Regional transportation destination and crossroads
- Market Street is the central destination of the Bay Area transportation system and a key city transit corridor.
- Market Street’s role as a transportation destination runs into multiple mode conflicts where north-south “feeder” streets cross Market.

Lack of identity and imageability
- Although Market Street still serves as San Francisco’s front door, its physical character, operational challenges, and lack of urban life diminish its identity as a distinctly San Francisco place and regional transportation destination.
- Visitors seeking an iconic “postcard” photo of San Francisco seldom choose Market Street.

An organizing hinge
- Market Street forms a “hinge” between two very distinct street grids. These changes in block size and orientation were established when the street pattern was laid out in 1847 (see History).
- The dramatic San Francisco topography reinforces this role as a hinge – as northern and western hills transition to SOMA flatlands.

Featuring key city views and landmarks
- Market Street is a strong reference point and orienting feature in the City offering iconic views to the Ferry Building, Twin Peaks/Subte Tower and City Hall.

A place for civic pride and celebration
- Market Street is the place for all major parades and civic celebrations in the City.
- The Market Street parade route links two major City landmarks: the Ferry Building and City Hall.

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This document discusses various aspects of Market Street in San Francisco, including its districts, edges, transit, and opportunities for development. Key points include:

- **Districts and Edges**
  - The great majority of people on Market Street frequent the Financial District and Transbay District.
  - The edges of Market Street are defined by two distinct city grids, which vary in scale along the corridor.

- **Transportation Interface**
  - Market Street lacks strong points of interest and is perceived as a throughway with little connectivity.
  - The transit role is significant, with transit modes on Market Street.

- **Distinct grids**
  - The edges of Market Street are defined by two distinct grids that create connection challenges.

- **Density and contrasting edges**
  - The urban form varies along the street and reflects some of the highest densities in the city, particularly in the Financial and Civic Center districts.
  - Buildings along the corridor are in transition, reflecting encroachment and scale along the corridor.

- **Intersections unique to Market**
  - Market Street intersections provide unique spatial qualities with multiple building corners, attractive angled views, and a sense of arrival.
  - Street geometries resulting from the change of grids create a number of opportunity areas.

- **Opportunities are lost**
  - Lively nearby districts lack identity on Market Street.
  - Adjacent existing activity nodes including Civic Center, Union Square, and Transbay Terminal don’t directly activate Market Street.
  - For the retail between 4th St. and 5th St., Market Street lacks strong points of interest and is not perceived as a center.

- **Capitalize on new projects synergies**
  - Market Street can leverage a number of upcoming projects and initiatives that are contemplated along or near the corridor, including residential and arts-oriented investments, to re-energize and activate the street.

- **Transit plays a major role**
  - The great majority of people on Market Street are using transit, above and below ground.
  - People’s experience of Market Street depends greatly on their route and transit mode choices.
  - Improving travel modes and their interface is an opportunity to strengthen connectivity of districts and further activate the public realm.
Inconsistent ground floor edges quality and activity
- Treatment of ground floor facades is key to an attractive and successful pedestrian environment.
- Currently, ground floor facades vary significantly, with long stretches of Market Street offering an unattractive, inactive pedestrian environment including blank walls and vacant storefronts.
- Retail District and the south side of the Financial District feature the highest concentration of attractive facades; conversely, the Central Market area currently has the highest concentration of dull and unattractive facades.

**ELEMENTS OF CONTINUITY AND VARIETY**

**Paving**
- Sidewalk brick paving
- Fore Plaza

**Wayfinding**
- Structures/signage
- City map / information
- North Market

**Civic Art**
- Artwork in Plaza
- Mid Market

**Street Element Precedents**
- Street view & seating
- Train shelter & seating
- Bike parking
- Pedestrian lockers

**TREES**
- The condition and form of the Market Street trees do little to benefit the civic pride and identity of San Francisco’s great street
- The health, form and scale of existing trees along Market Street vary greatly
- Many failing trees due to a high degree of shade and poor soil conditions
- The few robust trees on Market Street create physical comfort and entice people to stay

** precedent examples**: Trees create a defining character (San Ramon)
## Identity

### Questions

1. **What do you think is special about Market Street? Be as specific as possible.**

2. **What features or elements would you change on Market Street to make it a more memorable place?**

3. **Thinking of your favorite streets here or elsewhere, what aspects could provide inspiration for Market Street? Be as specific as possible.**

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**The Better Market Street Project is made possible with participation of the following City Agencies:**

- San Francisco Planning Department
- SFMTA
- Municipal Transportation Agency