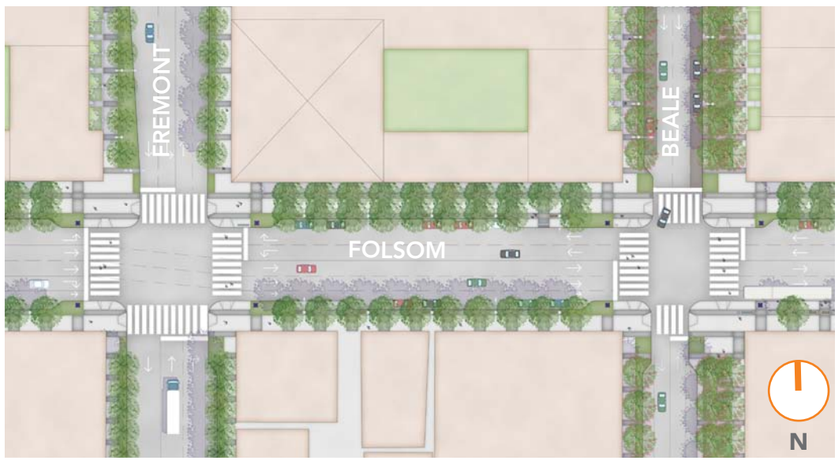
3.5 FOLSOM STREET

Folsom Street is designated as an eastbound arterial road in the General Plan. It forms a one-way couplet with Howard Street. It is also a major route to the Bay Bridge via Essex and First Streets. However, land uses along a significant portion of Folsom Street in the Transbay neighborhood will face major changes in the next few years, transforming its role into a main street that serves both the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods. A number of large-scale high-density residential development projects have been approved and shortly will begin construction along Folsom Street between Fremont and Main Streets, which will bring new residents into the area.

The Design for Development document envisions Folsom Street as a boulevard with two-way circulation, widened sidewalks, an eastbound bike lane, and transit services. Two potential cross-sections are identified, one with a median and the second one without a median. The Mobility Plan in general endorses the concept of establishing two-way traffic here. However, this plan also recognizes that changing Folsom Street to two-way operation potentially could have significant implications to the overall traffic circulation in the South-of-Market area.

The San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) has indicated that it plans, in the near future, to analyze the implications of converting both Howard and Folsom Streets to two-way operation. Before any conclusion is reached by that study, this plan seeks to find an interim plan that meets the needs of the Transbay neighborhood without creating undue impacts on overall traffic circulation in the South of Market area. Thus, this plan proposes to change Folsom Street to two-way operation east of Fremont Street at this point and postpone the two-way proposal between Fremont and Second Street until the completion of the SFCTA's study.

Folsom Street currently carries approximately 1,600 vehicles during the evening peak hour at the Second Street approach. The volume along Folsom Street reduces as it moves eastward, and east of Fremont Street the volume is less than 600 vehicles. Converting Folsom to two-way from Main to Fremont Streets would calm traffic fronting the proposed high-density residential neighborhood but would not cause significant traffic congestion problems.



Folsom illustrative plan (See Section 2.2)

The intersection level of services analysis performed for the Rincon Hill Plan EIR shows that intersections along Folsom Street will continue to operate at acceptable conditions with the proposed land use changes in the Rincon Hill area and with Folsom Street as a two-way operation.

Pedestrian crosswalks are provided at every intersection along Folsom Street. They typically have the same width as the sidewalks, 10' wide. Sidewalks in the Transbay area are usually 10' wide, except for Main and Beale Streets, where 15' sidewalks are provided. The Design for Development document proposes wider sidewalks (25') along the north side of Folsom Street by requiring minimum building setbacks of 15'. There is interest expressed by the members of the Transbay Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to potentially widen the south side of Folsom Street by 2.5'. This could be potentially be accomplished by reducing the exiting traffic lanes to 10' and parking lanes to 7.5'. The other possibility is to only widen the sidewalk by 2' and keep the parking land at 8' in order to avoid the "doorings" impacts with bicyclists on the adjacent bicycle lane.

During the interim period when the Transbay Terminal will be located to its temporary location north of Folsom Street between Fremont and Beale Streets, Folsom Street would have a contra-flow bus lane to allow outbound AC Transit buses to access the Bay Bridge. This contra-flow bus only lane may terminate at First Street or at Essex Street.

3.6 FIRST STREET

The Design for Development document provided a vision for potential sidewalk widening on the west side of First Street. The concept requires elimination of one travel lane and no parking, tow-away during the peak period, so there will be three travel lanes during midday and four travel lanes during the peak period. The Design for Development concept appears to be viable on certain blocks, but detailed traffic analysis would be necessary.

3.7 BEALE & MAIN STREETS

During the development of this concept plan, Beale and Main were being considered by the Transbay Transit Center team for temporary conversion to two-way traffic flow. This modified circulation is necessary to accommodate efficient bus circulation in and out of the temporary bus terminal whose location is planned where Transbay Square will be built. The temporary bus terminal and two-way flow is needed during the construction of the new Transbay Transit Center. While further study is needed, converting to two-way flow on these linear park streets would be conducive to these pedestrian-oriented bicycle-friendly streets. The temporary conversion would be a good test for considering Main and Beale as two-way streets more permanently. The implications of this conversion for the long term would be worth further study to understand the potential benefits for the neighborhood when the temporary bus terminal is no longer needed.

3.8 ALLEYS

The Design for Development envisions a number of additional alleys in the Transbay neighborhood area. The purpose of these alleyways is to enhance pedestrian circulation in the area while continuing to provide limited access to parking and service areas. The block sizes in the Transbay neighborhood are substantially larger than a typical block in the North of Market area. Mid-block alleyways would facilitate pedestrian circulation in the area.

Some of these alleys may not be implemented for many years to come, because of existing buildings, while others may be implemented in the near future because of the potential land development projects in the area or because of the opportunity to reconstruct them as part of the reconstruction of the Transbay Terminal and Caltrain Downtown Extension. This plan focuses only the alleys shown here. Entrance to the alleys would feature a raised crosswalk as shown here. The raised crosswalks would have traffic calming effect and would facilitate pedestrian movement along the sidewalk.

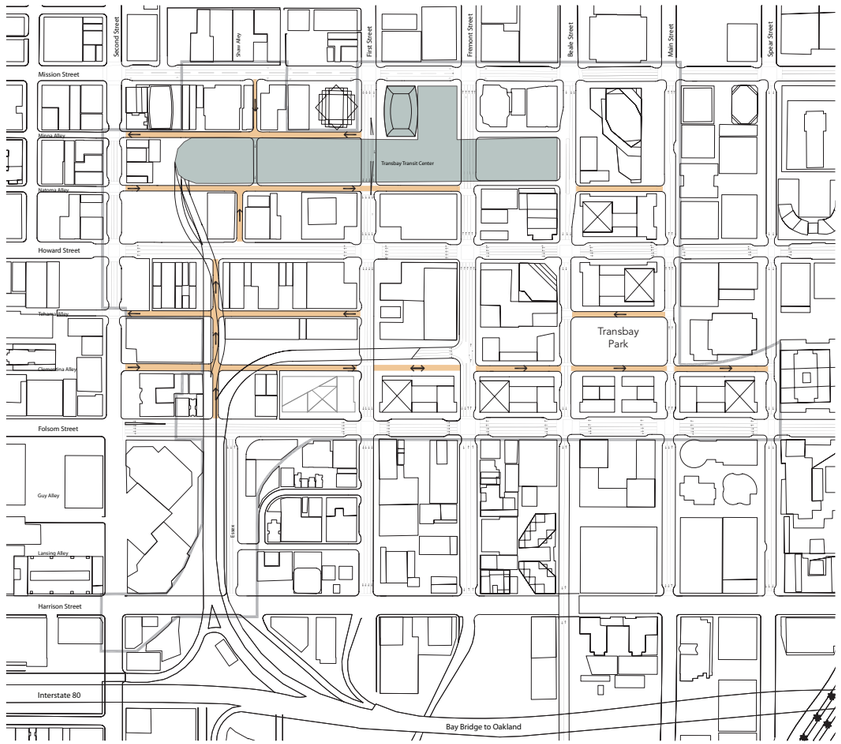
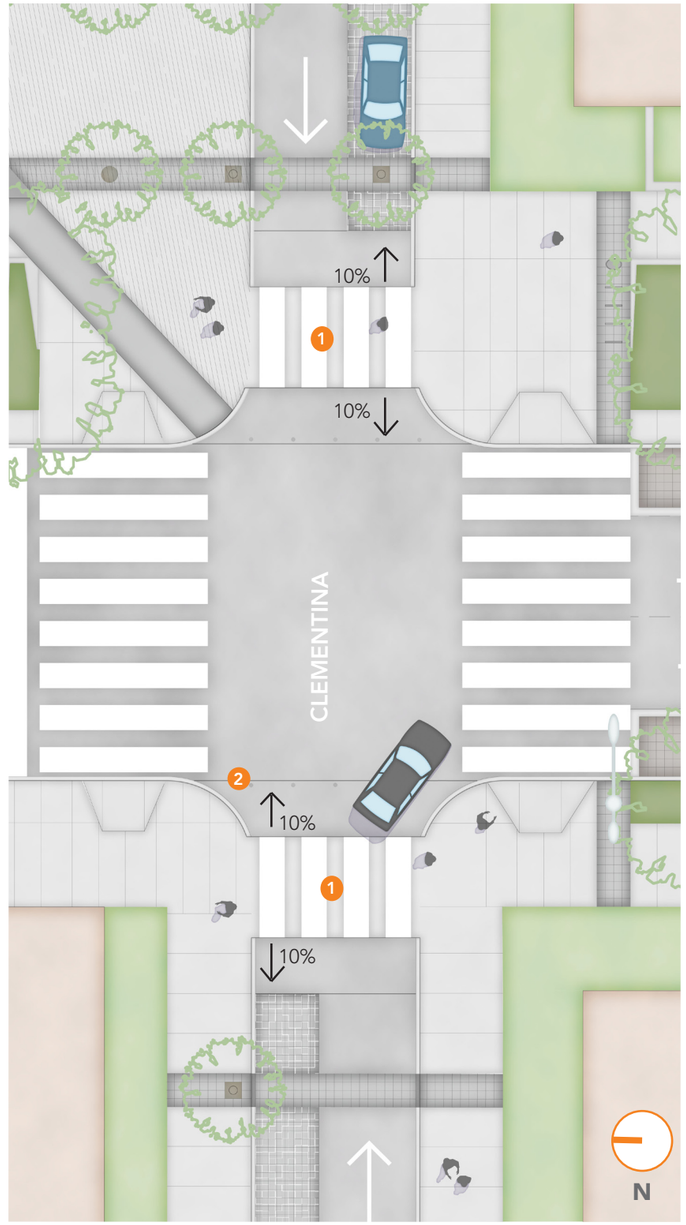


Diagram of existing and proposed alleys in the Transbay neighborhood



Illustrative plan showing raised crosswalks at alley entrances to facilitate pedestrian access.

DESIGN FEATURES

1 Raised crosswalk
2 Removable bollards