



SFMTA

Painted Safety Zones

Three Ways Painted Safety Zones Make People Safer

Painted safety zones are the khaki-colored painted areas, flanked by flexible white posts, which wrap around a growing number of sidewalk corners in San Francisco on streets like Polk and 2nd. Painted safety zones are a relatively cheap and quick measure to make pedestrians safer. While that may seem intuitive, we put the theory to the test by collecting safety data at eight locations before and after they were installed. The locations include:

1. Northwest corner of Broadway and Polk streets - Crossing Polk Street
2. Northwest corner of Broadway and Polk streets - Crossing Broadway Street

3. Southeast corner of California Street at Polk Street
4. Northeast corner of Charles Brenham Plaza at Market Street
5. Southwest corner of Geary Street at Leavenworth Street
6. Southeast corner of Green Street at Columbus Avenue
7. Northwest corner of South Park Street at 2nd Street
8. Southwest corner of Harrison Street at 3rd Street



Motorists turned corners more slowly.

Motorists yielded to pedestrians more often.

More motorists turned further from the curb, at safer distances from people on sidewalks.



On average, turning speeds decreased by up to 55 percent. This is based on turning speeds recorded for 100 vehicles, using a radar gun, at a site where a painted safety zone was installed.



The number of drivers who “fully yielded” to pedestrians increased by an average of 25 percent after painted safety zones were installed.



The number of vehicles turning within six feet of the curb decreased by an average of 35 percent after painted safety zones were implemented.