
Mayor's Disability Council



Sheri Albers
Alex Madrid
Co-Chairs

Deborah Kaplan
Acting Director

Forest Barnes Forest.Barnes@sfmta.com
Accessible Services Transportation Planner
Paul Stanis Paul.Stanis@sfmta.com
Project Manager Transportation Planner

October 30, 2024

Dear Forest and Paul:

At the September meeting of the Mayor's Disability Council, members heard details of the SFMTA's revamped Valencia Street Project. This endeavor could spur San Francisco's post-Covid recovery. We are aware of the potential: an estimated 26,000 people filled the closed Valencia Street for August 25's Sunday Streets Mission event. The MDC would like to support the Valencia Street Project -- while ensuring that it provides a safe and accessible experience for all.

We are cautiously optimistic, while noting these concerns:

"Floating parklets" (with bike lane between curb and restaurant platform) pose a serious challenge for people with a variety of disabilities. Most Valencia Street restaurateurs have opted for curbside parklets. We support their approach. The existing bikeway directs riders around curbside parklets. Based on the experience on Valencia Street and in Oakland's Telegraph Avenue Temescal District, this approach works.

We are opposed to floating parklets. But if the final Valencia Street Project design does include them, we make two recommendations: (1) a raised walkway from curb to platform (at least four feet wide with tactile paving) and (2) speed bumps in the bikeway pavement. The walkway, designed for mobility and sensory disabilities, will demarcate the safest approach. Like the speed bumps, it will have a bike-traffic calming effect.

Disabled parking and disabled drop off zones are crucial to accessibility along Valencia Street. These areas should be well marked. Construction, street repairs and similar projects may require that blue zones temporarily shift to other locations. Whether permanent or temporary, disabled parking/drop off areas should always have clear signage.

We are happy to discuss these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Mayor's Disability Council

Paul Bendix and Orkid Sassouni, Members of the Council

CC: Deborah Kaplan, MOD

Jeffrey Tumlin, Director, SF MTA

Erin McAuliff, Accessibility Services, SFMTA