Together, We’re Making History for Safe Streets

2022 IMPACT REPORT
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Thank you to the staff and Board members who dedicated their time and talent to Walk SF for part or all of 2022.
Dear Friend,

It’s one of the hardest questions I have to answer in my job: **what will it take to really change our streets?**

When I get this question from someone like Gina LaBlanc, whose son Kyle was walking when he was hit and killed by a speeding driver, I can feel overwhelmed in how to answer.

The reality is that so much must happen for our streets to be truly safe for everyone who walks, of every age and ability.

We need new policies, increased funding, and leaders that prioritize pedestrians – at every level of government. We need widespread behavior shifts by drivers. And the most dangerous streets must be systematically and comprehensively redesigned for safety, not speed.

**Because of you,** Walk SF is pushing every day, in every way, on all of these fronts. I’m so grateful that you believe in – and invest in – our vision for a San Francisco that leads the nation in pedestrian-first streets. And given the national trends in pedestrian deaths and the stark inequities in who’s being hurt most often, there couldn’t be greater urgency for our city to lead.

As you’ll read inside, your support made 2022 a year for the record books. There were the defining, historic wins for pedestrians with JFK Promenade, Slow Streets, and the Great ‘Walkway.’ There was also Walk SF’s groundbreaking report and work to push San Francisco’s leaders to focus on deadly speeds.

**Yes, we have so, so much more to do. But we have momentum, both with historic wins and showing what’s possible.**

I can’t thank you enough for your support, especially as Walk SF approaches the start of its 25th year. You’re how Walk SF is building the movement and pushing for solutions to transform our streets for a safer, healthier, more equitable and climate-friendly future.

With gratitude,

Jodie Medeiros, Executive Director
Walk San Francisco
A Fresh Look as We Kick Off Our 25th Year

Thanks to you, Walk SF will soon kick off a yearlong celebration of 25 years of working on behalf of everyone who walks. It’s a time to reflect on the wins your support has made possible, and look to what’s next. In that spirit, we’ve refreshed our logo.

Out with the old…             In with the new!

We’re excited about the new look because it captures:

The heart of the challenge Walk SF exists to solve.

At the end of the day, it’s pretty simple: we should all be able to cross the street without fearing for our lives – especially kids, seniors, and people with disabilities. Yet every day in San Francisco, an average of three people are hit while walking. It shouldn’t be like this.

Our focus on solutions.

Did you know that a zebra-striped crosswalk (also known as ‘high-visibility' or ‘continental’) increases the likelihood of a driver yielding to a pedestrian by 30 - 40%? A zebra-striped crosswalk is one of countless proven ways that our streets can be designed to protect pedestrians. But this absolute basic for pedestrian safety still isn't yet at all designated ‘high-injury’ intersections!

The reality is that we have to advocate – loudly and consistently – for pedestrians, or solutions simply don’t happen at the pace or scale needed. Every day, Walk SF pushes the City to bring more solutions to our streets – in a layered, cost-effective, preventative way – to make us safer.

Our vision for a San Francisco that leads the nation with pedestrian-first streets.

As a compact 7 x 7 mile city with mild weather, walking should be the preferred way of getting around for many trips for most people. That will happen when streets are designed to truly prioritize pedestrians in all parts of the city, with everything from safe intersections to slower speeds to car-free spaces.
Walk On!

We held a fantastic set of walks in 2022 that not only got people exploring new sides of our city, but were a starting point for many to get involved with Walk SF. Plus, our ticketed walks raised essential funds for our advocacy work.

The Golden City Odyssey. This self-guided adventure explored sections of the Crosstown Trail in a 35-mile route separated into five loop hikes.

The 18th annual Peak2Peak. Our biggest fundraiser of the year was back in-person for the first time since the pandemic! Showcasing ten peaks over 12 miles, the new route did not disappoint. Mark your calendars for the 19th annual Peak2Peak on Saturday, September 9, 2023.

Our new DIY member walks. As a way to thank our members, we now send curated, self-guided, off-the-beaten-path walks to members’ inboxes every few months.

WalkLab: The Wonderful Volunteers Who Create Our Walks

All of these walks are possible because of WalkLab, our braintrust of wonderful volunteers who donate their time to design our totally unique walks. Not only do they know every neighborhood in the city, they bring history, creativity, and San Francisco spirit to each walk.


Fun Fact: The History of the Zebra-Striped Crosswalk

The zebra-striped crosswalk we know and love today began to be widely used in the early 1950s in the United Kingdom. After rising pedestrian deaths, the government tested a variety of designs and the zebra-striped ones rose to the top. Zebra-striped crosswalks can be seen from greater distances by drivers, plus pedestrians are more visible against the striped background. Most importantly, the crosswalk informs drivers that pedestrians might enter there.

Photo credit: Transport Research Laboratory
You Made History (Twice!) with Victories for a Permanent Car-Free JFK

Just weeks into the pandemic, one of Walk SF’s staff members heard an idea some runners were talking about.

**What if JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park were made car-free not just on Sundays, but every day, so people could be active with plenty of room for social distancing?**

It was an idea with legs, so to speak.

On March 20, 2020, Walk SF launched an action on our website so people could send an email to Mayor London Breed asking her to create this safe space. Within 48 hours, nearly 2,000 people sent emails!

Support and activism around the idea quickly grew from there. On April 28, 2020, using emergency powers, Mayor Breed officially closed a 1.5-mile segment of JFK Drive to traffic 24 hours a day (note: Shelley Drive in McLaren Park was made car-free that day, too; Walk SF is supporting a section staying this way).

Not only did car-free JFK prove incredibly popular, it was clear to us at Walk SF how necessary it was in a city where an average of three people are hit walking every day – and supported the City’s Vision Zero goals. We needed to keep this large, safe, dedicated space for pedestrians – the largest in San Francisco – always.

Fast-forward to August of 2021, when we learned that the Board of Supervisors would vote on car-free JFK’s fate. And because of you, we were able to go all-in to organizing to make it permanent. (This idea was championed by the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition and activist David Miles, Jr. for decades.)

Within a few weeks, we had volunteers out on car-free JFK every weekend getting passersby to sign postcards to their Supervisor. And that was just the start of what would be 15 months of organizing and advocating for a forever car-free, people-first, pedestrian oasis that’s now called ‘JFK Promenade.’

The first campaign was all about getting enough Supervisors to vote in support of Mayor Breed’s legislation to make car-free JFK permanent; the second campaign was getting voters to reaffirm this legislation on the ballot.
Your support is how Walk SF was able to:

**Coordinate volunteers in gathering 10,000 signed postcards to deliver to Supervisors before the April 26, 2022 vote.** Check out page 12 for the list of volunteers who helped!

**Organize rallies and get extensive positive media coverage.** Throughout the campaign, our messaging focused on safety and the love of car-free JFK.

**Identify and push for accessibility solutions.** Walk SF led walk audits and listening sessions with senior and disability groups to identify specific needs. This led to a detailed list of proposed solutions, many of which came to life in 2022.

**Bring in and lift up new voices.** We worked with climate groups, health care professionals, local businesses, schools, the running community, and a passionate group of moms to reach elected officials and voters from different perspectives.

**Be part of a coordinated coalition** including the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, KidSafe SF, Church of 8 Wheels, Great Highway Park advocates, Mothers Out Front, Richmond Family SF, San Francisco League of Conservation Voters, San Francisco Parks Alliance, San Francisco Surfrider Foundation, SF Climate Emergency Coalition, Sierra Club San Francisco Bay, SPUR, Streets for People, the Climate Reality Project, Urban Environmentalists, 350 SF, and more. Together, we were able to navigate a lot of politics, do an incredible amount of grassroots organizing and outreach, and leverage resources. This was critical for both the Board of Supervisors vote and on the November ballot.

Look what you did! Your support and amazing volunteers are how we got 10,000 postcards to Supervisors signed in support of car-free JFK. We spread quilts of them on the steps of City Hall before delivering them to Supervisors.

**Win #1**

The Board of Supervisors passes legislation from Mayor Breed to make JFK Promenade permanent in a vote of 7 to 4 on April 26, 2022.

**Win #2**

After opposition put car-free JFK on the November ballot, voters passed Measure J by 63% on November 8, 2022, reaffirming the Board’s legislation.

Congrats to YOU: you made our city better for generations of people who walk, of all ages and abilities!
Measure L: A $200 Million Win for Safe Streets

Thanks to you, Walk SF both worked to help pass Measure L – and successfully advocated for Measure L’s ‘expenditure plan’ to increase the funding available for safe streets projects.

Measure L, passed by voters by almost 72% on November 8, 2022, continues San Francisco’s ½ cent sales tax for transportation. This has been a core funding source for public transit (including paratransit) and street projects (including redesigning some of the most dangerous streets) for more than 30 years!

Measure L includes more than $200 million specifically for a range of projects to reduce deadly speeds and protect people crossing, plus additional funds for programs to make it safer for kids to walk to school and for neighborhood-specific pedestrian safety improvements.

“The ability to walk safely is the truest form of equity, and a key measure of quality of life. Walk SF has been at the forefront of pushing for solutions to transform San Francisco’s streets into safe streets – which is vital in creating an equitable, healthy, and livable city. I’m a proud Walk SF supporter.”

- Tim Hickey, Walk SF member since 2014

Tim Hickey, his wife Leah, and son Liam can often be found walking or biking around their Panhandle neighborhood. Tim and Leah moved there in 2010, and immediately fell in love with the neighborhood’s walkability.

Thirteen years and one son later, Tim is more passionate than ever about walking and being a pedestrian advocate. He was most recently involved in Walk SF with our efforts to save car-free JFK.
Dangerous speeds kill and injure again and again on San Francisco’s streets. Speed is the #1 cause of severe and fatal crashes in our city.

That’s why with the support of our members, Walk San Francisco launched the #SlowOurStreets campaign in 2020 to take on dangerous speeds.

In 2022, you made it possible for the #SlowOurStreets campaign to take on an ambitious project to move the needle on dangerous speeds.

Walk SF conducted speed surveys on 47 blocks around the city. Walk SF also researched everything San Francisco is—and isn’t—doing related to speed, plus the approaches working here and elsewhere to successfully slow down our streets.

This led to the groundbreaking report we published in November: Making San Francisco a ‘Safe Speeds City’: Solutions to Slow Our Streets and Save Lives.

The report offers the City a blueprint for becoming a ‘safe speeds city.’ Read the report at walksf.org/speedreport.

Walk SF has since presented the report nationally, and it now guides our advocacy work on dangerous speed. We believe San Francisco must comprehensively address speed to make real progress toward Vision Zero.

20 is Plenty... and is Now the Speed Limit on More Streets

In 2021, Walk SF worked hard to pass Assembly Bill 43. AB 43, which is now law, gives cities including San Francisco greater freedom in setting speed limits based on safety.

Speed limits are a crucial starting point for slowing our streets; research shows that lowering limits is particularly effective in bringing down the highest (and deadliest) outlier speeds.

We’re grateful to the SFMTA for using their new authority to bring 20 MPH limits to 28 corridors in 2022. Walk SF will push for continued rapid expansion of this. For driver behavior to really shift, 20 MPH limits must be widespread combined with street designs, savvy driver education, and enforcement to support this.
Continuing to Push for Speed Safety Cameras

Speed camera systems dramatically shift behavior and can reduce the number of severe and fatal crashes by as much as 51%. But California cities do not yet have the legal authority to use speed safety cameras.

In 2022, Walk SF again worked to pass state legislation to change this. Assembly Bill 2336 (Friedman) had additional equity and privacy considerations from the 2021 version, plus it would have allowed speed safety cameras near schools, not just high-injury streets. But AB 2336 did not even make it out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Clearly we have more work to do – and we will do the work. Walk SF and Families for Safe Streets continue to have this as our top legislative priority. (At the time of publication in August 2023, AB 645 had been passed by the California Assembly and was moving through the California Senate!)

“I don’t have a car, so when I go for a walk, whether I’m commuting to work, picking up groceries, getting exercise, or meeting friends, I want to know the streets are designed to keep me safe and protected. There’s no other organization taking this on as their sole priority except Walk San Francisco. Pedestrians need to band together!”

- Lyslynn Lacoste, Walk SF member since 2020

Lyslynn loves to walk San Francisco, especially if her path takes her towards the water. “I’ve been given two feet so I might as well use them,” says Lyslynn, who aims for at least 10,000 steps each day.

She first learned about Walk SF from her community-building work when she was the Executive Director of BMAGIC in the Bayview. Lyslynn now supports Walk SF in many ways, including buying tickets and recruiting her friends for our walks like Peak2Peak.
Slow Streets and Great ‘Walkway’ Add to Historic Wins

Across the country, most cities have ended any car-free or low-traffic streets created during the pandemic.

But not here in San Francisco, thanks to the voices of so many – and you!

Not only was JFK Promenade made permanent in 2022, the Slow Streets program was, too, plus the car-free space on the Great Highway was extended for three years as a pilot. **Your support allowed Walk SF to play key roles in these victories for safe streets.**

Walk SF helped bring together the People’s Slow Streets Coalition, which successfully pushed the SFMTA to adopt specific design standards for Slow Streets to keep traffic speeds at 15 MPH and traffic volumes to 1,000 or fewer vehicles.

This is not what was originally being considered: SFMTA staff had proposed standards that would have allowed more traffic, and at higher speeds – risking the success and safety of Slow Streets.

After a nine hour hearing in December, the SFMTA Board moved forward with the Coalition’s recommendation, plus asked SFMTA staff to bring forward a list of possible additions to the network with a goal of 100 miles of Slow Streets.

Like JFK Promenade, the ‘Great Walkway’ has proven a popular, needed, pedestrian space we don’t want to lose. Your investment in Walk SF meant we could support this campaign in a range of ways, from helping organize rallies to activating our members.

In December, the Board of Supervisors voted 9 to 2 to continue car-free space on the Great Highway on weekends for the next three years as a pilot before a public process determining its long-term future occurs.

“To combat the climate crisis, we should be prioritizing access to green spaces versus commuting cars that pollute our air through emissions. San Francisco can be the climate leader we need right now.”

- Megan Nguyen, an organizer with Sunrise Bay Area, who spoke at a ‘Save the Great Walkway’ rally that Walk SF helped to organize
This year’s World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims was the largest yet. The global event creates a space for grieving severe and fatal crashes, shines a light on the true toll of unsafe streets, and demands an end to these preventable tragedies.

Because of you, Walk SF is able to provide support and guidance to San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets. This group brings together crash survivors and people with loved ones who were hurt or killed in crashes.

Each year, we hold World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims together with Families for Safe Streets. Some members of the group bravely shared their stories, making real the devastation that traffic crashes bring to families, friends, and entire communities.

Again and again, we see how stories can change how decisionmakers view and act on traffic safety issues. Many city leaders attended the event, which is both meaningful for those who have been affected by traffic crashes and also sparks greater accountability for real action.

Remembering Those Pedestrians Lost in 2022

January 5 – Yang Zhao
March 4 – Ubaldo Sarceno Mazariegos
March 10 – Erna Egli
May 11 – Kristen Avansino
May 15 – Elmer Redbull, Sam Edwards
May 21 – Marcia Shin
May 22 – Mary and Willa Henderson
June 21 – Rene Kelly
August 12 – William L Fong

September 1 – Tan Mok
September 6 – Kenny Clay
September 8 – Timothy Carpenter
October 22 – Unidentified
October 24 – Huansu He
December 6 - Carlos Mauricio Perez
December 7 – Jose Flores Espinoza
December 25 - Unidentified
December 28 – Brandon Gorski
Our Volunteers Are Walk-Stars!

Volunteers are 100% how we were able to gather 10,000 postcards to Supervisors in support of a permanent car-free JFK, do speed surveys on 47 blocks across the city, hold events like Peak2Peak, and much more. 2022 was the biggest year of volunteer support in our history. Thank you for sharing your time and talent!

Marilyn Adamson
Nina Alshef
Divad Aguileria
Jalal Alabsi
Holly Allen
Karen Allen
Brian Andersen
Kayla Anderson
Linda Antoine
Amelia Antrim
Lillian Archer
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2022 car-free JFK, do speed surveys on 47 blocks across the city, hold events like Peak2Peak, and much more. Our Volunteers Are Walk-Stars!
GRATEFUL TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

Our donors make Walk San Francisco's life-saving work to win safe streets possible. Thank you to the following individuals, foundations, and companies for your history-making generosity in 2022!

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- Tides Foundation*

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Our Finances in 2022

2022 was a historic year of wins, and this meant that Walk SF had to really stretch to be able to take on so many major campaigns in one year! We tapped into our strategic reserve to be able to act on major opportunities and be the bold advocates we needed to be. This is exactly why we established this flexible pot of funds with your past support.

We need to continue growing our strategic reserve, plus our core operating budget. Walk SF faces increased costs due to inflation and the ever-present challenge of paying our wonderful staff competitive salaries in one of the most expensive cities in the country. That’s why 2023 will bring a greater focus on increasing fundraising revenues, and we hope you can help us succeed!

Walk SF operates on a July - June fiscal year, and our audited FY 2022-2023 financial statements are currently being finalized. For a copy as soon as these are available, or for a copy of our FY 2021-2022 financial statements, please contact info@walksf.org.

A special thanks to Matt Biggar and son Jack.

They did Climate Ride together in the Santa Cruz Mountains in 2022, raising more than $5,000 for Walk SF! Matt sees Walk SF’s work as a key local climate solution.

“I particularly appreciate Walk SF’s focus on equity and making sure all communities in San Francisco are involved in making positive changes to their local transportation infrastructure,” says Matt.

More than 400 people volunteered with Walk SF in 2022, and were crucial to the JFK Promenade wins!
3 Ways to Connect with Walk San Francisco

1. Find us on Facebook, Instagram, Mastodon, and Twitter with @walksf

2. Sign up for our newsletter at walksf.org.

3. Read the latest on our blog.

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