

**NOTES FROM THE
JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE
GEARY BRT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
1765 SUTTER STREET
MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Glynis Nakahara, Alice Kawahatsu

STAFF PRESENT:

Greg Marutani, Jeremy Chan

OTHERS PRESENT:

Monica Munowitch, Wahid Amiri, Colin Dentel-Post, Curt Harrington, David Parisi, Karen Kai, Robert Rusky, Augie Phillips, Kent Iwamiya, Johanna Warden, Marcia Phillips, Samanina Roxas (Supervisor Breed's Office)

Meeting began at 6:05 p.m.

After introductions of those present the agenda presented by the SF County Transit Authority (SFCTA) and the SF Municipal Transit Agency (SFMTA) was

A handout prepared by the SFCTA and SFMTA staff was distributed (Attachment A). The staff provided oral explanations about each drawing. SFCTA/MTA staff responded to questions and/or comments raised by the audience members.

- A. Proposal for Buchanan Street crossing
Install "Z" crosswalk; install two signals that would display "count down" time; may be activated by pedestrians. This aligns with the community comments at the previous meeting.
- B. Proposal for Webster Street intersection
Retain Bridge, add both east and west crosswalks across Geary; eastside surface crossing would need to be designed to prevent "blind spots" for drivers. The design would increase the length of time to complete the "Z" crossing, meaning that pedestrians could not cross in one light cycle; it would not allow for a "bus only" lane and be impacted by possible wait while vehicles making right turns on to Webster.
- C. Steiner Street intersection
Of the three options presented: Retain bridge with shared through lane; Retain bridge and bus lane; Remove bridge west and east side crosswalks, the SFMTA recommendation is to remove the Steiner Bridge, install a left turn signal, at grade crossings. They have reached out to the Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) staff at the Hamilton Center. However JTF questioned whether the individuals contacted (e.g. Phil Ginsberg) could provide an accurate representation of the Hamilton Center staff and its patrons.

SFMTA agreed to:

- 1. Look into the effect of the left turn signal on to Steiner northbound bound.
- 2. Check with users of playgrounds about their position on the Steiner Bridge.

D. Laguna bus stop

The SFMTA recommendation is to discontinue the rapid stop.

SFMTA agreed to:

1. Meet with senior groups
2. Provide information on ridership on corridor
3. Provide the number of buses that would be running on Geary;
4. Provide time differences between rapid and local buses

Way-finding consideration: can program voice over to announce "Fillmore-Japantown" when approaching Fillmore stop. Currently, the system only announces crosstown transit. It is possible to implement announcement by requesting such service in the September 2016.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Attachment: SFCTA/SFMTA April 4, 2016 PowerPoint Presentation

Geary Bus Rapid Transit Project

Japantown Working Group



SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

April 4, 2016

Discussion Overview



- ▶ Review of Buchanan crossing and Webster design recommendation
- ▶ Review of Steiner pedestrian data and design recommendation
- ▶ Review of Laguna bus stop
- ▶ Japantown wayfinding

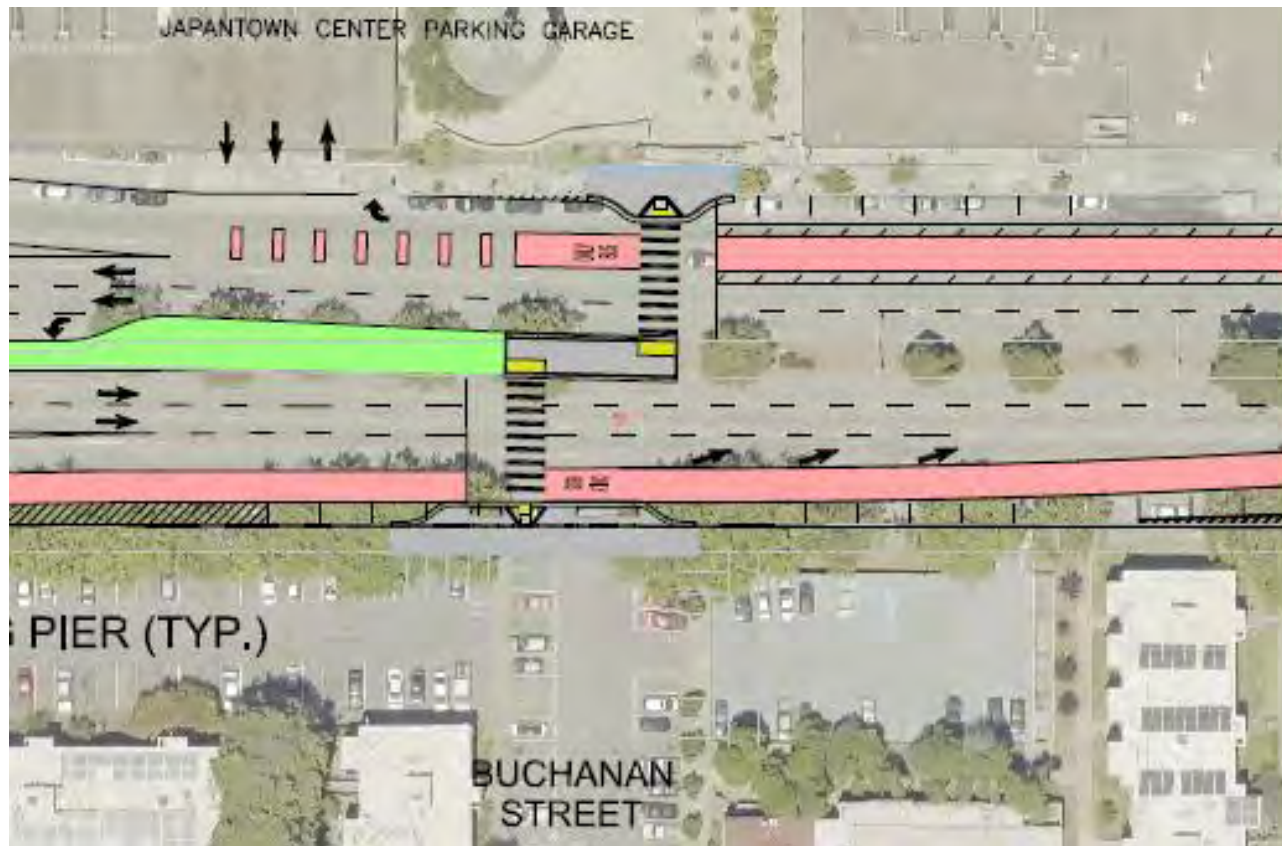
Buchanan Crossing, Proposed Location

ATTACHMENT A



Buchanan Crossing, Proposed Design

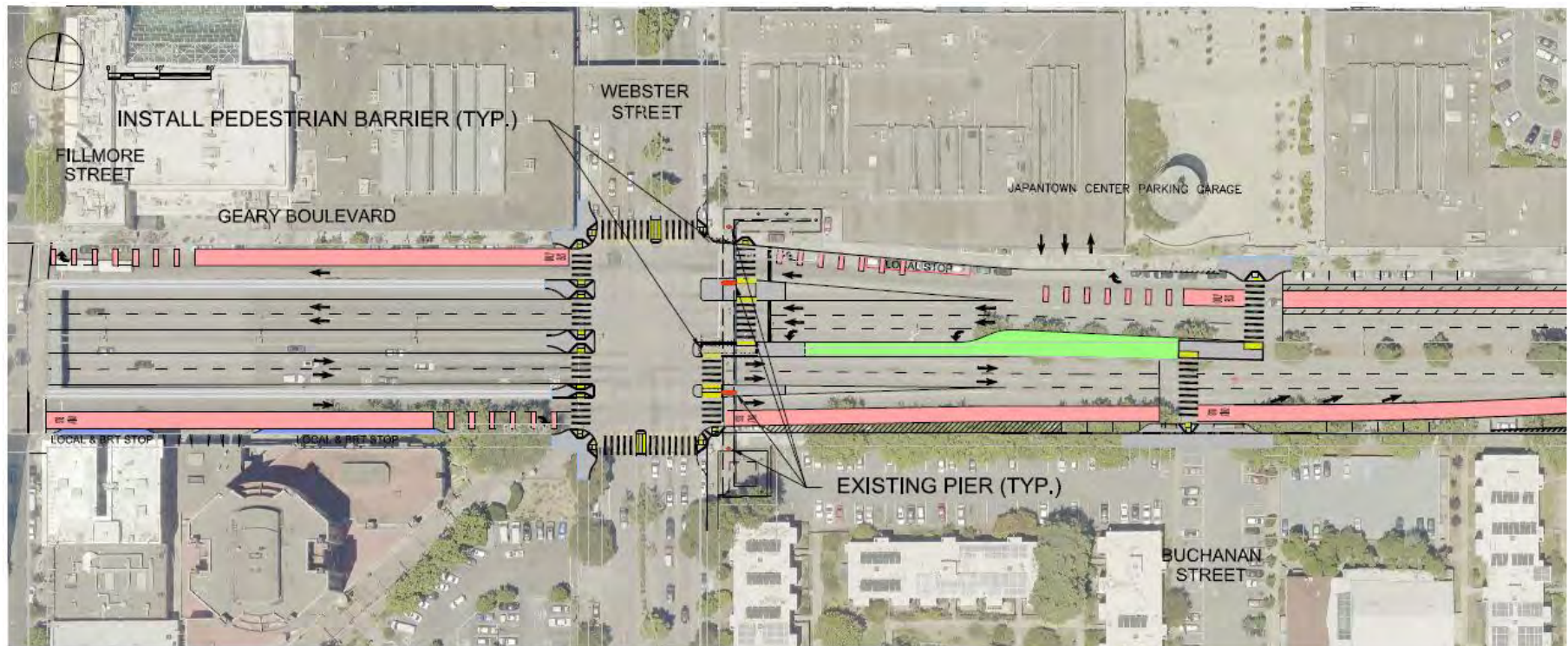
ATTACHMENT A



Webster Recommendation



- Retain existing bridge, add westside crossing and two-stage eastside crossing.



Steiner Street Crossing Review



Pedestrian Counts



- ▶ 79% of pedestrians crossing Geary use the westside surface crossing
- ▶ 16% use the overcrossing
- ▶ 5% cross illegally on eastside surface
- ▶ Children = 1/4th of total Geary crossings at Steiner; Seniors = 3%.



Pedestrian Counts



Steiner & Geary Northbound/Southbound Pedestrian Counts*

| | Bridge | Crosswalk | Eastside | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Total Pedestrians | 121 (16%) | 607 (79%) | 38 (5%) | 766 |
| Children | 47 (24%) | 141 (72%) | 9 (5%) | 197 |
| Adults | 69 (13%) | 447 (82%) | 27 (5%) | 543 |
| Seniors | 5 (19%) | 19 (73%) | 2 (8%) | 26 |
| Mobility-Impaired | 0 (0%) | 2 (67%) | 1 (33%) | 3 |
| Non-Mobility Impaired | 121 (16%) | 605 (79%) | 37 (5%) | 763 |
| Strollers | 5 (15%) | 29 (85%) | 0 (0%) | 34 |
| Non-Strollers | 116 (16%) | 578 (79%) | 38 (5%) | 732 |



*Counts collected Tuesday 8/25/2015 from 7-9am and 3-6pm, and Tuesday 12/15/2015 from 1:15-3pm.

Historical Context

ATTACHMENT A



News » Neighborhoods

June 26, 2013

← PREVIOUS

NEXT →

Unused S.F. walkway over street becomes blight, but city won't remove it

By Andrea Koskey



MIKE KOOZMIN/SPECIAL TO THE S.F. EXAMINER

Neighborhood residents say a raised walkway at Geary Boulevard and Steiner Street is often inhabited by homeless people.

TOOLS

- Twitter
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- Reddit
- StumbleUpon
- Email
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- Save to Instapaper
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RELATED STORIES

Japantown has 'totally bad feng shui,' San Francisco supervisor says

By Ari Burack

Bus speed boost hits roadblocks

By Kamala Kelkar

An unused pedestrian bridge over Geary Boulevard in the Western Addition has become blighted, and though neighbors want it removed, a fix from The City is likely years away.

The concrete structure at Steiner Street was built to help pedestrians cross the busy Geary corridor, but years ago a crosswalk was installed at street level, leaving the bridge less traveled.

Instead, homeless people are moving in and sleeping there all hours of the day. The bridge also is littered with trash and has large areas of graffiti.

Additional Input



- ▶ **Mixed opinions from community**
 - ▶ Japantown – Concern that bridge is safest crossing
- ▶ **Groups that support removal of Steiner Bridge:**
 - ▶ Senior & Disability Action – bridge not ADA compliant, safety and security concerns
 - ▶ WalkSF – removing bridge improves visibility for a safer at-grade crossing, removing would lengthen crossing and narrow sidewalk
 - ▶ Lower Fillmore Merchants – should improve surface crossings instead
 - ▶ Rec & Parks – majority of people accessing facilities cross at-grade

Steiner Street Options Under Consideration



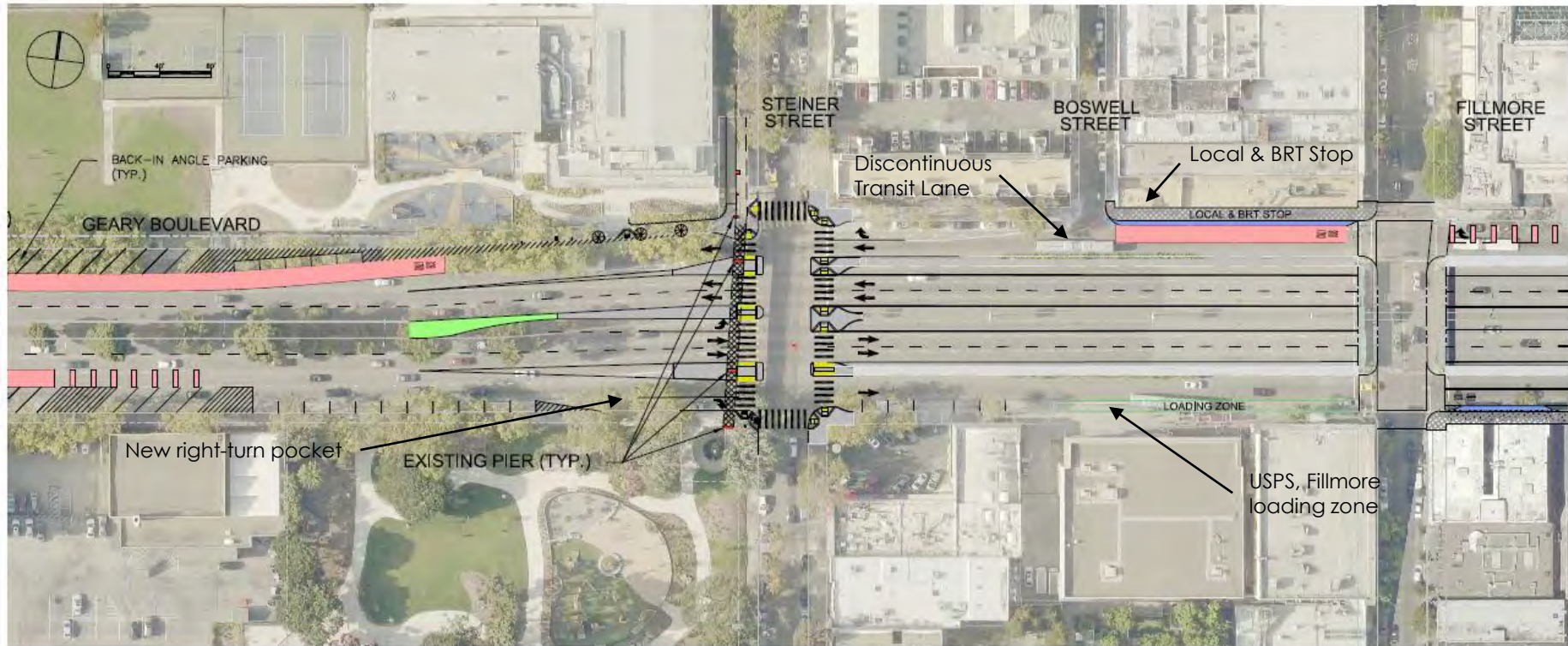
| Options Remaining | Effects to Transit-Only Lane |
|--|------------------------------|
| Remove bridge, retain westside and add eastside surface crossings | Continuous |
| Retain existing bridge and westside crossing, and add eastside crossing | Discontinuous |
| Retain existing bridge and westside crossing, and add eastside crossing; widen roadway | Continuous |

Existing Conditions

ATTACHMENT A



Retain Bridge, Shared Through Lane



Retain Bridge, Shared Through Lane



Tradeoffs:

- ▶ Provides grade-separated crossing
- ▶ Discontinuous transit lane
- ▶ Detailed delay analysis: average delay expected to increase by 9 seconds per bus compared to remove bridge scenario
 - ▶ 25 hours of additional delay for 10,000+ westbound daily passengers
 - ▶ SFMTA not comfortable with accepting this additional delay

Retain Bridge and Bus Lane



Geary Boulevard and Steiner Street Northwest Corner

EXISTING CONDITIONS



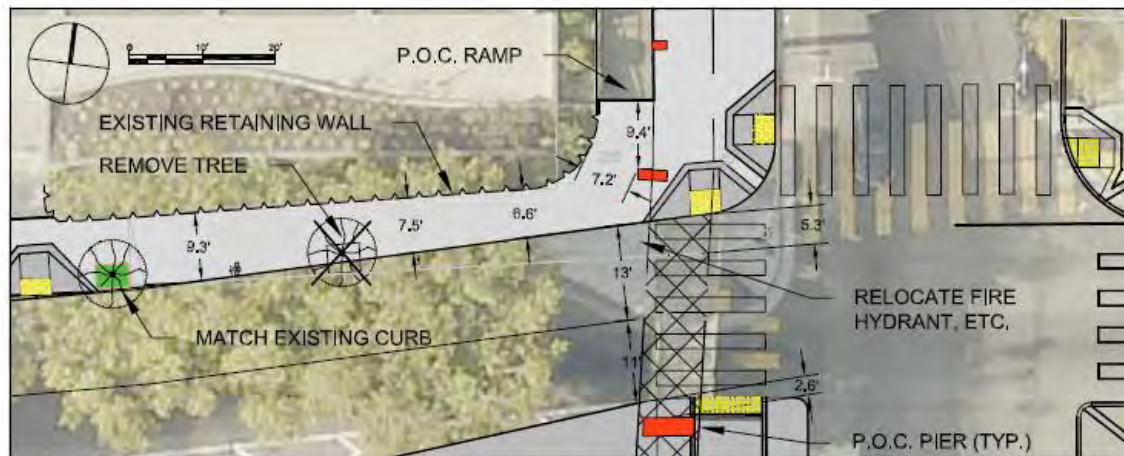
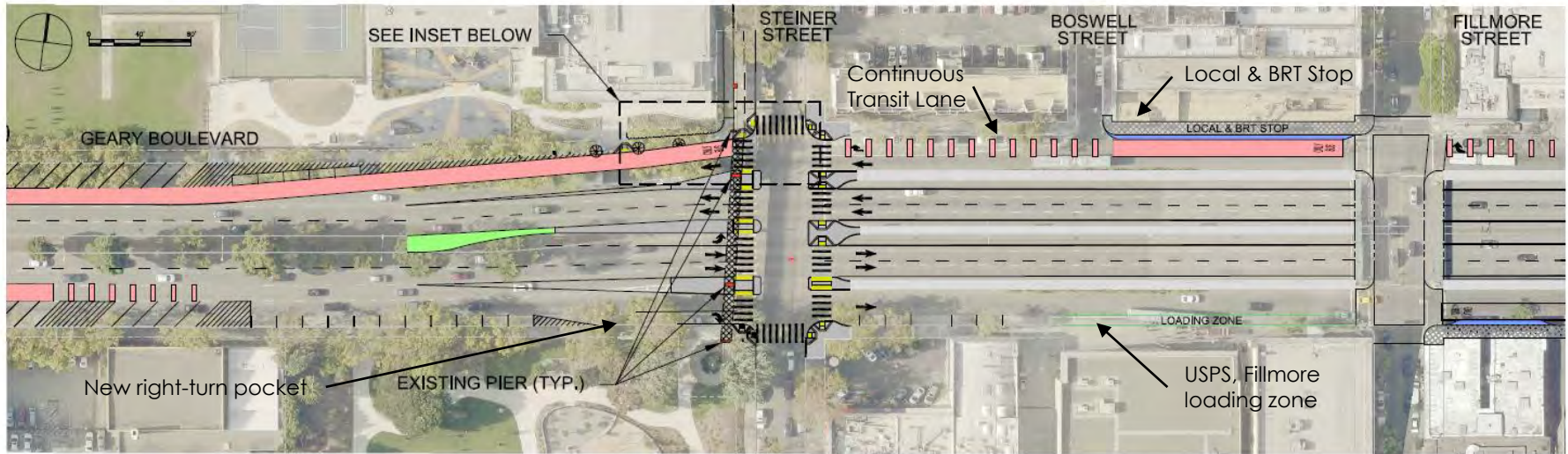
Retain Bridge and Bus Lane



PROPOSED CONDITIONS



Retain Bridge and Bus Lane



Retain Bridge and Bus Lane

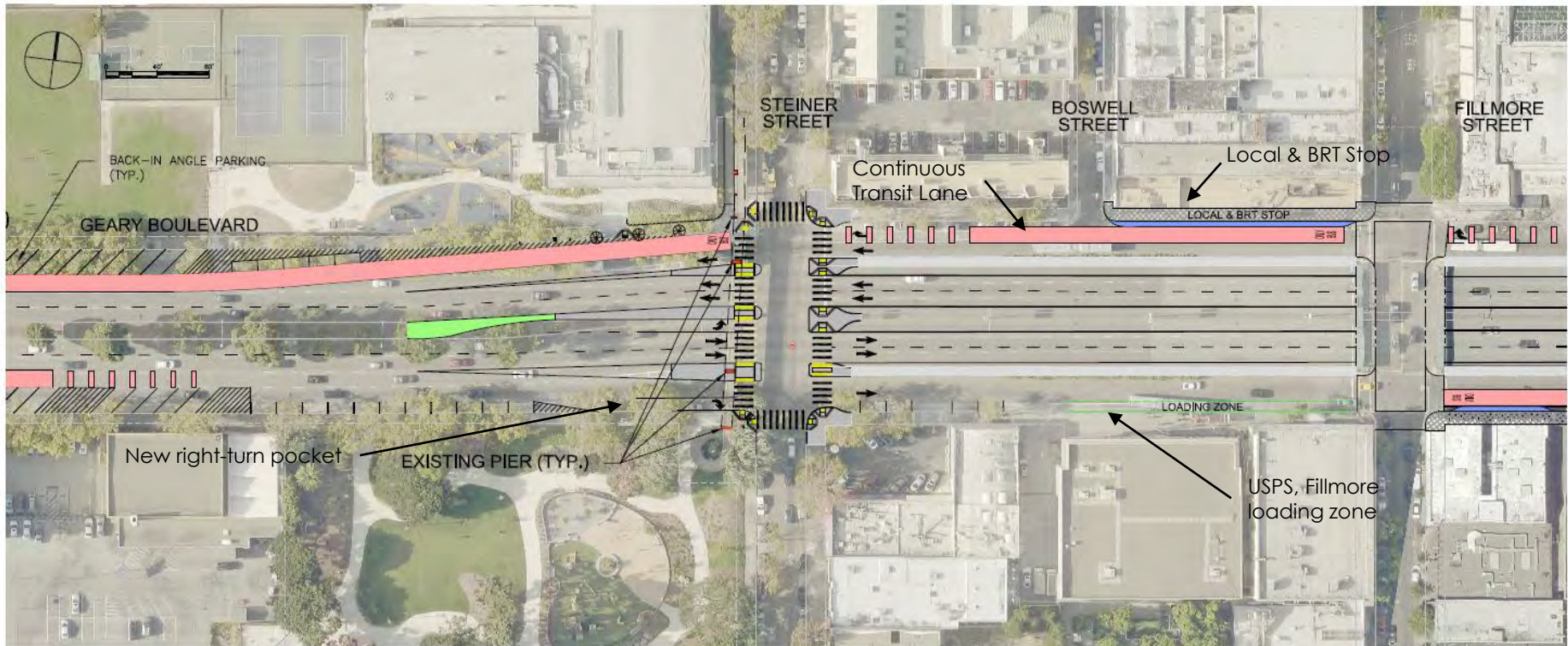


Tradeoffs:

- ▶ Enables continuous transit lane
- ▶ Provides grade-separated crossing
- ▶ Removal of a mature tree
- ▶ Reduction in sidewalk to 6.6' width doesn't meet Better Streets standards
- ▶ Westside surface crossing distance increases

Remove Bridge, West and Eastside Crosswalks

ATTACHMENT A



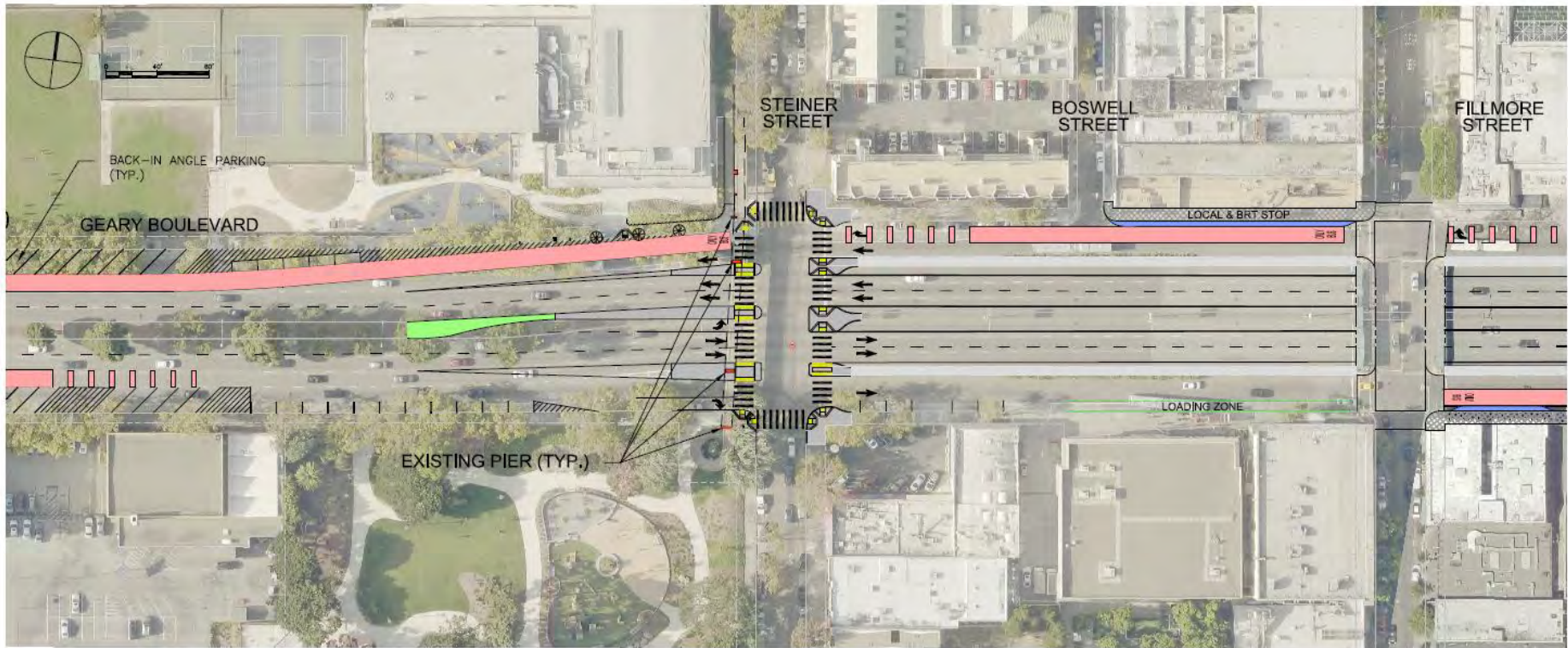
Remove Bridge, West and Eastside Crosswalks



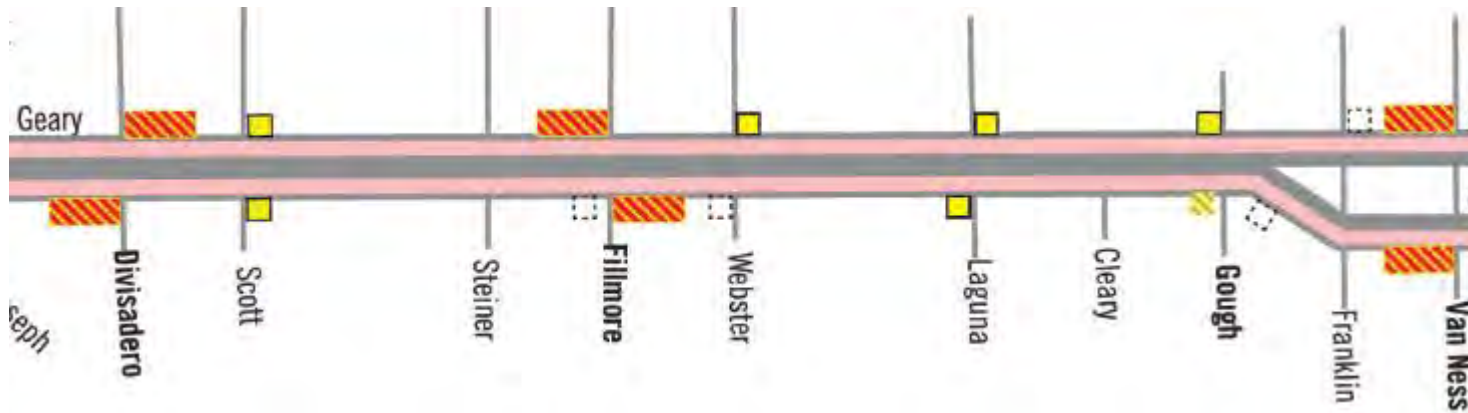
Tradeoffs:

- ▶ Provides surface crossing on westside and eastside
- ▶ Allows higher quality ADA-compliant westside surface crossing, with improved visibility and refuges
- ▶ Could create improved entrance to Kimbell Playground
- ▶ Allows continuous westbound bus-only lane
- ▶ Does not provide grade-separated crossing

► **Remove Bridge, West and Eastside Crosswalks**



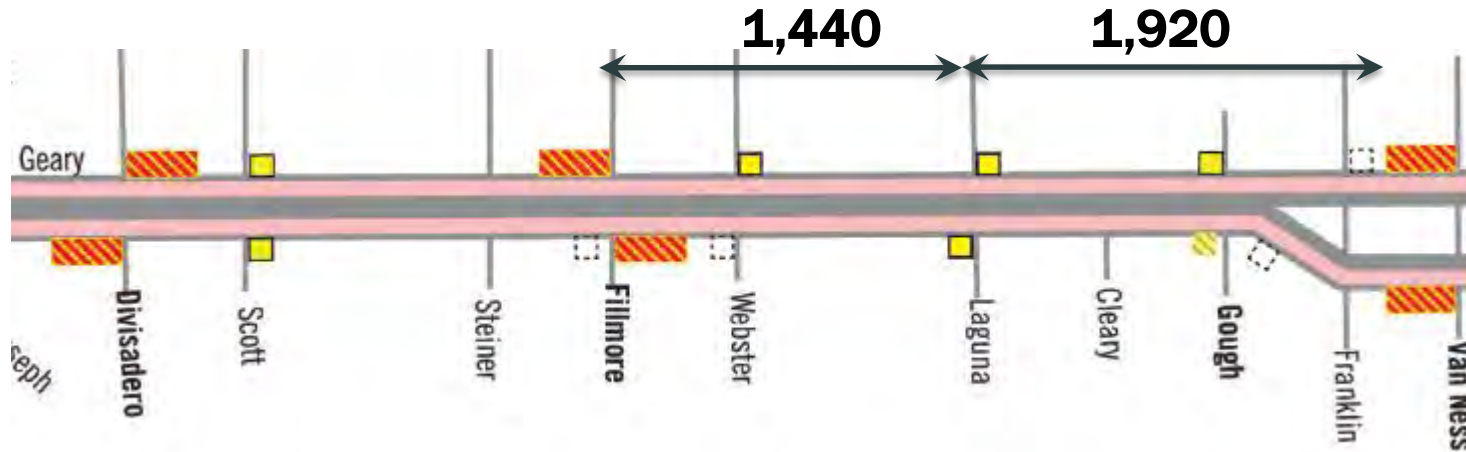
Laguna Bus Stop Proposal: Convert to Local-Only



Rationale:

- ▶ Time savings for Rapid bus riders: 125 hours daily
- ▶ Daily ridership:
 - ▶ Laguna: 2,900
 - ▶ Average Rapid Stop: 4,500
 - ▶ No transfers to other Muni routes, unlike most Rapid stops
- ▶ Local service available for riders who need shorter walking distance 23

Laguna Bus Stop Proposal: Convert to Local-Only



Maximum walk distances to Rapid stops:

- ▶ Laguna current: 840 feet
- ▶ Laguna proposed: 1,680 feet
- ▶ Other proposed Rapid stops, Arguello to Powell: 1,000-1,700 feet

Laguna Bus Stop Proposal: Convert to Local-Only



Implications for Laguna riders:

- ▶ Existing travel time increase to downtown:
 - ▶ 3 minute average increase
 - ▶ Best case: no increase, worst case: 9 min increase
- ▶ Existing travel time increase to Richmond
 - ▶ 3.5 min average increase
 - ▶ Best case: no increase, worst case: 9.5 min increase
- ▶ Bus crowding at Laguna: Local 5-20% lower than Rapid

Wayfinding



- ▶ **Request to include Japantown in stop announcement**
 - ▶ SFMTA coordinating with transit operations
- ▶ **Request for more wayfinding to guide visitors to Japantown destinations**
 - ▶ SFMTA connecting with other local and regional agencies to pursue wayfinding opportunities
 - ▶ Japantown is one of several tourist destinations likely to be included in future wayfinding programs

