

1 [Better Streets Policy.]

2

3 **Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to add Chapter 98, the Better Streets**
4 **Policy; making environmental findings; authorizing and urging official acts in**
5 **furtherance of this Ordinance; and requesting General Plan amendments to incorporate**
6 **the Better Streets Policy and its supporting principles.**

7 Note: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;
8 deletions are ~~*strikethrough italics Times New Roman*~~.
9 Board amendment additions are double underlined.
Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

10 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

11 Section 1. Findings.

12 (a) The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this
13 Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public
14 Resources Code sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the
15 Board of Supervisors in File No. and is incorporated herein by reference.

16 (b) The Board finds that the authority of the City in articulating its vision for its streets
17 and public right-of-ways in its Municipal Codes and in General Plan is hereby affirmed. All
18 departments shall coordinate their various decisions regarding the planning, design, and use
19 of public right-of-ways so as to fully carry out the vision for streets contained in this Better
20 Streets Policy, so that all actions balance the needs of all street users, and so that all actions
21 of City government work in unison toward the creation of streets and publicly-accessible right-
22 of-ways that contain the characteristics and objectives of good street design and sound
23 environmental planning.

24 Section 2. The San Francisco Administrative Code is hereby amended by adding
25 Chapter 98 to read as follows:

1
2 **CHAPTER 98 - THE BETTER STREETS POLICY.**

3 **Section 98.1. Better Streets Policy; Governing Principles; Coordination of Departmental**
4 **Actions.**

5 (a) The Better Streets Policy is an official policy of the City and County of San Francisco and
6 shall read as follows: Design City streets in keeping with the Urban Design Element of the City's
7 General Plan, the City's Transit-First Policy, and best management practices in environmental
8 infrastructure design to ensure continued quality of life, economic well-being, and environmental
9 health in San Francisco.

10 (b) In furtherance of the Better Streets Policy, the City recognizes that San Francisco's streets
11 constitute a large portion of the City's public space. Implementation of the Better Streets Policy will
12 ensure that such streets will continue to be:

13 (1) Corridors for all modes of transportation, with a particular emphasis on pedestrians and
14 transit priorities;

15 (2) Organizers of the City's development pattern and how individuals perceive such a pattern;

16 (3) Attractive, safe, and useable public open spaces with generous landscaping and greenery;

17 (4) Sustainable and healthy components of the City's ecology, taking advantage of available
18 technologies to reduce the environmental impact of our street systems and to better manage stormwater
19 runoff; and

20 (5) Providers of access to properties, public view corridors, light, and air.

21 (c) As part of an approval or decision concerning any public and private project that impacts
22 or is adjacent to a publicly-accessible right-of-way, all City departments shall coordinate their various
23 determinations regarding the planning, design, and use of public right-of-ways in accordance with the
24 Better Streets Policy and the following supporting principles:

1 (1) Streets must be designed as a whole, cognizant of the facing buildings and uses within them,
2 such that the resulting street environment is of appropriate scale and character.

3 (2) Streets that support and invite multiple uses, including safe, active, and ample space for
4 pedestrians, bicycles, and public transit, are more conducive to the public life of an urban
5 neighborhood and efficient movement of people and goods than streets designed primarily to move
6 automobiles. Decisions regarding the design and use of the City's limited public street space shall
7 prioritize space for pedestrians, bicycles, and public transit over space for automobiles.

8 (3) Street trees and landscaping in right-of-ways have been demonstrated to ameliorate the
9 negative effects of traffic on pedestrian areas and adjacent uses, enrich open spaces, enhance property
10 values, and increase the safety and attractiveness of neighborhoods. Decisions regarding the design
11 and use of the City's streets shall result in replacing unnecessary paved areas with street trees and
12 landscaping wherever possible, and shall facilitate the health and maintenance of such landscaping.
13 Drought-tolerant plantings, passive rainwater retention systems, and other technologies shall be used
14 to reduce the costs associated with mechanical irrigation where possible.

15 (4) The design of the City's streets shall minimize visual clutter. This concern shall extend to
16 the number, design, and placement of signs, signals, utility structures, and elements oriented to
17 vehicular traffic. Decisions regarding signs and signals for the control of vehicles must consider and
18 balance the visual impact of the design of the street on all users and the image of the City.

19 (5) The control and signalization of vehicular traffic has significant impacts on the quality and
20 safety of the street experience for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit users
21 and operators. Decisions regarding the systems and signals for the control of vehicles, including, but
22 not limited to, changes to signal timing, speed limits, and allowable turning movements, must consider
23 and balance the impact on the street experience and safety of all users.

24
25

1 (6) The design of the right-of-way and adjacent development, including the maintenance and
2 removal of street trees and other landscaping, allowance of curb cuts, and placement of utilities, have
3 significant impact on the street environment. Decisions regarding street design must consider and
4 prioritize pedestrian safety, enjoyment, and comfort.

5 (7) Paved space on many of the City's streets is more than is needed for the safe and efficient
6 movement of transit, bicycles, and automobiles. The City will encourage innovative solutions to reuse
7 such excess street space as planted or open space areas. The City also will consider establishing a
8 program to encourage and make it possible for adjacent neighborhoods to replace paved areas with
9 usable open space, permeable surfaces, plantings, stormwater retention areas, and other public
10 amenities.

11 (8) New technologies and the rethinking of old techniques will provide opportunities for more
12 sustainable design of our public right-of-ways to increase opportunities for public use and enjoyment,
13 reduce pollution and water usage, better manage stormwater, and provide the opportunity for
14 environmental education where possible. The City will encourage and facilitate the use of innovative
15 solutions based on best management practices in environmental planning and design for its publicly-
16 accessible rights-of-ways.

17 (9) Major new developments, both public and private, often include the rebuilding of portions
18 of public right-of-ways and should serve as models of the Better Streets Policy. Special efforts should
19 be made to ensure that such new developments lead by example. Public projects should establish
20 model street and open space designs and private projects should incorporate stronger street design and
21 landscaping standards. The City should encourage local residents, businesses, and other stakeholders
22 to collaboratively develop such designs and standards in order to foster the community's active use and
23 sense of ownership of these spaces over time.

1 Section 3. The Mayor and Directors and General Managers of all City departments are
2 hereby authorized and directed to take any and all lawful actions which they or the City
3 Attorney may deem necessary or advisable in order to effectuate the purpose and intent of
4 this Ordinance.

5 Section 4. The Board urges the Mayor to report to the Board within 6 months of the
6 effective date of this legislation on those actions undertaken pursuant to Section 3 above.
7 Such report may include proposed legislation; recommended actions or activities that may
8 involve the Board of Supervisors, affected City departments, or interested stakeholders; and
9 proposals for the creation of public-private partnerships.

10 Section 5. The Board of Supervisors and Mayor hereby request the Planning
11 Commission, in accordance with Section 340 of the Planning Code, to initiate amendments to
12 the City's General Plan to incorporate the Better Streets Policy and its supporting principles.

13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

By: _____
John D. Malamut
Deputy City Attorney