

# Lake Merced Quick Build Frequently Asked Questions

## Virtual Handout

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/5434a1264f0640ecbe32e6b930709240?item=1>

## General Questions

### Why is SFMTA pursuing a “Quick-Build” project on Lake Merced Blvd.?

Quick-build projects allow us to install successful traffic safety improvements on much quicker timelines. They also cost less than capital improvements and allow for greater flexibility. We are able to make adjustments immediately as needed.

### How much will the project cost?

Total costs (design and construction) are estimated at \$1.5 to \$2 million

## Travel Lane Changes Questions

### Why are you removing traffic lanes?

Along some sections of Lake Merced Blvd. we are proposing to remove lanes in order to calm traffic and fit pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

### What about existing congestion and won't traffic get worse with less lanes?

- Project designs are not expected to impact traffic operations. Proposal is to remove a lane only in 1.5 out of five sections, not the entire corridor, and one of those sections retains two travel lanes after removing one lane.
- Existing traffic volumes indicate that, in sections with proposed lane removal, there will be little or no impact to traffic operations.
- The primary reason for collisions along Lake Merced Blvd is due to unsafe speeds. Drivers tend to drive faster when there is more space on the road than there are vehicles. While we don't believe the volume of traffic will increase along the corridor, we do want to slow traffic down. Slowing down traffic will dramatically decrease the likelihood of a crash and if there is a crash it will decrease the likelihood of fatalities and injuries.
- The SFMTA is committed to thorough on-going evaluation of its quick-build projects and to adjust as required. The project teams will continue to monitor all types of transportation conditions, including pedestrian safety and vehicle traffic, to ensure that the projects continue to meet the needs of the community.

### Will travel lane removal affect buses?

The lanes adjacent to transit boarding islands will be wide enough for a vehicle to go around a stopped bus. We are proposing a lane removal at this location because existing volumes are far lower than existing traffic volumes. This leads to cars traveling at dangerous speeds that have led to severe injuries and fatalities along this street.

## Parking Removal Questions

### Why are you removing parking and how much parking is being removed?

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Our proposed designs require parking removal, to install traffic calming, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements. The project proposes the removal of 324 parking spaces.

## **Where will students or those needing short term parking be able to park?**

Recognizing that some people using the project area may need to load or use short-term parking, the project team is looking at options to provide approximately 680 feet of parking/loading areas on Lake Merced Blvd. near SF State. There are also several parking lots in and around the lake and unmetered parking a long John Muir Dr. that can be used to access the lake area. For students and campus users, SF State provides daily parking permits and public parking onsite, and shuttles from Daly City BART to campus. The school also provides daily parking permits and public parking onsite, and shuttles from Daly City BART to campus. A range of transportation options serving the campus can be found here : <https://parking.sfsu.edu/transit>

## **What are you doing about Recreational Vehicles (RVs) currently parked along Lake Merced Blvd.?**

The D7 office and the Coalition on Homelessness are working with and supporting the community through parking removal/RV relocation. Additionally, our implementation schedule will take a phased approach and work from the ends of the corridor inward, where there are the most people living, to ensure enough time to provide alternative housing arrangements.

## **Where will they be relocated if there is no parking available?**

The D7 office and other parties are looking to find a location for a RV parking Safe Site.

## **Is there any ordinance/regulation that prohibits RV or overnight parking on Lake Merced blvd?**

Currently there are no overnight restrictions, but the Quick Build project would remove much of the parking for all vehicles on Lake Merced Boulevard to install traffic calming, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements.

## **Capital Improvement Questions**

### **Will there be accessible pedestrian signals (APS)?**

Some intersections already have APS but any that do not may be within our project scope depending on location and feasibility. The project team is aiming to install as many missing APS as possible.

### **Is there a long term/larger project/capital improvement project planned?**

We will have some initial funding available through future Capital Improvement Plans but will need additional planning and funding for any larger capital project that follows the quick-build. Results from the quick-build can help to inform any future larger capital projects.

### **Why are you not including street lighting?**

Street lighting is typically handled by Public Works or the Public Utilities Commission and is not within the quick-build scope of the project. This project will however add lighting to new bus shelters wherever feasible.

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## **What is being proposed/Why is there nothing being proposed at Sunset Blvd?**

We are not proposing any changes to the Sunset and Lake Merced intersection. Based on the needs of this intersection (i.e. main movement is Sunset to Lake Merced, intersecting Muni lines), potential changes to this intersection would most likely require more permanent modifications that are outside the scope of a quick-build project

## **Pedestrian Safety Questions**

### **Why can't we add new crosswalks where there aren't any?**

The team aren't proposing any new crosswalks at this time since there is either a marked crosswalk less than 300 feet away or it would require capital intersection modifications that fall outside the scope of a quick-build (i.e. signalization, moving utilities and signals, etc.)

### **Why is there no proposal to close the slip lane?**

Based on the location, closing the slip lanes most likely would require more intensive modifications to the concrete, signals, etc. that are outside the project scope. The team is looking into possibilities for traffic calming at some slip lane locations.

### **Where is there daylighting/How can we increase visibility when people are crossing the street?**

Daylighting is achieved at crossings by setting parked vehicles farther away from intersections to improve visibility. Pedestrian visibility will dramatically increase at all intersections where there is parking, given that much curb space will now be occupied by a protected bike lane.

### **Can you make the asphalt paths into a sidewalk?**

Converting asphalt path into a sidewalk requires extensive surveying, excavation, materials, and construction all of which are outside of the quick-build project scope, schedule, and budget. The project team is looking into resurfacing some portions but will need additional time to understand the feasibility and cost.

## **Bicycle Safety Questions**

### **Why are you proposing a bike lane?**

The inclusion of the protected bikeway in our proposed designs are intended to alleviate the crowding that occurs along the multi-use path, to provide an extra buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles, and a safe, dedicated location for people riding along or accessing Lake Merced Blvd.

### **Why isn't the bike lane two-way on one side?**

We prioritized providing an additional bike facility on the neighborhood side for most of the corridor to improve neighborhood connections to and along Lake Merced. However, this project will not preclude the future installation of two-way facilities.

### **Why isn't the bike lane continuous?**

Lake Merced Blvd is used by all modes and there are some parts of the road where we could not fit a bike lane, transit boarding island, and a travel lane, especially areas that already have a concrete median dividing the two directions of travel. Where new proposed bike facilities are proposed on Lake Merced Blvd., they be fully protected by concrete barriers. Where there aren't new bike lanes

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proposed, the design offers connections to the lakeside path or to neighborways on Vidal or Gellert. This ensures that a continuous safe path of travel is available for bicyclists for the length of the project area.

## **Why is the bike lane curbside?**

Protecting curbside bike lanes with buffers and vertical treatments like raised concrete islands also provide an extra buffer for pedestrians walking along the sidewalk. It also allows for seamless connections between the proposed neighborways along Vidal, Gellert, and Lakeshore.

## **What is a neighborway?**

Neighborways are residential streets with low volume, low speed vehicle traffic, making them easier to navigate and friendlier for walking and biking. They combine street design measures tailored to each neighborhood, including wayfinding sharrows, speed humps, traffic circles, crosswalk upgrades and sometimes restrictions on thru traffic.

## **Why are you proposing sharrows?**

Sharrows are proposed primarily as a wayfinding strategy to identify the bike path of travel and will be installed in coordination with speed humps in some areas. The streets where sharrows being placed and that bikes will be guided to (Vidal/Gellert) have low volume, low speed vehicle traffic and offer a safe shared road environment.

## **Where is the project proposing protected bikeways on Lake Merced Blvd.?**

There will be a protected northbound bike lane between:

- John Muir Dr and Brotherhoodway
- Font Blvd and Middlefield Dr
- Sunset Blvd and Skyline Blvd.

There will be a protected southbound bike lane between:

- Skyline Blvd to Sunset Circle Parking Lot
- Sunset Circle Parking Lot to Middlefield Dr
- Brotherhoodway to John Muir Dr.

Please refer to the story map linked below for more detail regarding each section of Lake Merced Blvd.: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/5434a1264f0640ecbe32e6b930709240>

## **Why can't you install a bike lane along the Gellert Dr median?**

Converting the median along Gellert drive requires extensive surveying, excavation, engineering, construction, interagency coordination all of which are outside the Quick Build project scope.

## **Why are you recommending concrete median islands?**

With the higher traffic speeds on Lake Merced, we are proposing a more robust vertical buffer in comparison to a safe-hit post.

## **How are bikes going to access the neighborways?**

We are proposing bike ramps along the neighborhood side of Lake Merced Blvd right before Brotherhood Way, between Vidal and Lake Merced Blvd northbound asphalt path, and before Vidal.

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## Transit Questions

### **When is the 58 coming back?**

Muni plans to modify the line but we are still grappling with operator shortages so we've had to push service changes out and prioritize service changes to resorting routes that are not yet in service. We are making service changes at the pace of hiring. We have a service change coming April 16 to bring back the 8AX/BX and then the next service change is being planned for summer. Stay tuned for details on what that will include.

### **Who should we contact about transit?**

Please call 311 or email [TellMuni@SFMTA.com](mailto:TellMuni@SFMTA.com). We know people sometimes prefer to email different folks working in government, but the best way to ensure that your issue is being tracked properly is to email TellMuni or call 311. Doing those things creates a "case" in our database, not in someone's email box. That case can be assigned to the right staff and each step along the way is saved to provide a historic record of the issue. It also adds to our data about different topics and issues.

### **Are all flag stops getting transit boarding islands?**

Almost all of the flag stops along Lake Merced Blvd (except around Brotherhood Way) are proposed to get a transit boarding island in order to provide a safe waiting area for riders separate from the bike lane.

### **Why isn't Brotherhood Way getting a transit boarding island?**

Since we are directing bicyclists to ramp to and from the sidewalk at this location, buses will be able to board from the curb.

### **Why are you moving some stops?**

All locations where we are proposing to move stops are within 250-300 ft of the original stop location. We are working with both Muni and SamTrans to optimize stop locations based on proximity to signalized crosswalks, existing driveways, etc. In other areas, we are proposing a transit boarding island to improve the service times of the routes.

## Timeline Questions

### **When will we find out the final design?**

We will be spending the next few months reviewing survey responses, continuing to meet with stakeholders and community members along the corridor, and refining the design. In late August/early September will be sending email updates, mailing postcards, and posting flyers with info about the final design and advertising the SFMTA board hearing date (process known as legislation).

### **When is SFMTA Board Approval/Legislation**

The project team is aiming to get this project approved/legislation by the SFMTA board in mid-September.

### **How long will construction take?**

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The project is estimated to take 3-6 months. We are hoping to pursue a phased construction where we start on both ends of the project areas and the neighborways and work our way towards the center of the project.

## **Collisions and Speed Questions**

### **When and how did the two fatalities occur along Lake Merced Blvd?**

One fatality occurred in 2017 and another in 2021. Both were pedestrians hit by vehicles.

### **What are the common reasons for crashes?**

Most collisions are either rear ends or broadsides. More than 30% of reported incidents (27 collisions) cite unsafe speeds as a primary factor of the collision. Other common collision factors include following too closely (7 collisions ) and failure to yield right of way when turning.

### **What are the speed limits?**

The speed limits are 40 mph between John Muir and Winston. 35 mph between Winston and Skyline.

### **Can we lower the speed limit?**

Under the provision of Assembly Bill 43, San Francisco only has the authority to lower speed limits along certain streets that serve in key business activity districts. The speed limit for the rest of the streets in the city are under the State of California's jurisdiction. If the proposed improvements result in lower speeds, we may be able to conduct a speed survey which would enable speed limit lowering.

## **Lake Merced Community Based Transportation Plan (CBTP) Questions**

### **Who was involved in creating the Lake Merced Pedestrian Safety Community Based Transportation Plan (CBTP)?**

The CBTP Project was directed by a Steering Committee of 10 members with diverse interests/backgrounds including WalkSF, Merced Extension Triangle Neighborhood, Lakeshore Elementary, SFSU, Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center, District 7 staff, residents, and regular commuters. The Steering Committee met monthly from January to June 2021 to:

- Establish baseline conditions
- Perform a community safety needs assessment
- Develop a prioritized list of pedestrian safety improvements for Lake Merced Boulevard

### **Where can I find the recommendations proposed in the Lake Merced Pedestrian Safety CBTP?**

All recommendations are discussed and prioritized in depth the in plan document, which can be found at this link: [https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2021/10/lake\\_merced\\_pedestrian\\_safety\\_cbtp.pdf](https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2021/10/lake_merced_pedestrian_safety_cbtp.pdf)

### **Will the recommendations listed in the plan be implemented and when?**

The CBTP document details which recommendations are higher priority and discusses the feasibility of implementation. Most of the recommendations such as improving striping at intersections, adding signs, upgrading signal heads, narrowing traffic lanes and installing bike facilities will be implemented by the Lake Merced Quick Build project. The Lake Merced Quick Build project will likely start construction in late 2022.