

Appendix H: White Paper

SMALL STREETS PROJECT DELIVERY

KEY TOPICS

- Discussion of opportunities to improve the timeliness, transparency, and effectiveness of small transportation project implementation

1 Introduction and Project Purpose

San Francisco agency's processes for identifying, prioritizing, and designing small-scale street improvements (sidewalk bulbouts, crosswalks, bike lanes, traffic calming) is a mystery to the public and a source of frustration to many in city government. The fragmented institutional roles and myriad funding sources in the transportation sector are common explanations for slower-than-desired delivery rates, as are funding related challenges. These conditions exist in other U.S. cities, however, and may not fully explain the situation in San Francisco.

The Project Delivery Strategic Initiative of the San Francisco Transportation Plan (SFTP; see Attachment 1 for list of acronyms) seeks to identify opportunities to improve the timeliness, transparency, and effectiveness of project implementation in San Francisco's transportation sector. This research on small streets projects seeks to document the extent to which key stakeholders and practitioners perceive a problem with the delivery of small street projects, and to document their views about the specific challenges that exist in San Francisco. This research project also made note of stakeholders' input on how best to address these issues.

This research project was intended to provide neutral ground for stakeholders and practitioners to provide comments and as such, this summary doesn't rank or evaluate interviewee responses. They are intended to provide a jumping off point for discussion for agencies to work together to identify steps that can be taken to improve the perception and actual timeliness, transparency, and effectiveness of small scale transportation project implementation.

2 Research Approach

In March 2013, investigator Victoria Eisen (Principal with Eisen|Letunic) conducted 27 interviews, representing 14 agencies and organizations (see Attachment 2 for list of interviewees). Interviewees ranged from members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (which also sits as the Transportation Authority governing board), city agencies responsible for planning, programming, designing and/or implementing projects, to civic organizations and other non-government project sponsors. Ms. Eisen asked respondents about their perceptions of project delivery and about the main contributing factors to delays in the context of five categories: Policy, Process, Organizational, Resources and Outside

Regulation. When asked, “small projects” were defined by example, including bulbouts, crosswalks, bike lanes and other spot improvements typically limited to a single intersection or street resurfacing segment. In all, these interviews resulted in over 60 pages of notes, which were then organized into large matrices, categorizing interviewee comments on specific challenges to small project delivery and suggestions for addressing them. A summary of what she heard is presented below.

3 Summary of Findings

- A. All persons interviewed stated that San Francisco is challenged in delivering small street projects.
- B. Primary challenges mentioned span all five categories of contributing factors:
 1. City lacks strong and clear leadership implementing transportation policies.
 2. City’s Complete Streets (CS) policy doesn’t include a modal hierarchy.
 3. Final designs based on consensus can diminish ability to reach project goals.
 4. Coordination within and among agencies is inadequate to deliver a multi-modal vision.
 5. Agencies have different transportation priorities and cultures.
 6. Funding and grant administration processes are burdensome and inefficient.
 7. No funding available for pre-implementation or coordination.
 8. City lacks a sufficient pool of experienced, proactive project managers.
 9. Some city staff who interact with the public need public communication training.
 10. CEQA empowers opponents of any project.
- C. Main suggestions mentioned span efforts that have already been begun, are just being initiated, and those that respondents would like to see happen, including:
 1. City needs single leader to establish transportation priorities.
 2. Add a street-specific modal hierarchy to city’s CS policy.
 3. Create city Department of Transportation (DOT) or Streets Department (separate from Muni), with ultimate responsibility for delivering CS projects.
 4. Create integrated project teams.
 5. Create hierarchy among existing agencies so one is ultimately responsible for delivering CS and others provide support.
 6. Streamline funding and grants management processes.
 7. Create funding pot for CS project conception and coordination.
 8. All PMs should use same CS checklist (see Seattle) and attend a unified PM training program.
 9. Provide public communications training to staff who will interact with the public.
 10. Implement proposed CEQA reforms.

The attached five tables summarize the specific challenges to project delivery mentioned by interviewees and identify their specific suggestions for addressing them. As noted above, interviewee comments have been summarized in the tables below, but have not been ranked or evaluated since this research is intended to inform future discussions about next steps for improving small project delivery in San Francisco.

4 Policy

CHALLENGES	INTERVIEWEE SUGGESTIONS
1. City lacks strong and clear leadership in implementing transportation policies (e.g., Transit First policy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without leadership no one agency wants to give up control over project implementation • No high-level institutional champions for coordinating (as Better Streets Plan had) 	a) City needs single leader to establish transportation priorities across departments. b) City needs overarching pedestrian safety policy to guide all agencies.* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g., prioritization methodology
2. City's CS policy doesn't include a modal hierarchy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City bad at weighing tradeoffs • City still fighting about what streets should be used for • No citywide trans-departmental vision • BSP doesn't say on which corridors which modes trump 	a) CS policy needs a street-specific modal hierarchy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g. NYC DOT guidance • In General Plan Transportation Element
3. Agencies' priorities are sometimes inconsistent with one another	a) Includes policy, process and organizational solutions.
4. Plans have no clear implementation mechanism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g., Pedestrian Action Strategy 	a) Develop TEP for walking.* b) Ped strategy needs metrics and deadlines like ADA Transition Plan & city PCI policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g., Ped Action Strategy calls for fixing ~5 mi/yr of roads with high ped collisions over 10 years
5. Past charter amendments constrain future flexibility.	a) Role of Charter should be to establish departments & commissions, but should be vague about specific responsibilities of each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove prescriptions from Charter because priorities change. • Facilitate needed Charter changes through ordinance.

* Initiative underway

5 Process

CHALLENGES	INTERVIEWEE SUGGESTIONS
1. Final designs based on consensus can diminish ability to reach project goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g. TASC • Need for 100% consensus reduces opportunities for innovation • Agencies can veto a project by stonewalling/ignoring it • Innovative projects can suffer death by 1,000 cuts 	a) Street Design Review Committee* - if conflicts between agencies, Committee will rule in favor of city policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controller’s Report recommendation & legislation introduced by Supervisor Wiener* • Reports to Mayor & incl reps from all agencies • Anyone can request that a project be reviewed • Eventually would replace TASC
2. Coordination within and among agencies is inadequate to deliver a multi-modal vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streets Capital Group - members don’t have authority to approve projects; run by PLN, which is not an implementing agency, so implementing agencies don’t feel ownership of process • Reluctance on part of PMs to coordinate across departments / agencies (because perceived as slowing down projects) or add scope onto projects to point that scale will trigger TASC or public process. • No setting for considering surface and subsurface infrastructure at the same time • MTA staff doesn’t typically do constructability analyses. • DPW repaves roadways, but MTA does striping, which sometimes leads to 60-90-day delay between the two tasks. • MTA review by one department doesn’t reflect needs of all MTA departments. • See POLICY challenge #4. 	a) Create integrated project teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider putting MTA (Sustainable Streets), DPW & PLN in same bldg • Eliminate barrier of travel time between bldgs • Easier than ballot initiative or charter amend • Include centralized outreach (see PROCESS suggestion 5d) • Jointly designate or hire pool of PMs to deliver program of high-priority projects, where coordination is essential. b) All PMs should use same CS checklist* (see Seattle) and attend a unified PM training program. c) Establish policies on surface/subsurface infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLN should coordinate with PUC on Green Connections Plan re: subsurface utilities • PUC should use subdivision guidelines as an opportunity to do this. • Joint PUC/TA presentation to TA Board since both agencies have funding for long range planning/priority-setting • Follow successful examples of surface / subsurface coordination, e.g., PUC Green Infrastructure d) Institutionalize coordination through Envista* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden “Follow the Paving” efforts beyond bond projects* • DPW needs to anticipate and initiate opportunities to coordinate to implement CS components • Keep Envista’s planning module updated (TA to fund this effort?) • Use common set of tools to track Envista 5-yr paving program, MTA 5-yr Cap. Plan, Prop K 5YPPs e) DPW should conduct constructability review before resources are spent on project design. f) Single agency should repave and restripe. g) Create a “Jump Start” funding pot to facilitate CS additions to projects (see RESOURCES 2a)
3. Project development and delivery processes unclear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clarity on process of reviewing, approving, delivering projects on part of public, elected officials & other agencies • 5-yr paving program drives implementation of CS features due to BSP 5-yr paving moratorium, yet it’s not subject to public process. 	a) Publish Citizens’ Guide to Transportation Planning, with each implementing agency writing its own section to describe how ideas become on-the-ground projects.
4. City ignores own plans, policies, standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g., Transit First, Complete Streets, neighborhood plans • “Next steps” sections of plans typically lack detail with varying buy-in of implementing agencies. • Under current conditions, city has more projects 	a) City needs single leader on transportation to demand compliance, quality designs (see POLICY suggestion 1a) b) Plans need more detailed “Next Steps” and agreed timelines to implementation, e.g. see Bi County Transportation Study Table 19. pp.76

identified in completed plans than can be implemented in next 20+ years.

<p>5. Public process is too time-consuming and inadequate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much time between public meetings and construction • Unwillingness of staff at public meetings to disappoint public with realistic constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reduce number of meetings per project b) Deliver quickly as results get stale c) Move/add meetings closer to implementation d) Centralize outreach role using citywide professionals (like BART model) e) Develop outreach guidelines or toolkit for PMs.
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* Initiative underway

6 Organizational

CHALLENGES	INTERVIEWEE SUGGESTIONS
<p>1. Multiple agencies involved in transportation gives rise to varying practices and priorities, creates confusion for the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies led by separate boards with sometimes dissimilar priorities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “PCI is more important to DPW than number of people killed.” – “MTA is too focused on Muni, moving traffic, parking and LOS and not focused enough on pedestrian safety.” – “Since DPW reports to the Mayor and not the BOS, the SFTP is not compelling to them.” – “Multiple capital plans is confusing to the public, agencies and decision-makers.” • Agencies have different cultures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “MTA often lacks sufficient internal coordination between and among divisions.” – “Although PUC (and private utilities) are responsible for all that lies below transportation projects, they’re not typically involved in project pre-planning, nor do they always consider above-ground impacts of their projects.” – “PLN understands the value of Traffic Calming/CS better than many implementing agencies.” – “TA does not have implementing responsibilities, so is not sensitive to challenges.” 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Main Organizational Suggestions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Keep organizational structure as is and focus reform on <i>Process</i> recommendations b) Create hierarchy among existing agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTA Sustainable Streets or DPW would be transportation hub of city • Other agencies/organizations would play specific supporting roles c) Create new city DOT or Streets Dept <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New York City DOT model, where staff includes planners, designers and construction <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Other Organizational Suggestions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Transit operations should remain its own agency. e) Put sewer & water delivery under DPW so easier to consider roadwork (like Palo Alto model) f) City (DPW) should accept responsibility for maintaining streets currently managed by Rec/Park, Port & Presidio g) Need strong, <i>empowered</i> PMs (see RESOURCES, suggestion #6) h) Better integrate DPH injury prevention team and SFMTA. i) Move Street Lighting Bureau from PUC to DPW or new Streets Dept.
<p>2. MTA cannot focus on traffic calming until transit house is in order.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Create funding plan for implementation of TEP
<p>3. Which agency to contact is confusing for non-governmental project sponsors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) City should have single point of contact for non-governmental agencies working to construct projects.

7 Resources

Challenges	Interviewee suggestions
FUNDING-RELATED	
<p>1. Funding and grant administration processes are burdensome and inefficient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easier to use federal funds (FHWA, FTA) than Prop K Separating allocations by phase is not perceived to improve project quality. PMs and grants managers not always coordinated Caltrans/FHWA grants require sponsors and PMs to be diligent and aware of grant expiration deadlines and other requirements, e.g., HSIP. Grant admin costs can exceed grant amount for a given phase of smaller projects. Work stops while grant recipients are waiting for phase-specific approval (TA CAC, TA Plans and Programs, TA Board process takes 9 weeks). MTA can't open job # until after TA allocation (thereafter, process takes up to 2 months). 	<p>a) With grantees, TA should develop and pilot a streamlined Prop K funding process for smaller projects, and monitor and report on resulting project delivery outcomes (e.g., create two Prop K allocations per year: conceptual engineering and constructability review for prioritized projects; and completion of design and construction)</p> <p>b) TA should fund multi-phase projects through one allocation if they are sufficiently developed and reflect input from multiple agencies. (New MTA traffic calming program may provide opportunity to combine allocations.)</p> <p>c) Grant recipients should train PMs on timely use of funds deadlines and other federal grant requirements.</p> <p>d) Better align the accounting teams of Planning, DPW, TA and the Controller's Office.</p>
<p>2. Inadequate funding available for pre-implementation and coordination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g., conceptual planning, 30% design, environmental analysis Implementation departments are project funded. 	<p>a) Create funding pot for planning, project development, conceptual design & environmental analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund through Prop K 5YPP process, which allows this use of funds for capital project development. Applicants would be integrated in cross-departmental teams (see PROCESS suggestion 2a)
<p>3. Life-cycle costs, including maintenance and operations, not always considered during project design.</p>	<p>a) Consider O&M costs when designing projects.</p>
<p>4. Enterprise departments cannot access general funds, yet politically, most cannot raise fees at will.</p>	<p>a) Allow MTA greater access to the General Fund.</p> <p>b) Mayor's Transportation Task Force and SFTP are considering new revenues for transportation.*</p>
<p>5. Difficult for neighborhoods with few development opportunities to undertake area transportation plans because there is little hope of obtaining impact fees to implement projects.</p>	<p>a) Fund neighborhood plans in built areas w/General Fund.</p> <p>b) Prop K should provide funding to support neighborhood transportation plans, especially those without opportunities for large development projects.</p> <p>c) Prop K should directly fund streetscape improvements in these neighborhoods.</p>
STAFF-RELATED	
<p>6. City lacks a sufficient pool of experienced, proactive PMs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to know coordination process, decision-points Need to have communication & facilitation skills Can be consultant (e.g., UC Hastings successfully utilized contract PM with city familiarity in parking garage project) 	<p>a) Jointly designate and hire pool of PMs to deliver program of high-priority projects, where coordination is essential.</p> <p>b) Create integrated project teams (see PROCESS 2a)</p> <p>c) All PMs for CS projects should use the same checklist* (see Seattle) and attend a unified PM training program.</p> <p>d) Use citywide pool of consultants.</p> <p>e) Remove disincentives for PMs to add Complete Street features, (e.g. provide design toolkits, funding pots)</p>
<p>7. Some city staff who interact with the public need public communication training.</p>	<p>a) Train staff who will interact with the public to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate clear goals and objectives from city policy Work with community push back Improve listening skills Discuss project trade-offs <p>b) Would save time if public were told what can and cannot happen at outset of planning process.</p> <p>c) MTA Livable Streets: just hired Public Information Officer to respond to inquiries.*</p>

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| 8. Most city agencies under-utilize consultants to design, manage and deliver small projects. | a) Consider using consultants to help with some project development/ delivery tasks
b) Utilize on-call consultant contracts to minimize time to procure consultants for a given project.
c) Streamline city contracting process |
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* Initiative underway

8 Outside Regulation

CHALLENGES	INTERVIEWEE SUGGESTIONS
1. Federal funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPA requirement can delay projects or risk losing funds • Projects that don't maintain schedule can also lose funding • Consultants' contracts need to conform to federal standards • Difficult to change scope/add features 	a) Proactively identify good candidates for federal funds in the early stages of project development. b) Create backlog of fall-back projects so federal funding isn't lost when a funded project can't meet federal deadlines or requirements.
2. Cal-OSHA requires de-electrification of catenary wires during construction beneath them, which triggers need for diesel replacement/overtime, which increases project cost significantly	
3. "CEQA empowers opponents of any project"	a) Implement proposed CEQA reforms.

9 Appendix

9.1 | List of Interviewees

AGENCY	INTERVIEWEE
City Administrator's Office	Brian Strong
Controller's Office	Chava Kronenberg
Controller's Office	Christina Lee
DPW	Ramon Kong
DPW	Douglas Legg
DPW	Cristina Olea
Livable City	Tom Radulovich
SFMTA	Matt Brill
SFMTA	Damon Curtis
SFMTA	Darton Ito
SFMTA	Jonathan Rewers
SFMTA	Seleta Reynolds
SFMTA	Manito Velasco
Planning	Adam Varat
Public Utilities Commission	Rachel Kraai
Recreation & Parks	Karen Mauney-Brodek
SFCTA	Commissioner Avalos
SFCTA	Commissioner Chiu
SFCTA	Commissioner Wiener
SFCTA	Sunny Angulo (Comm. Kim's office)
SFCTA	Andres Power (Comm. Wiener's office)
SFCTA	Rachel Hiatt
SFCTA	Ben Stupka
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition (SFBC)	Kit Hodge
San Francisco Planning & Urban Research (SPUR)	Gabriel Metcalf
University of California, Hastings College of Law	David Seward
Walk SF	Elizabeth Stampe

9.2 | Acronyms

ACRONYM	FULL TITLE
5YPP	5-Year Prioritization Programs
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BSP	Better Streets Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CAC	Citizen’s Advisory Committee (of Transportation Authority)
CS	Complete Streets
DOT	Department of Transportation
DPH	Department of Public Health
DPW	Department of Public Works
Envista	DPW’s new project-tracking software program
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program
MTA	Municipal Transportation Agency (or SFMTA)
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
O&M	Operations & Maintenance
OSHA	Occupational Safety & Health Administration
PCI	Pavement Condition Index
PDA	Priority Development Area
PLN	Planning Department
PM	Project Management or Project Manager
PUC	Public Utilities Commission
SFTP	San Francisco Transportation Plan
TASC	Transportation Advisory Staff Committee
TA	Transportation Authority (or SFMTA)
TC	Traffic Calming
TEP	Transit Effectiveness Project