

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

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**Policy Analysis Report**

**To:** Supervisor Christensen  
**From:** Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office  
**Re:** Washington Street Improvements  
**Date:** December 1, 2015



**Summary of Requested Action**

Your office requested the Budget and Legislative Analyst examine how the City could improve Washington Street between Stockton Street and The Embarcadero as a pedestrian and bicycle connection from the site of the new Chinatown Central Subway station to the waterfront. You also asked that we look at how the Golden Gateway Garage could potentially add ground floor retail, as well as look into the potential abandonment of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission pump station located at Washington and Drumm Street.

*For further information about this report, contact Severin Campbell at the Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office.*

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**Executive Summary**

- The Washington Street corridor spans from Stockton Street in Chinatown to The Embarcadero at the waterfront. This corridor is 0.7 miles long, and takes approximately thirteen minutes to walk, or five minutes to bike. This corridor is spread across two distinct neighborhoods, Chinatown and the Financial District, and provides a direct connection from Chinatown to The Embarcadero and the waterfront.
- The current conditions of this corridor vary greatly from buildings with small markets and sidewalk retail to large iconic skyscrapers such as the Transamerica Building. Large-scale residential developments and open space also exist along the corridor. However, a significant portion of the corridor does not have ground floor uses, creating an unfriendly environment for pedestrians. In addition, there is no bicycle infrastructure along the corridor.
- The Planning Department completed both the Northeast Embarcadero Study and Portsmouth Square Improvements Project to identify streetscape improvements including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. However, no new development has come in along the corridor to finance such improvements.
- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) owns the Golden Gateway Garage, a block-long podium parking garage along the corridor with no street-level uses. In order to convert a portion of the garage to ground-floor retail, which could encourage pedestrian activity, SFMTA would need to

first conduct a six to nine month feasibility study which cost approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000, or more depending on the related studies deemed necessary. SFMTA would also need to complete a transportation demand management study, and consider whether or not a retail use would provide sufficient revenue to make up for any loss of parking revenue due to conversion of parking spaces to retail uses. The Garage currently earns approximately \$7.1 million in gross revenue each year.

- The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) owns the Drumm Street pump station located along the corridor that interrupts the flow of open space near The Embarcadero. While removal of this pump station would allow continuity of open space, SFPUC believes this pump station is important to its operations, as it is their only property in the area to store and dispense odor control chemicals for local sewers.
- Because the Golden Gateway Garage and Drumm Street pump station are City-owned properties, City officials could remove these obstacles to open space and pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares along the Washington Street corridor, but would need to address the impact on SFMTA and SFPUC.
- City agencies have identified a number of pedestrian and bicycle improvements that could be made along the Washington Street corridor to improve the streetscape and pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares. In order to make these improvements, the City would need to identify funding sources. While development projects often generate impact fee revenues and other development requirements to improve public infrastructure, development in the corridor is limited. In the absence of new development, streetscape and thoroughfare improvements would need to be publicly-funded or could potentially be funded by property owners through a community benefit district.

*Project Staff: Jadie Wasilco and Severin Campbell*

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## The Current Washington Street Corridor

The Washington Street corridor spans from Stockton Street in Chinatown to The Embarcadero at the waterfront. This corridor is 0.7 miles long, and takes approximately thirteen minutes to walk, or five minutes to bike. This corridor is spread across two distinct neighborhoods, Chinatown and the Financial District, and provides a direct connection from Chinatown to The Embarcadero. The new Central Subway<sup>1</sup> Chinatown Station will be located at the western edge of the corridor, as shown in Exhibit 1 below.

### Exhibit 1: Washington Street Corridor



Portsmouth Square, widely considered the “heart of Chinatown”, separates Chinatown from the Financial District. The separation is noticeable when walking along Washington Street, as ground floor retail changes from predominantly markets with sidewalk retail in Chinatown to other retail types without sidewalk retail in the Financial District.

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<sup>1</sup> The Central Subway is a large-scale transportation infrastructure project which is currently under construction. Upon completion in 2019, it will connect the Caltrain station at 4<sup>th</sup> and Brannan Streets to Chinatown.

**Exhibit 2: Washington Street Corridor Sidewalk Conditions**



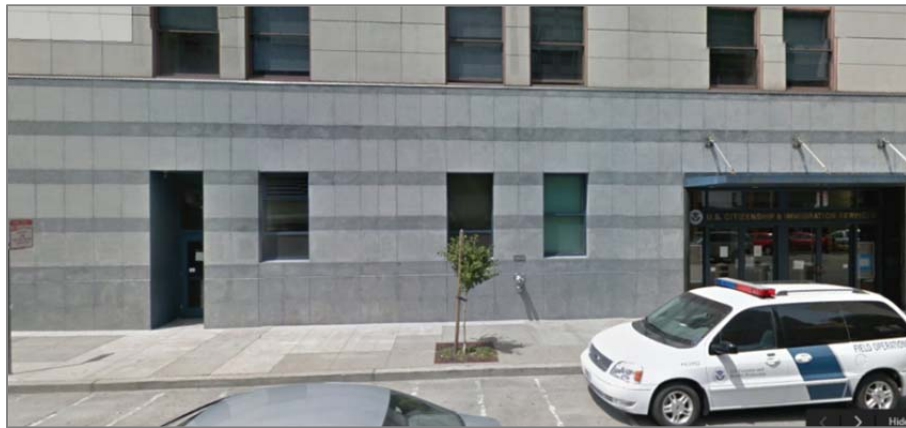
*Chinatown Sidewalk Retail*



*Financial District Retail*

The height of some buildings becomes noticeably larger in the Financial District with major skyscrapers such as the Hilton Hotel and Transamerica Pyramid located on the block between Kearny and Columbus Avenue. Many of the buildings in the Financial District have long frontages without ground floor uses, compared to the smaller buildings with active ground floor uses in Chinatown.

**Exhibit 3: Washington Street Corridor Building Frontage**



*Long building frontage without ground floor uses in the Financial District*

**Current Inadequate Pedestrian and Bicycle Thoroughfare**

In December 2010, the City adopted the Better Streets Plan, which seeks to improve the streetscape and pedestrian environment using a “complete streets” approach, which designs streets for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit riders of all ages and abilities.<sup>2</sup> Overall, the Washington Street corridor does not have the complete streets infrastructure necessary for it to become an active thoroughfare for pedestrians and bicyclists. The corridor lacks sufficient bicycle infrastructure, and significant portions of the corridor are surrounded by large building fronts or walls without active uses at the ground floor for pedestrians.

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<sup>2</sup> Smart Growth America. “What are Complete Streets?” <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/completestreets>

Gateway Residential Development and Golden Gateway Parking Garage

For example, the Gateway residential development and the Golden Gateway Parking Garage are both located on Washington Street between Battery Street and Davis Street in the Financial District. The Gateway is a large residential complex with apartments and townhomes, located above a podium wall. The residential entrances are elevated above the sidewalk that can be reached by staircases, leaving the sidewalk essentially walled off to pedestrians.

**Exhibit 4: Gateway Residential Complex**



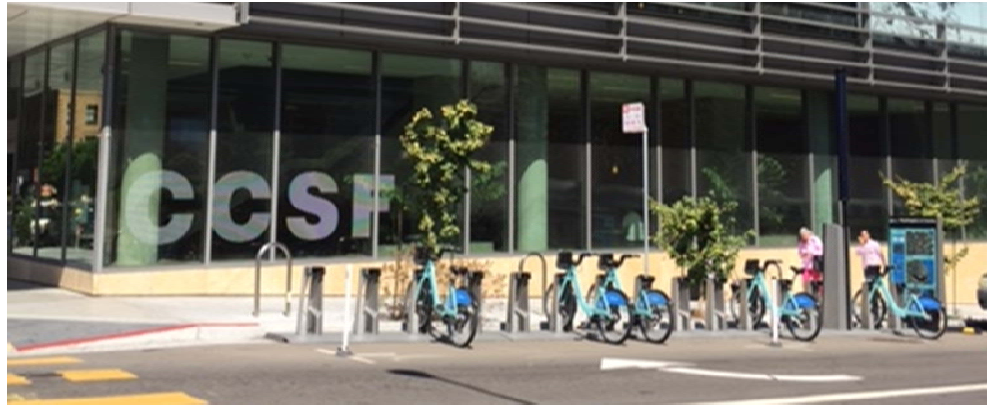
Directly across the street from the Gateway residential complex, is the SFMTA-owned Golden Gateway Garage, which consists of two stories of podium parking below the Maritime Plaza skyscraper office building. The Golden Gateway Garage does not contain any ground floor uses. Two skywalks connect the Gateway to the Maritime Plaza above the Golden Gateway Garage along this block.

**Exhibit 5: Golden Gateway Garage**



With the exception of a Citi Bike Share station in front of the City College of San Francisco, no bicycle infrastructure exists along this portion of Washington Street.

**Exhibit 6: Citi Bike Share Station at City College of San Francisco**



**Interruption of Open Space by the Drumm Street Pump Station**

The open space from Davis and Washington Street to The Embarcadero is interrupted by the Drumm Street pump station, owned by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC).

**Exhibit 7: Aerial View of Drumm Street Pump Station**



The Bay Club, as shown in the map above, also has a walled street front along a portion of Washington Street, until it opens up to a surface parking lot, Seawall Lot 351.

**Exhibit 8: Street View of Drumm Street Pump Station**



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**New Development along the Washington Street Corridor**

While new development along the Washington Street corridor could contribute to open space, pedestrian, and other improvements, new development is limited except for the Central Subway Chinatown Station. According to the Planning Department's 2015 second quarter development pipeline report, there is only one other project currently in the pipeline along the Washington Street corridor, and it will not trigger any new improvements to the public right-of-way.

**Central Subway Chinatown Station**

The Central Subway Chinatown Station will be located at Washington Street and Stockton Street on the western end of the Washington Street corridor. According to the SFMTA, the sidewalk on Stockton Street will be widened, and two new trees will be added on the Washington Street side. The roof of the station will serve as a public open space. A proposed rendering for the station is shown in Exhibit 9 below.

**Exhibit 9: Chinatown Central Subway Station Rendering**



Source: SFMTA

### **Limitations of the Northeast Embarcadero Study due to Lack of Development**

In 2010, the Planning Department completed the Northeast Embarcadero Study (NES), which provided recommendations to the Port of San Francisco for streetscape, bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The study area included the Embarcadero and the adjacent blocks from Washington Street up to North Point Street.

The NES identified several problems including:

- Disconnected and dislocated sidewalks and open space
- Surface parking lots leaving major gaps in the pedestrian network
- Suburban-style office parks with no ground floor uses
- Podium parking garages with no ground floor uses
- Wide streets that interrupt pedestrian movements

The NES includes general recommendations for the entire study area, as well as recommendations specific to smaller sections of the study area. Recommendation Four is specific to the Washington Street corridor, and recommends the City “strengthen the pedestrian character of Washington Street between Columbus Avenue and The Embarcadero through a series of phased improvements.”

The NES envisions Washington Street as a key pedestrian route linking the Central Subway in Chinatown to The Embarcadero. The specific recommendations are listed in Exhibit 10 below, and shown on a map in Exhibit 11.

#### **Exhibit 10: Northeast Embarcadero Study Washington Street Recommendations**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Description</b>
R 4.1	Prioritize activating the corner locations on Washington Street between Drumm and Battery by inserting two-story retail spaces into the existing parking podium. Over time, extend these activating spaces to the entire block face.
R 4.2	Narrow Washington Street between Drumm Street and The Embarcadero
R 4.3	Explore the possibility of returning two-way traffic to both Washington Street and Clay Street
R 4.4	Explore the possibility of providing bike lanes on Washington Street between Columbus Avenue and Drumm Street

*Source: Northeast Embarcadero Study*

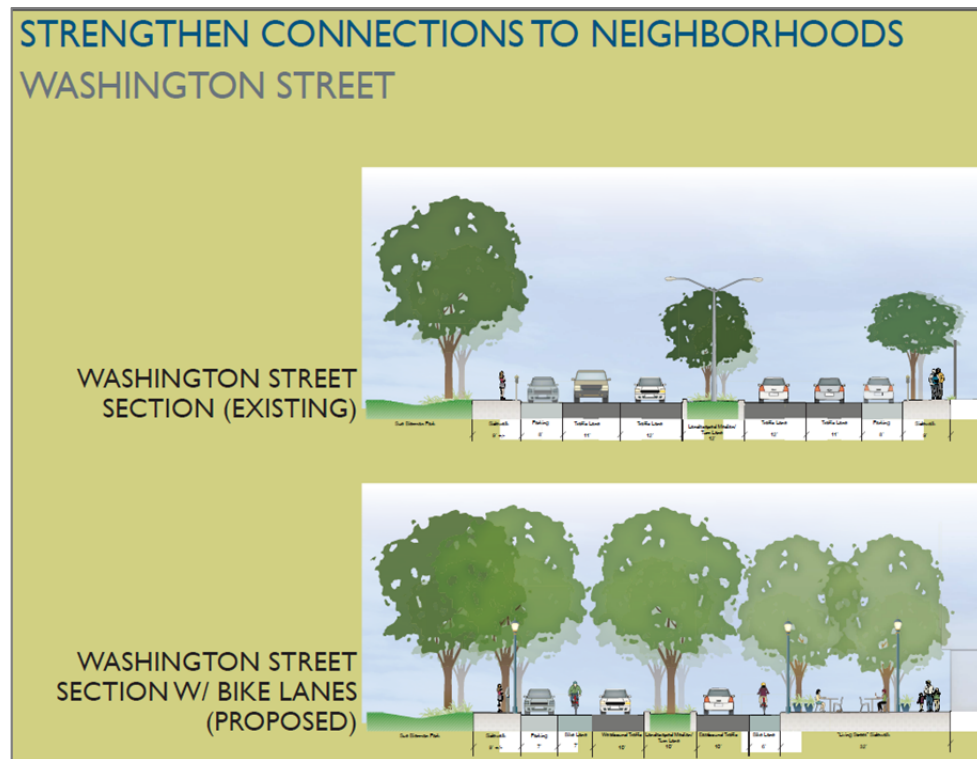


**Exhibit 11: Map of Northeast Embarcadero Study Recommendations**



Exhibit 12 below shows the existing and proposed street improvements to Washington Street set forth in the NES, including reduction of automobile lanes, the addition of bicycle lanes and sidewalk widening.

**Exhibit 12: Northeast Embarcadero Study Proposed Street Improvements**



However, due to the lack of new development in this area, none of the NES recommendations have been implemented, as new development is generally necessary to finance or construct the identified improvements. Alternative financing options for improvements are discussed later in this report.

### **Portsmouth Square Improvements Project**

In 2014, the Planning Department and Recreation and Park Department (RPD) collaborated with consultants to produce the Portsmouth Square Existing Conditions Report identifying needed improvements in the area. The Request for Proposals for the Concept Design is currently being advertised. RPD anticipates awarding the contract in February of 2016, and the concept design to be finalized by spring of 2017. Construction is expected to begin in 2019.

#### **Exhibit 13: Aerial View of Portsmouth Square**



*Source: Portsmouth Square Final Report*

Design improvements to Portsmouth Square will likely provide streetscape and other improvements to at least one portion of the Washington Street corridor.

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## **Impact of City Property on Streetscape and Pedestrian and Bicycle Thoroughfare**

### **Golden Gateway Garage**

The two-story podium Golden Gateway Garage, owned by the SFMTA, is located on Washington Street between Battery and Davis Streets. The Golden Gateway Garage is located on the first two floors of a 25-story office tower structure and has over 1,000 spaces, primarily used by employees of the surrounding offices.

The podium parking garage does not have any ground floor uses, leaving pedestrians with nothing to interact with as they walk along the long block, as shown in Exhibit 5 above. Converting the ground floor of the garage from the current parking use to a more pedestrian friendly use, such as retail, would

significantly contribute to activating the sidewalk along this portion of Washington Street.<sup>3</sup>

Currently, the zoning code for all new developments within this zoning district, C-3-0 (Downtown Office), requires buildings with frontages of 40 feet or more to have commercial uses at the ground floor.<sup>4</sup> If a new building were to be built at that site today, the design of the Golden Gateway Garage would not be permitted, as is.

#### Golden Gateway Garage Conversion to Ground Floor Retail

If the City were to convert the ground floor of the Golden Gateway Garage from parking to ground floor retail, SFMTA would need to determine:

1. The impact of removing a portion of the 1,095 parking spaces would have on parking demand in the area by conducting a transportation demand management study; and
2. Whether or not a retail use at the Golden Gateway Garage site would provide sufficient revenue to make up for the loss of parking revenue generated by any parking stalls to be converted to a retail use.<sup>5</sup>

Once these issues are considered, SFMTA would conduct a feasibility study. The study would take six to nine months to complete and cost approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000, or more depending on the related studies deemed necessary, such as a market study and traffic demand management study. Topics covered in the feasibility study would include the revenue impact to SFMTA, the impact of removing parking on the surrounding area, and the infrastructure needed to convert the garage into a retail space such as lighting, water and American Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements.

According to SFMTA senior staff, there are no examples of removing a large-scale parking garage such as Golden Gateway Garage within the City. Removing the garage would require actions by the SFMTA Board of Directors and Board of Supervisors, including revising the capital plan, and funding relevant studies and capital improvements.

#### Ground Floor Retail at the Golden Gateway Garage

If the ground floor of the Golden Gateway Garage were to become retail, it would need to consider who its customers would be, as well as the retail's competition. Employees in the numerous office buildings both above and nearby the garage, including Maritime Plaza and the Transamerica building, as well as nearby

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<sup>3</sup> According to the City Attorney's Office, property use restrictions stated in the redevelopment plan do not have any continuing effect after the expiration of the plan. The plan expires in 2016. As long as the SFMTA does not make a final determination to alter the use of the property until after the redevelopment plan has expired, there will be no conflict with the plan's provisions that limit the use of the property to parking.

<sup>4</sup> San Francisco Planning Code Section 210.2

<sup>5</sup> SFMTA's gross parking revenue in FY 2014-15 from the Golden Gateway Garage was \$7.1 million. Reducing parking to develop retail could potentially reduce revenues to SFMTA.

government entities including the US Citizenship and Immigration Services, US Customs and Border Patrol and the City College of San Francisco, would likely provide future retail establishments with a solid customer base.

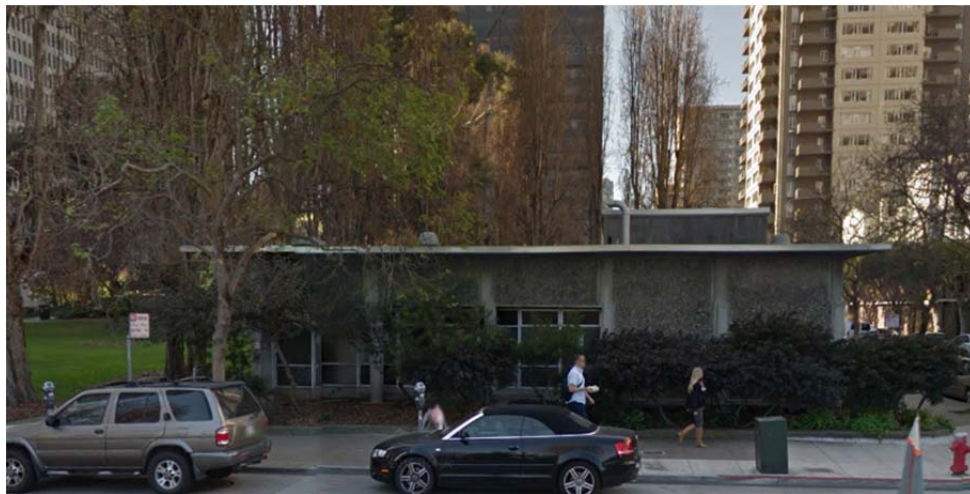
Both casual and upscale restaurants would likely do well for lunch and after-work options for nearby employees. Express drug stores (such as Walgreen's Express), as well as daily services such as dry cleaners would likely also be used.

Residents who live in the Gateway residential development would likely provide a customer base for new retail at this site, as it is directly across the street. Food and beverage options, an upscale grocery store, banks, cafes, and the same casual and upscale dining options that would appeal to the daytime employees would also likely appeal to the Gateway residents.

### **SFPUC Drumm Street Pump Station**

As noted above, SFPUC's Drumm Street pump station interrupts the open space from Davis and Washington Street to The Embarcadero.

#### **Exhibit 14: Drumm Street Pump Station**



Currently, the Drumm Street pump station is used by SFPUC as a location to store and dispense odor control chemicals for local sewers and the Embarcadero sewer storage box. According to SFPUC staff, the Embarcadero sewer storage box often emits foul odors, and chemicals are dispensed from this location to immediately address sewer odor in and around the area. In addition, RPD informally uses the station as a storage location for their gardeners and other workers.

While removing the pump station would remove the open space interruption, SFPUC considers the Drumm Street pump station to be a necessary storage and staging area. SFPUC is also considering other futures uses for the site by SFPUC contractors for future projects in the area and possible use as part of larger collection system work to control odors in local sewers and address sea level rise.

## Recommended Improvements & Best Practices

The City has several policies for pedestrian, bicycle and streetscape improvements, including SF Better Streets Plan, Walk First San Francisco, and the 2013-2018 Bicycle Strategy.

### Street Improvements

The San Francisco Better Streets Plan provides a guide to creating more complete streets, as shown in Exhibit 15 below.

**Exhibit 15: SF Better Streets, Street Improvements by Project Type**

Category	Types of Improvements	
<b>Activating Street Space</b>	Block Parties and Street Fairs Outdoor Café & Restaurant Seating Play Streets Parklets	Sidewalk merchandise displays Street artists Street food vendors Street markets Street openings
<b>Greening &amp; Stormwater Management</b>	Hanging planters Median greening Parking lane planters Sidewalk landscaping Street trees	Rain gardens (bioretention) Channels and runnels Permeable paving Swales
<b>Pedestrian Safety &amp; Traffic Calming</b>	Crosswalks Curb ramps Pedestrian signals Chicanes Bulb-outs	Curb radius changes Medians and islands Raised crosswalks Speed humps Traffic calming circles
<b>Reclaiming Roadway Space</b>	Bike corrals Living alleys Parklets	Street and sidewalk parks Street openings (temporary) Street openings (pedestrian-only)
<b>Other Streetscape Elements</b>	Special sidewalk paving Street lighting Street furniture overview Banners Benches and seating Bicycle racks Bollards	Community kiosks Fixed pedestal news racks Public art Public toilets Signage Transit shelters Sidewalk trashcans

Source: San Francisco Better Streets

### Pedestrian Improvements

#### *Walk First San Francisco*

WalkFirst is a collaborative initiative of the SFMTA, Planning Department, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Works, and the Controller's Office, focused on improving pedestrian safety in the City. WalkFirst provides a descriptive toolkit the City can use to improve pedestrian safety with tools that are ranked by their cost, timeframe, and effectiveness, as shown in Exhibit 16 below.

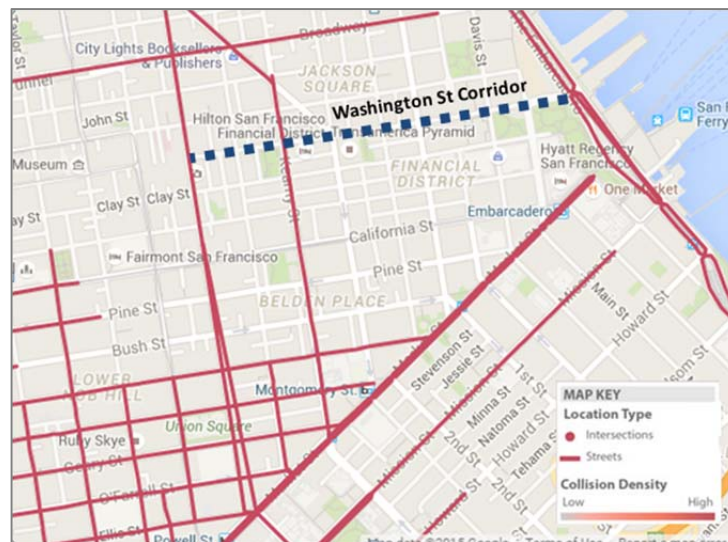
**Exhibit 16: WalkFirst Pedestrian Safety Improvements Toolkit**

Tool	Cost	Timeframe	Effectiveness
Advance Stop or Yield Lines/ Red Visibility Curbs	Low	Short	Medium
Leading Pedestrian Intervals	Low	Short	Medium
Speed Humps	Low	Medium	Medium
Corner Bulbs and Chokers	Medium	Short	Medium
Pedestrian Refuge Islands	Medium	Short	Medium
Radar Speed Display Signs	Medium	Short	Medium
Roadway Safety Lighting	Medium	Long	High
Speed Tables & Raised Crosswalks	Medium	Long	Medium
Traffic Circles, Roundabouts & Chicanes	Medium	Long	High
Turn Prohibitions	Medium	Medium	High
Automated Speed Enforcement	High	Medium	High
Flashing Beacons	High	Long	High
Pedestrian Countdown Signals	High	Long	High
Protected Left Turns	High	Long	High
Road Diets	High	Long	High

Source: WalkFirst

WalkFirst identifies a number of “Safety Streets,” which are prioritized for improvements based on the number of collisions that have occurred. While the Washington Street corridor is not one of the identified “Safety Streets,” three intersecting streets are: Stockton Street, Kearny Street and The Embarcadero. Any pedestrian safety improvements made to the identified these streets could encourage related improvements on nearby portions of Washington Street.

**Exhibit 17: WalkFirst Safety Streets Map**



## Bicycle Improvements

The San Francisco 2013-2018 Bicycle Strategy provides a matrix of tools that the City can use in order to evaluate various bicycle improvement options for different communities ranked by safety, connectivity, cost and implementation time.

### Exhibit 18: Bicycle Safety Improvement Toolkit

Improvement Tool	Safety <sup>1</sup>	Connectivity	Cost	Time <sup>2</sup>
Wayfinding signage	*	*	\$5,000	< 1 year
Traffic diverter	*	*	\$5,000	< 1 year
Bicycle boxes	*	*	\$5,000	1-2 years
Bicycle signal, bicycle boxes, and counters	**	**	\$10,000	3-4 years
Buffered bicycle lane	**	*	\$100,000	3-4 years
Basic cycle track	***	*	\$250,000	5-6 years
Colored bicycle lane	**	*	\$500,000	5-6 years
Bicycle boulevard	**	*	\$1,000,000	6+ years
Separated cycle track	***	*	\$10,000,000	6+ years

Source: San Francisco Bicycle Strategy, 2013-2018

<sup>1</sup> Scale of 1-3 stars

<sup>2</sup> Time estimates vary greatly depending on environmental clearance

As this portion of Washington Street has almost no bicycle infrastructure at all, the City should consider, at a minimum, adding basic bicycle improvements along this corridor. The Citi Bike Share station at the City College of San Francisco could be a launching point for these improvements, connecting that Citi Bike Share station to other Bike Share stations along The Embarcadero.

### Funding for Improvements

In recent years, much of the financing for sidewalk, streetscape, pedestrian and bicycle improvements has come from impact fees associated with new development as set forth in the appropriate Area Plan. As discussed above, there are currently no new major developments along the Washington Street Corridor expected to contribute funding for improvements in the public right-of-way in the near term.

Without major new development in the area, any improvements to the Washington Street corridor would need to be funded and carried out by a combination of City agencies including the Planning Department, SFMTA, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), and the Department of Public Works (DPW), competing for prioritization amongst all other streetscape improvement project throughout the City.

According to the WalkFirst Streetscape Prioritization Plan, the resources shown below in Exhibit 19 are available for various streetscape improvement projects within the City.

**Exhibit 19: Potential Funding Sources for Streetscape Elements**

FUNDING SOURCE	ESTIMATED ANNUAL FUNDING	USES	GEOGRAPHIC LIMITATIONS?	RESTRICTIONS ON STREETScape ELEMENTS ELIGIBLE?	PROGRAMMING AUTHORITY	NOTES ON TIMING
<b>One Bay Area Grant</b>	\$11,700,000	All elements of streetscapes and safe routes to schools projects	Yes	No	Metropolitan Transportation Commission	Next call for projects expected end of 2015/early 2016, with funding decisions made Fall of 2016. MTC will likely program multiple years of funds. (Prior OBAG was 3 years of projects).
<b>Bonds</b>	\$0–\$16,000,000*	All elements of streetscapes	No	No	Bond Holder: e.g. City and County of San Francisco or SFMTA	N/A – unless MTA has any timing info to share on when streetscape project funding will be implemented.
<b>Proposition K</b>	\$5,900,000**	Funding for enhancements to specific modes of travel or to be local match to a grant. Uses for much of this funding has been identified in 5-year plan.	No	Yes	San Francisco County Transportation Authority	Requests possible monthly, if use is included in current 5-year plan. Next full update of 5-year plan will start in approximately 3 years.
<b>Proposition AA</b>	\$5,000,000	Street repair and reconstruction, pedestrian safety, and transit reliability.	No	Yes	San Francisco County Transportation Authority	Requests possible monthly, if use is included in current expenditure plan.
<b>General Fund</b>	\$0–\$2,200,000	Varies. Often for a Board-specified streetscape projects of citywide importance.	No	No	Board of Supervisors	Department Capital Budget requests due annually in mid January. Budget approved in August.
<b>Development Impact Fees</b>	\$15,000,000–40,000,000	All elements of streetscapes. Named projects for most of the funding are already identified through area plans.	Yes	No	Board of Supervisors	Funds are programmed annually, and expenditures are approved as part of the City Budget each August. Funds vary widely year to year based on timing of development.
<b>Active Transportation Program</b>	\$3,000,000	Infrastructure and non-for streetscapes and other pedestrian and bike safety projects.	Yes	Yes	California Transportation Commission and Metropolitan Transportation Commission	Next call for projects anticipated 3/26. Requests due 6/1. Will program next 3 years of funds.
<b>Sewer System Improvement Program</b>	TBD	Funds must be used for on-site stormwater management (i.e. green infrastructure) or other sewer system improvement projects.	Yes	Yes	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission	N/A

\* The 2011 voter-approved Road Repaving and Street Safety Bond included \$50 million for streetscape improvements. The proposed 2014 Transportation and Road Improvement would provide \$5,200,000 year for these types of improvements.

\*\* Based on average Proposition K programmed for upgrades to major arterials, signs and signals, traffic calming, bicycle and pedestrian circulation and safety, transportation demand management, and transportation/land use coordination.

Source: *WalkFirst: Streetscape Prioritization Plan*

In addition to the funding sources listed above, the San Francisco Community Challenge Grant, whose next grant cycle is expected to open in February 2016 provides a total of \$500,000 in funding to all awardees for physical improvements to neighborhoods by:

- Promoting physical improvements and greening of public spaces
- Engaging residents and business in creating welcoming places for residents to play, gather and build community
- Use greening projects to support and promote community participation, neighborhood stewardship, and address issues of importance to residents and others.



### Establish a Community Benefit District

In the absence of new development, funding for streetscape improvements could potentially be funded by a community benefit district (CBD). CBDs are commercial or mixed-use neighborhood districts created by local property owners who tax themselves in order to fund improvements in their neighborhood beyond those provided by the City.

Local business owners along designated portions of Washington Street could create their own CBD to identify desired projects, raise additional funds, and carry out public realm improvements that could potentially increase foot traffic outside for their businesses. There are currently twelve neighborhood CBDs in the City, and the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) provides resources for the creation of new CBDs.

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## Conclusion

The Washington Street corridor currently lacks streetscape and pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares. Because little new development is planned for the Washington Street corridor, private development is not a source of funds to improve the streetscape and pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares. In order to develop the corridor's streetscape and thoroughfares, public funds would need to be used. Additionally, in the absence of new development, streetscape and thoroughfare improvements could potentially be funded by property owners through a community benefit district.

City-owned properties, including SFMTA's Golden Gateway Garage and SFPUC's Drumm Street pump station, are two significant obstacles that interrupt the continuity of the sidewalk along the Washington Street corridor. To convert the Golden Gateway Garage into ground floor retail, SFMTA would need to complete feasibility and transportation demand management studies, and consider whether or not a retail use would provide sufficient revenue to make up for any loss of parking revenue due to conversion. SFPUC has not expressed interest in abandoning the Drumm Street pump station given that it is their only property in the area to store and dispense odor control chemicals for local sewers. Because these are City-owned properties, City officials could remove these obstacles but would need to address the impact on SFMTA and SFPUC.