Guidelines for
MASTER PLANNING a
SUSTAINABLE GREEN STREET NETWORK

How to move from
Vision to Practice

Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter
Sustainable Land Use Committee

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Many cities already have:

★ Bike master plan
★ Complete streets plan
★ Green infrastructure plan
★ Safe routes to school plan
★ Urban canopy/Tree plan
★ Parks & open space plan
But often they are developed and implemented at different times and by different city departments and not integrated together into a single plan, funded by a sharing of multi-department financial resources (Public Works, Parks, Public Safety, etc.), and implemented congruently.
Cities need to
Create a policy
so that city departments work
together rather than in silos
to
Plan and fund INTEGRATED
solutions for greening city
streets
How to **conceptualize** an **INTEGRATED** Green Street Network

Engage multiple city departments, private utilities, and the public to create a citywide Slow, Safe street network with Trees, Plants & Green Stormwater Infrastructure

Image: C/CAG FlowstoBay.org – Green Infrastructure Design Guide
1. Start with a map of your city (as illustrated here by the map of the City of San Mateo)
2. Identify Open Spaces: existing parks & creeks
3. Add a 10-minute (1/2 mile) walk distance around existing parks to identify areas that lack pedestrian access to parks (shown grey)
4. Plan new green parks in these areas
5. Locate existing schools
6. Overlay Bike Master Plan, Safe Routes to School, & existing slow streets to create a connected network of safe, slow, low-stress pedestrian walks and bikeways that connect the schools, parks, creeks, and the Bay.
7. Slow auto traffic to 15-20 mph

- Prioritize a portion of street space for only pedestrians, bicyclists, kids, seniors
- Start with temporary and inexpensive materials
- Get feedback
A Safe Slow Green Street network:
Can include Safe Routes to School
8. Plant trees along streets to provide shade

- Calms traffic
- Encourages walking and rolling
- Reduces urban heat island effect
- Sequesters carbon
- Improves air quality
- Reduces energy use
9. Include green storm-water infrastructure

- capture rainwater for trees and plants
- clean pollutants
- prevent local flooding
- clean water to bay
- recharge groundwater
10. Use appropriate planting to Create Ecology / Habitat corridors to attract birds, insects, and pollinators

Select native and high habitat-value planting for:

- Trees
- Shrubs
- Groundcovers
11. Underground utility lines to avoid conflict with street trees and increase fire safety during storms

Safe green streets can serve as safe evacuation routes in emergencies

Photo: Emily Korman KCAW Dec 24, 2013
12. Provide incentives for property owners along the corridor to replant with native landscaping for habitat.
• Encourage Public Works, Public Safety, Parks & private sector to Plan & Implement Green Streets Together

• Encourage and Incentivise shade trees on public and private land

• Start with temporary “slow” (non-arterial) green streets

• Give people time to adjust, then review and re-adjust.

• Reconstruct streets to make temporary changes permanent
SIGNAGE IS CRITICAL: Examples of explanatory signage for temporary slow streets
Do not create a temporary slow street without clear explanatory signage because closures or street alterations without explanation will confuse people and they will rebel.
• Plan for new evolving non-fossil fuel modes of “last mile” transportation such as scooters, electric bikes, micromobility.
• Non-auto modes of transportation reduce VMT
• Vision Zero - Safety - top priority
• Anticipate growth
We have learned that pedestrians & bicycles blossom given their own network of green, slow, safe streets.

A policy for an integrated design yields benefits on many levels:

Climate, Resilience, Safety, Health, Water, Biodiversity
Green Streets create Sustainable & Resilient Communities

https://www.sierraclub.org/loma-prieta/guidelines-and-resources