

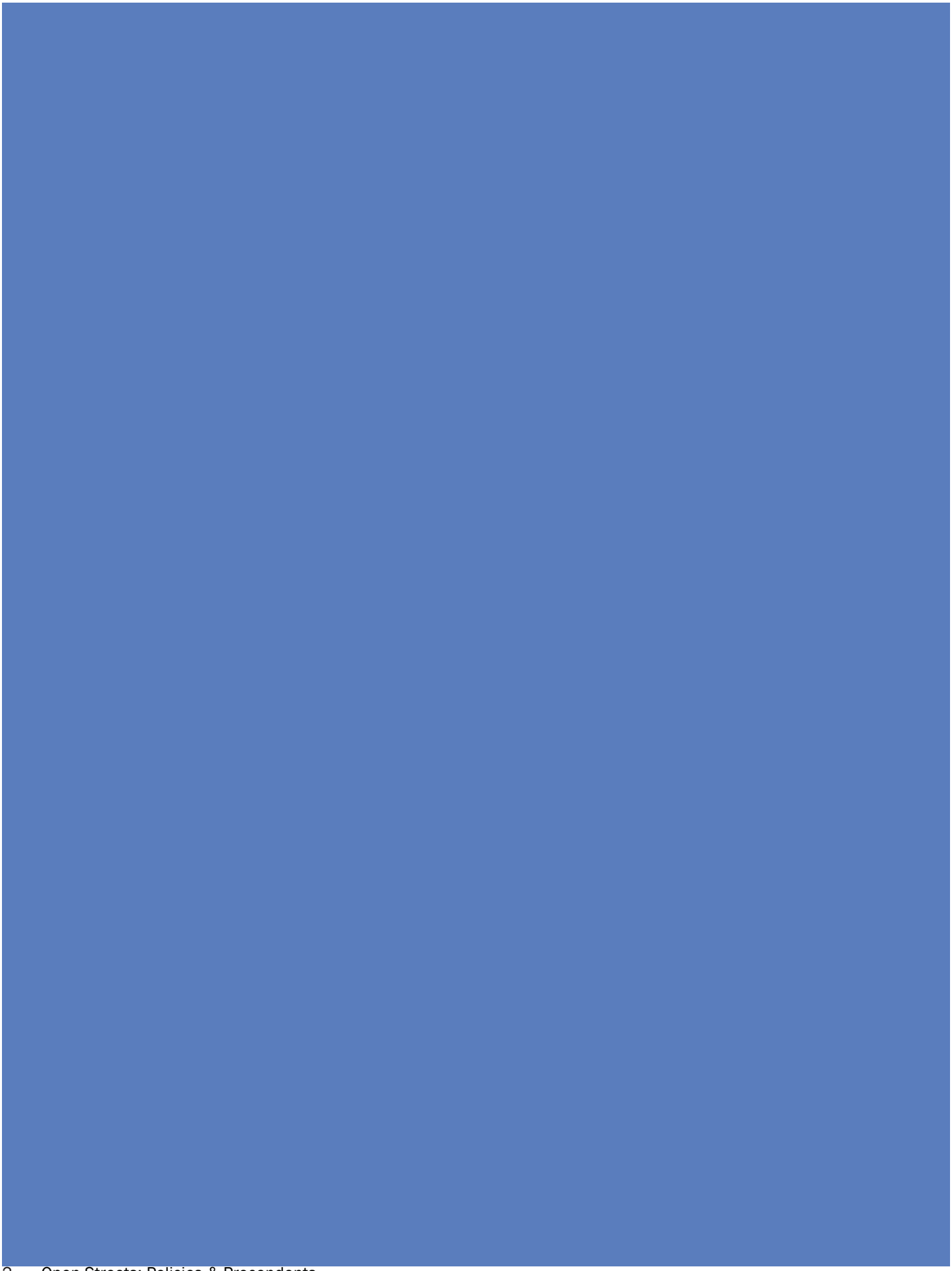
OPEN STREETS: POLICIES and PRECEDENTS

A WHITE PAPER FROM INTERNATIONAL PARKLET SYMPOSIUM : CALIFORNIA

Insights and recommendations from the International Parklet Symposium, California convened in San Francisco, CA, April 2025

Published October 2025

Published October 2025



Publihed October 2025

OPEN STREETS: POLICIES AND PRECEDENTS
A WHITE PAPER FROM THE INTERNATIONAL PARKLET SYMPOSIUM, CALIFORNIA

White Paper Editors:
Robin Abad Ocubillo (City of Oakland) and Shruti Shankar (Studio 111)

White Paper Principal Contributors:
Ric Abramson (West Hollywood, CA), Veronica Foster (Nashville, TN), Naria Kiani (Los Angeles, CA), Gordon Millchap (San Francisco, CA), Jenna Miller (New York, NY), Joel Miller, Patrick Pirtle (Seattle, WA), Kimberly Vacca (Washington, D.C.)

Symposium Programme Committee:
Robin Abad Ocubillo, John Bela, Luisa Bravo, Monica Munowitch, Ilaria Salvadori, Shruti Shankar

Special Thanks:
Michael Brentlinger, Kathy Lin, Janet Le, Jitka Dekojova;
Professor Justin Bigelow, UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design

Website: https://centersf.org/ca-parklet-symposium/
Email: parkletstudies@gmail.com

Co-presenting Partners:

Park(ing) Day

MUSEO SPAZIO PUBBLICO bologna

studioneleven

CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

AIA San Francisco

SPUR

Published October 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Why a White Paper on Open Streets? 6

When and How was the White Paper produced? 6

What does the White Paper address? 7

Policy and Regulatory Areas

1. Social Equity and Economic Impacts 12

2. Governance, Partnerships & Stewardship 19

3. Safe and Sustainable Mobility 25

4. Catalysts for Community Engagement 31

5. Engineering, Design & Materiality 35

Why a White Paper?

City streets have evolved rapidly over the last two decades to meet new challenges and complexities. These include new modes of transportation and mobility, green infrastructure and ecosystem function, and reclaiming spaces for pedestrian use.

Parklets, pedestrian plazas, open streets celebrations, and other interventions have been at the forefront of sparking joy and imagining possibilities for transforming urban places. An explosion of pedestrian-focused uses for roadways - especially during and since the COVID-19 pandemic - have revealed both challenges and opportunities with how streets are governed. This White Paper distills key recommendations policies and regulations at the state and local levels.

This White Paper distills key recommendations, policies, and regulations at the state and local levels. It outlines imperatives and opportunities for public policy and programs in to advance the transformation of our public realm through re-adaptation of existing infrastructure.

When and How was the White Paper produced?

The International Parklet Symposium, California was held in San Francisco from April 10-12, 2025, gathering experts from across North America to exchange ideas for adapting streets to the challenges in the decade to come.

The first two whole days of the Symposium featured cross-disciplinary perspectives that bridged urban design, environmental studies, public health, and social equity. Content included case study presentations, existing policy frameworks, future proposals, panel discussions, and interactive workshops.

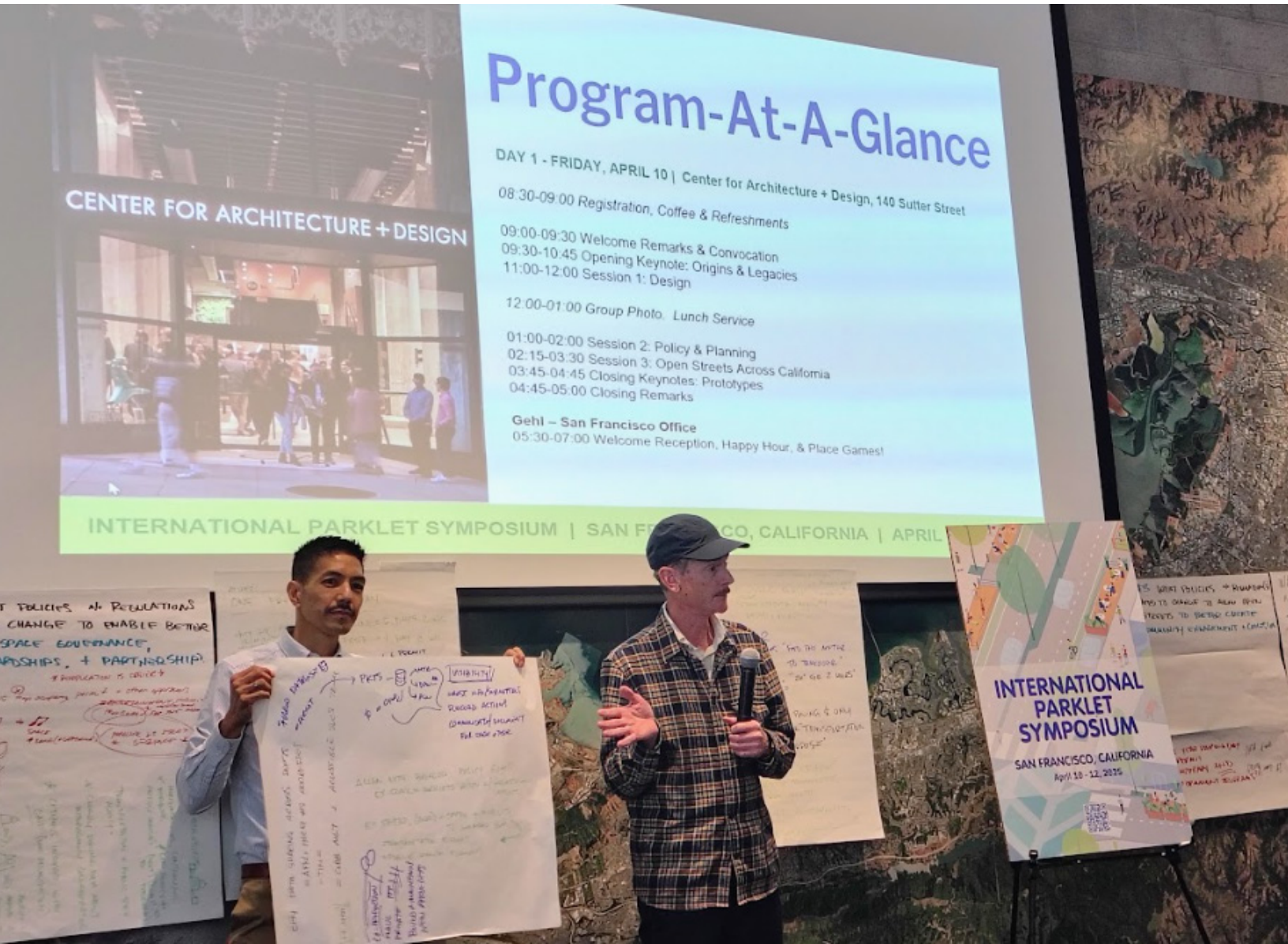
The third and final day focused on synthesis and production of the White Paper. Reflecting on contents shared in the days prior, participants gathered for a series of small-group workshops organized around the five main Symposium themes. Workshop groups brainstormed recommendations for changing policies and regulations.

After workshops, a plenary session was convened in which participants from each of the five breakout groups presented their proposed solutions. This portion of the session was both practical and generative. It demonstrated how the principles could be translated into actionable policy frameworks, and also exposed points of tension and opportunities for further iteration.

Subsequent to Symposium in-person workshops, the White Paper editorial team circulated a digital draft for asynchronous feedback from Symposium attendees to provide refinements.

Additional Background

- ★ Temporary to Transformative, paper, SPUR, 2021
- ★ Parklet Manifesto, The Museum of Public Space with the International Parklet Symposium, Bologna, 2024



What does the White Paper address?

The Symposium programme and subsequent white paper are organised around five themes:

1 Evaluating Social Equity and Economic Impacts

These include frameworks for managing and/or funding parklet and other public space programs to achieve social equity outcomes. Research, documentation and storytelling initiatives that look at measurable and perceived impacts?how parklets affect social cohesion, mobility, local businesses, property values, and pedestrian circulation in communities.

2 Governance, Partnerships & Stewardship

Enabling Projects in the Public Realm that include innovations in Policy and regulatory frameworks; especially as the result of collaboration between cities, businesses, artists, and community groups. Current opportunities and challenges for investment in parklets and ideas around the economics of parklet development and maintenance. Transition of individual sites and/or municipal programs - from temporary or pilot to permanent - are also important; for example with legislation, code changes, or program development.

3 Safe and Sustainable Mobility

Integrating Walkability, Cycling, and Public Transport: The role of parklets in achieving street safety outcomes like Vision Zero programs and compact communities that support human-powered mobility through enhancing pedestrian safety, connecting with bike infrastructure, and encouraging alternative forms of transport.

4 Catalysts for Community Engagement and Cohesion

Exploring how parklets serve as community gathering spaces, promoting local businesses, and enhancing urban life. Topics include case studies of bottom-up implementation through community initiatives, strategies for inclusive design, creative placemaking and art interventions, and storytelling to create, sustain and advocate for parklets.

5 Innovations in Engineering, Design, and Materials

Recognize the street as a distinct spatial entity; responding to contextual cues from the streetwall and landscape to foster meaningful opportunities for prospect and refuge. Encouraging innovative designs that address challenges such as limited space, street slopes,accessibility, cost-effectiveness, ease of maintenance, aesthetic appeal, and local regulations. This could also invite creative ways of using materials or integrating technology. Development of design guidelines, manuals, and technical specifications are also critical.





POLICY & REGULATORY AREAS

1. Social Equity & Economic Impacts
2. Governance, Partnerships & Stewardship
3. Safe & Sustainable Mobility
4. Catalysts for Community Engagement & Coehsion
5. Engineering, Design, & Materiality

1 Social Equity & Economic Impacts

Open Streets and Parklets are for everyone, and policies should consider social equity & inclusion.

1.1 Maximize public benefit and accessibility
1.2 Focus on ADA accessibility
1.3 Establish assistance programs for the most historically marginalized
1.4 Measure Impacts
1.5 Practice compelling and effective storytelling



Recommendation 1.1 : Maximize public benefit and accessibility

» Clearly differentiate between publicly accessible “Parklets” and exclusive commercial “Streatery” facilities. Create and deploy a clear signage strategy.

» Establish a requirement for free public access at commercially-operated streateries. Examples of this include that a portion of the streatery that is publicly accessible at all times; or requiring the entire parklet be accessible to the public at least one day every week.

» For municipalities which allow for both public Parklets and commercial streateries, incentivize the creation of public Parklets. This can be achieved by reducing or eliminating fees; or prioritizing reviews and approvals for these types of sites

Examples

★ Cafes in Public Space, City of Seattle
★ Shared Spaces, City and County of San Francisco,

Recommendation 1.2 : Focus on ADA Accessibility

Finding the balance between appropriate universal access and cost can be challenging on such small and constrained parklet sites. Extra effort and technical guidance is needed to ensure that design for universal accessibility is achieved successfully, but without undue delays to or expense.

» For fully public Parklets, the local governments could offer financial assistance such as a fee waiver , and/or design consultation, to ensure compliance.

» Create clear guidelines and specifications for designing for universal access.

Examples

★ Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (U.S. Access Board, 2024)
★ Cafes in Public Space, City of Seattle
★ Shared Spaces, City and County of San Francisco



Recommendation 1.3 : Establish financial & technical assistance programs for the most historically marginalized

» Prioritize City resources for communities most impacted by historical disparities with funding, access to design professionals and plans, materials and grants.

Examples

★ Social Equity Parklet Program (Vancouver B.C.)
★ Seattle Free Parklet Permits (Seattle Department of Transportation)
★ Seattle Free Block Party Permit (Seattle Department of Transportation)
★ Shared Spaces Equity Grants Program (City and County of San Francisco)
★ Tenderloin Community Action Plan (City and County of San Francisco)
★ Tactical Urbanism Permit and 1st year Parklet Fee Waiver (Nashville, TN)
★ Nashville Open Streets Program Free Neighborhood Block Party Permits

Recommendation 1.4 : Measure impacts

Leverage proven methodologies for measuring the impacts of open streets projects and programs. Studies can demonstrate greater positive perception by the public, social and psychological wellbeing, improved bicycle and pedestrian safety, and economic stabilization.

» Report on shifts in perceived impacts of parklets and similar programs over time. Ensure that surveys query all stakeholders: casual parklet users, parklet sponsors and small businesses, neighborhood groups and other entities.

Examples

★ Realising the Potential of the Porch (University City District, Philadelphia, 2013)
★ San Francisco Plazas Public Life Study (San Francisco Planning, 2016)
★ Citywide Assessment of Parklets and Plazas (San Francisco Planning, 2014)
★ Walking, Bicycling, & Public Space on Market Street (San Francisco Planning,2010)
★ Seattle Public Life Program



» Quantify the economic benefits of Parklets, especially to the most vulnerable operators (who are typically small businesses).

Examples

★ Shared Spaces Program: Economic Impact Report, Office of the Controller, Office of Economic Analysis (City and County of San Francisco 2021)
★ Shared Spaces: Small Business Impact Survey (City and County of San Francisco, 2021)
★ IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SMALL BUSINESSES IN SAN FRANCISCO (SF Small Business Commission and San Francisco State University, 2021)
★ Economic Value of the Chicago People Spot Program (Metropolitan Planning Council, 2014)

» Leverage emerging research on how built interventions influence spatial behavior, health outcomes, and social dynamics. Explore innovative public-private initiatives that use full-scale mock-ups to assess these impacts.

Examples

★ Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment. 100 Minds in Motion. University College London. Published May 2025.
★ University College London, Person Environment Activity Research Laboratory. Published May 2025.
★ Robinson S, Juhani Pallasmaa. Mind in Architecture : Neuroscience, Embodiment, and the Future of Design. The Mit Press; 2017.
★ Sternberg EM, Wilson MA. Neuroscience and architecture: seeking common ground. Cell. 2006 Oct 20;127(2):239-42.

Recommendation 1.5 :
Practice compelling and effective storytelling

» Leverage digital channels, especially programmatic social media, to share human impact narratives about the ongoing program and partnerships.

» Promote the relevance of Open Streets and Parklets within the fields of planning and governance; maintain connectivity and exchange with network practitioners in public, nonprofit, and private sectors.



2. Governance, Partnerships & Stewardship

2.1 Update public realm goals & outcomes in local policy frameworks
2.2 Designate an Office, or Officer, of public space
2.3 Evolve pilot initiatives into a legislated program
2.4 Simplify and streamline permitting
2.5 Expand alcohol beverage controls sensibly

Recommendation 2.1 : Update Public Realm Goals & Outcomes in Local Policy Frameworks

Open Streets initiatives typically begin as grassroots or community-initiated one-offs. These iterative pilots can address multiple policy goals: Public health and wellbeing, economic stabilization and development, sustainable mobility, urban environment and ecosystem services. Long-range planning and policy instruments - for example General Plan elements and Area (or "Community") Plans - can establish frameworks for tactical urbanism projects and programs.

» In Area ("Community") Plans, identify locations where pilot interventions can more deeply inform future detail design, stewardship arrangements, and capital investment.

Examples

★ Downtown DC Public Realm Plan (2024)
★ Central Waterfront - Dogpatch Public Realm Plan (San Francisco, 2018)
★ Mission District Streetscape Plan (San Francisco, 2010)

» In General Plan Elements, for example the Transportation Element, include tactical urbanism or pilot-phase projects as a typology in the range of solutions.

Examples

★ People Streets and Public Spaces, Seattle Transportation Plan
★ San Francisco Better Streets Plan (2010)
★ Adoption of the SFBSP into the Transportation Element, General Plan (2010)
★ Adoption of the SFBSP into Planning Code 138.1

» Amend local code sections as appropriate (transportation, public works, administrative, etc) to allow for tactical installations (physical improvements).
» Mayors, Commissioners, and city executives can drive innovation for public space and streets. Policies and aspirations can be articulated through Executive Directives and other strategy documents.

Examples

★ Designing New York: Streetscapes for Wellness (2022)
★ Mayor's Pedestrian Strategy and Progress Report (San Francisco 2013)
★ WalkFirst framework (San Francisco 2011)

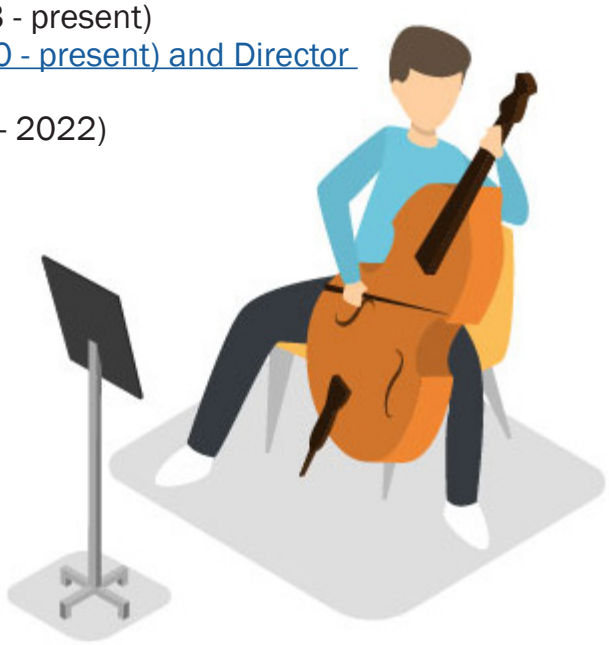
Recommendation 2.2 : Designate an Office or Officer of Public Space

Various public activation programs are distributed amongst different agencies, necessitating a patchwork of permits to achieve sustained public activations at scale. An Office of Public Space would be responsible for coordinating all activities intersecting with the Public Realm.

- This function could be housed in the City's executive branch, for example a Deputy within the Mayor's Office or the the City Administrator's Office. An existing City department could also be detailed to coordinate this.
- Maintain Strong Comprehensive Policy Coordination. Placemaking should be coordinated comprehensively and holistically with expertise integrating land use, transportation, public space, urban design, and equity considerations.
- Evolve past bureaucratic silos that make it difficult for communities to test, build, and steward public space project.
- Drive policy and regulatory changes
- Maintain Responsive And Coordinated Customer Service
- Develop and build easy-to-interface placemaking program(s); establishing clear rules and protocols for interagency collaboration.

Examples

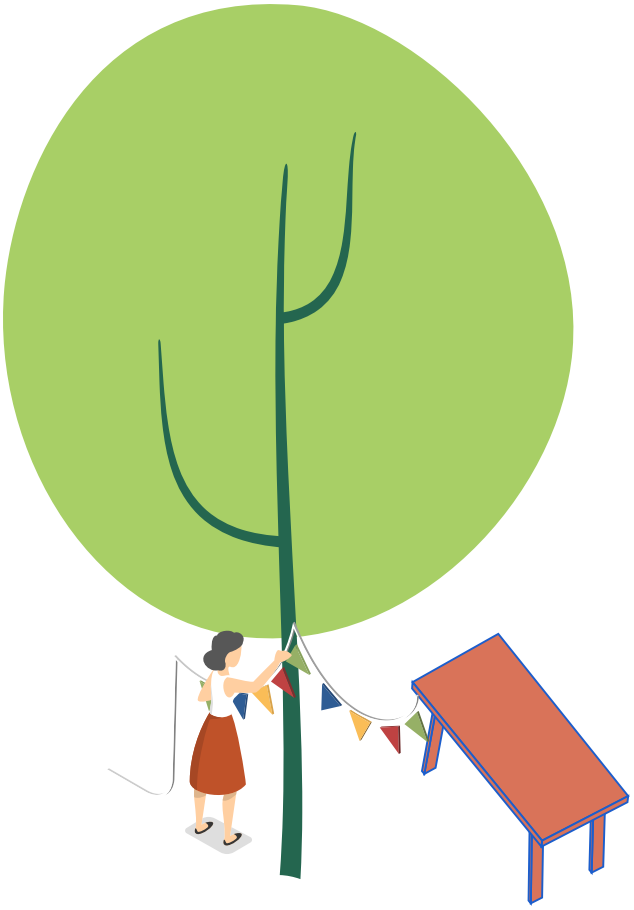
★ Seattle Public Space Management
★ City of Boston Tactical Public Realm Program (2024 - present)
★ New York City Chief Public Realm Officer (2023 - present)
★ San Francisco's Shared Spaces Program (2020 - present) and Director (2020 - 2023)
★ City of Los Angeles Chief Design Officer (2018 - 2022)



Recommendation 2.3 : Evolve pilot initiatives into a legislated program

Examples

★ Portland, OR, Street Seat Program
★ District of Columbia Parklet Program
★ Arlington County, Virginia Parklet Program
★ Los Angeles People Street, Play Streets, and Open Streets Programs
★ San Francisco's Shared Spaces Program (2020 - present)



Recommendation 2.4 : Simplify and Streamline Permitting

Projects in the public realm often require multiple approvals from several different agencies. Frequently, this requires multiple application submittals, with forms from different departments, asking much of the same information. This can result in a confusing process for applicants, inefficient coordination between city departments, extra time and expense for all parties.

» Streamline interagency permitting and agency review processes by establishing a clear and transparent sequence of review, approval, and adjudication of appeals by the pertinent City agencies.
» Centralize the customer service experience by creating a 'single one-stop-shop' portal where sponsors access and submit permit applications, technical assistance, grants, and other resources.
» Rather than several discrete permit forms, consolidate these into a universal project application that includes questions all departments may need
» Articulate Efficient Permit Review and Approvals with a clearly defined timetable.

Data silos at agencies require manual aggregation when reporting on program statistics; for example permit volumes and statuses, enforcement, and equity. This results in slow responsiveness to data inquiries, inconsistencies, and inability to monitor and therefore optimize program performance.

» Create a single, interagency database for all agencies to record and track actions. The database can also provide comprehensive visibility into the overall project portfolio and individual project statuses.
» Develop an interagency reporting platform that aggregates data from all pertinent agencies, and is easy to query for realtime information.
» Coordinate Enforcement by a single agency with a 'Single Bill of Health,' which is easy for operators to understand and comply with.

Example

★ Seattle Trick or Streets - Simple Registration Form
★ Shared Spaces Interactive Map

Recommendation 2.5 : Expand Alcohol Beverage Controls Sensibly

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the California legislature relaxed the Business and Professions Code 25750.5 to temporarily allow for alcohol beverage service and consumption in 'expanded license areas.' Current regulations do allow for more flexibility than pre-pandemic rules, however some provisions could be revisited to allow more alcohol-serving operators to leverage parklets and similar places.

» Explore modifications to California Department of Beverage Control Regulations for Licensing of Permanent Non-Contiguous Areas that require that parklets are "actively monitored" by an employee that is "physically present."

Example

★ California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Title 4, Article §70 (D) (1)

» Explore expansion of California Entertainment Zone provisions.

Examples

★ Washington House Bill 1515 (2026)
★ California Senate Bill 969 (2024 - applies statewide)
★ California Senate Bill 76 (2023 - specific to San Francisco)

3. Safe & Sustainable Mobility: Walkability, Cycling, and Transport

This theme area focuses on shifting streets from car-dominated to inclusive, multimodal networks that can then also support public space. Participants stressed the need to define "sustainable mobility" holistically, integrating equity, health, and land use. Micromobility's promise was debated, with concerns over equity and infrastructure. Behavior change, policy tools, and storytelling emerged as key levers. Parklets were seen as gateways to transformation, reframing streets as public assets for all.

3.1 Define Sustainable Mobility with Clear, Equity-Centered Standards
3.2 Launch Behavior-Change Campaigns to Normalize Transit and Walking
3.3 Implement Curbside Management Strategies to Support Multimodal Streets
3.4 Leverage Pilot Programs and Incremental Street Design to Build Public Trust



Recommendation 3.1 : Define Sustainable Mobility with Clear, Equity-Centered Standards

» “Sustainable mobility” is often unclear, blurring distinctions between modes. A consistent, equity-focused definition is essential to guide planning, policy, and investment, helping cities move beyond piecemeal efforts. Shared definitions enable better regional coordination, resource allocation, and alignment with climate, health, and access goals across California.

» Adopt a shared, equity-focused definition of sustainable mobility for California—prioritizing walking, biking, transit, and shared modes. Issue a model framework for local adoption, like Complete Streets or VMT thresholds. Embed climate resilience and equity in mode prioritization, with metrics for emissions, mode shift, and access for underserved communities.

Examples

★ Portland Transportation Systems Plan (2045)
★ Seattle Transportation Equity Framework and Climate Action Plan
★ California Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI)
★ Next Stop, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation Gender Action Plan (2024)



Recommendation 3.2 : Launch Behavior-Change Campaigns to Normalize Transit and Walking

» Changing transportation behavior requires more than infrastructure—it also demands cultural change. Yet many public awareness efforts fail because they are too broad, generic, or disconnected from the communities they aim to reach. California should invest in targeted, community-driven mobility campaigns that highlight the personal and local benefits of walking, biking, and transit—health, affordability, joy—not just environmental goals.

» Co-create targeted mobility campaigns with trusted messengers such as community organizations, youth groups, and local businesses. Provide grants or matching funds for cities and nonprofits to develop place-based outreach efforts. For example, a small-scale “Ride the Bus with Me” initiative in a low-transit-ridership neighborhood could pair storytelling with incentives and events. To be effective, campaigns must be iterative, culturally relevant, and grounded in lived experience—helping rebuild trust in public systems while celebrating sustainable choices.

Examples

★ Bayview Community Shuttle, SFMTA
★ SANDAG gO’side shuttle (2023-)
★ SBCCOG Turtle Talk (2024-)
★ SCAG Go Human Campaign (2016-)

Recommendation 3.3 : Implement Curbside Management Strategies to Support Multimodal Streets

» Evolve state statute(s) which regulate private transportation network companies (TNCs) to allow for greater local control over their use of streets; for example ‘geofencing’ or specifying pickup and dropoff areas.

» Urban curb space is increasingly in demand for transit, delivery, micromobility, and public uses, yet remains governed by outdated parking rules. Clear, flexible curb management policies are needed to reduce conflict, promote equity, and unlock its full potential as adaptable, shared public infrastructure.

» Cities need policy frameworks that designate curb space not as static parking but as flexible public infrastructure. These policies should prioritize low-carbon, high-impact uses—such as loading for shared mobility, bike/scooter corrals, and public gathering spaces—while also allowing room for user-generated uses like community-led parklets, street vending, or cultural installations.

Examples

★ Toronto’s CurbTO
★ Curbspace Management Element - Seattle Transportation Plan
★ San Francisco’s Curb Management Strategy

Recommendation 3.4 : Launch Behavior-Change Campaigns to Normalize Transit and Walking

» Many cities back sustainable mobility but face barriers like limited staff, unclear priorities, and fragmented funding. Smaller jurisdictions especially struggle to act without guidance. As a result, promising ideas often stall due to bureaucratic hurdles, despite alignment with state goals. Clear, accessible support is essential for local implementation.

» Cities should develop clear, accessible guidance to help identify high-impact, near-term actions for sustainable mobility—such as quick-build protected bike lanes, transit priority signals, or curbside parklets—and streamline access to funding for implementation. This includes bundling technical assistance with grant programs and prioritizing jurisdictions with demonstrated need or readiness.

Examples

★ Massachusetts' Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program
★ San Diego's Mobility Action Plan Scorecard
★ Antioch Pike Quick Build, Nashville
★ Los Angeles Department of Transportation Play Streets Program



Recommendation 3.5 : Measure Impacts

» Pilots like bike lanes or open streets can drive visible change, but their success often depends on public perception—especially around safety and behavior. Without structured evaluation, cities miss chances to build trust, counter resistance, and make the case for lasting, people-first mobility improvements.

» Issue guidance for evaluating impacts of sustainable mobility pilots, focusing on before-and-after metrics like safety and access (perceived and actual). Fund evaluation efforts, provide survey tools, and support partnerships to help cities capture public sentiment, especially from underserved groups, and build support for permanent, people-centered street transformations.

Examples

★ Streateries and Roadway Safety, District of Columbia Department of Transportation (2016 - 2023)
★ Broadway Dress Rehearsal Pre-Installation Existing Conditions Report (LADOT, 2014)

4. Catalysts for Community Engagement & Cohesion

4.1 Continue to leverage “Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper” phases
4.2 Encourage co-operative site stewardships
4.3 Activate ground-floor vacancies
4.4 Deepen the Role Of Arts, Culture & Entertainment



Recommendation 4.1 : Continue to leverage “Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper” phases

Pedestrian reclamations that are site-specific, event-based recurrences, and/or impermanent (2 months - 2 years) will always be a powerful strategy for helping communities understand long-term possibilities.

» Create a streamlined review and approvals procedure (permitting scheme) for tactical urbanism projects.

Examples

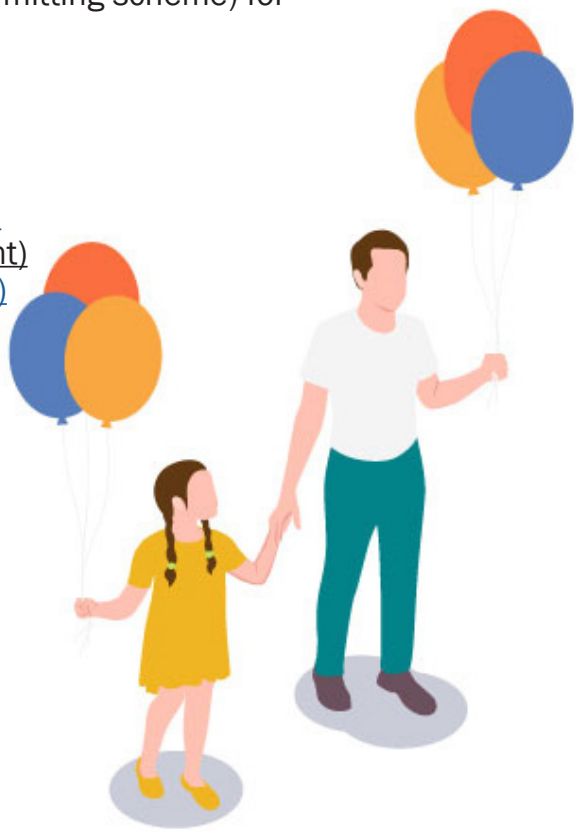
★ San Francisco Shared Spaces (2021) Ordinance
★ San Francisco Places for People (2016) Ordinance

Leverage impermanent (‘tactical’) projects to test stewardship, programming, and activation ideas. These temporary projects can also test potential road geometries that aim to achieve traffic calming, greater pedestrian visibility and safety, and/or transit efficiency.

» Create a streamlined review and approvals procedure (permitting scheme) for tactical urbanism projects.

Examples

★ Treat Plaza, San Francisco, (2022 - present)
★ Jane Warner Plaza, San Francisco, (2009 - present)
★ “Broadway Dress Rehearsal” LADOT, (2014 - present)
★ Broadway Pilot Program, New York, (2009 - present)
★ Tactical Urbanism Program, Nashville, TN
★ Seattle Pavements to Parks



Recommendation 4.2 :
Encourage co-operative site stewardship

Public Spaces can benefit from economies of scale when stewardship is shared between multiple discrete entities.

Examples

★ Portland, OR: Street Plaza Program
★ San Francisco, CA: Rusty Ladle & Andytown Coffee Roasters
★ San Francisco, CA: The “Building Blocks” program pilot by SF New Deal
★ San Francisco: The Lookout and Jeffrey’s Natural Pet Food Store
★ Palo, Alto: Ramona Street Half-block long parklet
★ City of Los Angeles, Adopt-A-Lot Pilot Program

Recommendation 4.3 :
Activate ground-floor vacancies

Public spaces are most successful when fronting ground-floor land uses are vibrant, forming a continuum of activation. Cities should integrate activation programs from both sides of the Property Line. Program(s) for groundfloor activation could be piloted in one neighborhood; and these efforts should be scaled citywide to neighborhood commercial districts.

Examples

★ Seattle ReSTORED
★ San Francisco Vacant to Vibrant Program
★ Zero Empty Spaces

Recommendation 4.4 : Deepen The Role Of Arts, Culture & Entertainment

» Encourage arts, culture and entertainment activities in a wide variety of public spaces. Leverage neighborhood-based and citywide arts organizations in activation and stewardship of public spaces.
» Explore using roadway murals as an affordable, tactical method to outlines space in the street for public space activation.

Examples

★ Arts in the RIght-of-Way Program, District of Columbia
★ CicLAvia, Los Angeles
★ San Francisco Downtown First Thursdays
★ Museum of Craft and Design Parklet, San Francisco

5. Engineering, Design, & Materiality

Recognize the street as a distinct spatial entity —one that can enhance situational awareness, support orientation, and encourage a sense of belonging, ownership, and stewardship among users. Respond to contextual cues from the streetwall and landscape to foster meaningful opportunities for prospect and refuge.

5.1 Create pre-vetted and pre-approved design details
5.2 Ensure easy dismantling
5.3 Establish minimum visual porosity standard



Recommendation 5.1 : Create pre-vetted and pre-approved design details

Maximize the use of modular components that meet standards for accessibility, life safety, stormwater management, and other requirements.

Examples

★ LADOT Parklet Kit of Parts
★ LADOT Plaza Kit of Parts

Recommendation 5.2 : Ensure easy dismantling

» Temporary parklets must be adaptable and easy to remove for maintenance, emergencies, or seasonal use changes. Designs that are difficult to disassemble can create long-term street clutter, increase city costs, and limit the flexibility that makes tactical urbanism successful.

» Issue design guidance that prioritizes fasteners like screws over nails, modular construction, and retractable or lightweight components. These details allow for efficient teardown, relocation, or seasonal storage—supporting flexibility and long-term program success.

Examples

★ Go Human Kit of Parts, Southern California Association of Governments
★ Play Streets Kit of Parts, Los Angeles Department of Transportation

Recommendation 5.3 : Establish minimum visual porosity standard

» Fully enclosed parklets can block sightlines, reduce safety, and create a sense of exclusivity. Visual porosity ensures parklets feel public, promote social interaction, and maintain clear views between sidewalks and streets for comfort and accessibility.

» Adopt a visual porosity standard—e.g., requiring 50% openness for vertical elements between 2–6 feet. This promotes transparency, safety, and inclusiveness by preventing parklets from appearing private or disconnected from the public realm.

Examples

★ San Francisco's Shared Spaces Manual
★ Toronto's Curbside Café Guidelines
★ SCAG Go Human Kit of Parts
★ Cafe's in the Public Space, City of Seattle





INTRODUCTION

» Why a White Paper?
» When and How was the White Paper Produced?
» What does the White Paper address?