



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Proposed Evaluation Method – 17th Street Plaza

The 17th & Castro Pedestrian Plaza is a pilot project for the temporary closure of a street for recreational open space. During the temporary closure, the success of the plaza will be evaluated to understand what adjustments need to be made in the short term, and ultimately, whether the temporary closure should be a long term community benefit.

In order to properly evaluate the success of the 17th Street Plaza, there will need to be a comprehensive approach that evaluates all aspects of the plaza. This means that neighbors, business owners, plaza users, and city agencies will all need to be consulted during this trial period.

The Planning Department, aided by Public Architecture, will monitor the project on a weekly basis for the first month and then monthly thereafter to see if any adjustments can be made to improve the plaza's positive impact. A broader evaluation of the plaza will occur in three parts.

There are currently three methods in which the 17th Street Plaza will be evaluated:

1) Baseline Assessment

In order to understand what impact the plaza will have, it is important to understand the perception and function of the plaza prior to project launch. Project partner Great Streets Project (a local non-profit with streetscape and public realm expertise) will deploy a team to conduct measurements within the plaza on Thursday, May 7 (both during the day and at night) and Saturday, May 9 (again, both during the day and at night).

Their information collection will include:

- Pedestrian counts
- Time lapse photos or video to understand space use
- Street user perception surveys
- Crime reports
- Traffic flow

2) Evaluation Round Table

Six weeks into the trial period, the Planning Department will convene a group of stakeholders to discuss the project and its effects, both positive and negative, to date. The purpose of the round table will be to discuss how the closure has affected the status quo of the neighborhood and the services delivered to it. This information will be combined with following preliminary data to produce an advisory report for ISCOTT.

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Members of the round table should include a representative from each of the following:

City Representatives including, but not limited to:

- Mayor's Office of Greening
- Department of Public Works
- MTA
- San Francisco Police Department
- San Francisco Fire Department
- Planning Department

Community Representatives including, but not limited to:

- Supervisor's Office
- Castro CBD
- MUMC
- EVPA
- CAPA
- Hartford Street Residents

Since the plaza will only be operational for six weeks by the time this evaluation is conducted, most information will be preliminary at best. This evaluation should be considered as a limited assessment to provide guidance.

3) Business and Plaza User Surveys

Initially Great Streets Project plans to conduct separate surveys for business surrounding the plaza as well as plaza users themselves approximately one month into the trial period. If the plaza time period is extended they will continue to survey the business owners at approximately month five of the trial period. The survey will be distributed by hand or by mail and will be available to download on the Planning Department's website.

It is important to note that these are the three formal measures that will be taken to evaluate the 17th Street Plaza, however, it is anticipated that there will be a considerable level of informal feedback. The Planning Department can be the reception point for that feedback. A link will be provided on the Upper Market Planning Process website that will allow residents, plaza users, and businesses to submit their feedback on an ongoing basis. This link will be distributed widely throughout the community (some suggestions include: Supervisor's e-mail list, the Upper Market planning process list, neighborhood lists, the Castro CBD and MUMC e-mail lists).