Hayes Valley Public Life Study

Initial findings from an analysis of the Hayes Street weekly roadway closure



San Francisco Planning

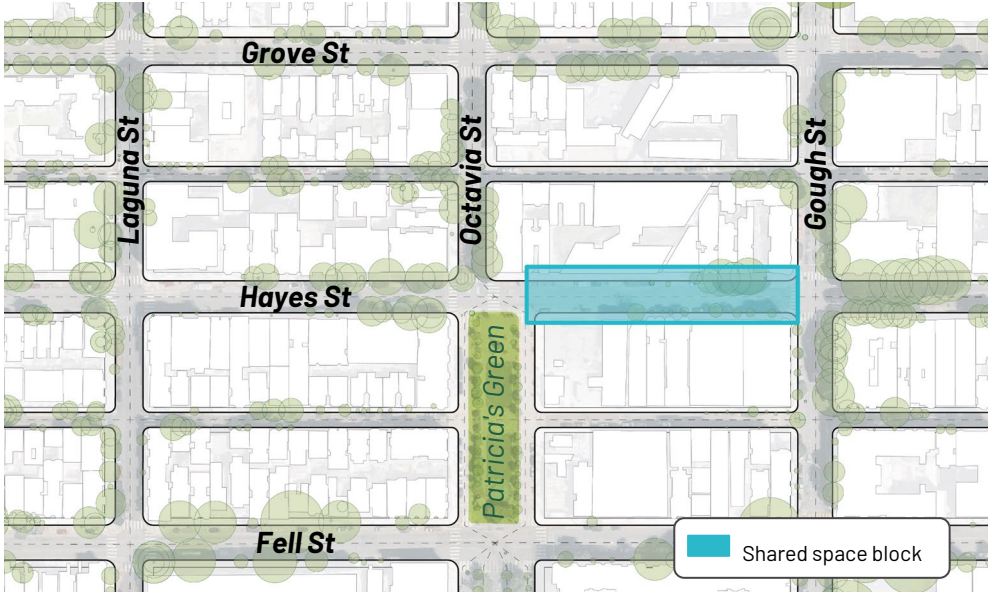
SITELAB urban studio

Fehr & Peers

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

About the Shared Space Program

- **Multi-agency program** enabling merchants and community groups to **utilize sidewalks and streets** for **commercial and retail** activities
- Roadway Shared Space closure (combined with farmer's market special event closure) is on **Hayes St**, between **Gough St** and **Octavia St**:
  - Fridays, 4-10 pm
  - Saturdays, 7am-10pm



What We Are Studying, and Why?

- **Purpose:** Understand the impacts of the Hayes Street Shared Space on Public Life, Transportation, and Business Activity

- **Goal:** Inform Hayes St Shared Spaces permit renewal and future concept development

- **Phase 1:** Analyze impacts through:
  - Public life
  - Transportation
    - Including Comparative Corridor Analysis
  - Business Activity
  - Public Engagement

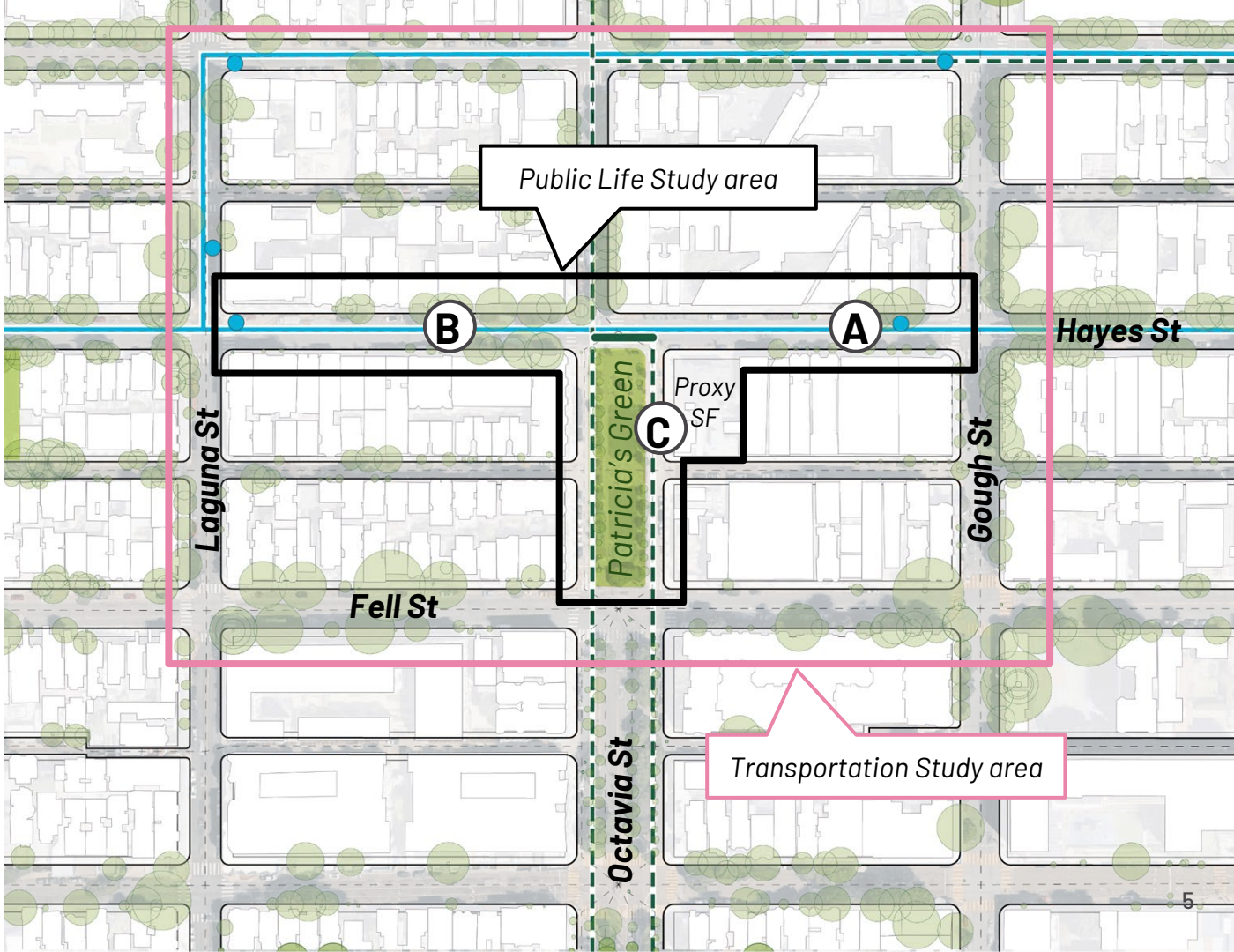
- **Phase 2:** Develop concepts for activation, open space and pedestrian improvements



Funded by Octavia St Special Fund

Study Area

- **A** Hayes St between Gough St and Octavia St (Shared Space block)
- **B** Hayes St between Octavia St and Laguna St
- **C** Patricia's Green / Proxy SF



- *Block outline*
- *Street centerlines*
- *Building footprint*
- *Open Space*
- *MUNI route*
- *MUNI bus stop*
- *Dedicated bike lane*
- *Shared bike lane*

0 50 100 200 ft

WHAT WE'VE OBSERVED

I. Public Life
II. Transportation
III. Business Activity
IV. Public Engagement

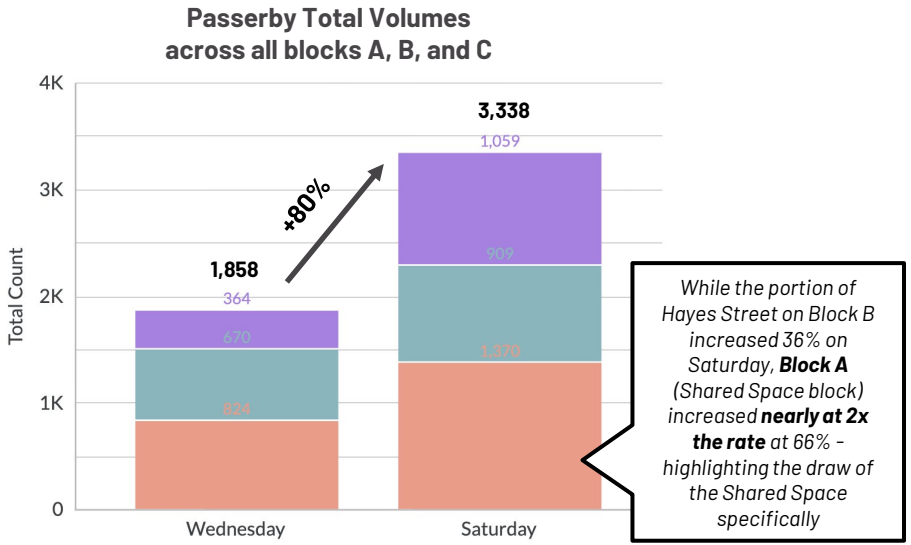
Public Life Study

About the Public Life Study

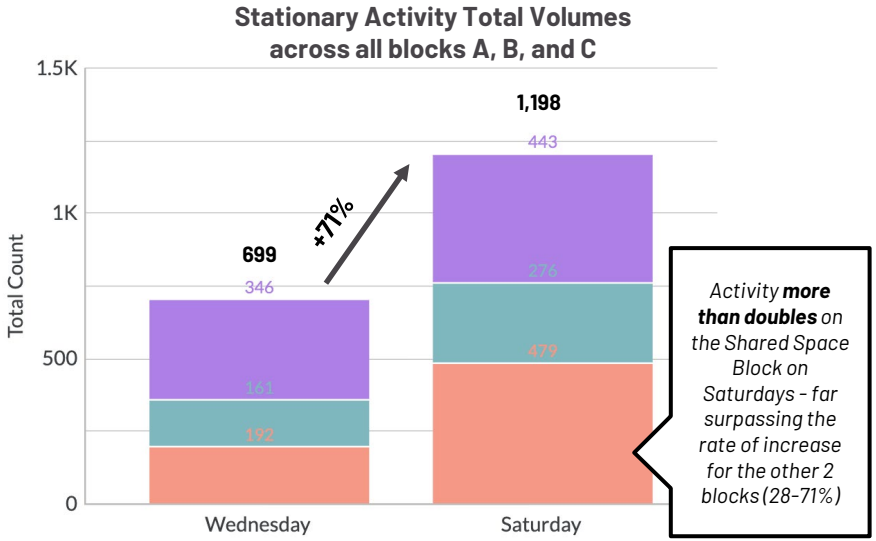
- On-site observation of **pedestrian/bike counts** and **observational data** on how people are using the Shared Space and surrounding blocks
- Data collected in July 2026 on 2 Wednesdays (baseline weekday condition) and 2 Saturdays (weekend condition with Shared Space in effect)
- Main learnings about the Shared Space:
    - The Shared Space weekend street closure turns Hayes Street between Gough St and Octavia St into a **dynamic economic and social destination**, driving a **noticeable increase in foot traffic and staying activity** compared to adjacent blocks.
    - The Shared Space **expands the neighborhood's holding power** (especially for families) and rivals Patricia's Green as **a premier space to linger and connect.**



People passing through the study area and staying increase **70-80% on Saturdays** vs Wednesdays, with particular draw to the Shared Space block Ⓐ



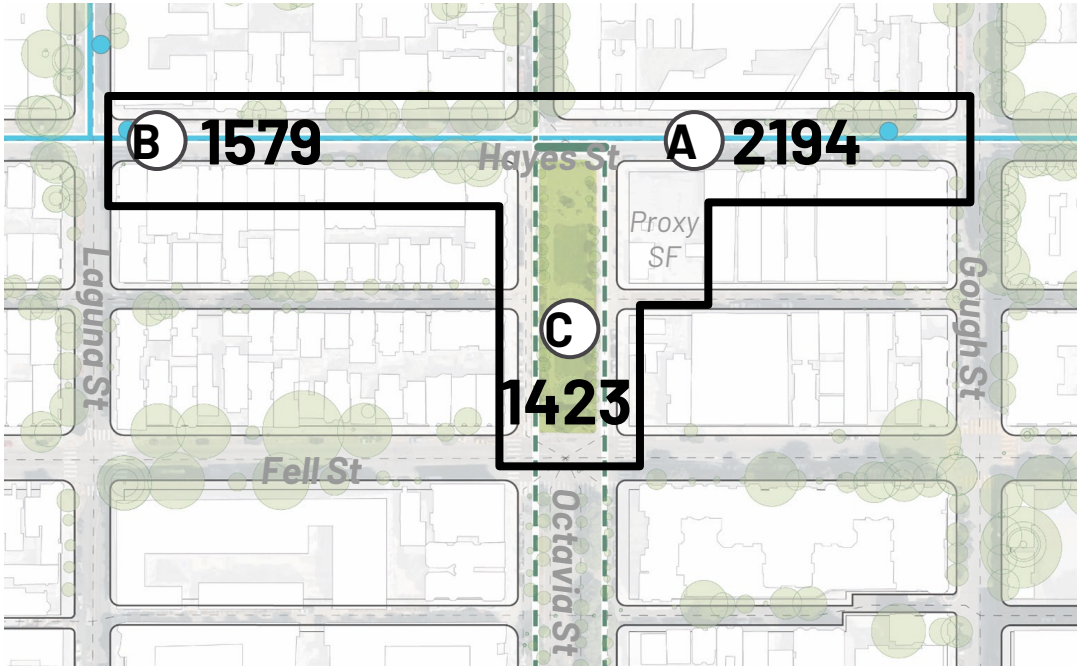
Source: Movement Survey

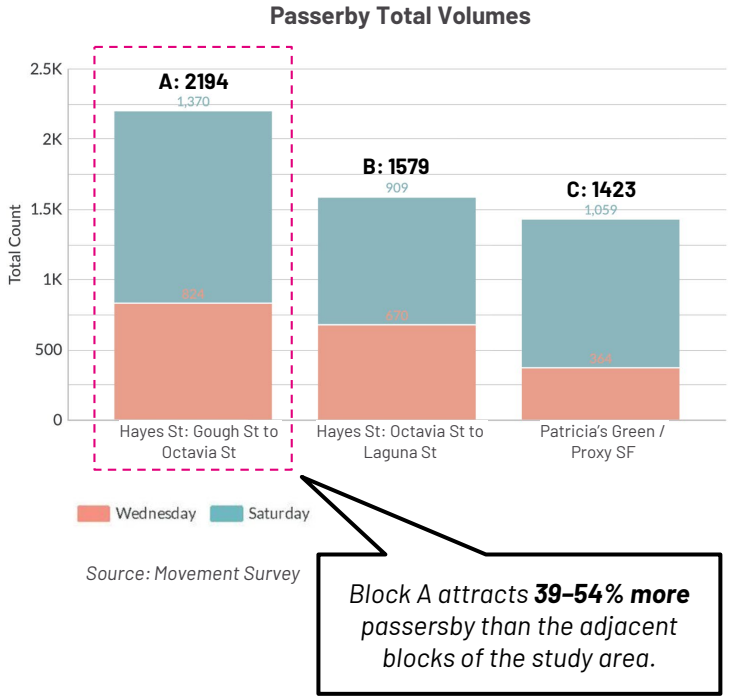


Source: Stationary Survey

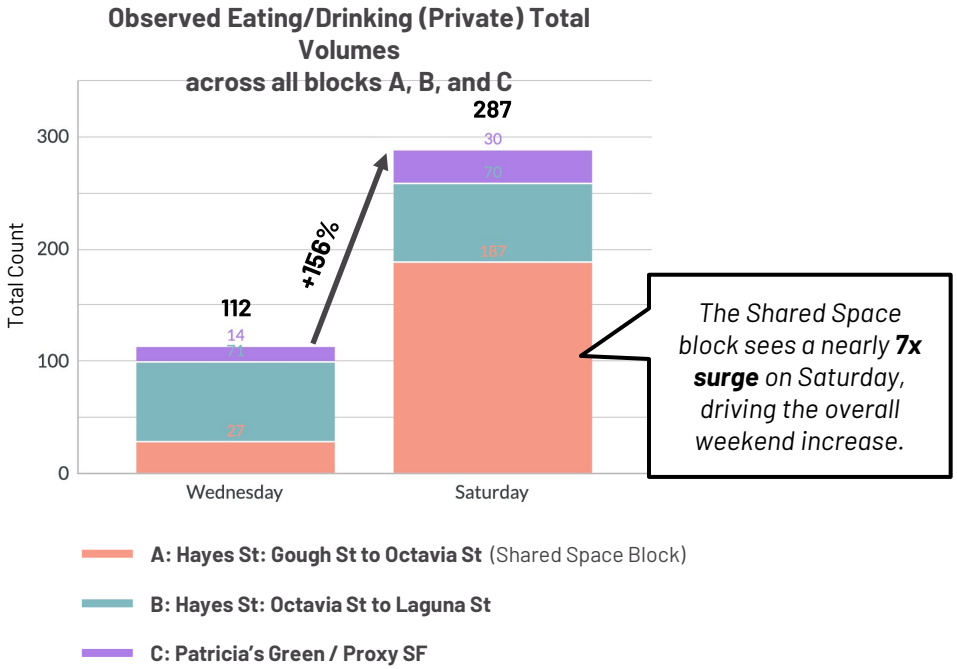
A: Hayes St: Gough St to Octavia St (Shared Space Block)
B: Hayes St: Octavia St to Laguna St
C: Patricia's Green / Proxy SF

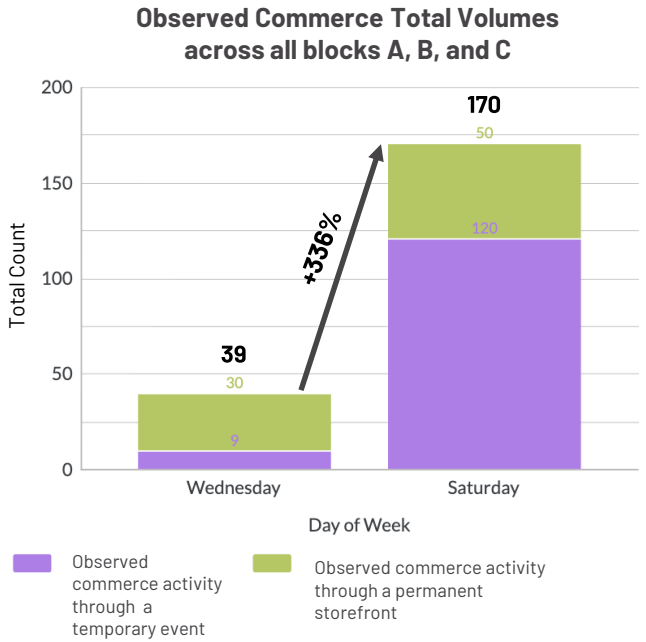
Overall *and* by weekday/weekend, the Shared Space block Ⓐ is the **most passed** through block of the 3 blocks.





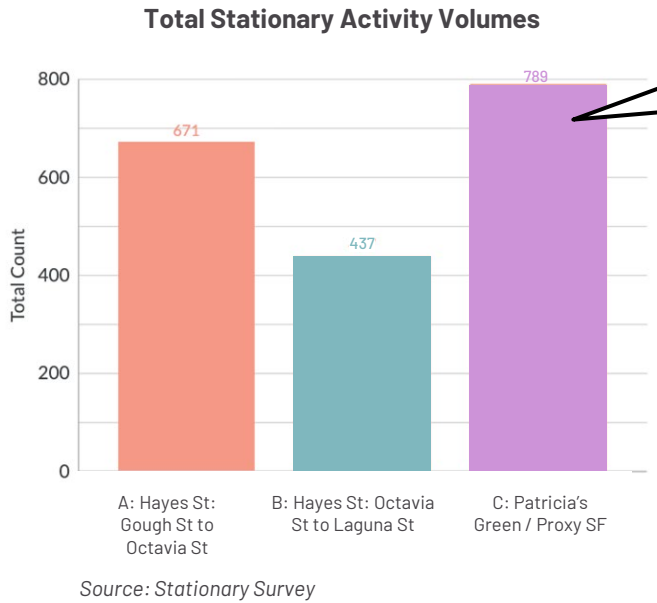
Observations of **private dining doubled** and **commerce quadrupled** on the weekends, highlighting the weekend's vital role in supporting local businesses.





Source: Stationary Survey

People **stay most** at **Patricia's Green and Proxy SF** of the 3 blocks, emphasizing these spaces' roles as **neighborhood anchors** around the clock.



Source: Stationary Survey

*Higher staying activity is driven by a combination of the site function as an open **public park and plaza**, as well as **many more amenities** than the other blocks **(abundant seating, open green space, play areas, dog-friendly features, and LuxFit SF classes)***

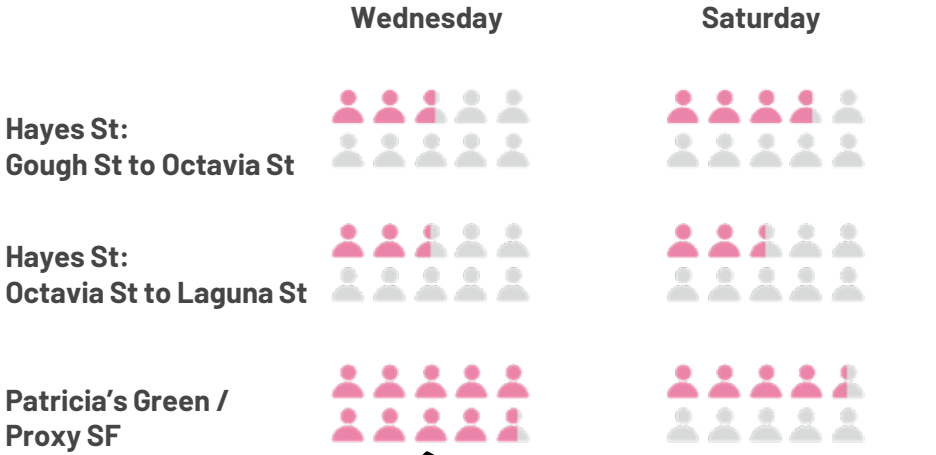


"People tend to sit where there are places to sit" - William Whyte

Additionally, Patricia's Green and Proxy SF are the **most "sticky" spaces** of the study area, acting as a neighborhood anchor.



BY DAY OF THE WEEK

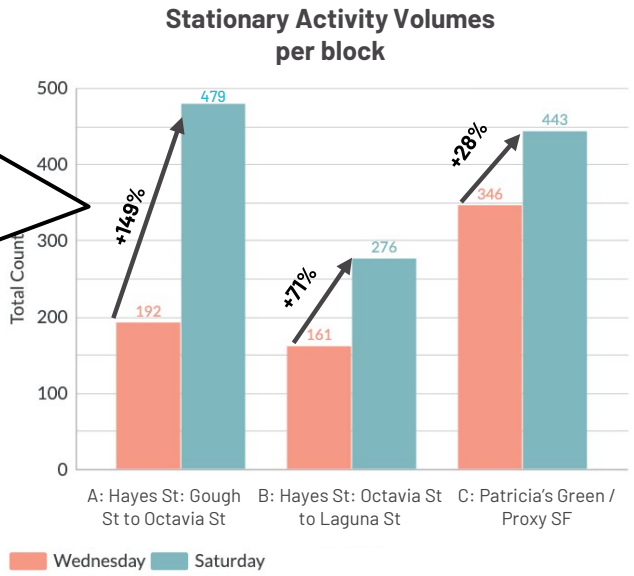


Note: "Stickiness" refers to a space's "holding power" – how effectively the space can attract people to spend time in a space rather than only pass through.

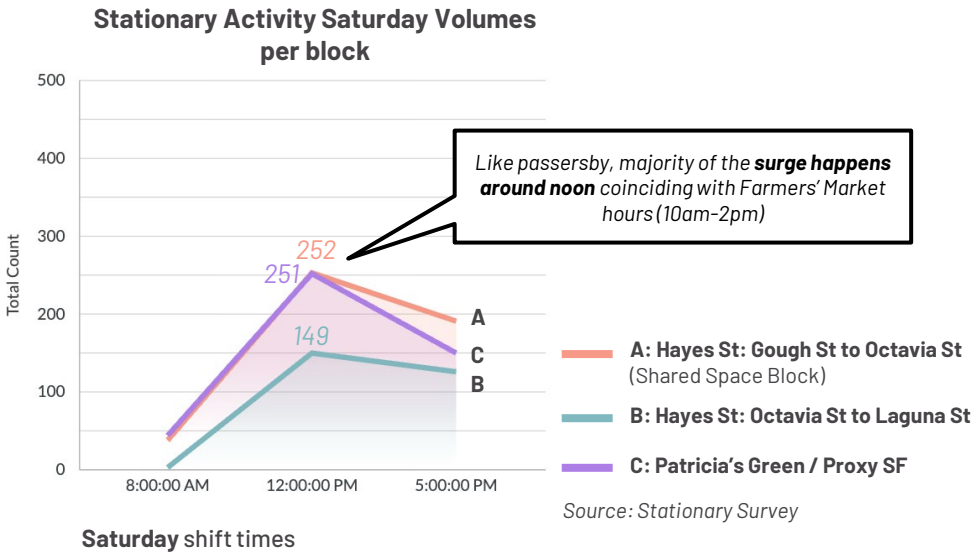
Source: Stationary Survey

The Shared Space block Ⓐ sees a **surge of stationary people** on Saturdays, rivaling Patricia's Green / Proxy SF Ⓒ

*While the portion of Hayes Street on Block B increased 71% on Saturday, **Block A** (Shared Space block) increased **at over 2x the rate** at 149% - highlighting the draw of the Shared Space specifically*

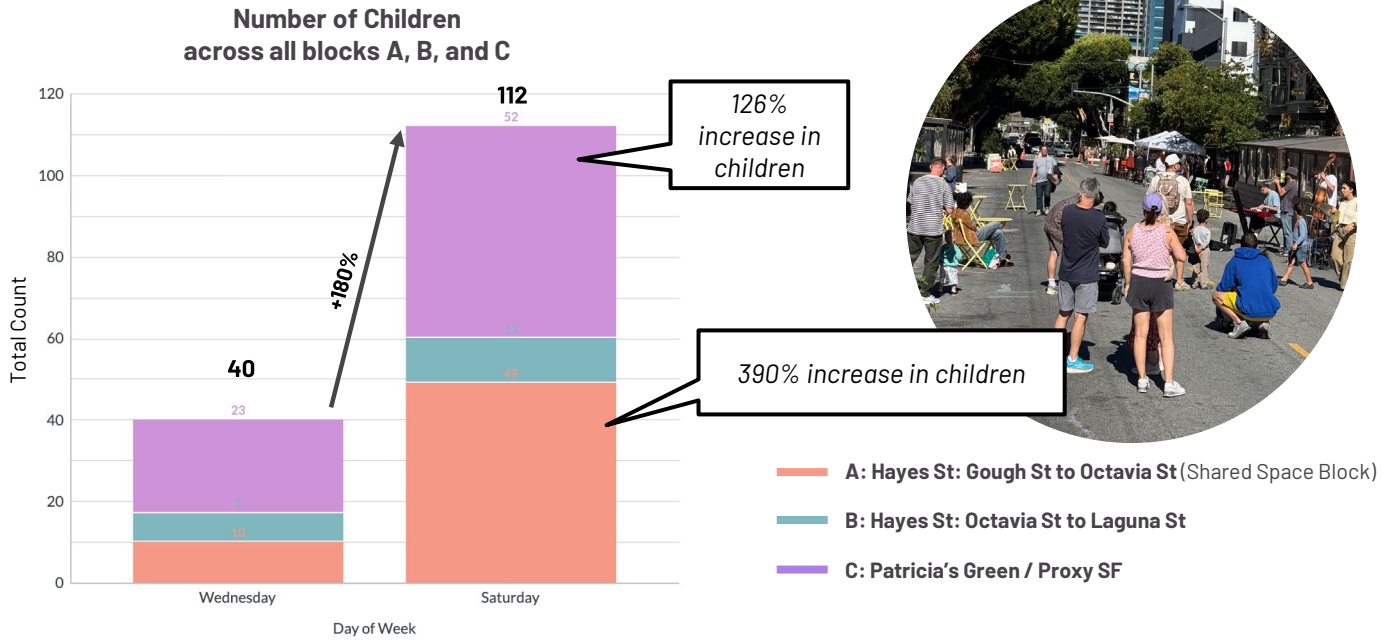


Source: Stationary Survey



Source: Stationary Survey

The observed number of children spending time **nearly triples on weekends**, with the biggest increase on the Shared Space block A, showing that the block attracts youth even with minimal interventions.



Source: Stationary Survey

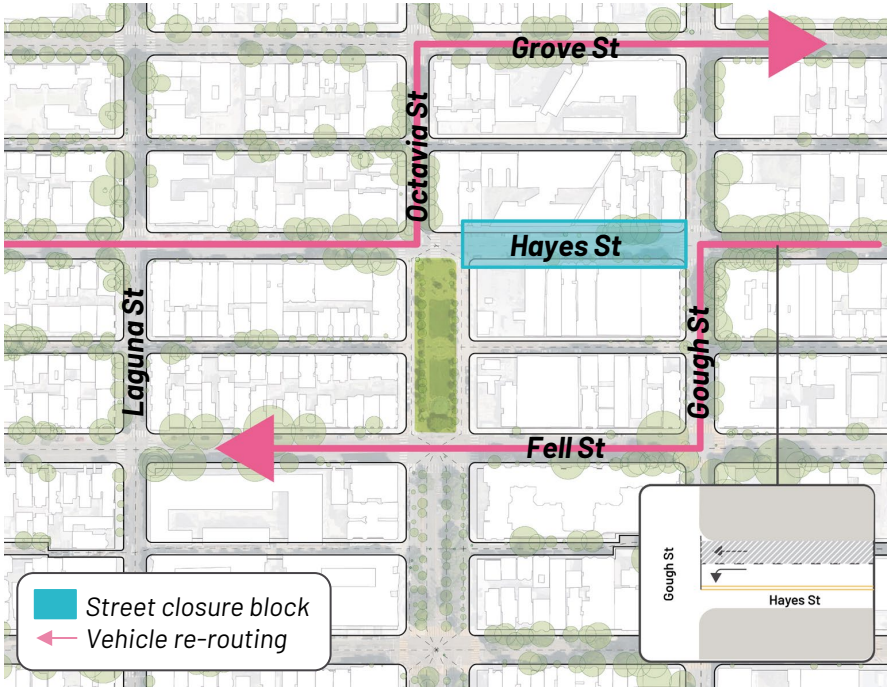
Transportation

How Vehicles Move During the Closure

During the street closure, traffic approaching from the east and west is redirected to nearby streets.

From the west: At Hayes and Octavia, eastbound vehicles are required to turn left onto Octavia St.

From the east: At Hayes and Gough, the through travel lane is closed and westbound vehicles are required to turn left.



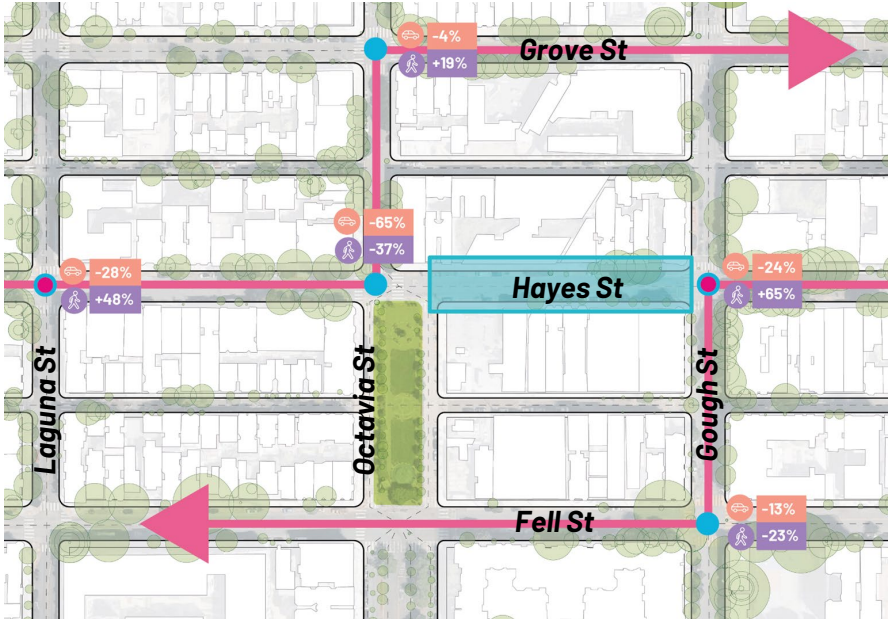
Source: SFMTA and Quality Counts, July 2026

Lower vehicle activity and higher pedestrian activity across study intersections on Saturday

Across the study intersections, on average there is 30% fewer vehicles on Saturday than on Wednesday,[1] compared to the citywide difference of 15%.[2]

Pedestrian volumes at Hayes St/Gough St and Hayes St/Laguna St, gateways to the Hayes Street Shared Space, increase by 50-70% from Wednesday to Saturday

[1] *Vehicle volumes collected in July 2026*
[2] *Citywide vehicle volumes were collected through Replica using private auto, taxi/TNC, and commercial freight vehicle trips that started, ended, or passed through the city during an average weekday or weekend in spring 2026.*

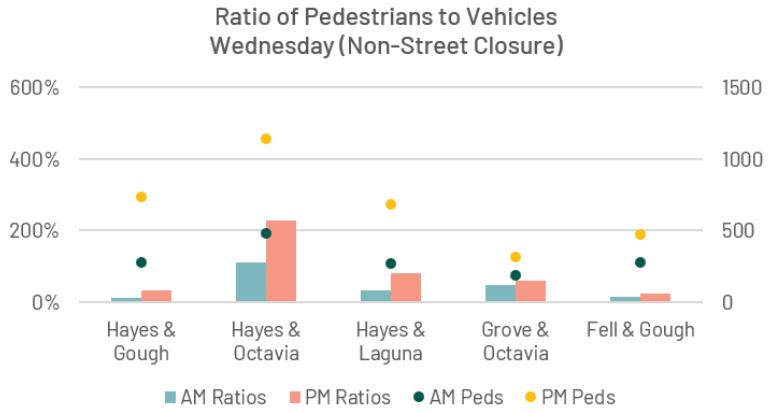


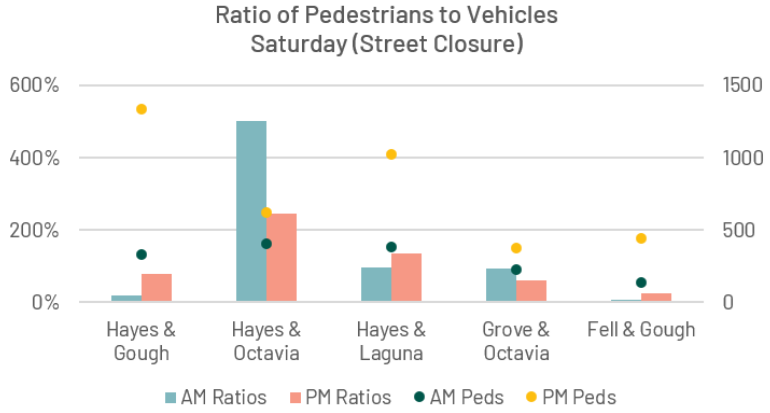
Shared space block
Study intersections
Vehicle volume change (Wed to Sat)
Pedestrian volume change (Wed to Sat)
Vehicle re-routing

Source: SFMTA and Quality Counts, July 2026

Hayes St intersections see higher pedestrian activity on Saturday than other intersections

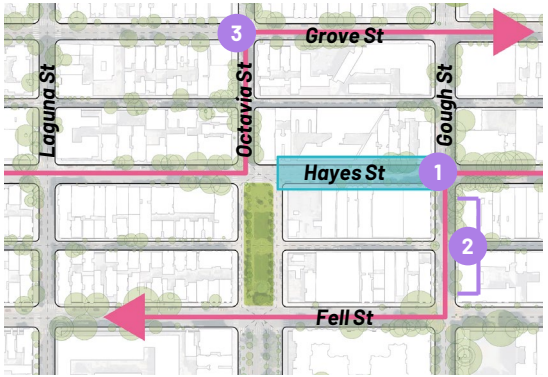
- On Saturday, Hayes St/Gough St and Hayes St/Laguna St see over 1,000 pedestrians during the PM peak hour
- Across Wednesday and Saturday, Hayes St/Octavia St has the highest ratio of pedestrians to vehicles out of all study intersections
    - Although Hayes St/Octavia St see a decrease in pedestrians on Saturday, the volume is still higher than that of intersections outside of Hayes St
- Intersections that primarily serve vehicle traffic, such as Fell St/Gough St, see lower pedestrian activity on Saturday





Source: SFMTA and Quality Counts, July 2026

Increase in vehicle volumes limited to two intersections along re-route.



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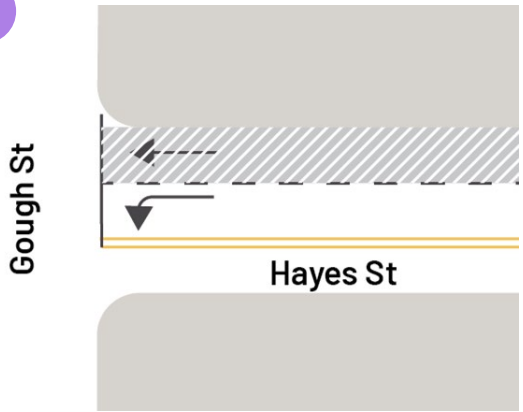


Despite overall reduction of vehicles at Hayes St/Gough St, the westbound left turn sees a 30% increase on average on Saturday.

2



Congestion was observed on Gough St between Hayes St and Fell St due to increase in westbound left at Hayes St/Gough St, double parking, high number of vehicles accessing US 101 via Fell St and Octavia St, and vehicles waiting for pedestrians to cross at Fell St.

3



Overall, Grove St/Octavia St does not see an increase in vehicle volumes on Saturday, but the northbound right turn increases on average by 80%.

Photos: Site Visit on July 25, 2026

Rerouting of the 6 Hayes-Parnassus

Transit is slower:

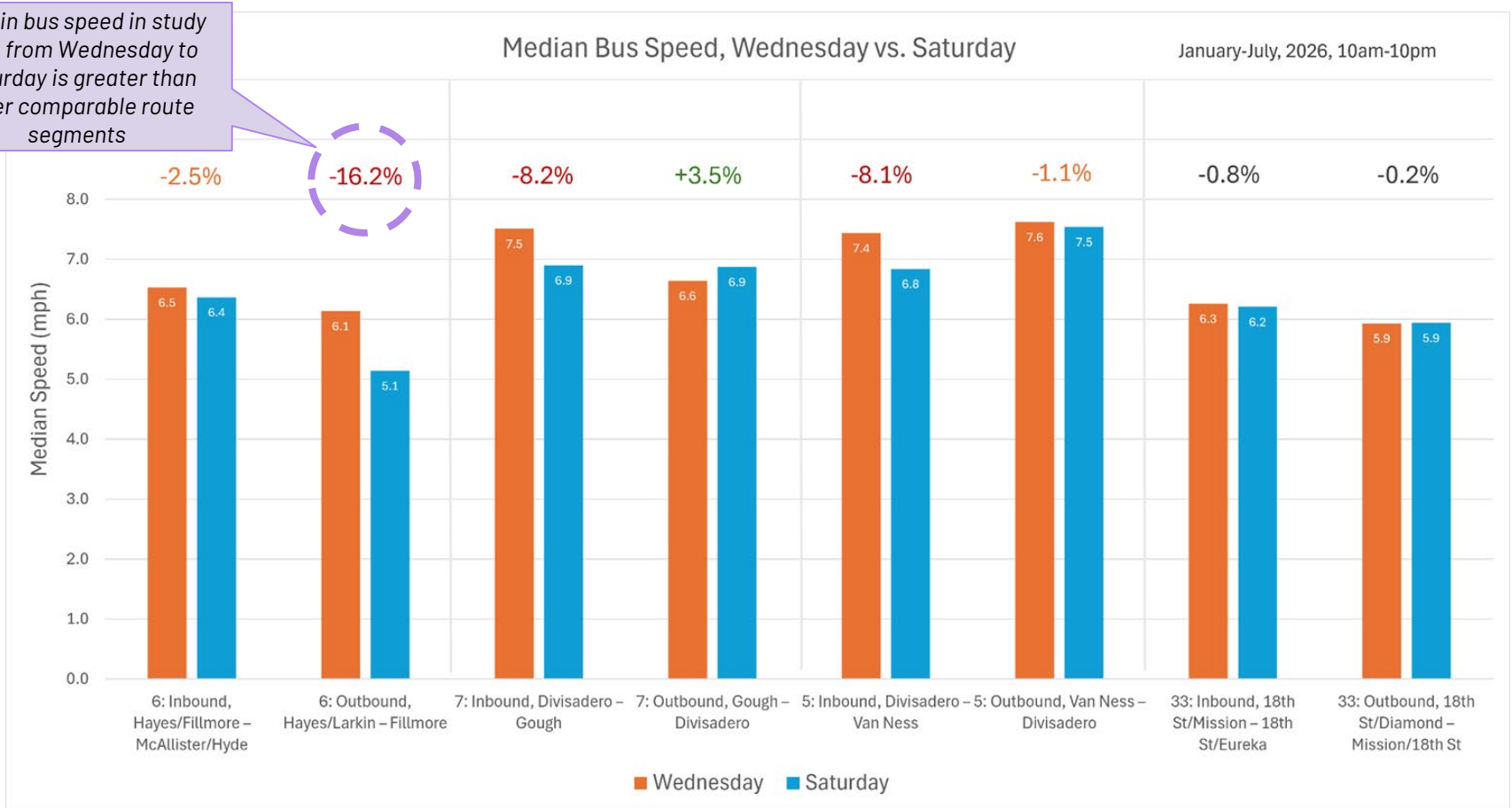
For the outbound 6 Hayes/Parnassus,within the study area, **median bus speeds are lower on Saturdays than Wednesdays** to a greater degree than comparable route segments.



Source: SFMTA, January - July 2026, 10am - 10pm

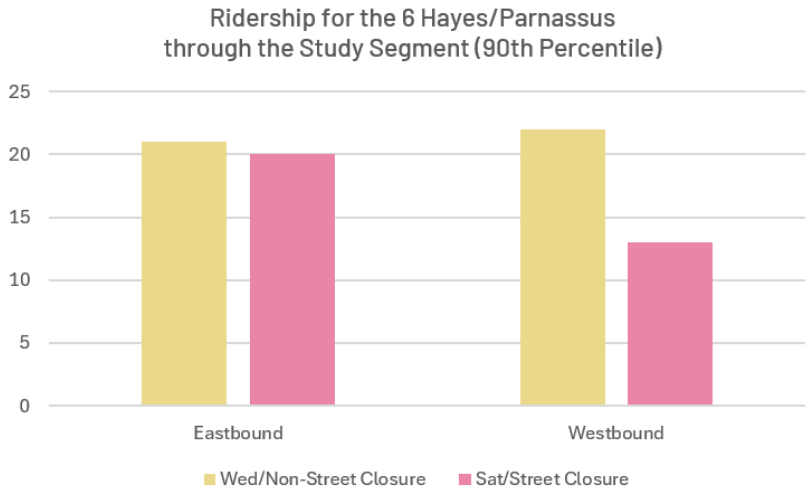
Comparison of Median Bus Speeds

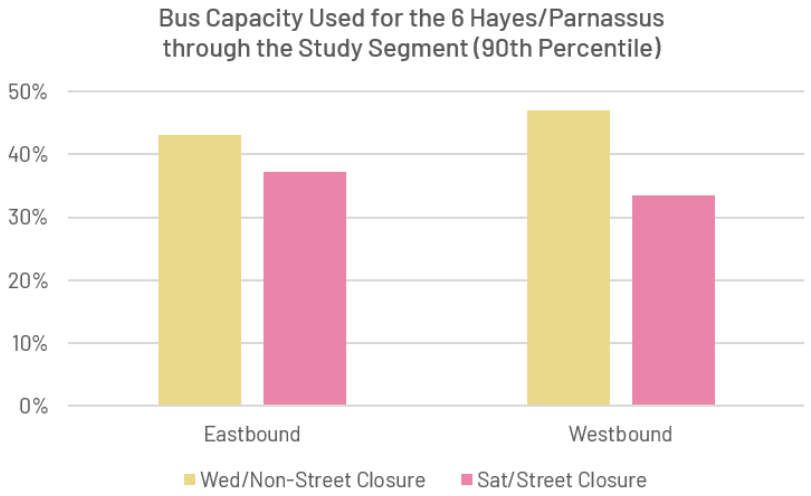
Drop in bus speed in study area from Wednesday to Saturday is greater than other comparable route segments



Transit Ridership

Average bus ridership through the study segment declines slightly for the re-routed westbound direction on Saturday, but overall ridership in both directions is relatively light and the bus remains less than half full during all study periods.



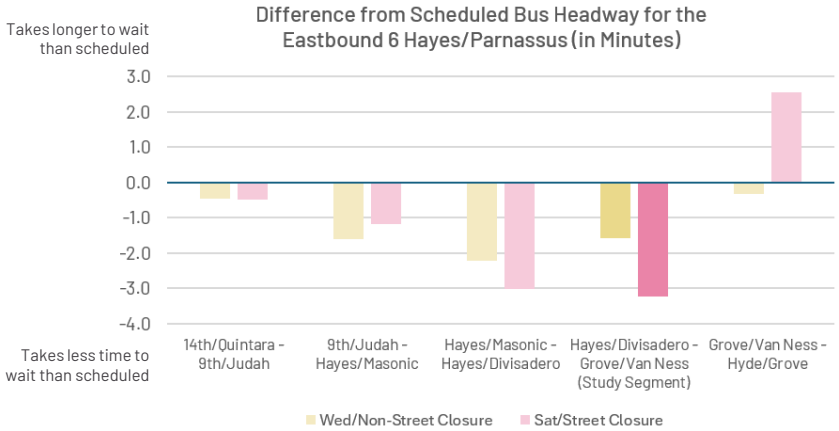


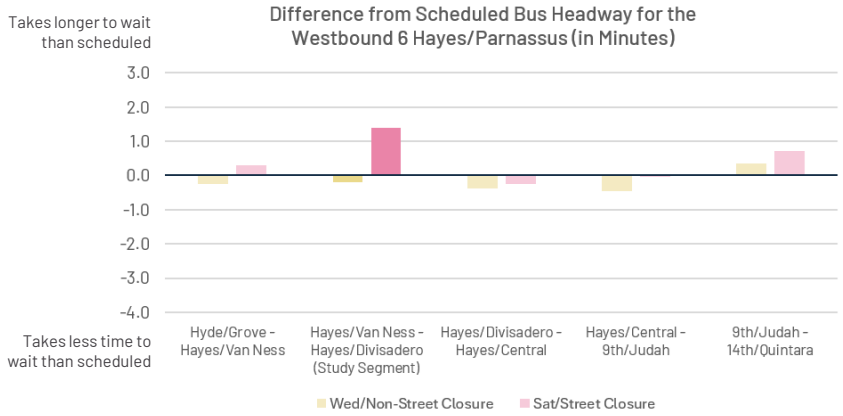
Source: SFMTA, January-July 2026

Note: Study segment differs by direction: eastbound (Hayes/Fillmore-McAllister/Hyde) vs. westbound (Hayes/Larkin-Hayes/Fillmore).

Street closure does not significantly affect transit reliability.

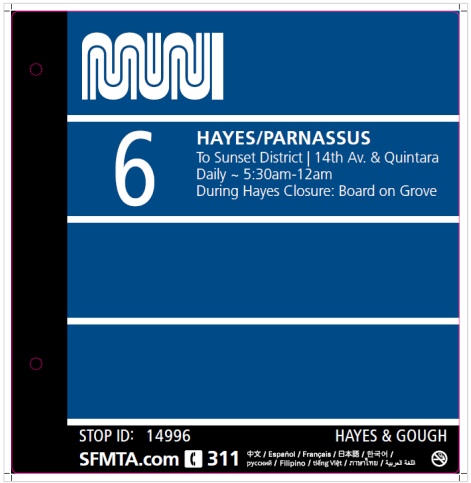
Despite westbound rerouting for the closure, *on average* buses remain on-headway (<5 mins from scheduled headway).





Source: SFMTA, January-July 2026

Wayfinding information for re-routed 6 is improving but could be better



The SFMTA installed new signs at existing bus stops along Hayes Street to inform passengers where to go when the bus is rerouted.



Re-routed bus stop at northeast corner of Hayes St/Laguna St did have detour signage, but some people still waited there and did not notice the signage.



Newly located bus stop at northeast corner of Grove St/Laguna St did not have any signage at all.

Photos: Site Visit on July 25, 2026

Other Transportation Metrics

Parking is Typical

On-street **parking occupancy is consistently high** across the study area, regardless of street closure.



Source: SFMTA, January-July 2026

Safety is Unchanged

Collisions generally remain the same between street closure and non-street closure days



https://assets.sfstandard.com/image/994911177489/image_fp7g31435523v2j3cj5dftsi5t/-S828x552-FWEBP

Source: SFMTA, 2024-2026

Comparable Commercial Corridors Analysis

(Pedestrian volume data only)

Key Findings Comparing Four Commercial Corridors

Highlighting findings from comparing mobile phone-based pedestrian traffic data across four commercial corridors in San Francisco.

KEY FINDING 1

Hayes St pedestrian activity **took the biggest hit from the pandemic**, but is **now recovering the fastest**.

KEY FINDING 2

Hayes St and two other corridors **reached pre-pandemic pedestrian volumes** within the last three years.

KEY FINDING 3

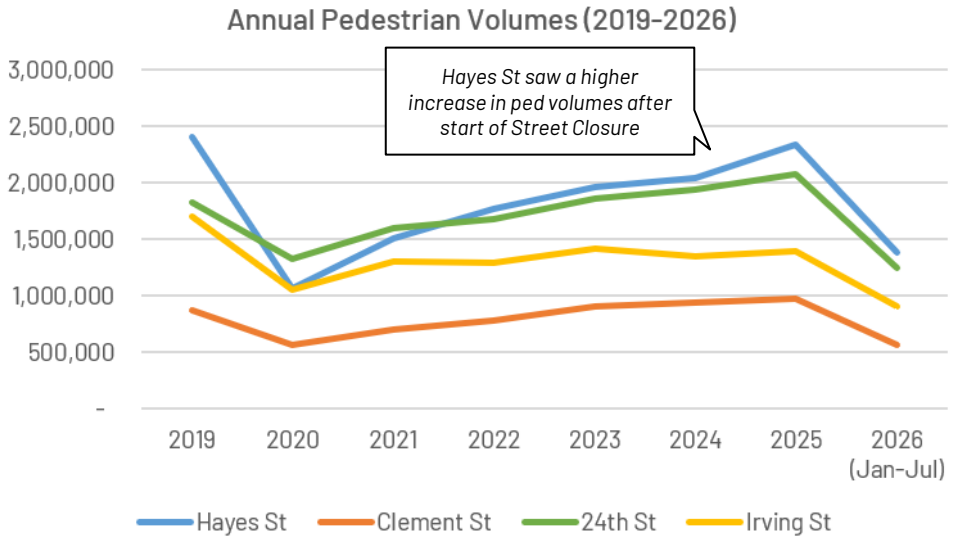
Saturday is the busiest day, both pre- and post-pandemic, for Hayes St and two other corridors.

Source: Placer AI data

KEY FINDING 1

Hayes St ped volumes **took the biggest hit from the pandemic** of all corridors, but is **now recovering the fastest**.

- **All four corridors had steady post-pandemic recovery** in pedestrian visits
- After 2023, **Hayes St and 24th St saw a higher increase** in pedestrian volumes than the two other corridors
- Half of the year's data is still missing, but **Hayes St pedestrian volumes likely to exceed pre-pandemic levels by end of 2026.**

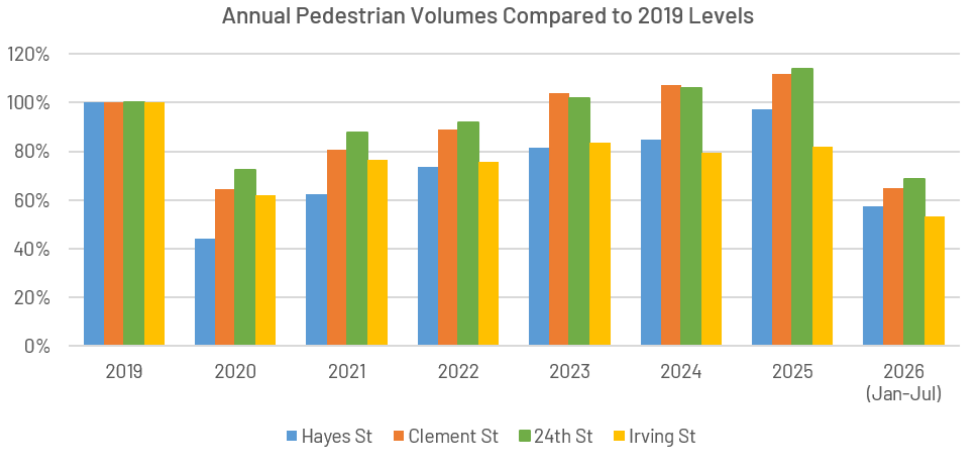


Source: Placer AI data

KEY FINDING 2

Hayes St and two other corridors **reached pre-pandemic pedestrian volumes** in the last three years.

- **Hayes St** was close to reaching pre-pandemic pedestrian volumes in 2025 and is likely to meet/exceed that level in 2026
- **Clement St and 24th St recovered faster** and reached their pre-pandemic pedestrian volumes in 2023 (impacts from pandemic were less)

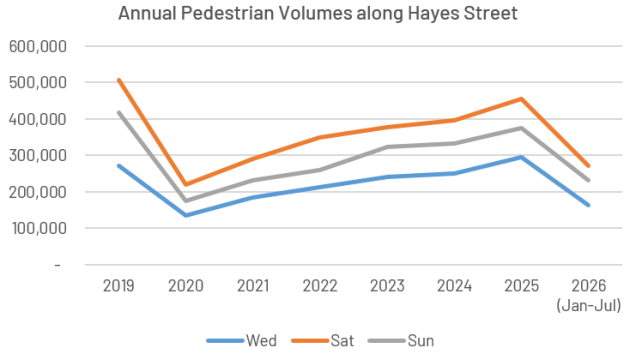


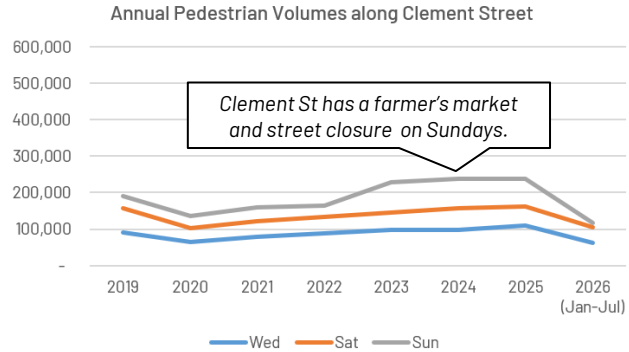
Source: Placer AI data

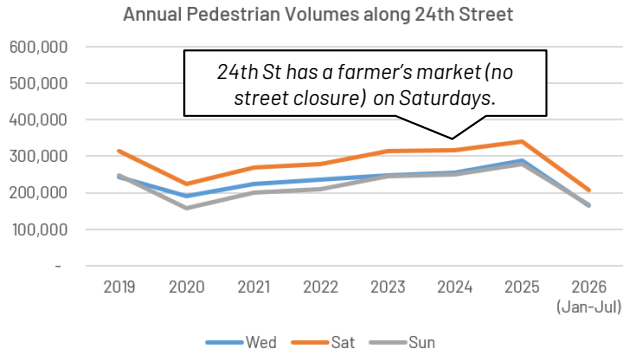
KEY FINDING 3

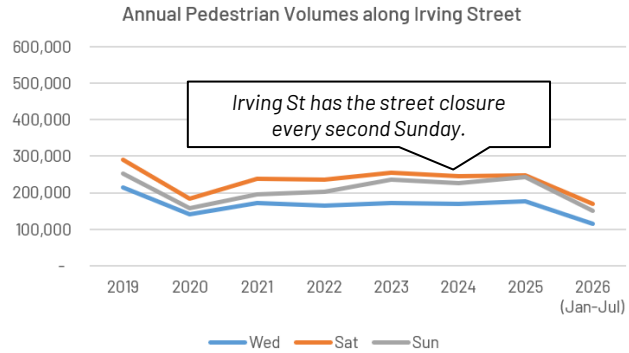
Saturday is the busiest day, both pre- and post-pandemic, for Hayes St and two other corridors.

- After the pandemic, **Hayes St and 24th St saw steady year-over-year increases** in pedestrian visits **on all three days**
- **Sunday is the busiest day on Clement St** every year
- **Irving St** saw the **greatest recovery** in pedestrian visits **on Sundays** compared to other days





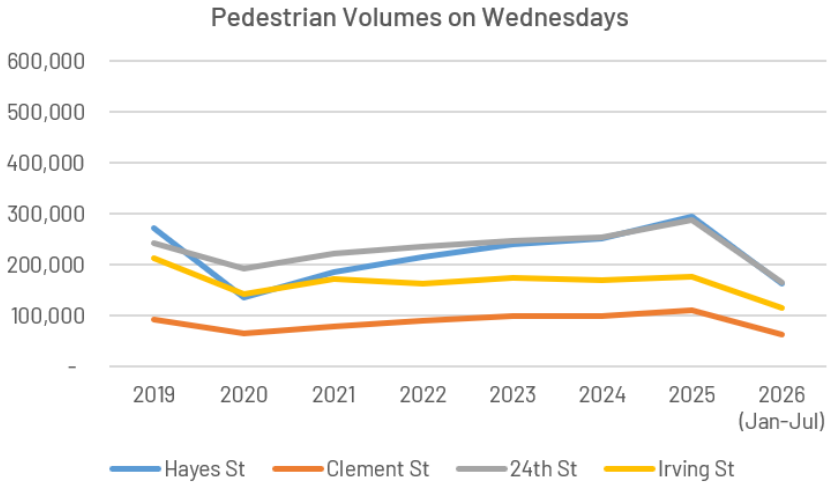


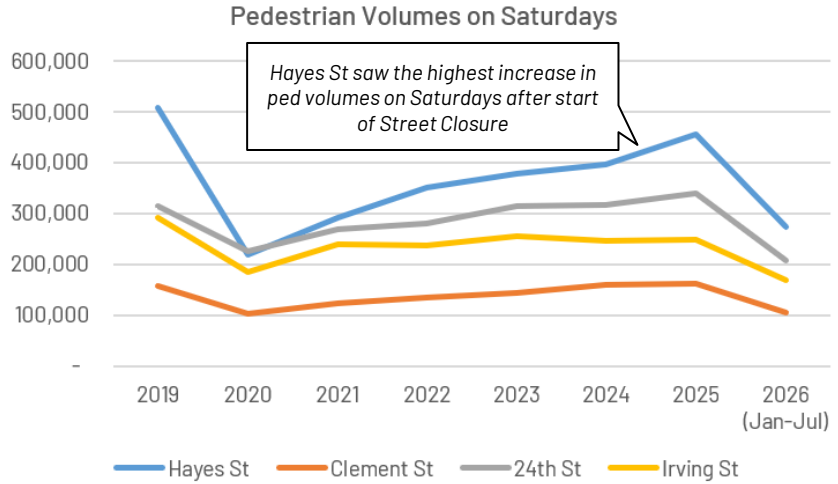


Source: Placer AI data

All four corridors, both pre- and post-pandemic, saw **more pedestrians on Saturdays** than on Wednesdays.

- From 2023 through 2025, **Hayes St and 24th St had similar levels of growth** in pedestrian visits **on Wednesdays**, but **Hayes St grew faster** and experiences **more pedestrian visits on Saturdays**

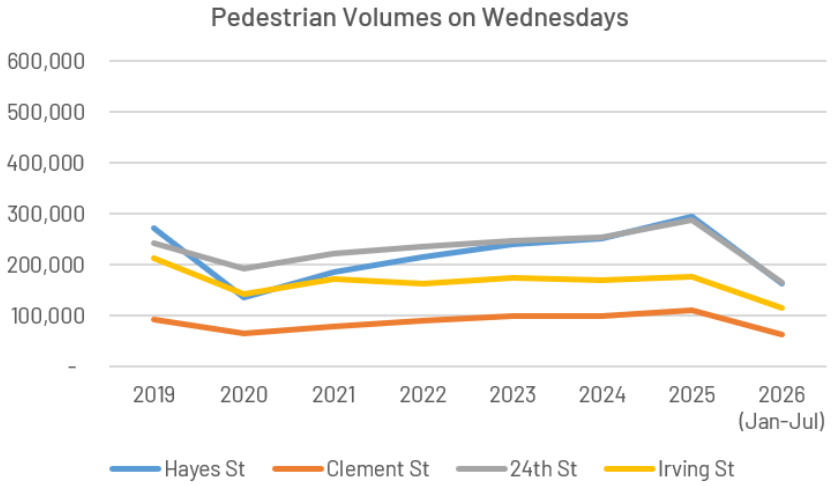


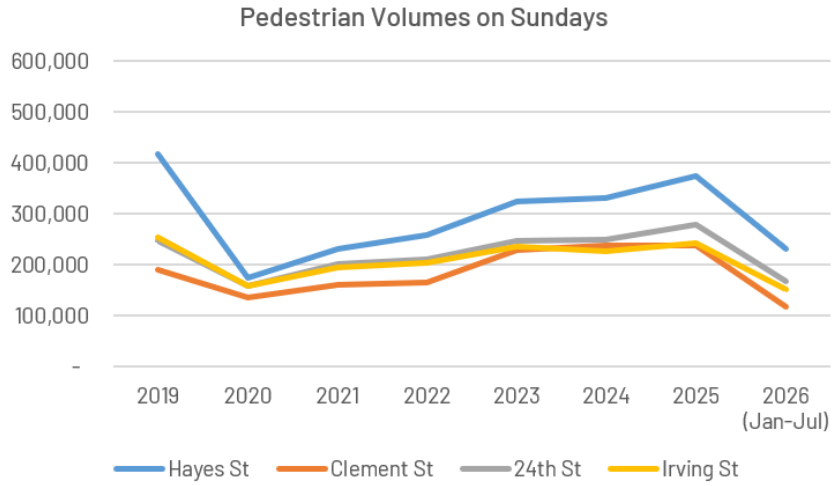


Source: Placer AI data

Hayes St and two other corridors, both pre- and post-pandemic, saw **more pedestrians on Sundays** than on Wednesdays.

- After the pandemic, **Clement St and Irving St saw a greater increase** in pedestrian volumes **on Sundays** compared to Wednesdays





Source: Placer AI data

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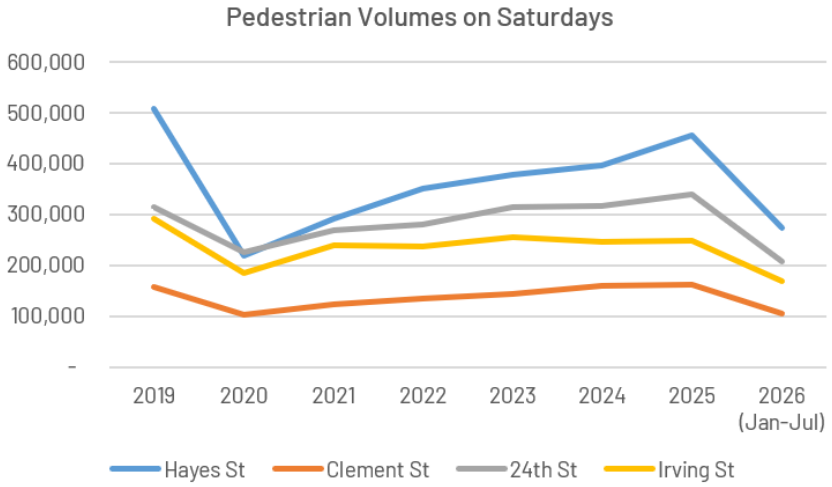
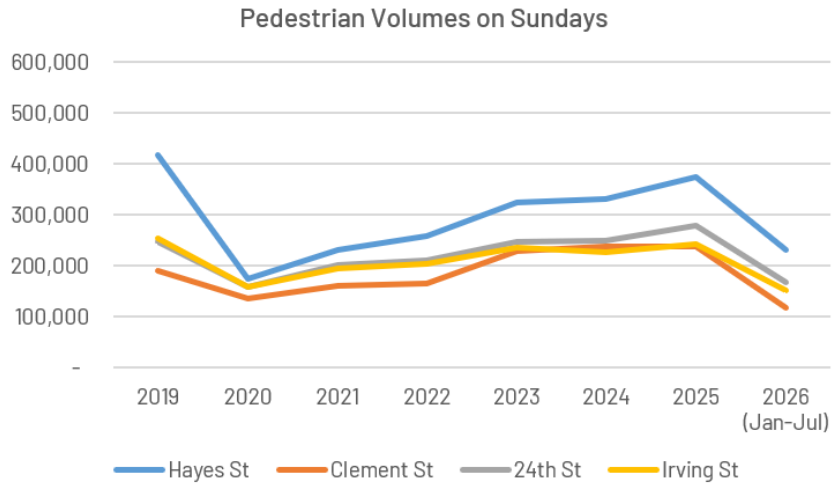
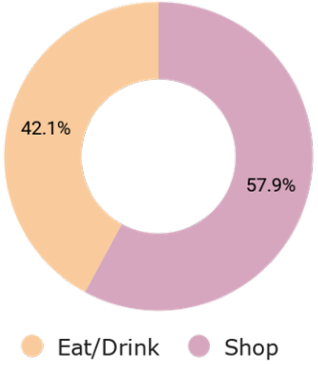


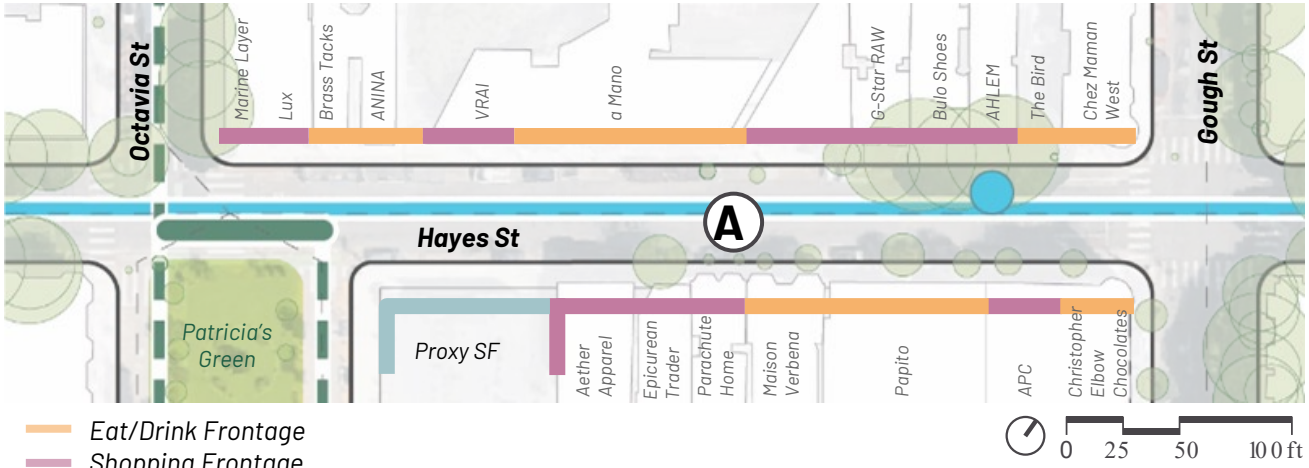


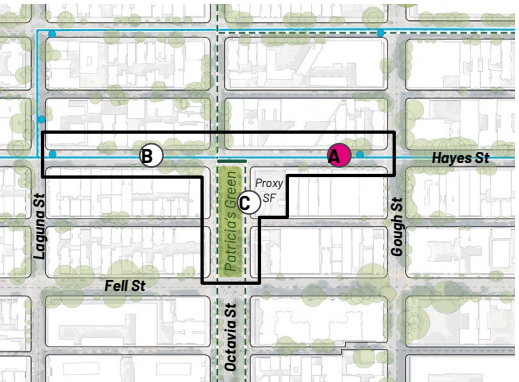
Source: Placer AI data

Business Activity

Block Ⓐ Hayes St between Gough and Octavia there is a fair balance of retail stores and eating choices.

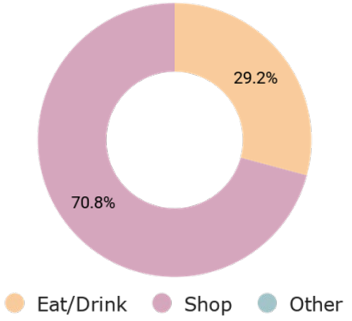


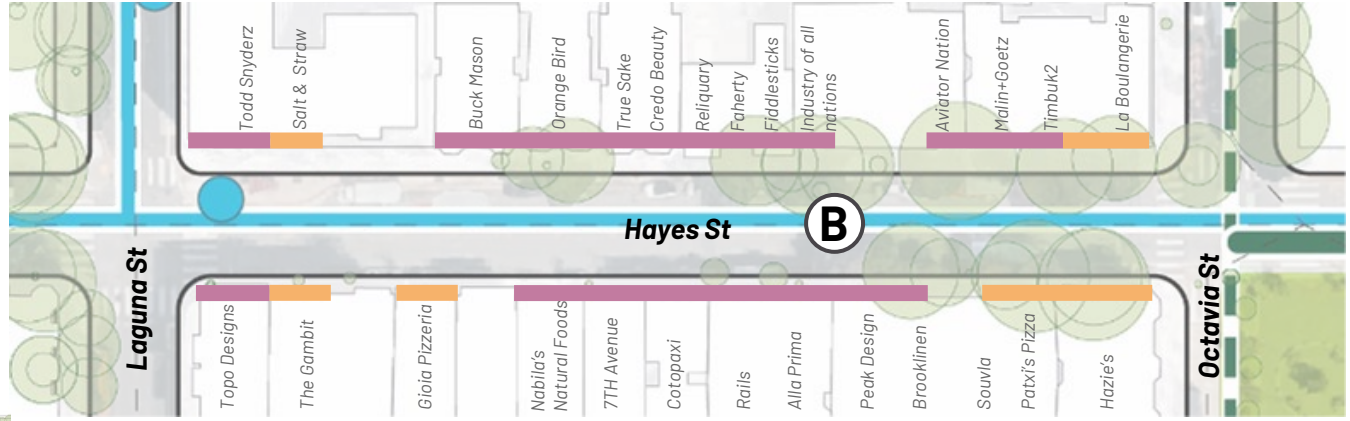


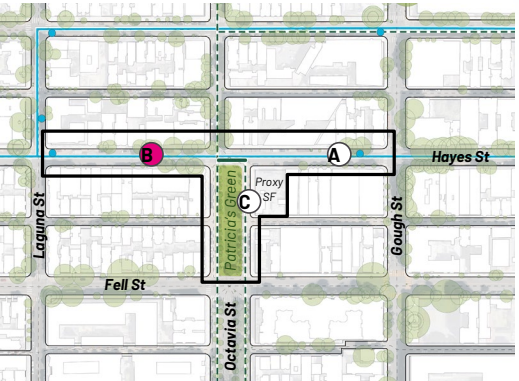


- *Eat/Drink Frontage*
- *Shopping Frontage*
- *MUNI Bus Stop*
- *MUNI route*
- *Dedicated bike lane*
- *Shared bike lane*

Block Ⓑ Hayes St between Octavia and Laguna is the most retail-heavy.



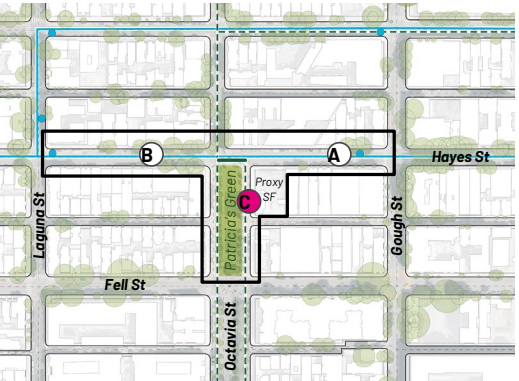


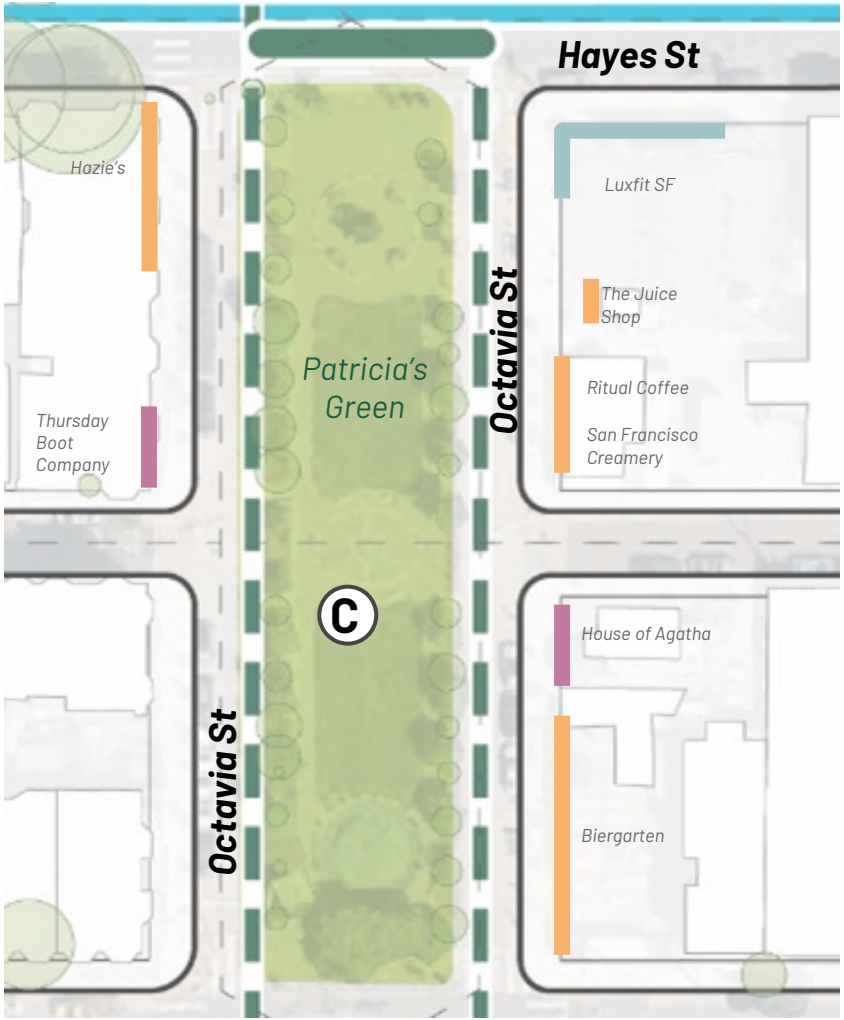


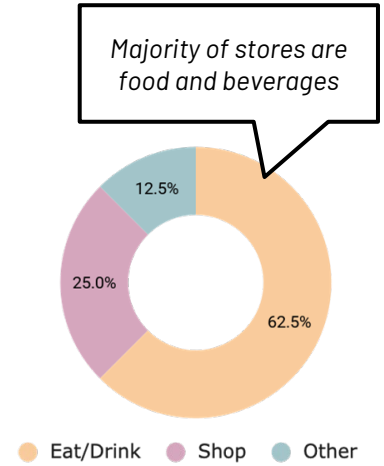
- *Eat/Drink Frontage*
- *Shopping Frontage*
- *MUNI Bus Stop*
- *MUNI route*
- *Dedicated Bike Lane*
- *Shared bike lane*

BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Patricia's Green / PROXY SF Ⓒ is anchored by food and beverage uses







Eat/Drink Frontage
Shopping Frontage
MUNI route
Dedicated Bike Lane
Shared bike lane

0 25 50 100 ft

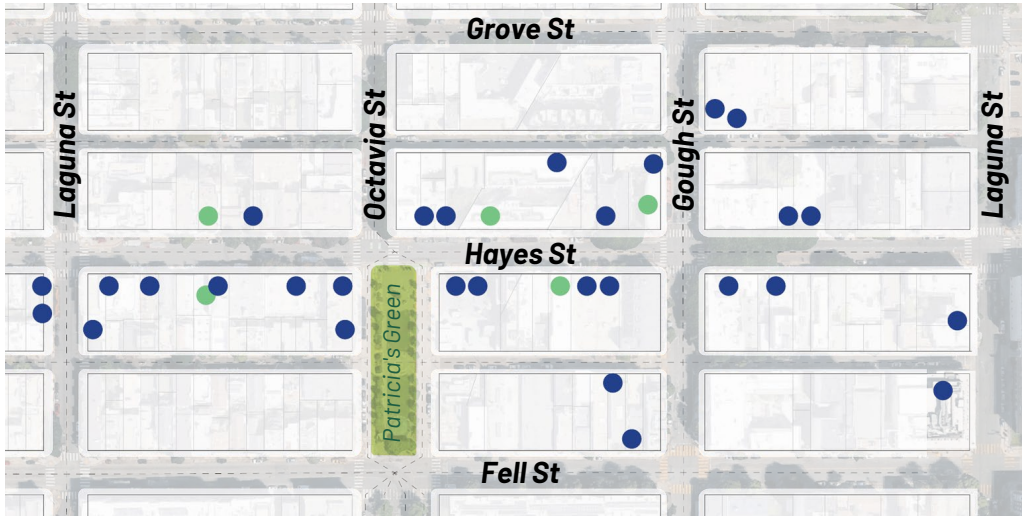
Business Surveys and Interviews

Engaged 37 Businesses in the Area

- 32 Businesses Responded to Survey
- 5 Businesses Interviewed

High Level Trends

- Top sales days are Fridays (82%) and Saturdays (85%).
- The most common sales peak window is early evening 5 to 7 pm (72%).
- Most sales come from walk-ins (overall 62%, 79% for Food/Bev)
- Most businesses say at least some customers need nearby parking.



Business Feedback on Shared Space

Respondents perceive Shared Space as strongly improving pedestrian activity (67%) and street atmosphere (55%)

Opinions on the impact to individual businesses are divided: 41% see a negative, 37% a positive, 22% no impact

Customer parking is the most widely shared pain point, including for businesses that favor the closure. Reduced visibility compounds the issue for a smaller group.

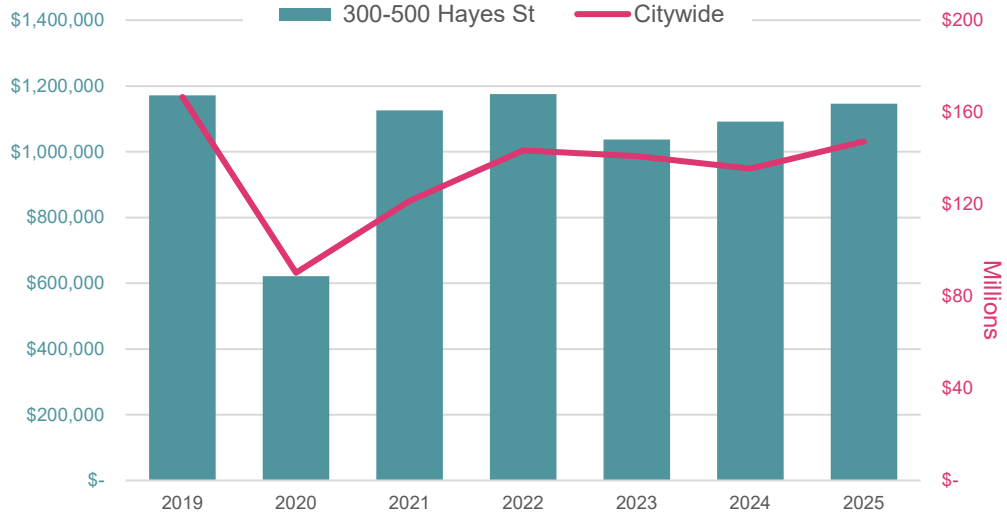
A majority of respondents want some form of the closure to continue. *13% support expanding operations,* 31% support current operations, while 28% favor scaling back the closure or limiting it to times with active programming.



Sales Tax Data

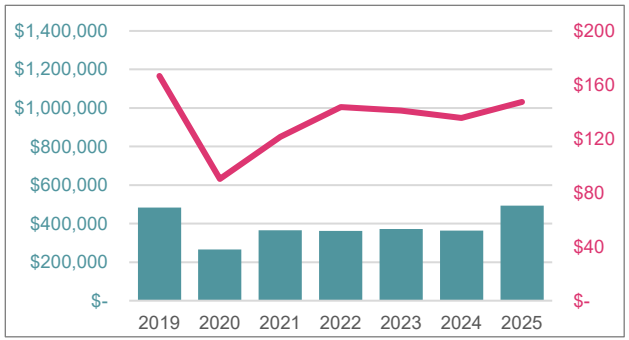
Annual Business Sales Tax, By Block

300-500 Blocks of Hayes *

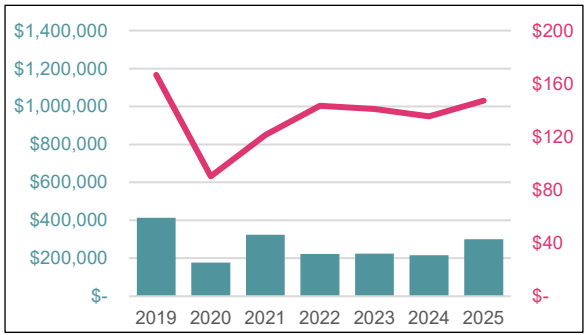




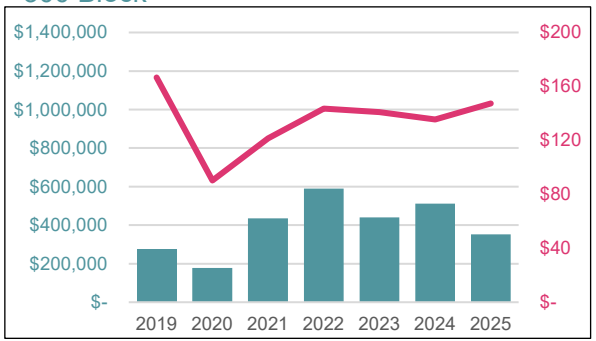
500 Block



400 Block *

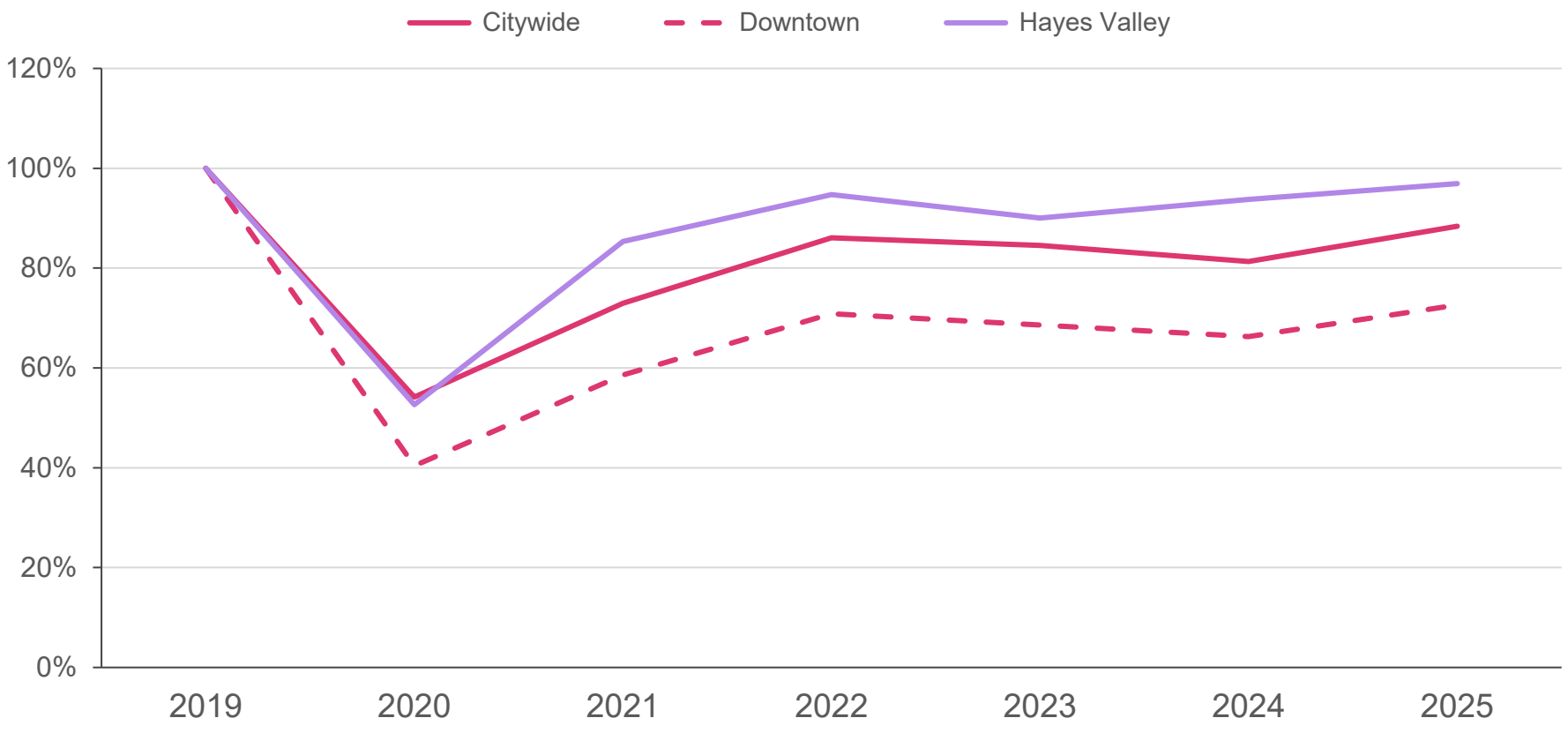


300 Block



- Years 2020 and 2022 appear higher than the actual totals, due to exclusion of negative sales tax figures

Annual Business Tax, as Percentage of 2019



Public Engagement

Findings from Public Engagement

- 80% of respondents said the **street closure encourages them to spend times** on Hayes Street, and none said it discourages them from spending time.
- Top reasons that people appreciate about the Shared Space is the **atmosphere/environment**, **events**, and **safety**.
- From most to least selected, people spend time **walking**, **dining**, and **shopping** on Hayes Street.
- People particularly **enjoy the Farmers' Market and live music**, while desiring more seating, more music, different types of cultural events and music, more kids activities, more generous dining space, clearer signage and wayfinding for cars, pedestrians, transit riders, and cyclists



Source: Farmers Market Booth on July 18, 2026

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Develop concepts for activation, open space and pedestrian improvements
    - To be informed and guided by SFMTA Board action on roadway shared space permit renewal request
- Concepts will be prioritized based on SFMTA Board action and feedback to permit all, a component of, or deny HVNA's request for continued roadway shared space closure on Hayes Street
- Present draft and final concepts to the SFCTA Board for potential acceptance into the Octavia Special Fund list of eligible expenditures