double tree one side + 25.5 / single tree one side)

**Figure 1.4.1: Sidewalk Typologies, Macro-scale**

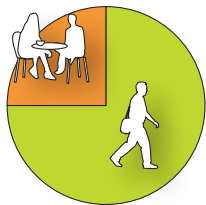


Source: San Francisco GIS Data - <http://gispub02.sfgov.org/website/sfshare/index2.asp>, Digitized from site aerial



# OCTAVIA to 12TH SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY

## SIDEWALK USE



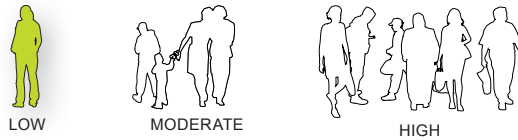
- Edge Zone - 0 Feet
- Furnishing Zone - 4 Feet
- Throughway Zone - 12 Feet

- HEALTHY TREE
- UNHEALTHY TREE

## TREE SPACING



## PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY



## + POSITIVES

- + 16 foot sidewalk accommodates intensity of current use.
- + 12 foot wide Throughway Zone concentrates circulation along this low volume area.
- + Single row of trees and furniture elements organized in fairly well defined 4 foot wide furnishing zone.
- + Scale of buildings relate well to street.

## - NEGATIVES

- 12 foot Throughway Zone and lack of Frontage Zone may not accommodate future outdoor seating or increased pedestrian volume.
- Furnishing Zone would be better defined with paving distinction.

Figure 1.4.2: Plan of Octavia to 12th

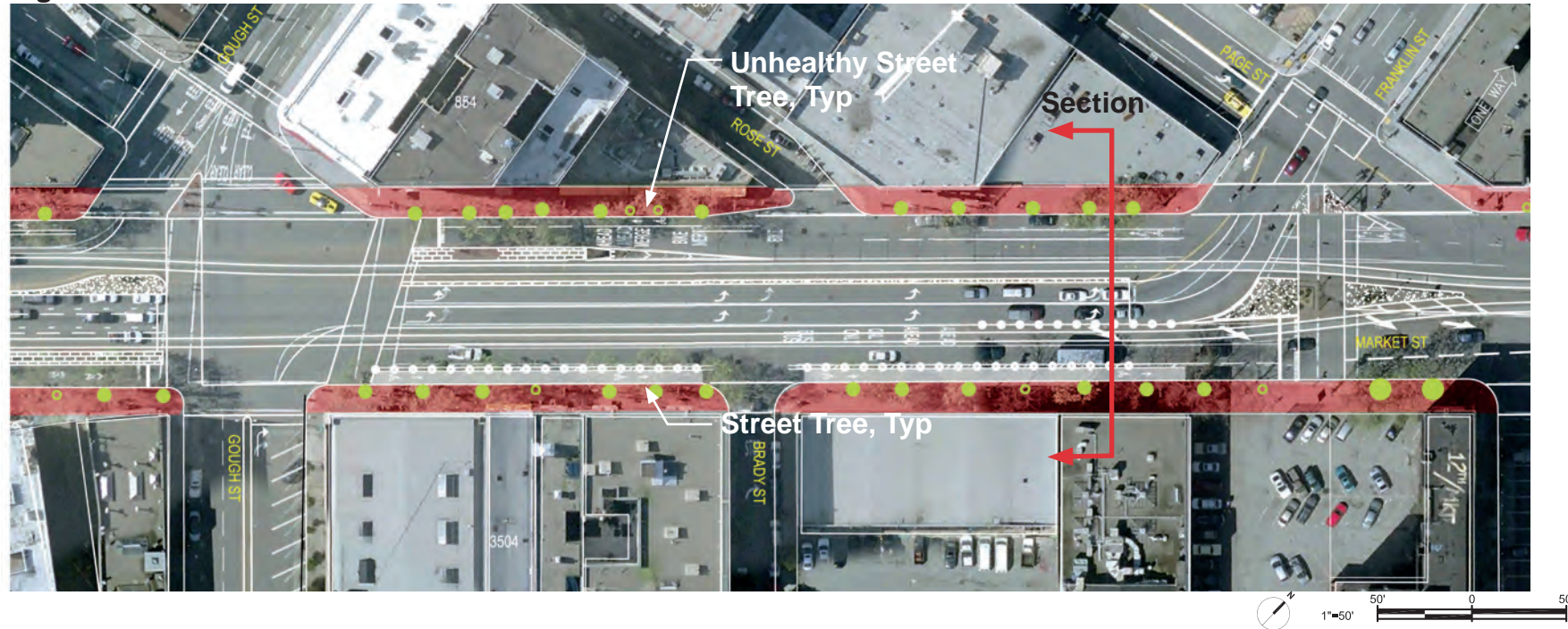
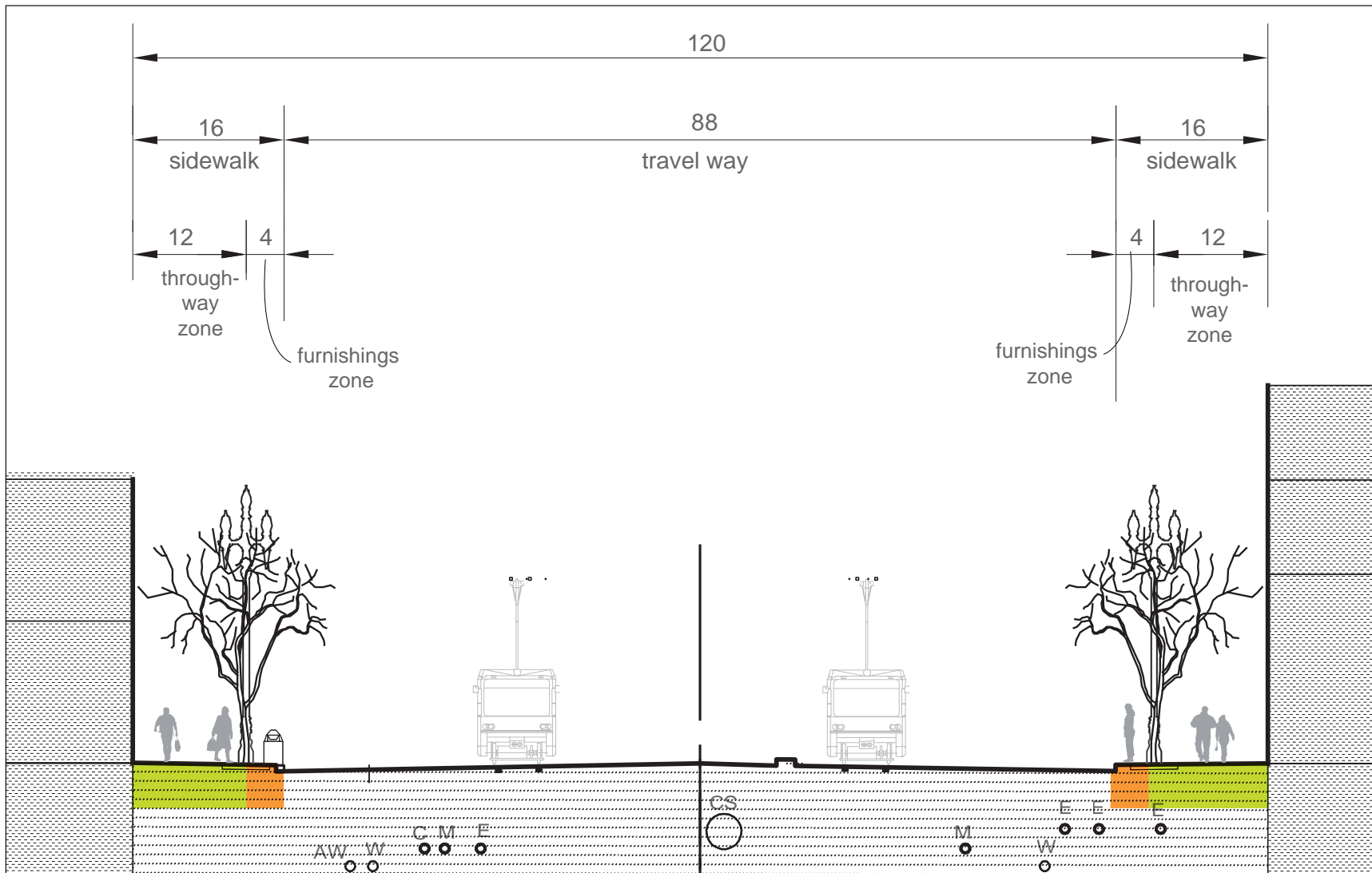




Figure 1.4.3: Section of Octavia to 12th

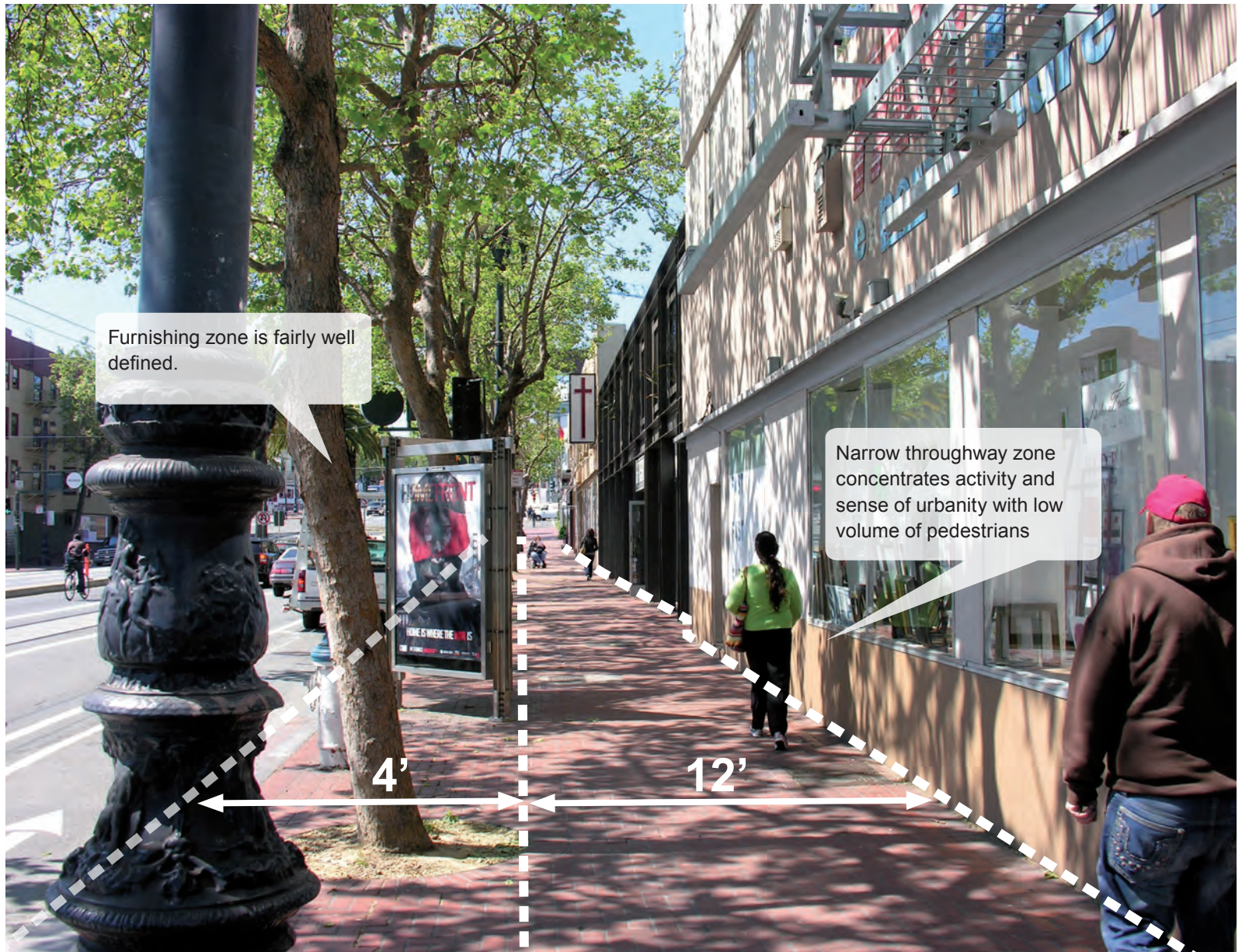


## OCTAVIA to 12TH SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY



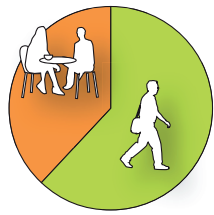
Parking at street edge does not support pedestrian activity.

## Octavia - 12th



## 12TH to 8TH SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY

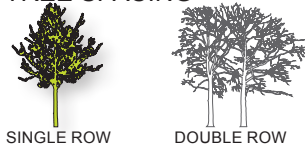
### SIDEWALK USE



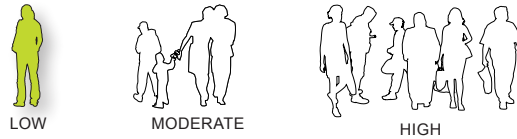
- Edge Zone - 0 Feet
- Furnishing Zone - 10 Feet
- Throughway Zone - 16 Feet

- HEALTHY TREE
- UNHEALTHY TREE

### TREE SPACING



### PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY



- ⊕ POSITIVES
  - + 26 foot sidewalk width allows for expanded bike lane at street side, a robust Furnishings Zone, or an activated Frontage Zone along buildings.
- ⊖ NEGATIVES
  - 26 foot sidewalk is too wide and undifferentiated for low pedestrian volume.
  - 16 foot Throughway Zone is wide for low level of pedestrian activity.
  - 10 foot wide Furnishing Zone is under utilized with no seating, and undifferentiated.
  - Large scale buildings lack ground floor activities, integration with the public realm, and do not create active frontages or an increase in pedestrian volume.
  - Vacant or undeveloped sites.

Figure 1.4.4: Plan of 12th to 8th

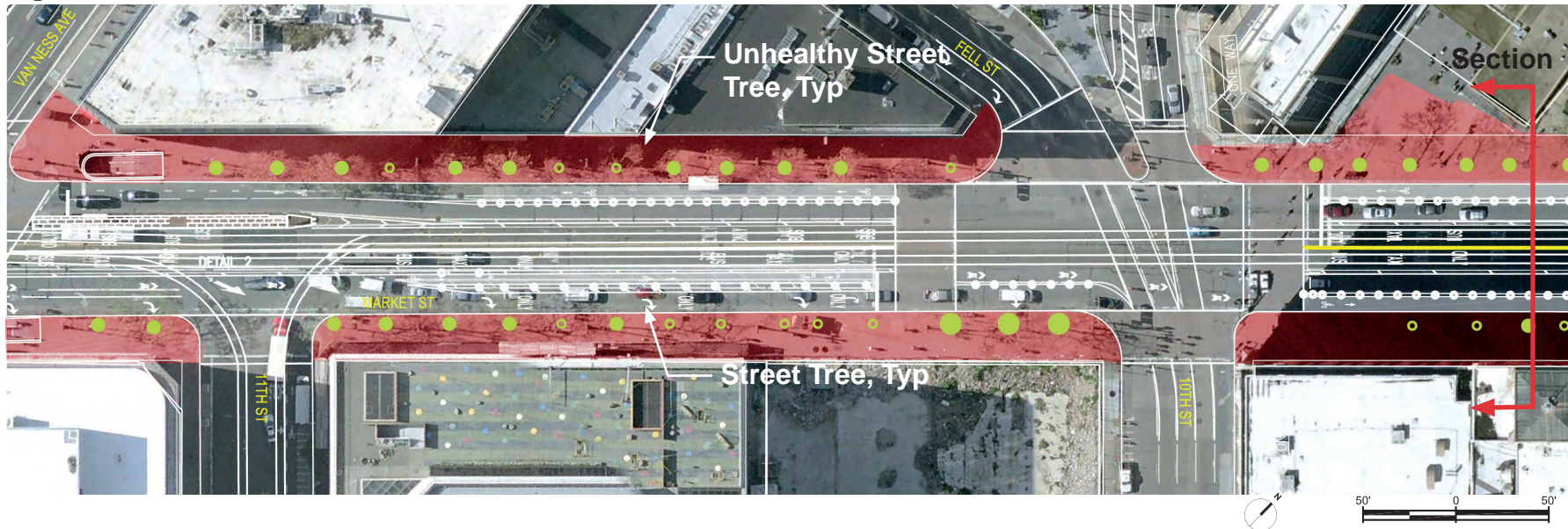
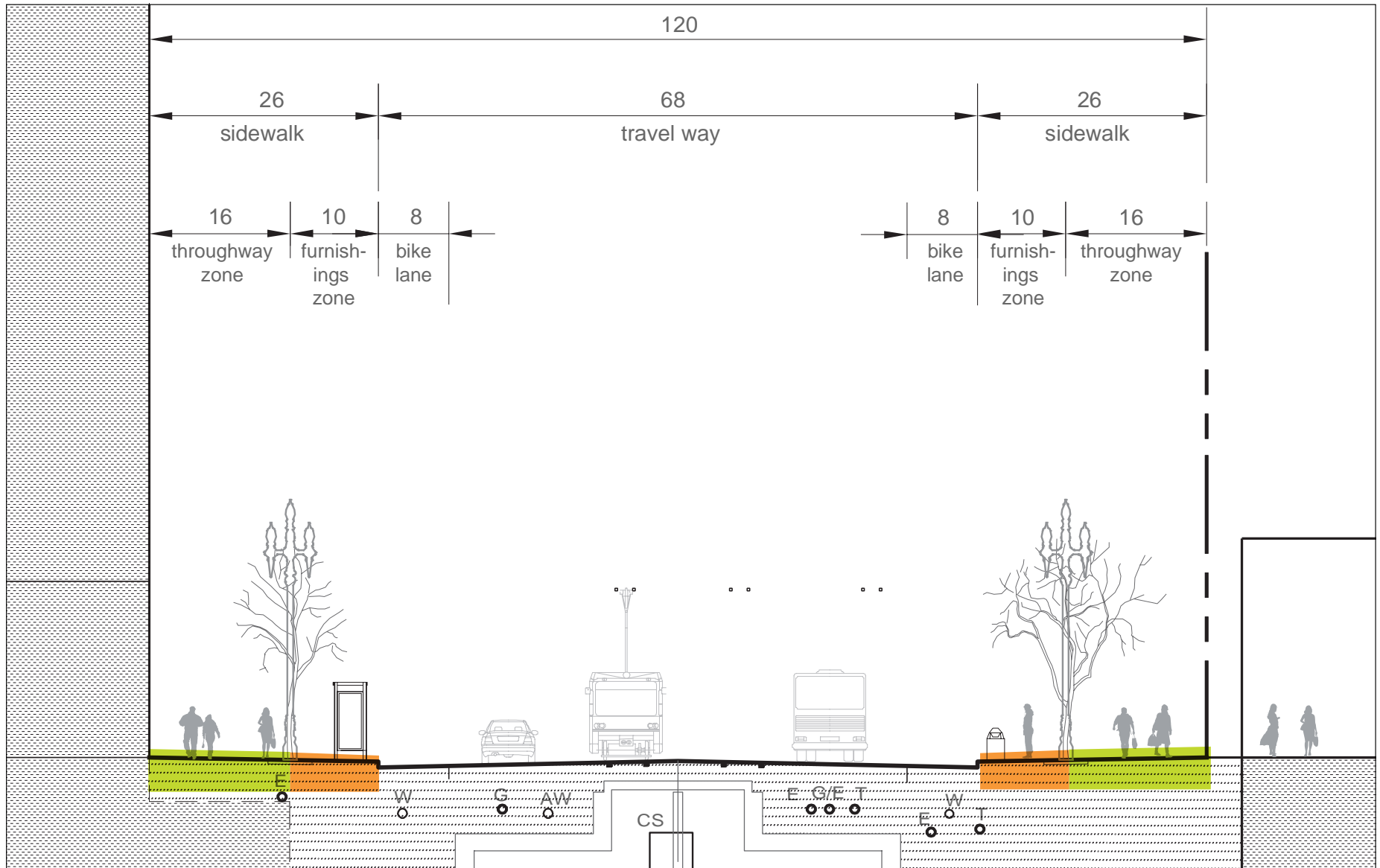


Figure 1.4.5: Section of 12th to 8th

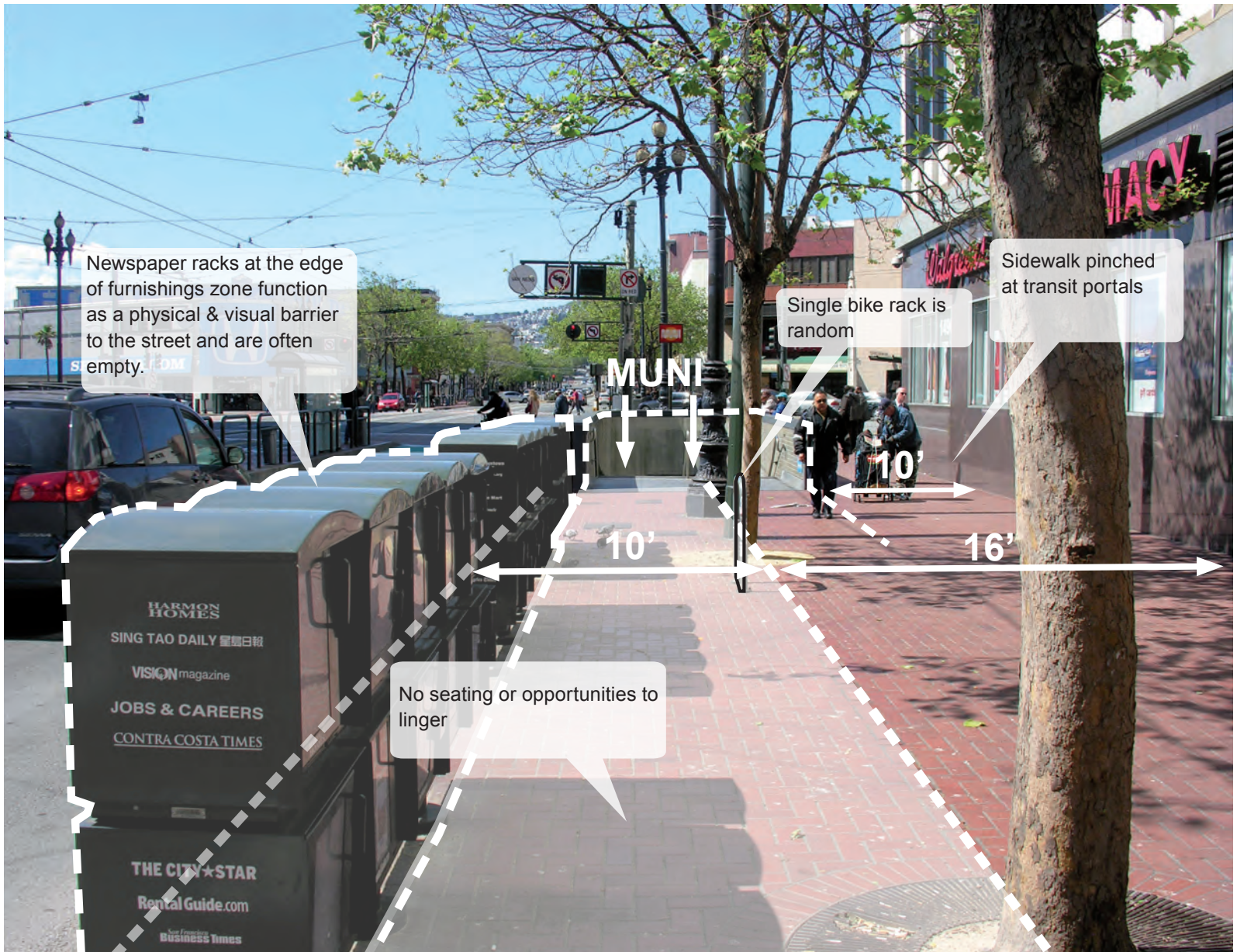


## 12TH to 8TH SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY



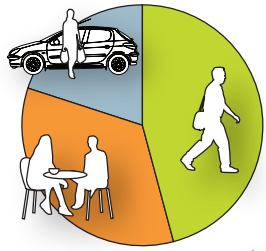
Sidewalk zones need differentiation and activation.



12th - 8th



## 8TH to 5TH SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY

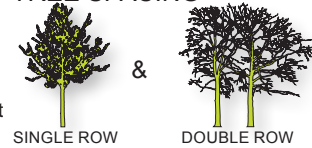
### SIDEWALK USE



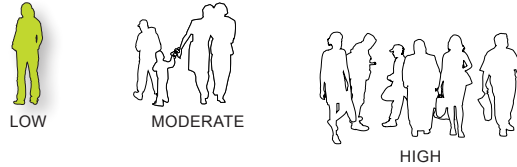
- HEALTHY TREE 
- UNHEALTHY TREE 

- Edge Zone - 7 Feet
- Furnishing Zone - 12 Feet
- Throughway Zone - 16 Feet

### TREE SPACING



### PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY



### ⊕ POSITIVES

- + 35 foot sidewalk width allows for expanded bike lane at street side, a robust Furnishings Zone, an activated Frontage Zone along buildings, or an increase in pedestrian volume.
- + 12 foot wide Furnishings Zone accommodates a double row of trees.

### ⊖ NEGATIVES

- 16 foot Throughway Zone is too wide for current pedestrian volume.
- Furnishings Zone provides no seating.
- 7 foot Edge Zone is unused.
- Buildings do not utilize Frontage Zone.

Figure 1.4.6: Plan of 8th to 5th

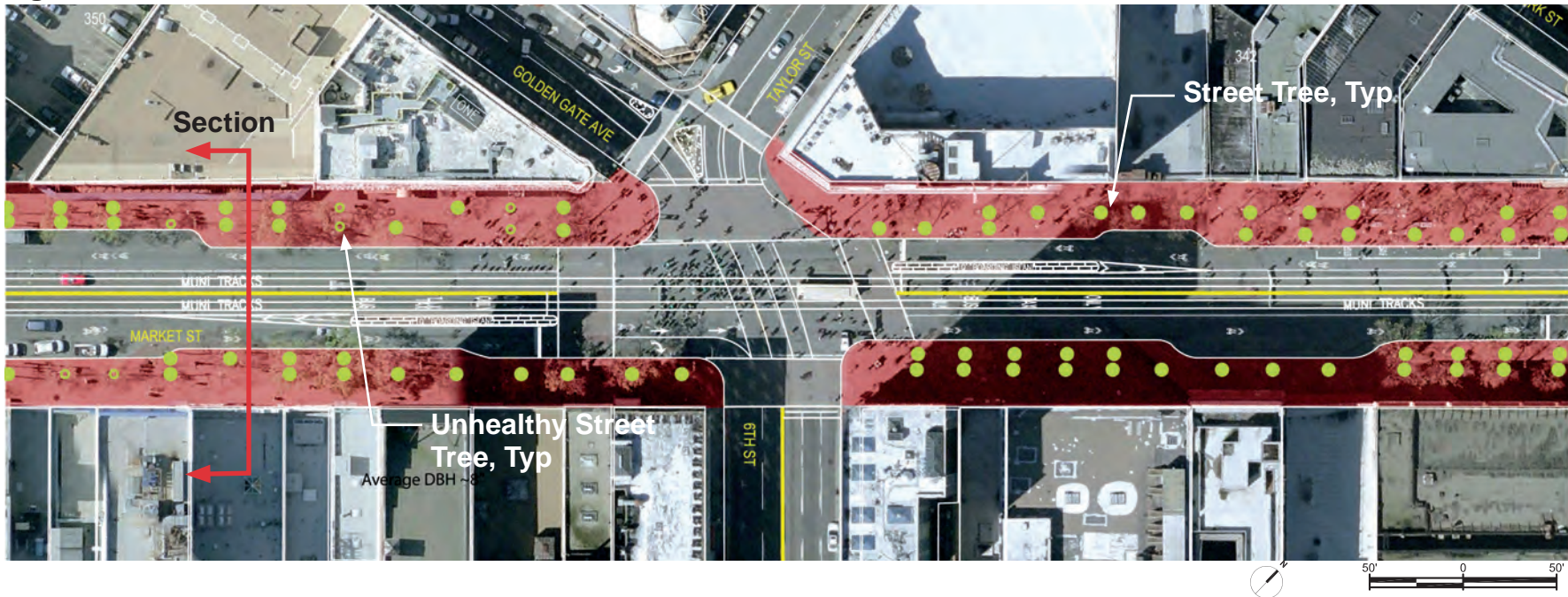
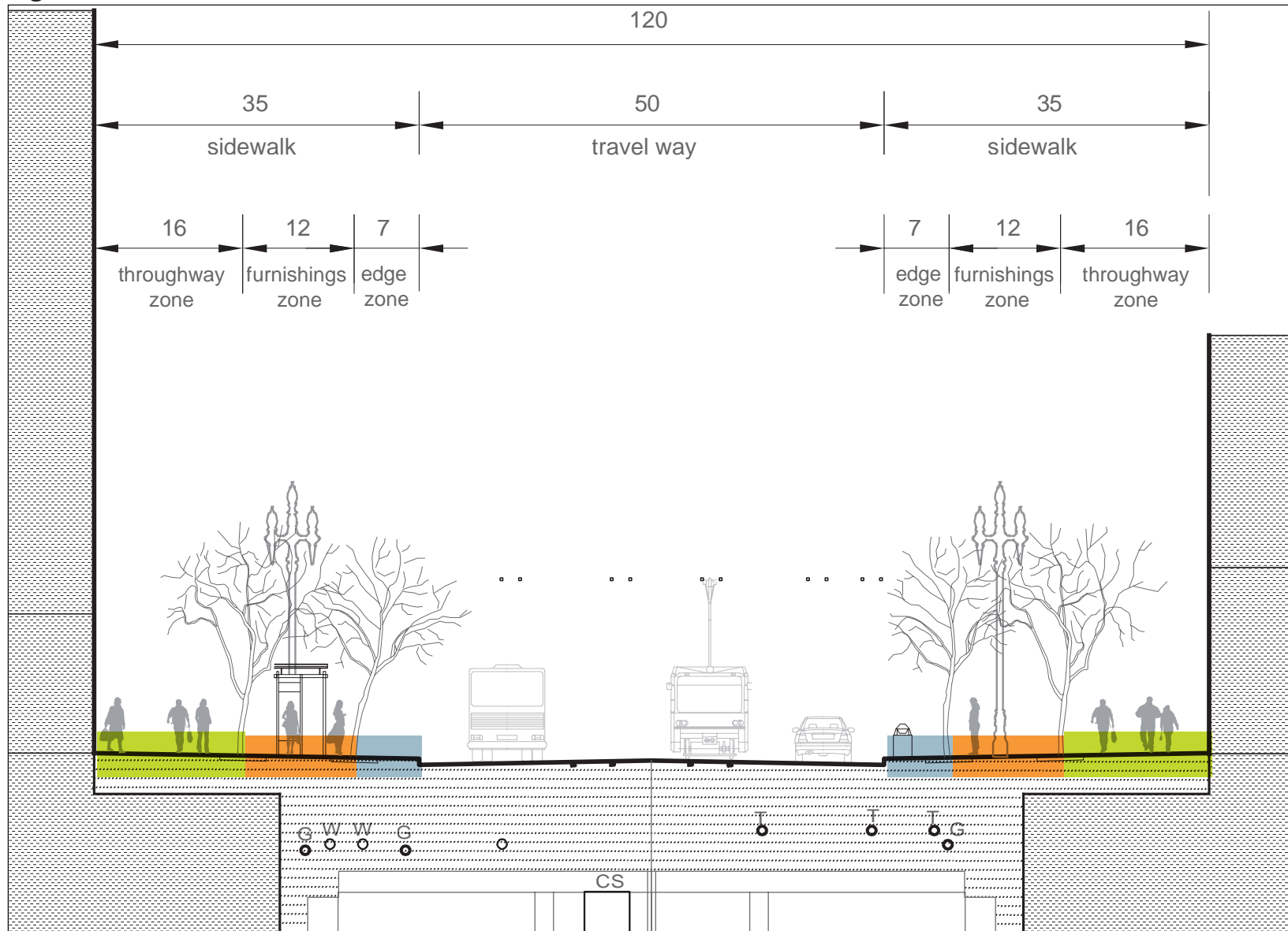




Figure 1.4.7: Section of 8th to 5th



## 8TH to 5TH SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY



Lack of furnishings allows for only transient activity.



Signage elements obstruct views and connectivity.

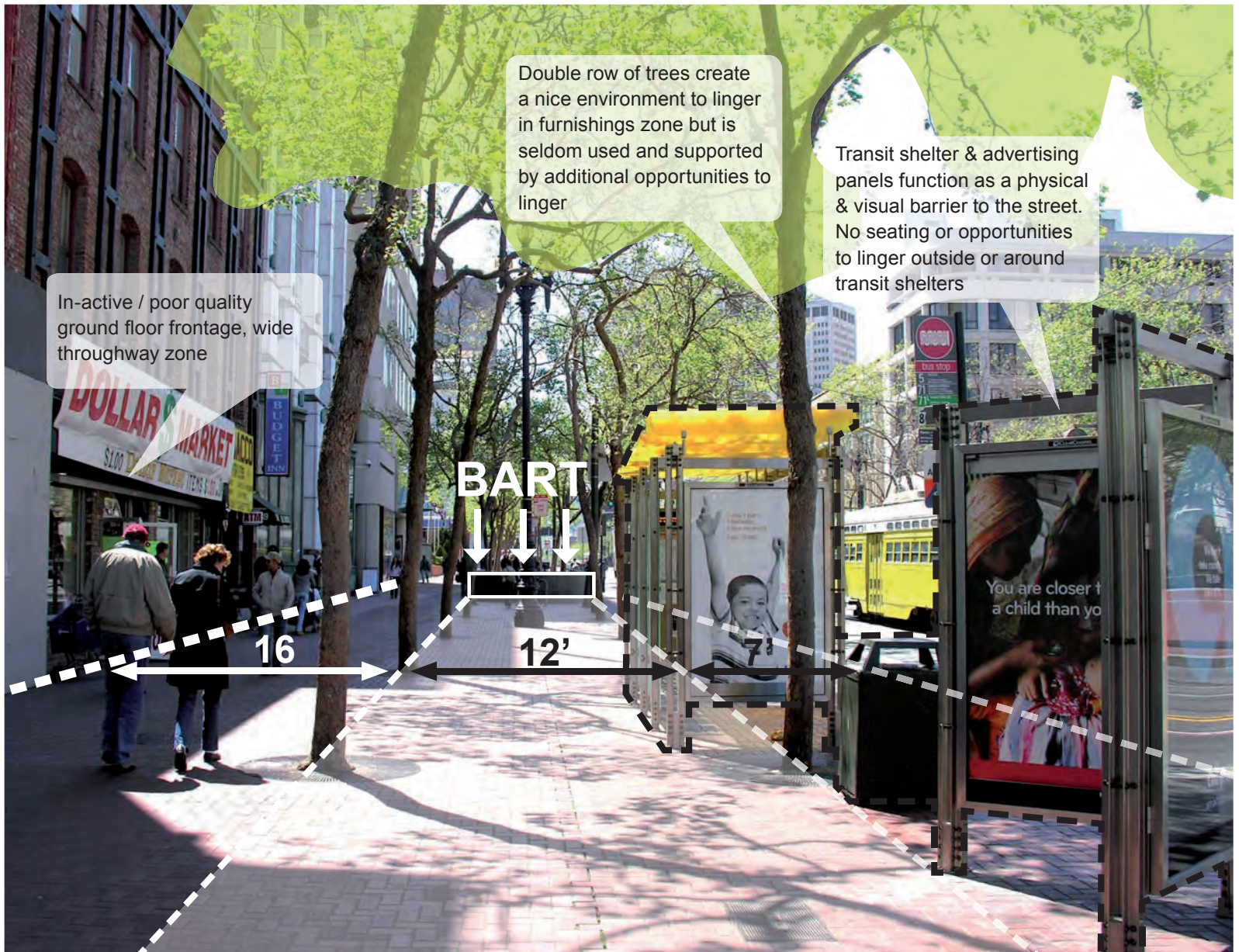


Seating encourages social activity.



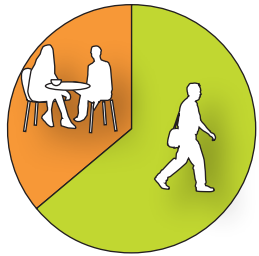
Absence of building uses removes frontage zone and lack of furnishings make sidewalk inactive.

8th - 5th



## 5TH to MONTGOMERY SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY

### SIDEWALK USE



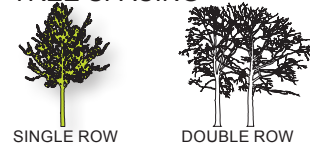
● HEALTHY TREE

○ UNHEALTHY TREE

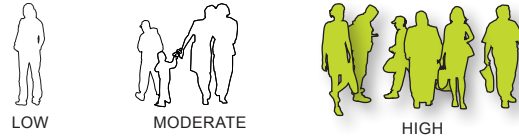


- Edge Zone - 0 Feet
- Furnishing Zone - 12.5 Feet
- Throughway Zone - 22.5 Feet

### TREE SPACING



### PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY



### ⊕ POSITIVES

- + 35 foot sidewalk width appropriately scaled for higher pedestrian volumes.
- + 22.5 foot wide Throughway Zone is the widest on Market Street, reflecting the high volume of activity.

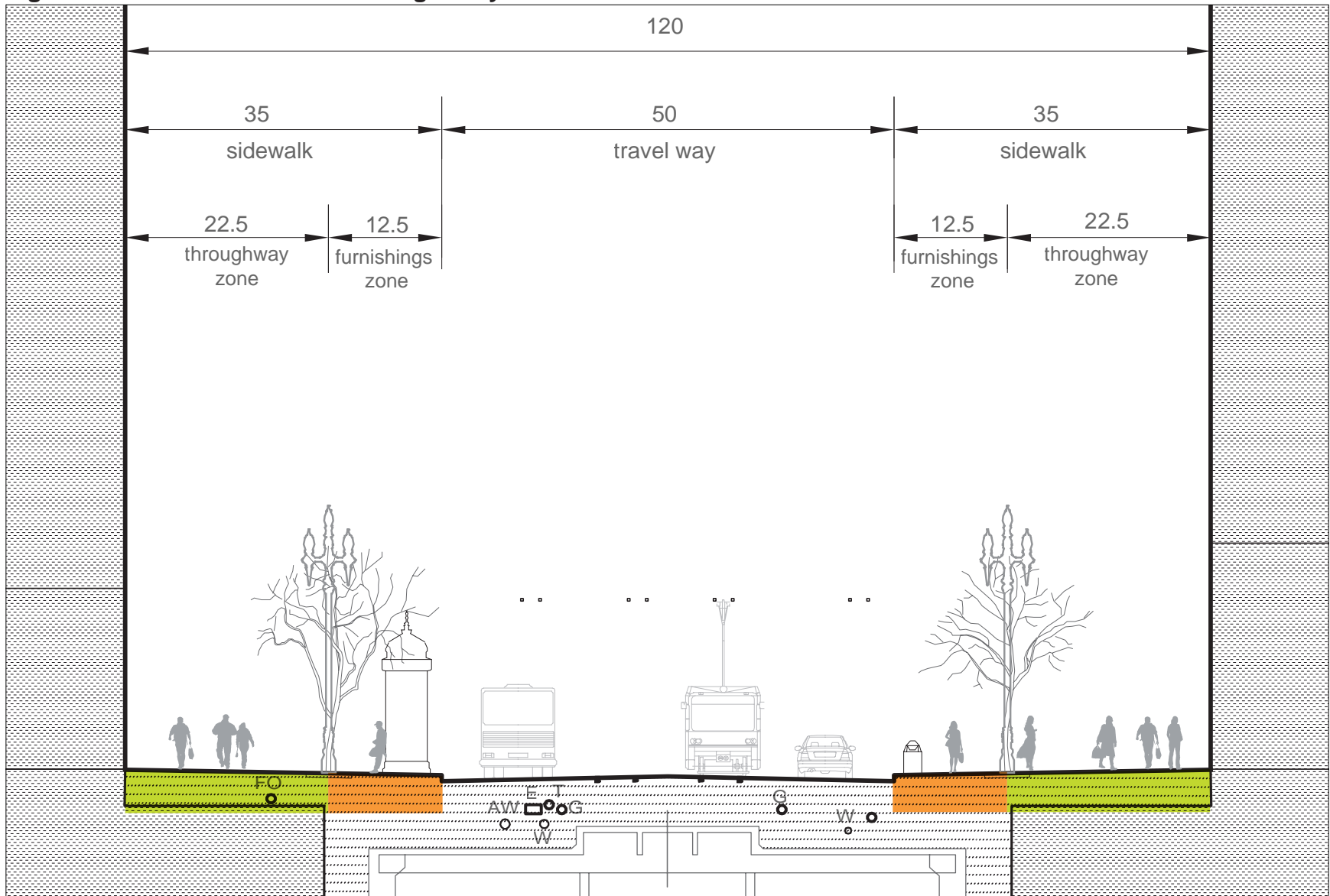
### ⊖ NEGATIVES

- 12.5 foot wide furnishing Zone is undifferentiated and has no seating.
- Buildings do not create Frontage Zones to encourage lingering activities.

Figure 1.4.8: Plan of 5th to Montgomery



Figure 1.4.9: Section of 5th to Montgomery



5TH to MONTGOMERY SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY



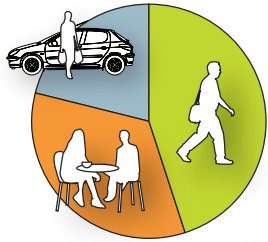
Sidewalk zones are undifferentiated and not activated.

## 5th - Montgomery



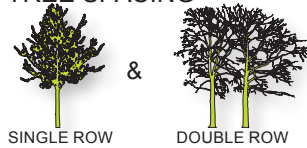
# MONTGOMERY to STEUART SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY

## SIDEWALK USE

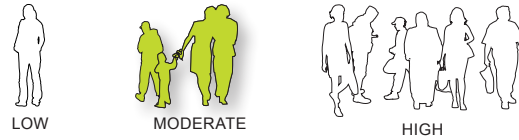


- Edge Zone - 7 Feet
- Furnishing Zone - 12 Feet
- Throughway Zone - 16 Feet

## TREE SPACING



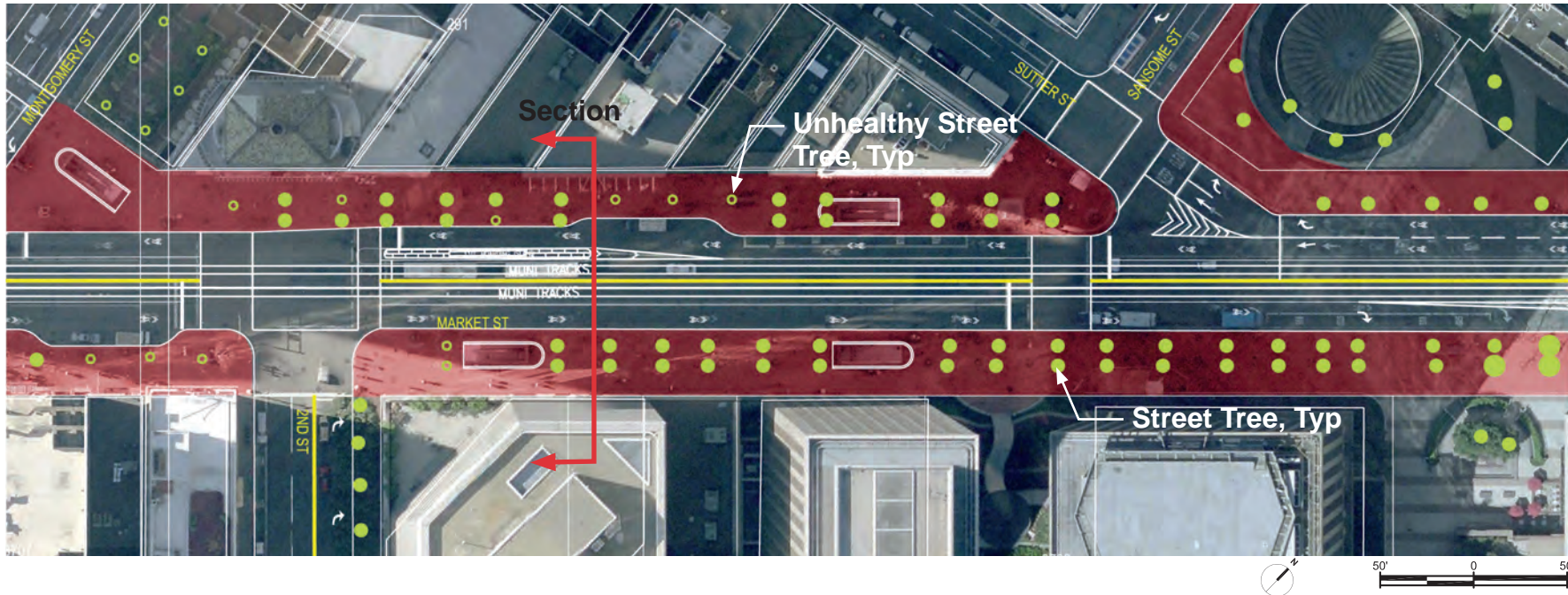
## PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY



- HEALTHY TREE
- UNHEALTHY TREE

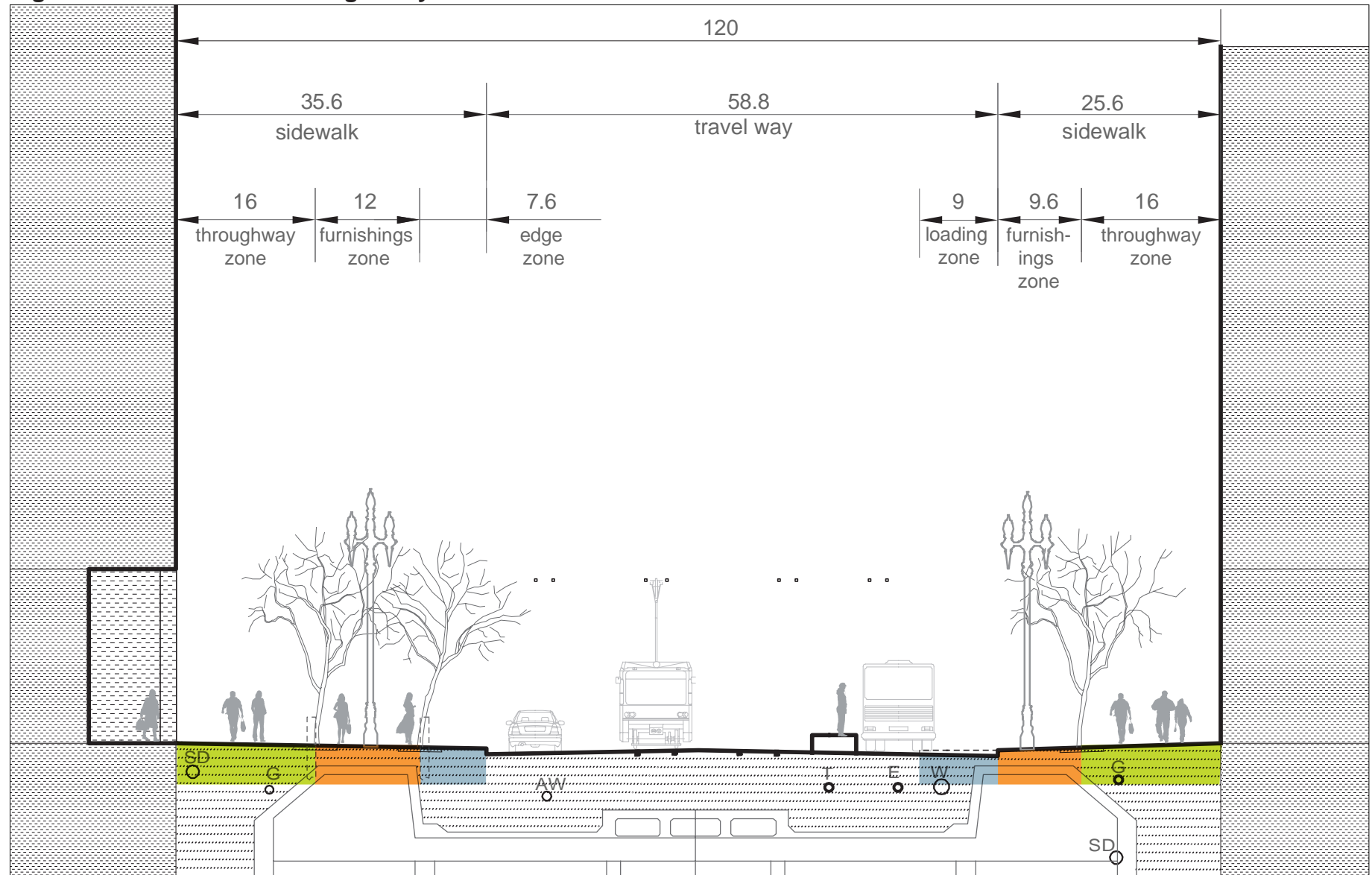
- ⊕ POSITIVES
  - + 35 / 25 foot sidewalk width appropriately scaled for higher pedestrian volumes.
  - + 16 foot wide throughway zone accommodates peak hours.
- ⊖ NEGATIVES
  - 12 foot wide furnishing zone is undifferentiated and has no seating.
  - Buildings do not create useful frontage zones to encourage lingering activities. Some areas have very large setback zones that are under utilized, creating a sense of emptiness.

Figure 1.4.10: Plan of Montgomery to Steuart





**Figure 1.4.11: Section of Montgomery to Stuart**

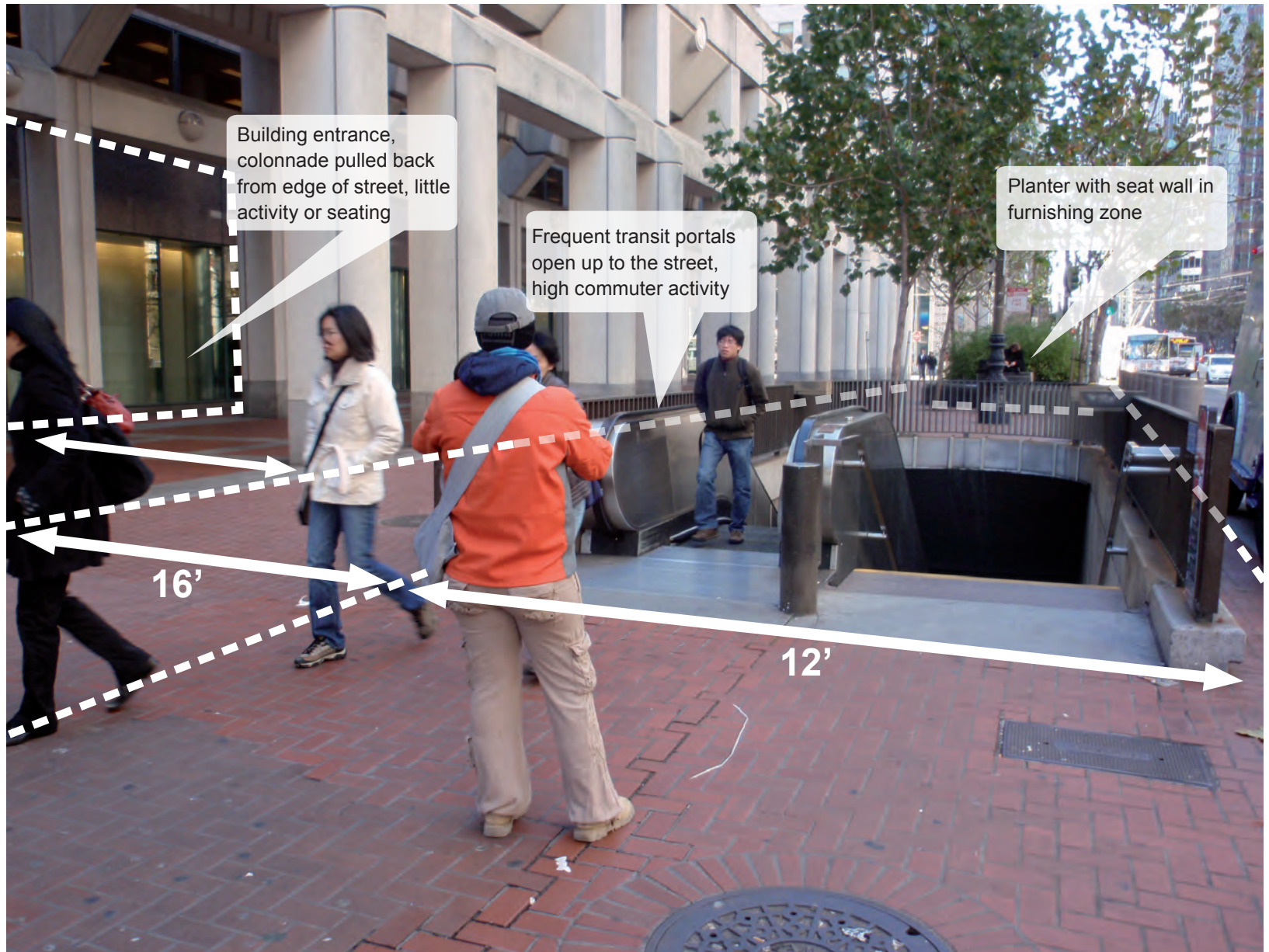


## MONTGOMERY to STEUART SIDEWALK TYPOLOGY



Frontage Zone is attractive but does not invite activity.

## Montgomery - Stuart

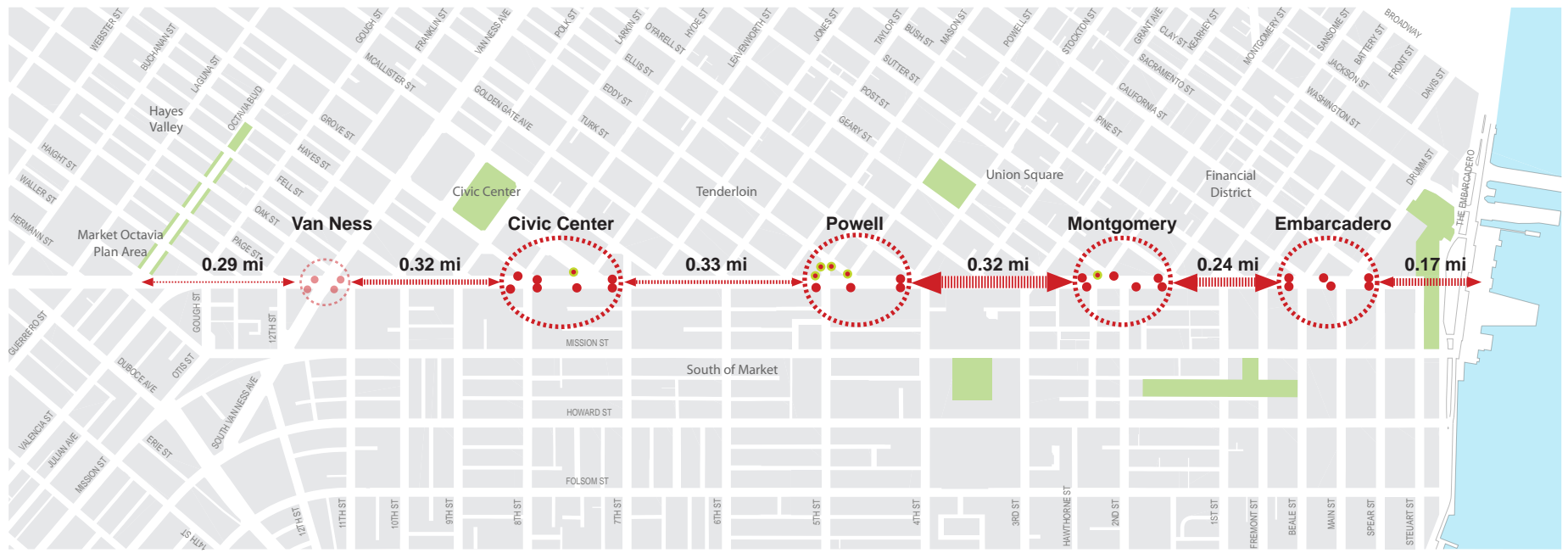


# Transit & the Pedestrian Realm

*Transit portals deliver large numbers of people to activate the street. Public space design should encourage social activities for people using transit.*

- BART / Muni portals deliver high volumes of people onto the street at regular intervals along Market Street. Often times these people do not stay on Market Street because there is no inviting activity.

**Figure 1.4.12: Transit hubs, distance between & BART/Muni portal locations**



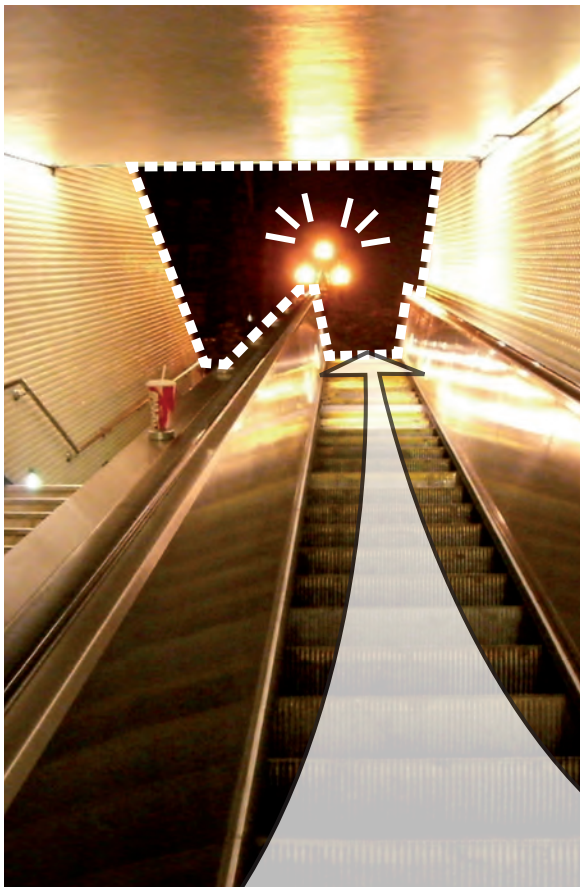
Source: San Francisco GIS Data - <http://gispub02.sfgov.org/website/sfshare/index2.asp>, digitized from site aerial

- BART/MUNI Portal
  - BART/MUNI Plaza Portal
  - MUNI Portal
- Distance & time to walk between transit hubs (line thickness=relative volume of pedestrian volume)



## BART/MUNI Transit portals - sense of arrival

- Coming up from the BART/MUNI stations are often the first impression that people have with Market Street. Most of the market street portals are not designed in a way that integrates the arrival experience with the street experience.



Sky view ascending, awkward focus on the street lighting.



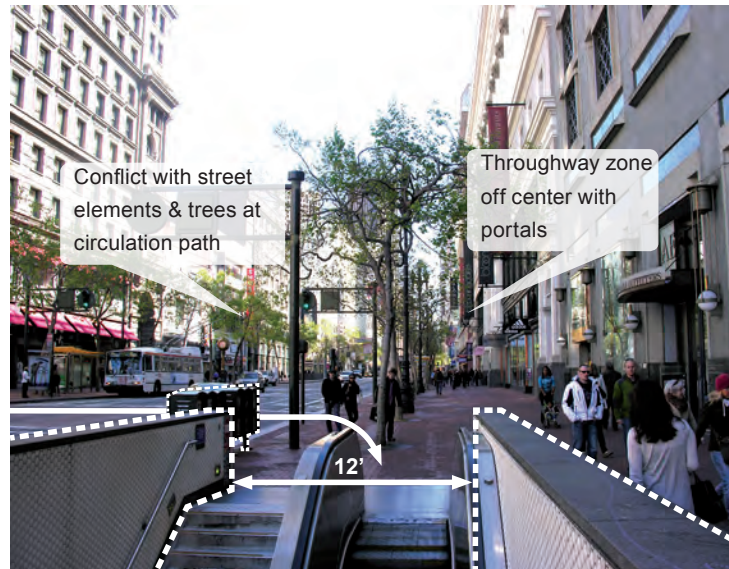
Ceramic hexagon tile at BART station interior walls create interesting detail.



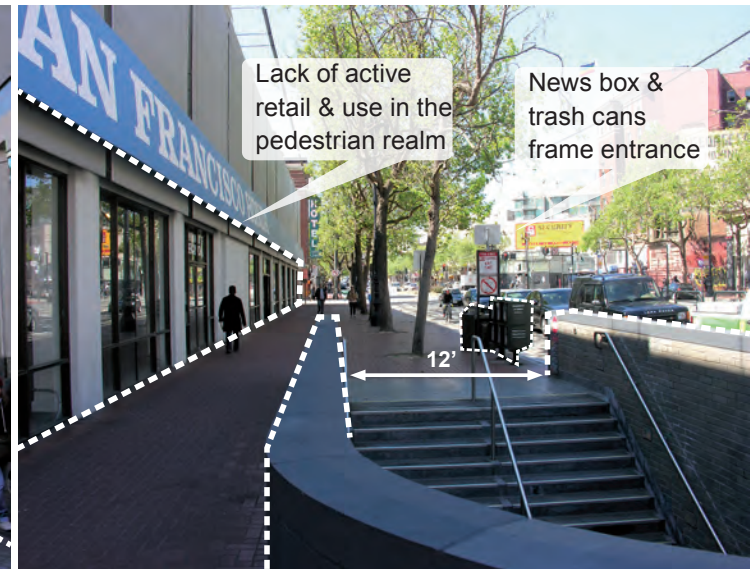
Sense of arrival at Hallidie Plaza. Open air accession & oriented to flag poles and corner architecture is positive.

## Portal Orientation

The sense of arrival upon accession from transit portals can be disorienting given the numerous configurations with the transit portals, Market street and cross streets. The circulation patterns to the portals often conflict with elements of the streetscape and are not with crosswalks and major routes of travel.



Portals opening at cross-streets.



Portals opening mid-block.



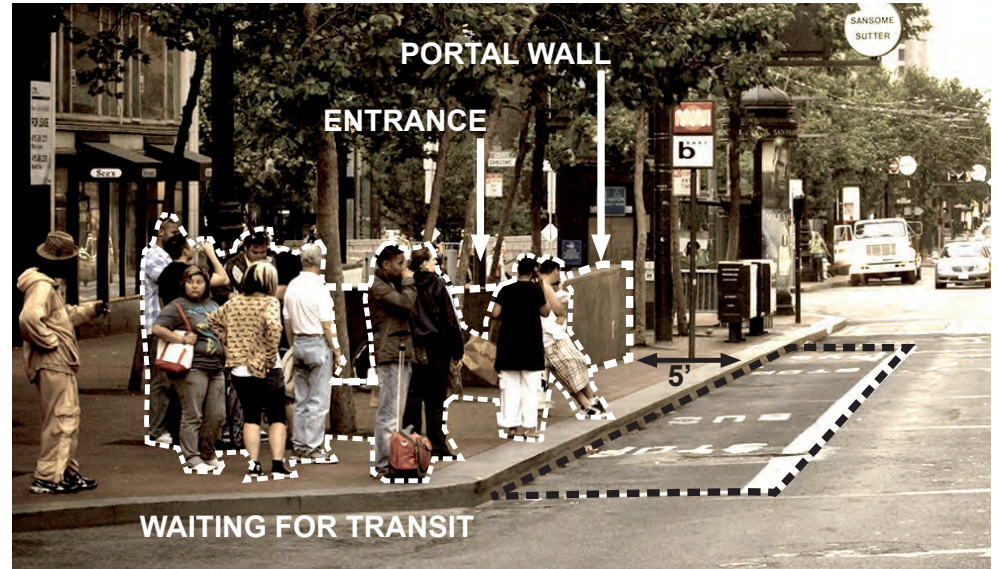
Plaza portals are set back from street edge.



Back of portal walls could invite social activity.

## Waiting for Transit

- A majority of all lingering activities on the street is standing / waiting for transport.
- The high volume of transit riders offers a design opportunity to activate the street and public plazas.



People waiting for street transit at corner & back of transit portals.



Standing & waiting for transit at the Powell Cable Car.



Standing & waiting for transit at the center boarding island.

# 1.5 Open Space Destinations

*Plazas along Market Street have the potential to activate the street by creating a rhythm of social nodes.*

- Market Street is punctuated by larger plazas spaced at fairly regular intervals from Justin Herman Plaza to U.N. Plaza. These open spaces have the potential to become destinations and help activate the spaces in between them along Market Street, if they are improved to encourage more activity and gathering. The addition of one or more new large open space destination between U.N. Plaza and Octavia should be considered.
- Secondary plazas and gathering spaces, such as Mechanics Plaza at Battery Street, significantly help activate Market Street by creating social gathering spaces. Medium and small sized gathering spaces should be improved and added.
- Most existing large plazas are not currently designed to activate the street edge or integrate the plaza activities with the street activities.

**Figure 1.5.1: Map of major open space (plazas) and inactive edges along the street**





## Fox Plaza

Located between Larkin and Polk on the north side of Market Street.

- Well connected to street.
- Good sun exposure.
- Not enough seating.
- Gusty winds are not a problem.



Secondary seating on stairs can conflict with building circulation.



Secondary seating removed from activating the street. Facades oriented to ideal lunch time sun yet circulation (ramp & stairs) conflicts with opportunities for cafes or seating.

## U.N. Plaza

Located between 7th and Hyde on the north side of Market Street.

- Large civic space creates a lot of activity, but is removed from the street.
- Opportunities for social gathering are often too far from the street edge.
- Civic identity is not strong.



Barriers at right are a poor solution to a design problem.



Secondary seating opportunities set back from street.



Active street program but lack of opportunities to sit and linger.



Seating along portions of U.N. Fountain help activate street.



U.N. Fountain helps activate the street but lacks seating near the sidewalk.



U.N. Plaza has many active edges that are too far back from street



U.N. Plaza is expansive and largely under used along the street edge. There is an absence of a boundary due to the lack of street trees.

## Hallidie Plaza - West

Located west of Cyril Magnin Street and north of Market Street.

- Cafe seating at building edge provides active use but removed from the street edge.
- Large quantity of news racks at the street edge separate plaza from street.
- Entrance to sunken portion seldom used.



Barriers at the edge of Hallidie plaza facing market street.



Lower level seldom used and little connection to street life.

## Hallidie Plaza - East

Located east of Cyril Magnin Street and north of Market Street.

- Powell street intersection with the cable car turnaround is a major destination and is the busiest space on Market Street. This portion is at grade and contributes to street life at the edge of the street but offers no opportunity to sit.
- A large portion of open space facing market street is entirely sunken, has major visual barriers and no opportunity to sit and linger.



Active street edge near Powell street cable car turnaround.



Barriers at the edge of Hallidie plaza facing market street.



Cafe at the lower level but little connection to street life.

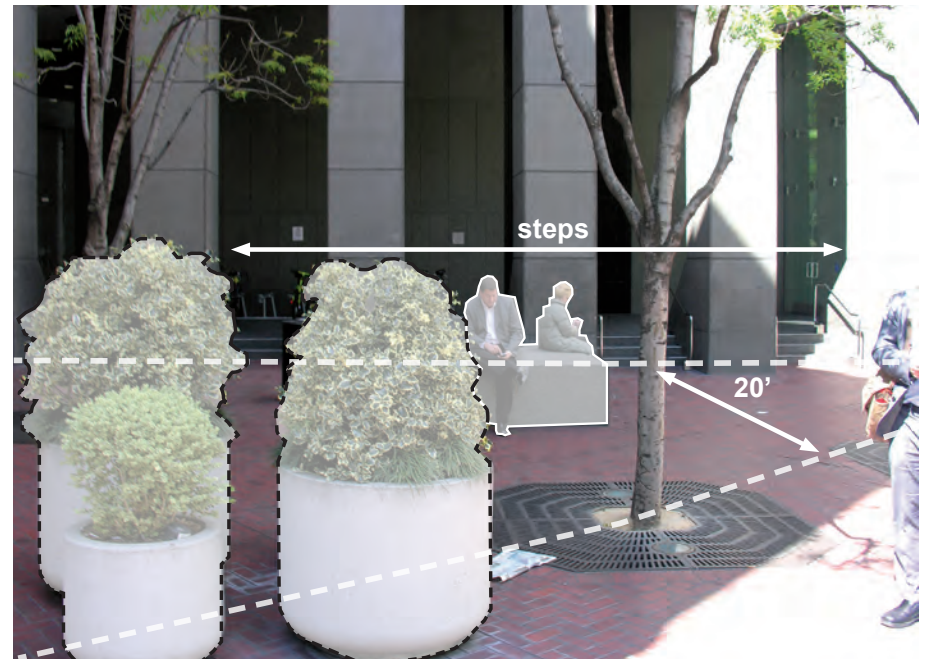
## One Post Plaza

Located at Post and Market Street on the north side of Market Street.

- Seating on steps is successful in activating the street. Close proximity to sidewalk, oriented to sunlight, elevated view, and protected back invite lingering.
- People linger far less at sunken portions than at grade level.
- Other portions of the plaza removed from the street edge are less successful and contain visual and physical barriers.



Active seating on steps near street edge



Secondary seating, more removed from the street edge, is less utilized. The planters create unhelpful barriers.

## Crown Zellerbach Plaza

Located between Sutter and Battery on the north side of Market Street.

- The interior is large and has a great potential but is inactive and disconnected from the street.
- Street edge is well used however, better seating would encourage more use.
- Protected from the wind.
- Sunny.



Interior protected from the wind - more activity at street level.



Low height wall at the street edge allows for seating.



Other portions of the edge wall block visibility and contribute little to street activity and opportunities to linger.

## Mechanics Plaza

Located east of Battery Street and on the north side of Market street.

- Well connected to street.
- Sunny although windy.
- Elevated seating at statue most successful because of viewing and protected back.
- Benches less used because of anti social arrangements and exposed back.
- Identified by public art at the corner.



A slight grade change, a good variety of seating options and close proximity to the sidewalk create an active relationship to Market street.



Seating and plaza is oriented to afternoon sun. The sun compensated for the wind.





Seating in sun is well used and activates street.

## Wind & sun

- People tend to want to be in the sun even if there is some wind.
- Wind conditions vary greatly due to building heights and open space.
- Site specific wind buffers are possible.



Building set backs on the south side of the street allow sun and opportunities to gather.



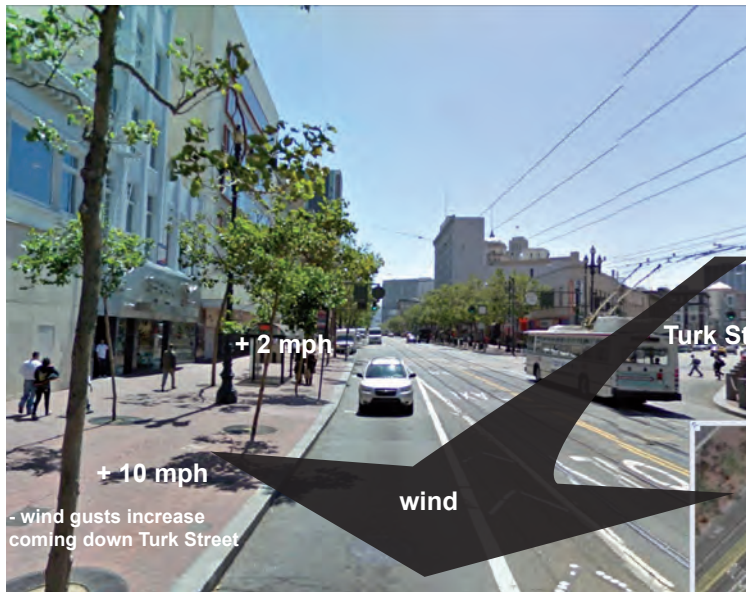
Deep perforations in the building fabric at Yerba Buena Lane allow wedges of sunlight.



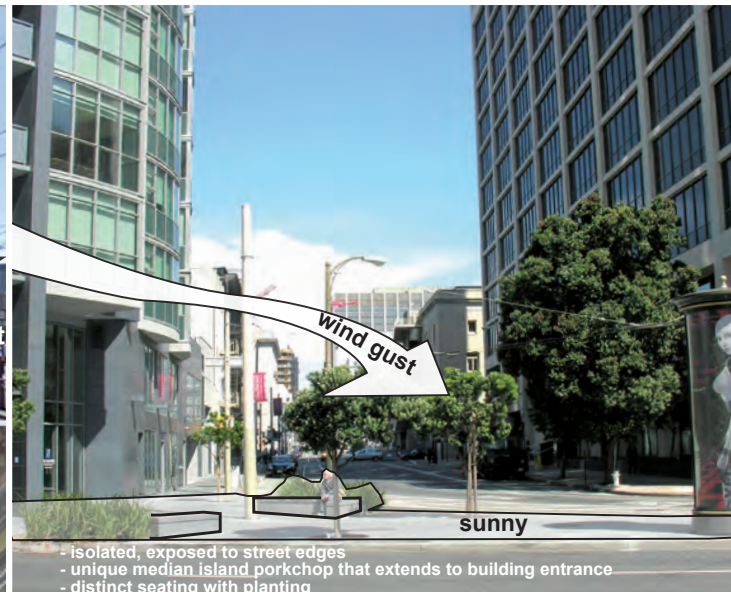
Private plazas like this one near Civic Center on the south side of the building can be ideal open spaces to gather in abundant sunlight.



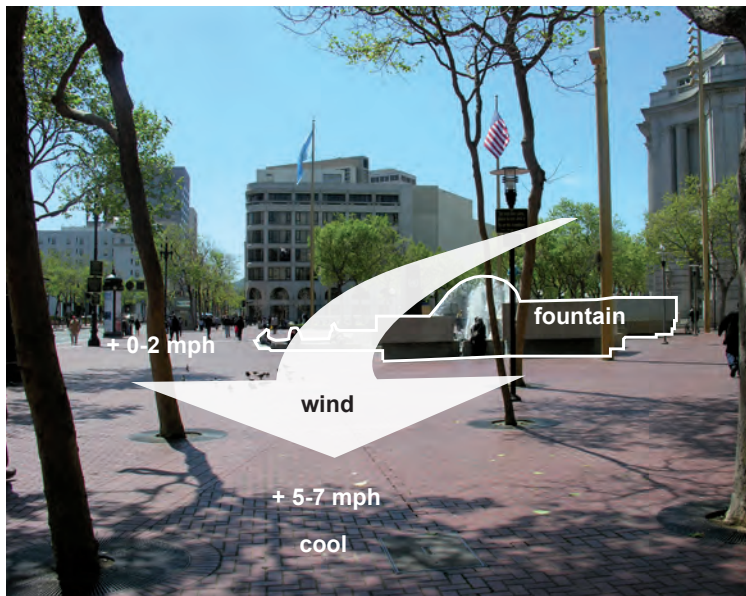
Shade during lunch time compounded by wind gusts discourages outdoor seating.



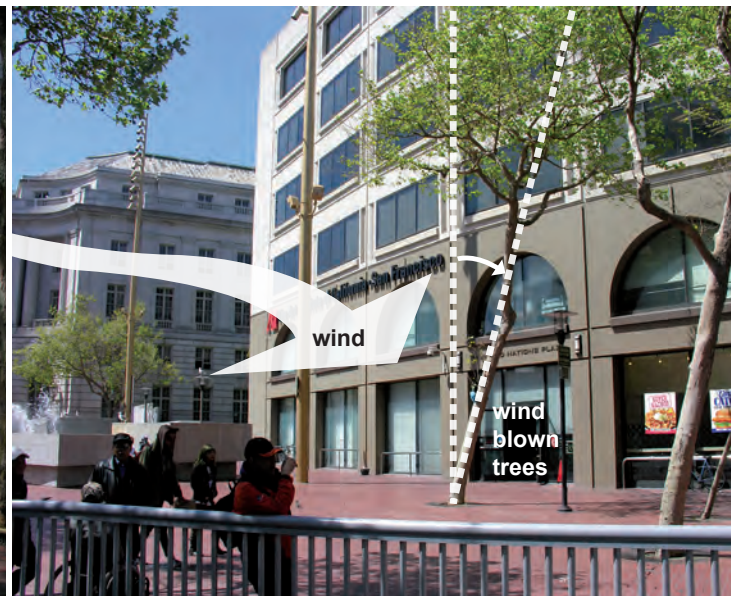
Major wind gusts often come down Turk street just past Hallidie Plaza.



Traffic islands in the middle of intersections can be exposed to wind gusts.



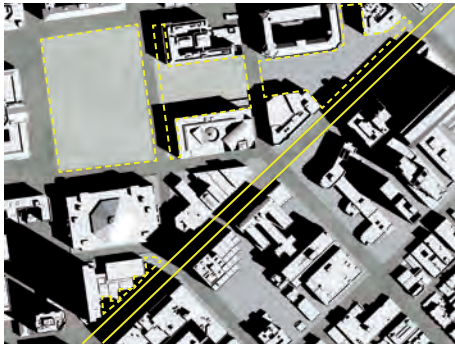
UN Plaza has vast open spaces exposed to wind gusts.



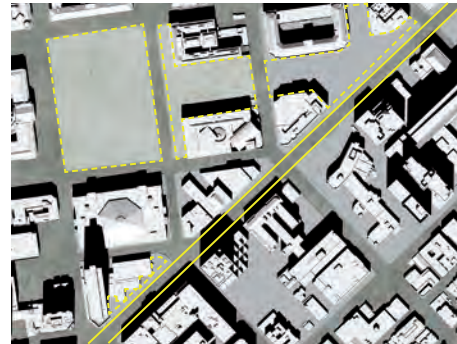
Winds have negative effects on trees.

## Sun / Shade - UN Plaza

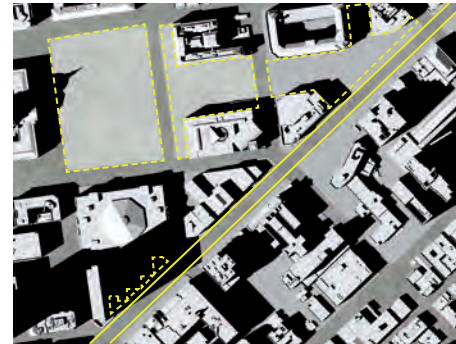
- Plenty of opportunity to gather in the sun especially at UN Plaza.
- Vast space translates to high wind gusts.
- UN Plaza has good noon time sun.



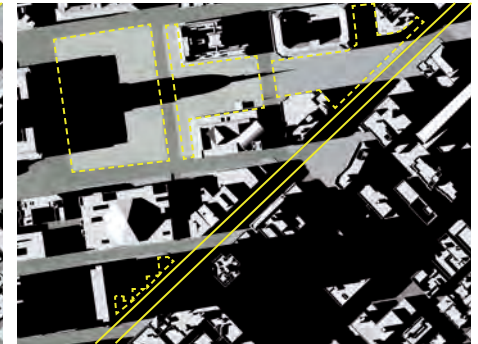
9am - March/Sept 21st



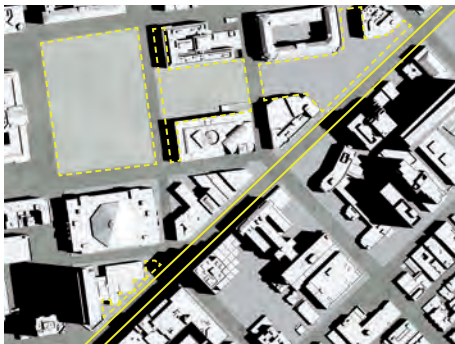
12pm - March/Sept 21st



3pm - March/Sept 21st



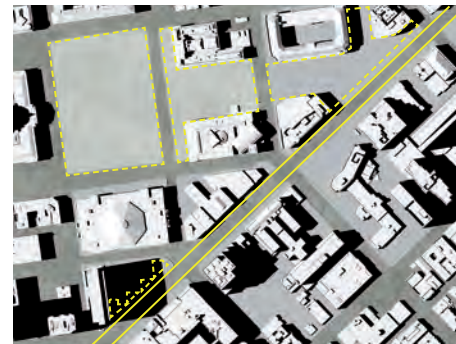
5pm - March/Sept 21st



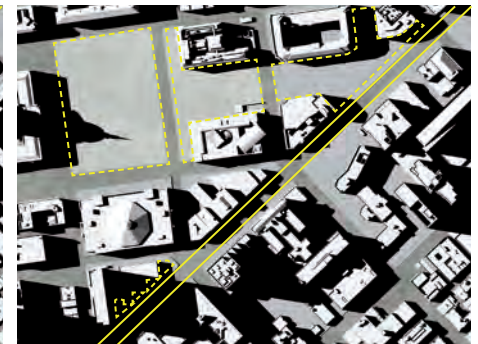
9am - June 21st



12pm - June 21st



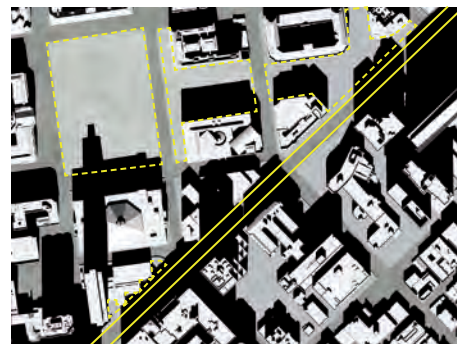
3pm - June 21st



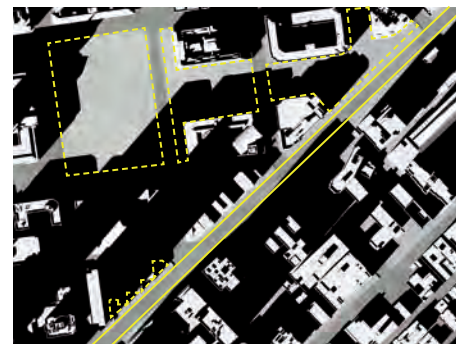
5pm - June 21st



9am - Dec 21st



12pm - Dec 21st



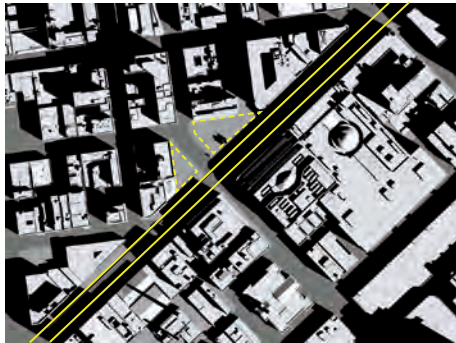
3pm - Dec 21st



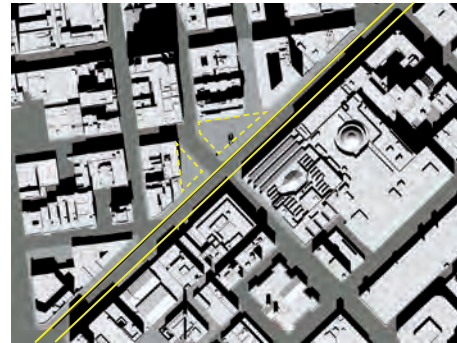
5pm - Dec 21st [sun down]

## Sun / Shade - Hallidie Plaza

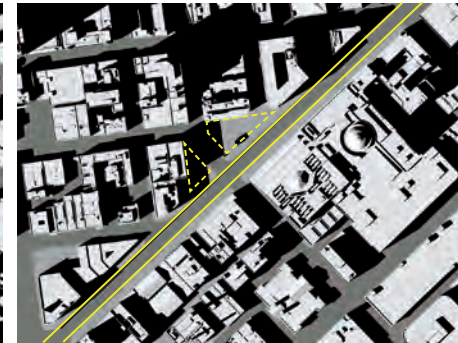
- Good year round sun.
- Hallidie East has more access to sunlight.
- High wind gusts down Turk Street just past Hallidie Plaza.
- Morning sun on the north side of street, afternoon sun on the south side of the street.



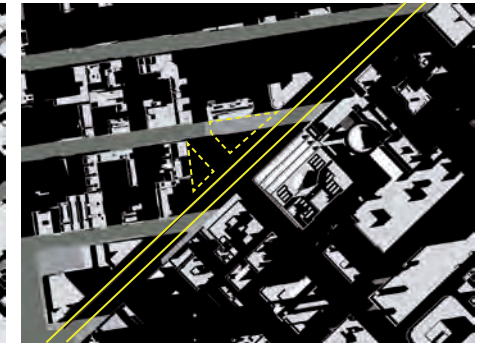
9am - March/Sept 21st



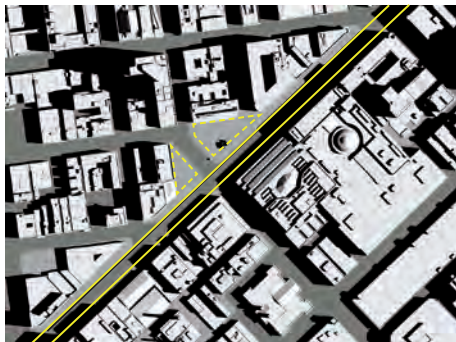
12pm - March/Sept 21st



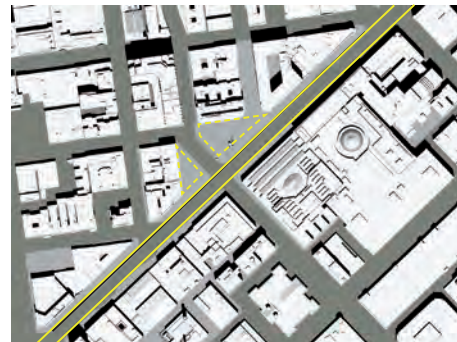
3pm - March/Sept 21st



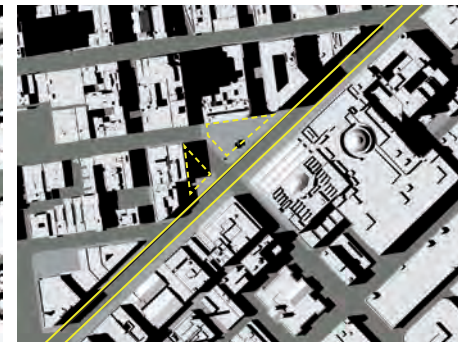
5pm - March/Sept 21st



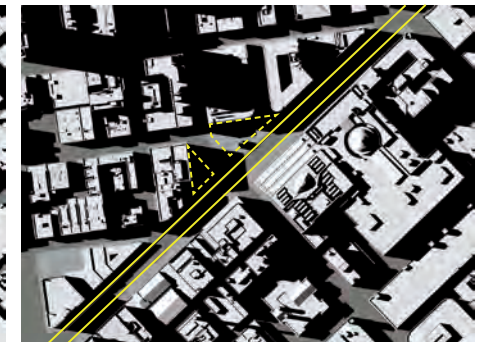
9am - June 21st



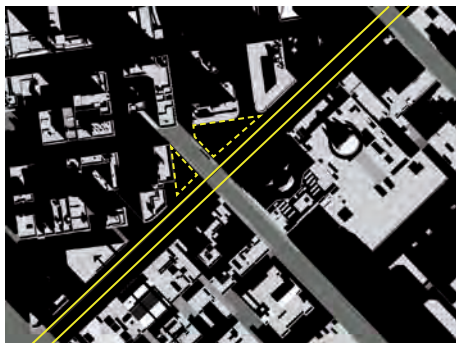
12pm - June 21st



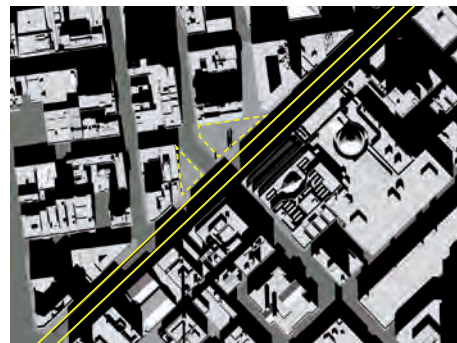
3pm - June 21st



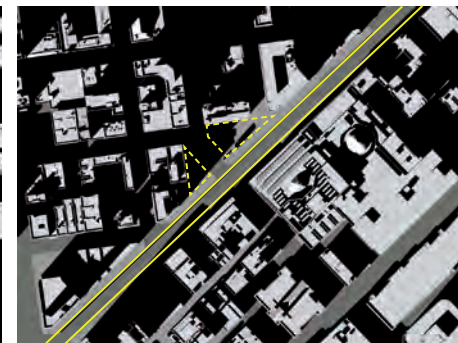
5pm - June 21st



9am - Dec 21st



12pm - Dec 21st



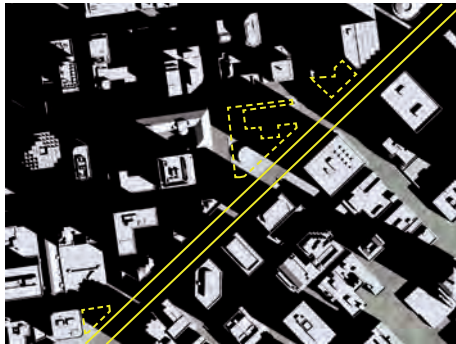
3pm - Dec 21st



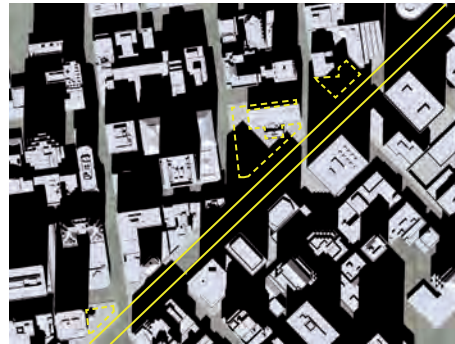
5pm - Dec 21st [sun down]

## Sun / Shade - One Post, Crown Zellerbach, Mechanics

- Crown Zellerbach protected from the wind but in shade for large portions of the day/year
- Mechanics Plaza offers more opportunity for sun, less protected from the wind
- One Post Plaza sunny especially at the corner of the street



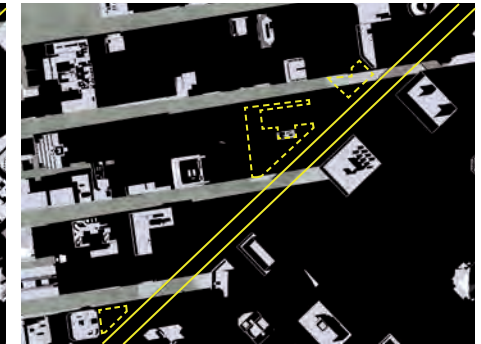
9am - March/Sept 21st



12pm - March/Sept 21st



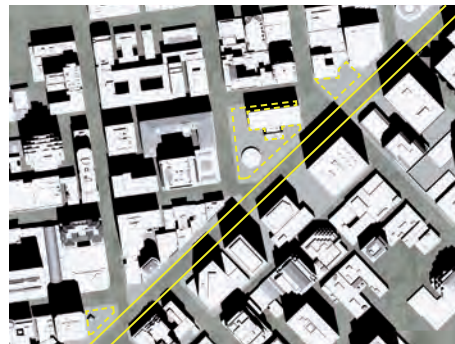
3pm - March/Sept 21st



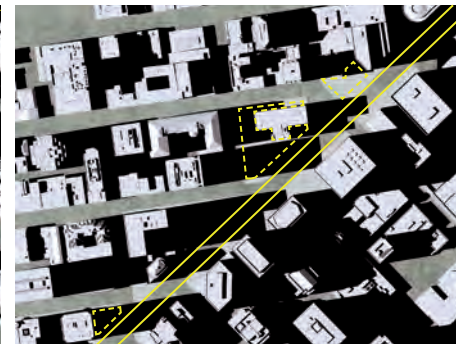
5pm - March/Sept 21st



9am - June 21st



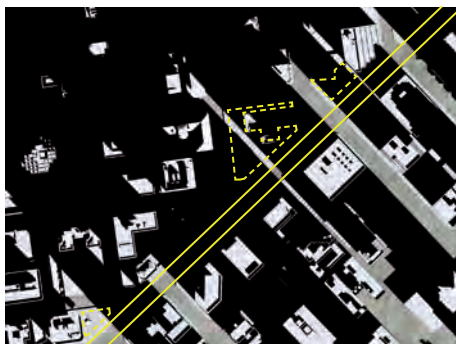
12pm - June 21st



3pm - June 21st



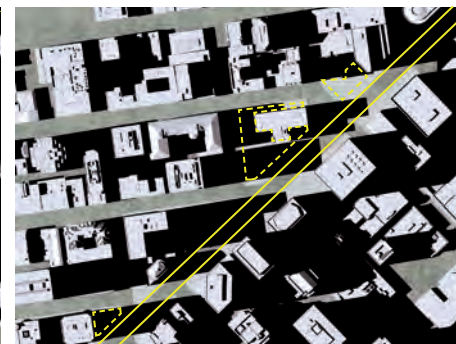
5pm - June 21st



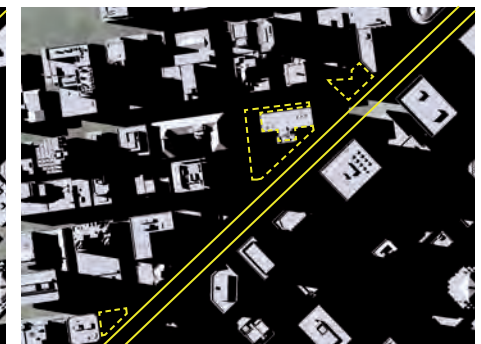
9am - Dec 21st



12pm - Dec 21st



3pm - Dec 21st



5pm - Dec 21st [sun down]

## 1.6 Streetscape Elements

This section focuses on the basic streetscape elements and how they contribute to the overall image and identity of the Market Street. A great deal of any street's identity comes from its streetscape elements, both in positive and negative ways. Streetscape elements make the street memorable but also help in establishing continuity along the length of the street. Contributing elements include street trees, furniture, transit shelters, signage and public art.

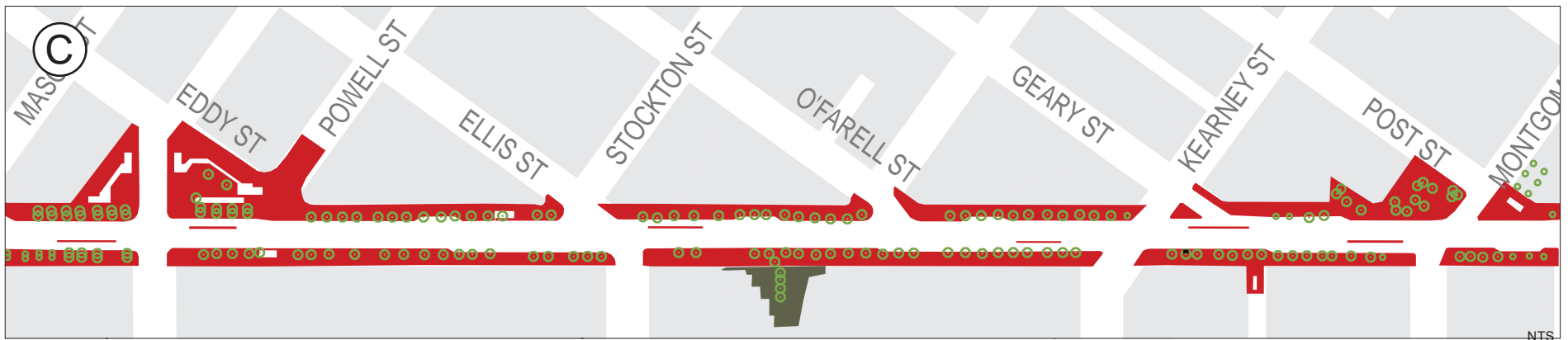
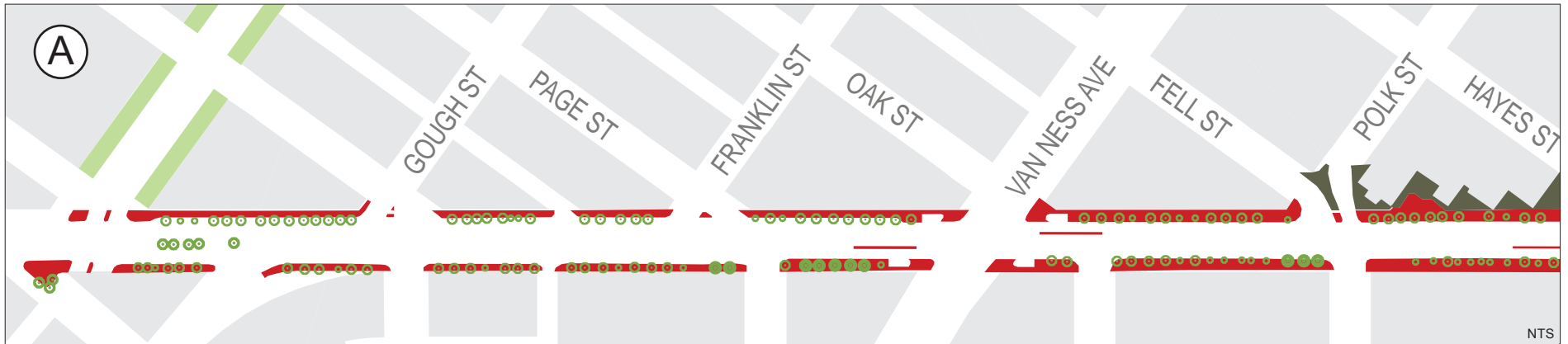
The palimpsest of past decades and grand redesigns has left Market Street with an accumulation of streetscape elements that needs to be evaluated for their effectiveness in creating a memorable and positive experience for all users of Market Street.




*While Market Street's existing streetscape elements create a strong unifying visual identity, they do not do enough to enrich the pedestrian experience.*

- Sidewalk zones: Edge Zone, Furnishing Zone, Throughway Zone and Frontage Zone, are not articulated and create a monotonous visual identity. The zones should be improved to create better functionality, encourage social activities and create more visual interest along the length of the street.
- The brick paving, London Plane Trees, and historic light poles create strong continuity for the entire length. While this works to create a strong visual identity, it does not create interest or variety. Richness and variation should be added while strengthening the iconic visual identity.
- There are not enough places to sit. More seating should be added.
- Trees are beneficial for character and microclimate where they are healthy. Many existing trees are in poor health. Poor soil conditions are a possible factor.
- Missing streetscape elements along Market Street include Public Art and Vendor Kiosks.
- Signage is a major element of the pedestrian experience for both public way finding and private businesses.

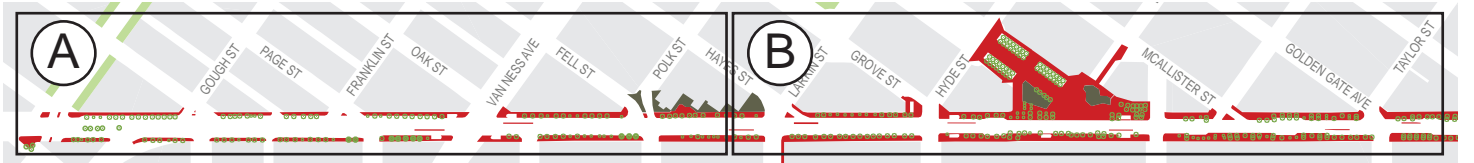
# Elements of the street

Figure 1.6.1: Elements of the street - Macro Plan

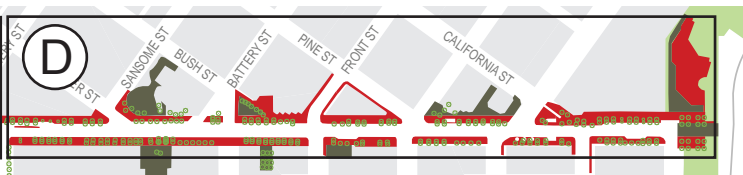
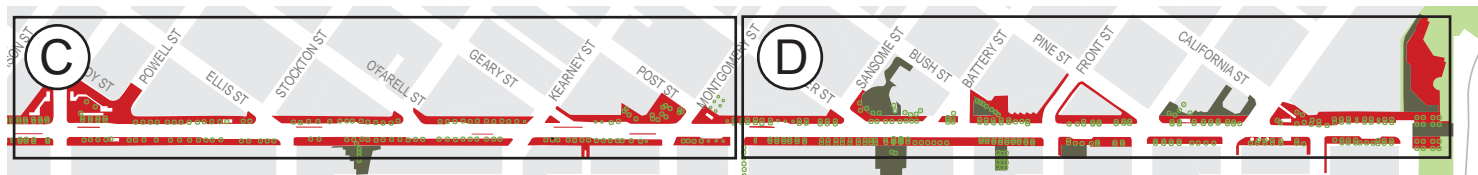
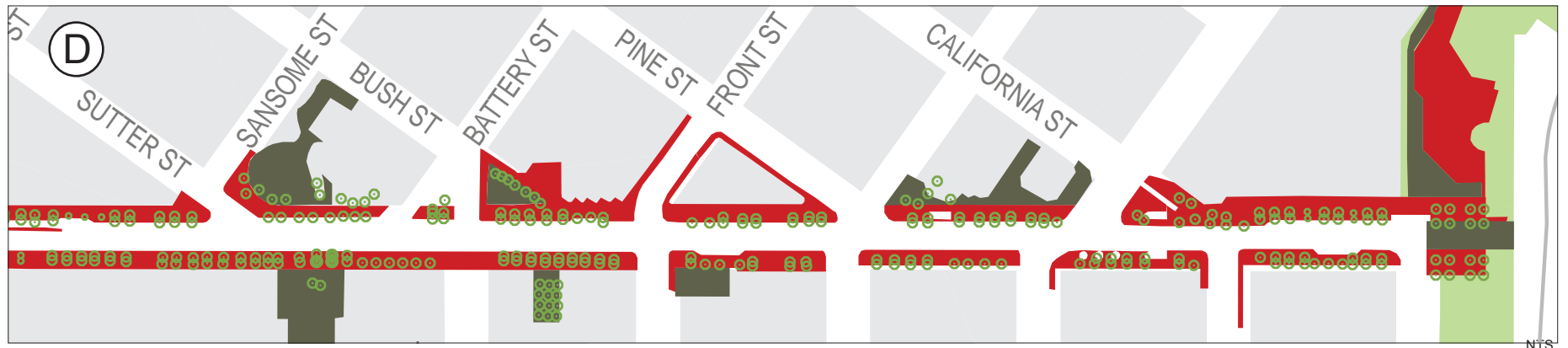
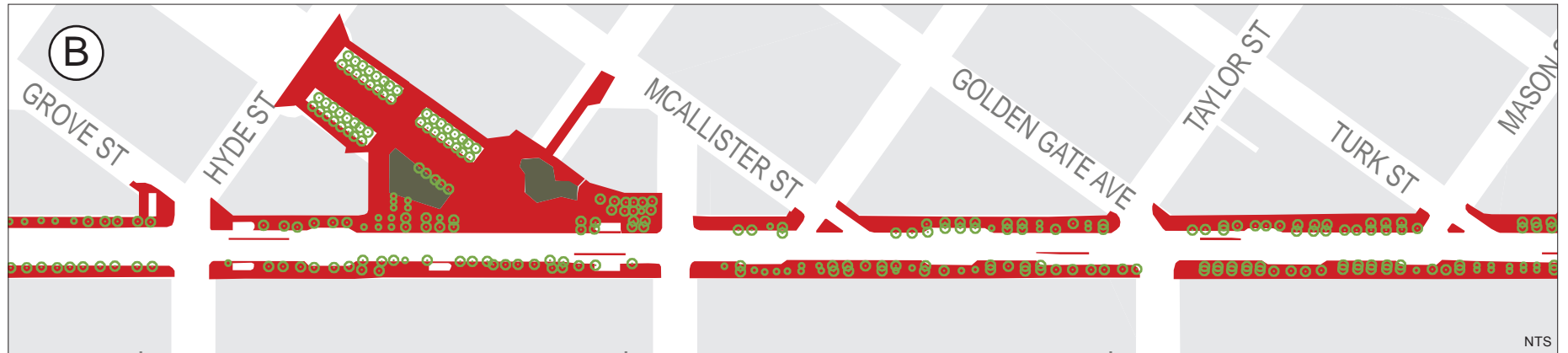


-  Brick Paving
-  Secondary Paving
-  Trees

Scale 1" = 1000'







## Paving

- Brick is unifying element along entire length of Market Street but does not help to differentiate important spaces along Market Street.



Brick paving



Crown Zellerbach - pebble



Fox Plaza - color concrete



UN Plaza - brick & granite



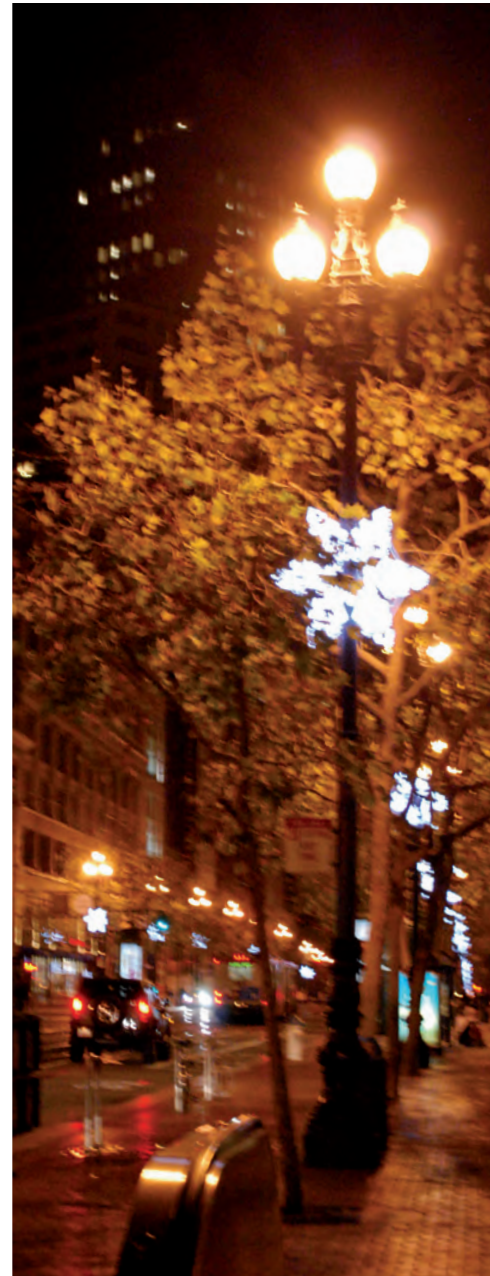
Yerba Buena Lane - unit pavers

## Lights

- Historic Path of Gold lighting creates continuity and identity.
- At night the Historic Path of Gold light quality can be unappealing and does little to invite activity.
- Secondary light fixtures at adjacent open spaces are more sculptural in nature.



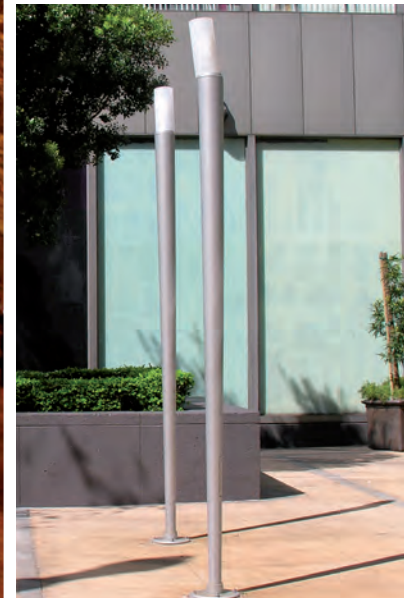
Historic Path of Gold fixtures



Historic Path of Gold fixtures at night, supplemental holiday lighting



UN Plaza - along main civic axis



Fox Plaza

## Furniture

- Lack of seating.
- Transit stops & advertising panels standard for the city of San Francisco.
- Street furniture elements work well to buffer the pedestrian realm from the street.
- Cacophony of street furnishings and randomness of placement detract from the overall sense of place along Market Street.



Newsstands



News racks



Bike racks



Restroom facilities



Transit Stops, Advertising Panels



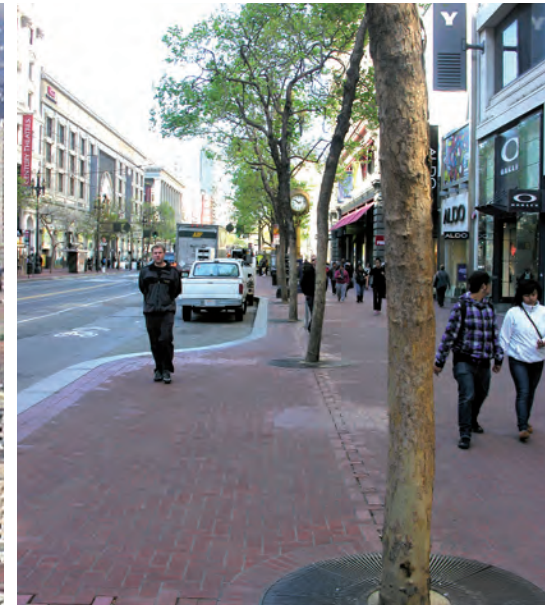
Transit Stops, Advertising Panels

## Trees

- The condition and form of the Market Street trees do little to benefit the civic pride and identity of San Francisco's great street.
- The health, form and scale of existing trees along Market Street vary greatly.
- Many poor trees are due to a high degree of shade and poor soil conditions.
- The few robust trees on Market Street create physical comfort and entice people to stay.



Trees define the pedestrian realm across the length of the corridor



Single row London Plane trees



Double row London Plane trees

## Function and Benefits of the Trees on Market Street



Palms at the end of the study area near Octavia signify proximity to the Mission District



Palms at the other end of the study area at the Embarcadero



Healthy tree canopy in lawn planter - UN Plaza

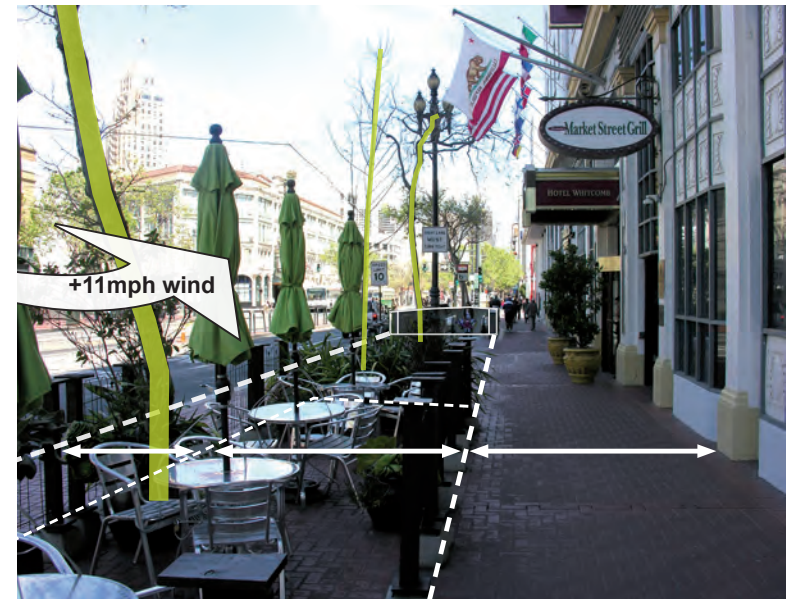


Marginalized street trees

## Environmental conditions and the effect on tree health and form



Subsurface condition might compromise soil volume and tree health



Extreme wind and lack of sun compromise tree growth and optimum form



Tree condition varies, often affected by wind on leeward side of a tree row and/or by soil conditions

*There are disparate planting details and tree growing conditions along Market Street. Tree planting systems should be standardized for optimum growing conditions.*



Typical grate



On-curb grate



No grate - gravel



In lawn / planting area



Debris clogged grates



Tree out-growing grate condition



Settling off center - grate conflict



Grate frame cutting root flare



Soil drainage issues



Cobbles + gravel



Newly planted tree condition



Empty tree pits + historic up lights



# 1.7 Signage and Wayfinding

Market Street carries a significant responsibility in signage and wayfinding that comes with being San Francisco's front door. To serve Market Street's many roles -- as a regional destination, primary Bay Area transit corridor, retail and business hub, a major bicycle route and a civic and cultural resource, among others -- the City must strive for a cohesive system of signage that provides clear and hierarchical wayfinding for the safety and comfort of all its users.

Key users of signage and wayfinding bring different needs and demands. One group is the frequent user including local and international travellers, convention goers, or City residents discovering the benefits of the street. Another are the day to day users including the primary focus on pedestrians, along with bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.

For the Better Market Street existing conditions survey and analysis, the focus was on recording current signage/wayfinding characteristics, typologies and systems, reflecting upon the benefits and limitations of those elements, and outlining opportunities for improvement that should be considered in design phases to follow.

Consequently, the signage/wayfinding briefing provided here includes:

- **Key Findings**
- **Key Opportunities**
- **Signage Typologies**
- **Existing Signage Observations**

## Key Findings

- **Existing Typologies:** Multiple signage typologies have been applied along Market Street, some serving activities or transit services on the street itself and others relating to surrounding districts or citywide systems.
- **Visual Clutter:** Municipal traffic signs have proliferated over time creating visual clutter on the street
- **Pedestrian Wayfinding:** The components and the quality of pedestrian wayfinding is inconsistent on Market Street. This is particularly challenging at transit stops/portals where consistent information should be the norm, and is essential for both improvements to mobility and to access to transit. Successful wayfinding would provide pedestrians the tools to move comfortably and confidently along their chosen path.
- **Linking Districts:** Signage linking Market Street to adjacent districts and destinations is inconsistent and lacks hierarchy. Linking pedestrians to adjacent districts is critical for pedestrians and essential for the success of Market Street.
- **Landmarks:** Wayfinding is not solely defined by signage elements. Landmarks create "moments" that act as a visceral compass and aid in wayfinding.

## Key Opportunities

As a Better Market Street plan moves forward, the new signage program should meet the following performance criteria:

- Delineate the critical traffic regulatory information, creating safer travel for all modalities, especially bicycles and pedestrians.
- Orient users to the street when they surface from underground transit, alight from an above ground transit line, or walk from an intersecting street.
- Link Market Street pedestrians to districts, open space, transit options, and cultural facilities - both on and off of Market Street. Link motorists to parking and citywide arterial streets.
- Empower users with information, which creates comfort and confidence, expands user opportunities and enhances the experience of Market Street.
- Celebrate the San Francisco past and present. Create opportunities for historic interpretation, and publicizing cultural and civic events.
- Beautify and organize the Market Street corridor in concert with other streetscape elements.

## Signage Typologies

Below, five broad streetscape signage typologies and their criteria for success are described. These typologies will frame the development of a new signage program for Market Street.

### Safety

Conspicuous presentation of traffic regulatory controls for all modalities creates a safe environment for all.

These controls are programmed by traffic and civil engineers, but should be presented in cohesive, distinctive framework in combination with other signage typologies to reduce visual clutter and to create a cohesive identity for a street.

### Identification

Clear identification of destinations and orientation devices are a pillar of effective wayfinding.

Creating gateways, defining districts, and identifying plazas and landmarks create a hierarchy and can add variety to the experience of a street. However, identifying cross streets and transit options are essential for a high quality and comfortable urban experience. High value orientation devices, such as street and transit identification, need to be visible and legible to all modalities.

### Directional

Provide just-in-time directional support for pedestrian (transit users included) and motorists.

Pedestrian directional information to districts, transit, parks and open spaces should be posted at key locations. When possible, wayfinding should support the use of key streets as links between destinations. Information should be descriptive for new visitors, such as the use of distances (miles) or walk times. These tools empower pedestrians immeasurably.

Vehicular directional information should emphasize nearby parking (to get people out of their cars) and major citywide traffic arterials (to expedite through traffic out of the busy pedestrian realm).

Directional information is typically specific to speed, sight lines and distance capacities of each modality, and therefore is not shared well between modalities.

### Interpretation

Provide site specific interpretation of significant historic features.

Links to the past add richness to the user experience. The detail oriented information included in historic interpretation is best presented to the pedestrian. However, historic interpretation can also be presented through large scale public art to all modalities.

### Announcements

Publicize events, exhibits and celebrations through the use of temporary graphic installations. Large scale temporary installations or classic banner series on street poles can temporarily ignite or enliven the street and even transform the street as a stage for the people of the city.

Each Great Street has different challenges and opportunities based on its own set of characteristics. Some of the typologies described above will be more critical in the success of a Better Market Street than others. Optimal signage solutions do not employ a one-size-fits-all approach. As the project moves forward, these typologies and their criteria for success will frame the development of the new sign program in a manner that reinforces the broader planning and design recommendations for Market Street.

## Existing Signage Observations

Overall the existing signage on Market Street is not comprehensive, hierarchical or attractive. The Existing Signage Observations are presented in five organizing themes:

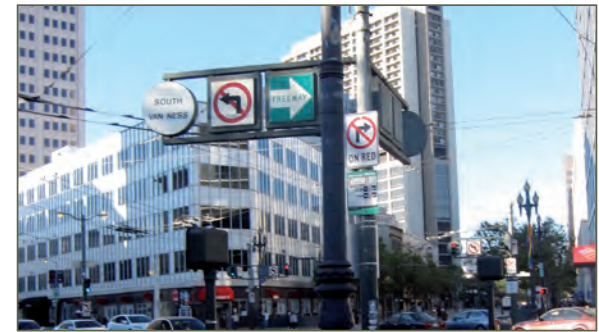
- Existing Typologies
- Visual Clutter
- Pedestrian Wayfinding
- Linking Districts
- Landmarks

## Existing Typologies

There are a several existing signage typologies and standards on Market Street that occur with some regularity. However, there is not a comprehensive system that creates a cohesive, high quality wayfinding system. The major reoccurring sign standards are few and include:

- Brown street identification and traffic control standards located at all intersections. These standards are an element of the cohesive streetscape that was created in the 70's. Over time, many little traffic signs have been added and many standards are cluttered now. This is the only signage typology that is continuous from the Embarcadero to Octavia.
- BART and Muni underground portal markers. These are visible and functional for all modalities, however they do not improve the visual quality of the street.
- Bus stops consistently have Muni transit maps, and JCDecaux pay toilets include a city map. More maps of the market street corridor and adjacent districts should be created and posted, particularly at intersections of future green streets that link to adjacent districts.
- Two styles of post mounted directionals with maps are implemented. The blue system links users to San Francisco districts and the green system links users to Transbay terminal. Neither system is comprehensively implemented along Market Street.
- Traffic signage, some of which does not meet current Federal and State standards.

## Safety and Identification Typologies



Brown street traffic control standards installed in the 70's.

### Identification Typologies



Muni / BART signs located at each underground portal.

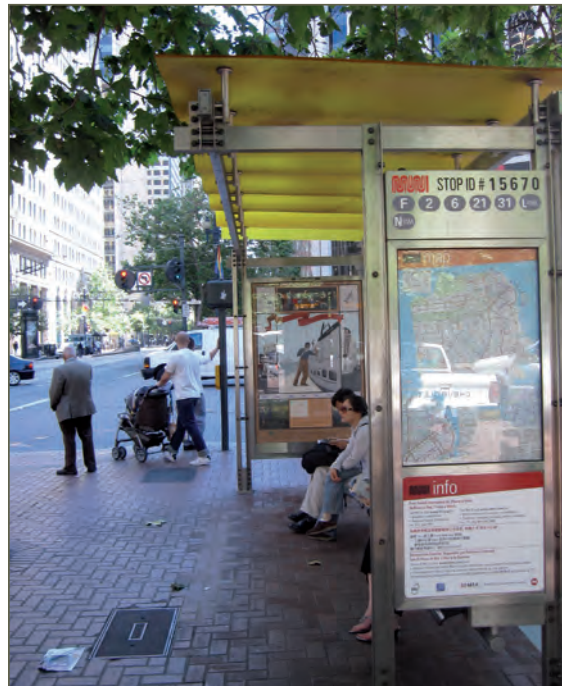


Muni underground signage retrofitted to portal railings are vandal prone.

### Directional Typologies



Public toilet with map.



Bus stop with transit map.

### Directional Typologies



Post mounted directional and transit information signage. Post mounted transit signs are located only in the Financial District.

## Visual Clutter

Many traffic, parking and behavior regulatory devices have been strapped to existing sign posts, including the historic Path of Gold fixtures. An effort should be made to manage and reduce signage clutter to improve the overall visual quality of the street.



Traffic regulatory devices attached to Path of Gold fixture.



Speed limit sign.



Prohibitory sign.



Civic Center prohibitory sign.



Several bike routes overlap.



Pole mounted Bike Box sign found only at Van Ness.



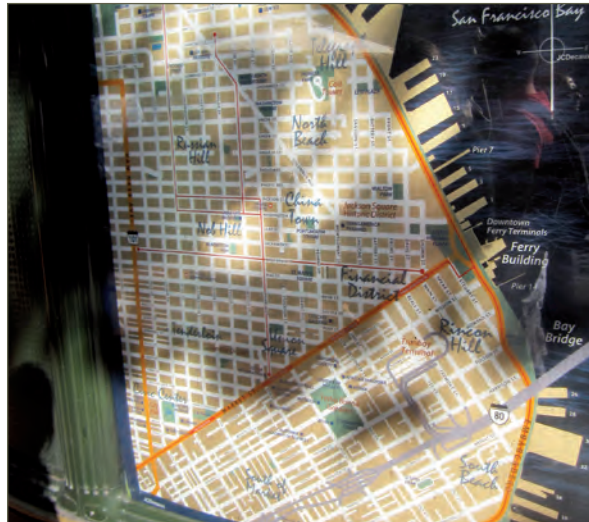
Sandwich boards are common.

## Pedestrian Wayfinding

Wayfinding and signage is necessary for all types of users: transit, auto, bicycle, and pedestrian. However, it is most critical for new pedestrians and transit users. Without adequate wayfinding, pedestrians are most negatively impacted by lost time, fatigue and even fear. Conversely, successful wayfinding ensures pedestrians will have the tools for a comfortable and confident experience. Market Street cannot become a great street without providing a sense of comfort and empowerment to its users. While the design of the signage pictured on this page is not to be modelled, they illustrate approaches that are effective for pedestrians.



Bronze embedded street names are effective for pedestrians and have a quality aesthetic.



Enlarged City map of popular visitor destinations with districts identified.



Post mounted district directional.

## Linking Districts

As previously presented in Existing Conditions and Best Practices documents, Market Street borders and divides many districts within the City, but overall does not contain many anchor destinations in its own path. Signage, along with other streetscape treatments, should consistently link Market Street to the abundant adjacent districts and destinations. These links are critical for pedestrians and essential for the success of Market Street.

The smaller blocks and angled grid on the north side of Market Street create a large number of intersections. Posting pedestrian signage at every intersection would not be feasible or attractive. Transit portals and streets should be studied and a hierarchy of street connections to adjacent districts should be developed. The key streets should be treated with directional signage and other embellished streetscape features.

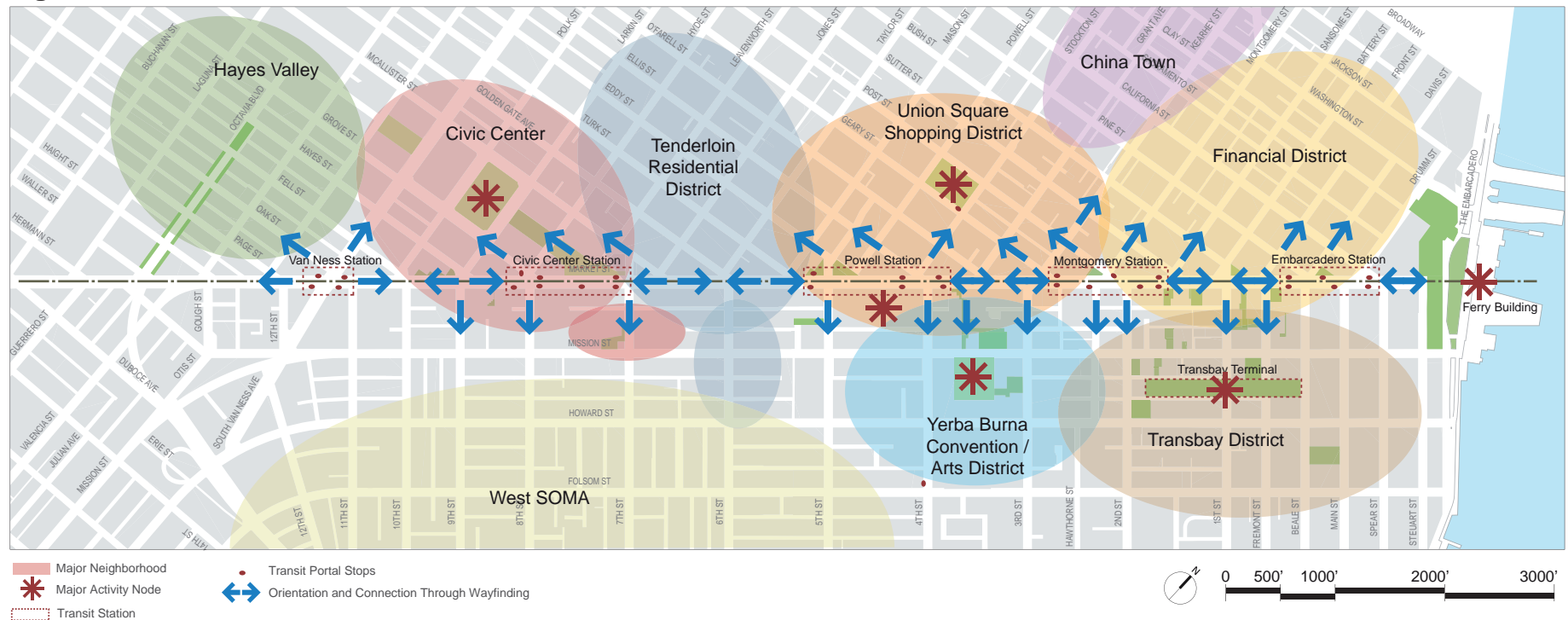
### Destinations On Market Street

Ferry Building, Justin Herman Plaza, Powell Street Cable Car, Westfield Shopping Mall, UN Plaza, Muni, BART

### Destinations Off Market Street

Transbay Terminal, Moscone Convention Center, Yerba Buena Gardens, SFMOMA / Museums, Union Square, Civic Center, Theaters, Parking

**Figure 1.7.1: Market Street Links** - Currently linking streets from Market Street to adjacent districts lack hierarchy as represented by blue arrows.



## Landmarks

Wayfinding is not solely defined by signage elements. For the occasional or frequent user, landmarks play an important role. Examples of landmarks include: distinctive buildings, plazas, and public art (such as sculpture, statues and murals). These urban features create “moments” that act as a visceral compass and aid in wayfinding. As a *Better Market Street* develops, creating more landmark “moments” should be considered as a tool for not only cultivating lingering activities, but also for wayfinding.

Many landmarks also provide opportunities for historic interpretations. Stories from our past emotionally connect people to a place and previous generation. Thoughtful interpretation creates healthy civic experiences and reflection.



Admission Day monument.



Iconic Ferry Building provides orientation.



Lotta Crabtree Fountain acts as landmark.



Distinctive round retail building at Crown-Zellerbach Plaza.



Public art can act as a landmark.



Statue in Mechanics Plaza.