City & County of San Francisco

FY25 Street & Sidewalk Maintenance Standards Annual Report

Prepared by

OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

CITY PERFORMANCE DIVISION

October 20, 2025

About the Controller's Office

The Controller is the chief financial officer and auditor for the City and County of San Francisco. We produce regular reports on the City's financial condition, economic condition, and the performance of City government. We are also responsible for key aspects of the City's financial operations — from processing payroll for City employees to processing and monitoring the City's budget.

Our team includes financial, tech, accounting, analytical and other professionals who work hard to secure the City's financial integrity and promote efficient, effective, and accountable government. We strive to be a model for good government and to make the City a better place to live and work.

About the City Performance Division

The City Performance team is part of the City Services Auditor (CSA) within the Controller's Office. CSA's mandate, shared with the Audits Division, is to monitor and improve the overall performance and efficiency of City Government. The team works with City departments across a range of subject areas, including transportation, public health, human services, homelessness, capital planning, and public safety.

City Performance Goals:

- Support departments in making transparent, data-driven decisions in policy development and operational management.
- Guide departments in aligning programming with resources for greater efficiency and impact.
- Provide departments with the tools they need to innovate, test, and learn.

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Introduction

The following report details San Francisco's Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards, which set objective measures of the cleanliness and condition of San Francisco's streets and sidewalks, and the results from evaluations of city streets and sidewalks conducted using these measures. The City Charter requires the Controller's Office (CON) to develop and evaluate these maintenance standards and report on the City's condition under the standards. CON developed the current standards in 2018 with input from the San Francisco Department of Public Works (Public Works). The standards evaluate litter, dumping, graffiti, feces, as well as other health hazards and sidewalk issues. Contracted evaluators physically assess pre-selected routes, which are generally one-block segments of street and sidewalk.

This report covers the results of nearly 2,600 in-person evaluations conducted over twelve months of data collection in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), which stretched from July 2024 to June 2025, as well as comparing results to Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), which lasted from July 2023 to June 2024. Evaluations from these two years covered almost identical street route samples. We also compared results to two prior periods of data collection between January and December 2022 and January to June 2023 and have noted if there are interesting trends.

The table on the next page shows the main results of evaluations. The report begins with a discussion of key findings from high-salience cleanliness issues, including relevant neighborhood findings. This is followed by additional analysis of trends in other standards.

See the appendix for additional information on data collection and sampling methodology. For more detailed information on the Maintenance Standards, data collection and sampling methodology, and detailed results on standards from January 2022-June 2025, see the program Reference Manual and Appendices. For more detailed neighborhood maps visit https://www.sf.gov/data/street-and-sidewalk-maintenance-standards.

FY25 Key Results

Over the past year we observed mostly stable results or very slight increases in observed issues related to the cleanliness or condition of San Francisco's sidewalks and streets. No issue areas saw large increases or decreases citywide. Neighborhoods across the city continued to vary in cleanliness, but no distinct pattern of neighborhood-level changes emerged either between FY24 and FY25 or over the course of the last year.

In general, over the last three-and-a-half years, our data has shown stability in the cleanliness and condition of San Francisco's streets and sidewalks.

The following table shows citywide averages for FY25 on the main evaluation measures. For more detail on these measures see Appendix 3.

Standard	Citywide Averages for July 2024-June 2025 (FY25)	Change from July 2023-June 2024 (FY24)	
Sidewalk Litter	**2.62** average on a 1-5 scale. Between a few traces of litter to more than a few traces but no accumulation.	No change in average levels.	
Street Litter	**2.44** average on a 1-5 scale. Between a few traces of litter to more than a few traces but no accumulation.	No change in average levels.	
Dumping	**32%** of evaluated routes have at least one large dumped item.	Slight increase in percent of routes with at least one large dumped item.	
Graffiti	**23** instances of graffiti per evaluated route on average.	Slight increase in average counts of graffiti per route.	
Feces	**34%** of evaluated routes have at least one instance of feces.	Slight increase in percent of routes with at least one instance of feces.	

Litter

Sidewalk litter remained stable from the prior year

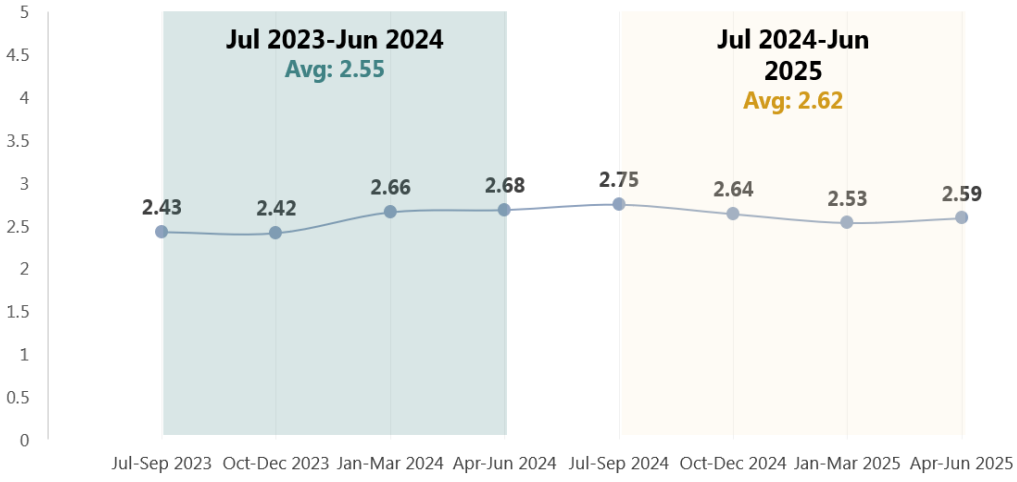
Litter on the sidewalk and street remained stable between FY24 and FY25.

Since July 2023, on the five-point scale used to measure litter, average sidewalk litter levels remained between a "few traces of litter" (Litter level = 2) and "more than a few traces" (Litter level = 3).[1] Routes with "more than a few traces" of litter remained around a quarter of all routes over the last two years.

Most evaluated sidewalk segments had some litter. It was rarer to see a sidewalk either completely free of litter or with significant accumulation. Over half of evaluated routes in FY25 had only "a few traces" of litter, while the percent of sidewalks with accumulated litter (levels 4 and 5) is low. This trend held true over time and across neighborhoods.

Litter level	Litter description
1	None: the sidewalk is free of litter
2	A few traces: the sidewalk is predominantly free of litter except for a few small traces
3	More than a few traces but no accumulation: there are no piles of litter, and there are large gaps between pieces of litter
4	Distributed litter with some accumulation: there may either be large gaps between piles of litter or small gaps between pieces of litter
5	Widespread litter with significant accumulation

Average sidewalk litter levels citywide, FY24-FY25



For the detailed results table, see Appendix 4.

Neighborhood highlights

- In FY25, street and sidewalk litter ratings at the neighborhood level were largely similar to FY24 results. Most neighborhoods saw less than a 0.17 change in average ratings on a 5-point scale.
- The most notable exception was the Tenderloin, which saw a 0.55-point decrease in sidewalk litter and a 0.37-point decrease in street litter.

For more detailed neighborhood maps, visit https://www.sf.gov/data--street-and-sidewalk-maintenance-standards.

Street litter continues to follow the same pattern as sidewalk litter.

The standards define litter on streets in the same format as sidewalk litter. Street litter trends in FY25 were similar to those of sidewalk litter. Street litter levels were slightly lower, averaging 2.44 in FY25, mostly unchanged from FY24 (2.40).

[1] Note that all averages and percent of routes for a given standard are weighted in FY24 and FY25.

Dumping

Dumping increased slightly in FY25

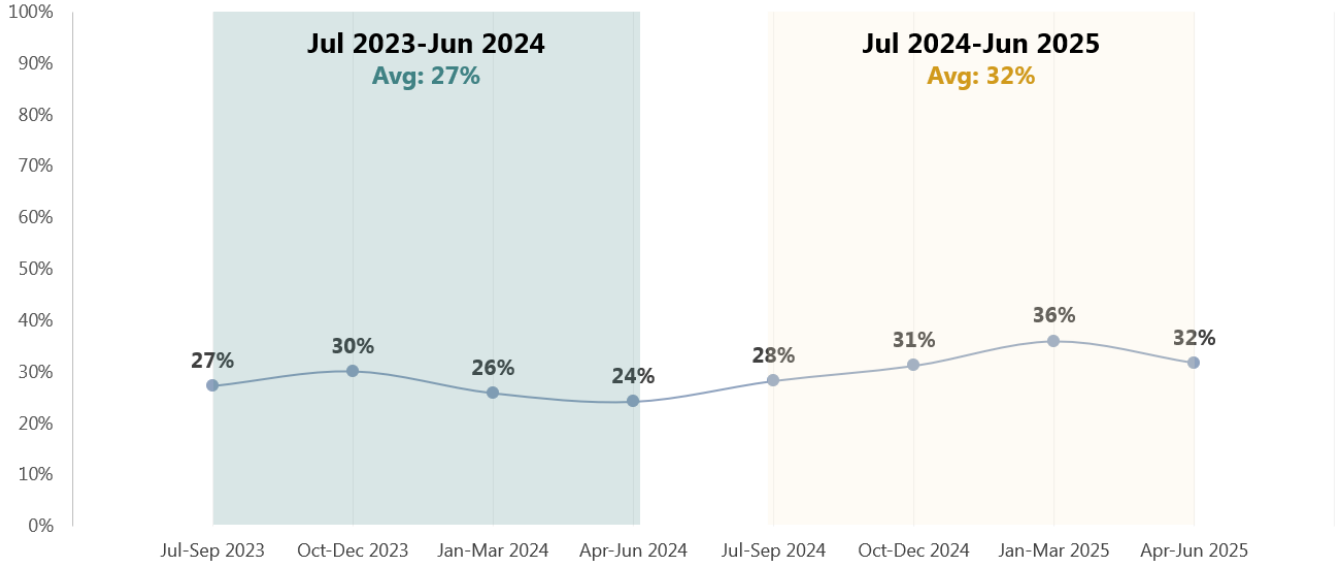
The standards define dumping as the number of items larger than litter present on an evaluated route.

- In FY25, 32 percent of routes had at least one dumped item, a slight increase from FY24 (27 percent).
- For the last three years, dumping has fluctuated across quarters, but evaluators have observed it on approximately 25 to 33 percent of evaluated routes.

Neighborhood highlights

- Most neighborhoods saw less than a 5 percentage point change in dumping presence from FY 2024 to FY 2025.
- Some notable exceptions include Bernal Heights, which saw a 23 percentage point increase in dumping presence, and Castro/Upper Market and Outer Mission, which saw a 17 percentage point increase.

Percent of routes with dumping citywide, FY24-FY25



For the detailed results table, see Appendix 4.

Evaluators most commonly observed boxed materials, construction waste, and furniture in FY25.

Evaluators record types of dumped items when they observe instances of dumping. The standards have 10 categories for dumped items, including furniture, mattresses, electronics, construction debris, luggage, and other items (see Appendix 3). Because routes can have multiple types of dumping issues present, the combined percentages of these issues will exceed 100 percent. Most categories of dumped items were very similar compared to the prior year.

- In FY25, boxed and bagged materials appeared on 17 percent of all routes or 52 percent of routes with dumped items (n=426). This type of dumping issue was most common in Mission, followed by Bayview, in both FY24 and FY25.
- The second most common dumping issue was construction waste and debris, found on 33 percent of routes with dumped items (n=272), followed by furniture, mattresses, and bed frames at 22 percent (n=178).
- Construction waste was less common but more evenly distributed across neighborhoods; higher counts were observed in Mission, Bayview, Outer Richmond, Seacliff, and Sunset/Parkside as compared to other neighborhoods. Similarly, the dumping of furniture was also more dispersed across neighborhoods, with somewhat higher instances in Bayview, Mission, Outer Mission, and Excelsior.

What were the most commonly dumped items in 2025 when there were instances of dumping?

Graffiti

Graffiti increased slightly from past years

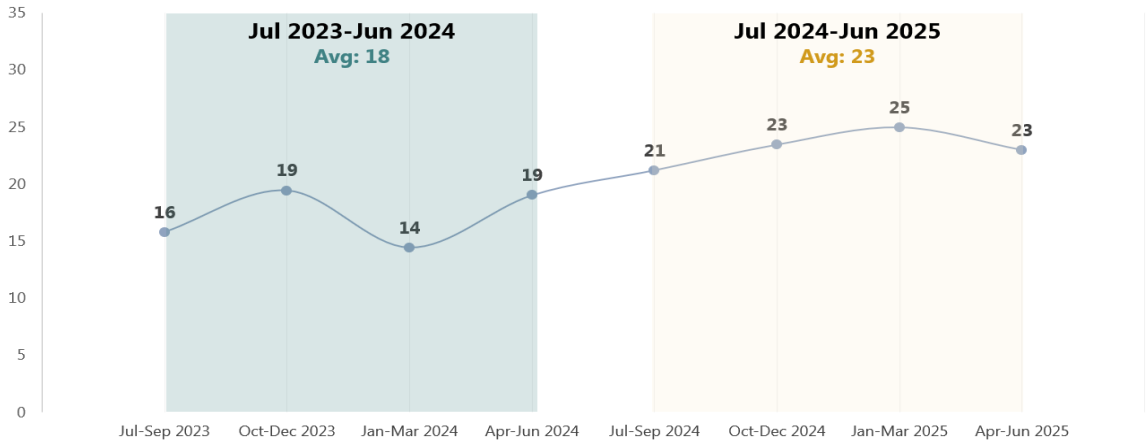
Graffiti includes text, symbols, and images marked on buildings, sidewalks, street pavement, trees, and other areas visible to the public. The likelihood of seeing some graffiti on a city street or sidewalk has remained high.

- In FY25, 89 percent of evaluated routes had some graffiti, with an observed average of 23 instances of graffiti across the city.
- The average counts were slightly lower over all three prior data collection periods, averaging between 18 and 20 instances. Observed graffiti tends to fluctuate over the year, so it isn't clear if the small increase in FY25 is a new trend or a temporary uptick.

Neighborhood highlights

- Average per-route graffiti in most neighborhoods remained mostly stable from FY24 to FY25, changing by less than 7 instances in most neighborhoods.
- However, graffiti did increase by at least 1 instance per route in 20 of 24 neighborhoods, which is why we see a small increase at the citywide level.

Average graffiti count per route evaluated citywide, FY24-FY25



For the detailed results table, see Appendix 4.

Feces

The proportion of routes with observed feces increased slightly

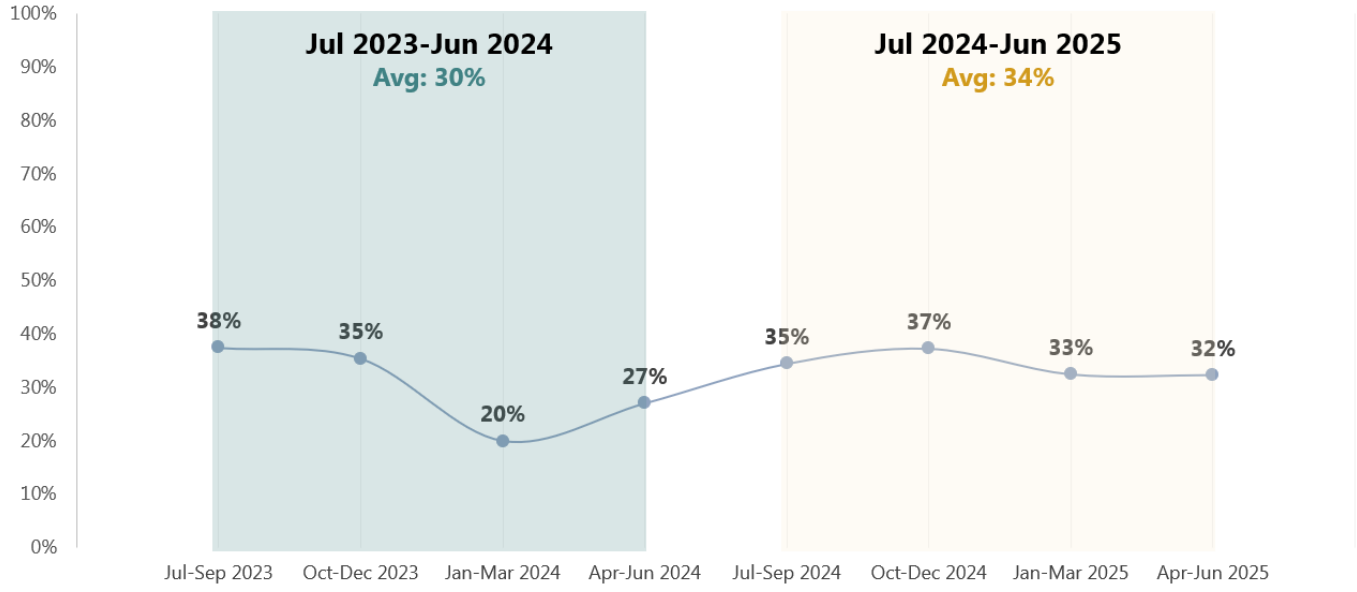
The standards count instances of feces on an evaluated route.[2] We report both the percent of routes with at least one instance of feces, and feces levels—the average count of feces on a route.

- Just over one third of evaluated routes (34 percent) had at least one instance of feces present, slightly higher than the 30 percent average in FY24.
- The prior two periods of data collection saw significant fluctuation in levels but there was relatively low change over the course of FY25. There aren't clear seasonal patterns to the observed rates.
- Average feces levels (the count of instances) on evaluated routes have also increased some this year, averaging just over one instance of feces across all routes.

Neighborhood highlights

- More neighborhoods had slight increases in feces than decreases from FY24 to FY25.
- Most neighborhoods saw less than a 10 percentage point change on routes with feces present.
- Some notable exceptions include Tenderloin, which saw an 18 percentage point increase in feces, and Financial District/South Beach, which saw a 14 percentage point decrease.

Percent of routes with feces citywide, FY24-FY25



For the detailed results table, see Appendix 4.

[2] Evaluators count any observations of animal or human feces and do not distinguish between sources. Bird droppings are excluded.

Additional Findings

The following section contains notable findings on other standards, like broken glass, pavement conditions, and transit shelters. Appendix 4 provides detailed results on all the standards from January 2022-June 2025.

High concentrations of glass were rare citywide, but glass covered more area on some routes

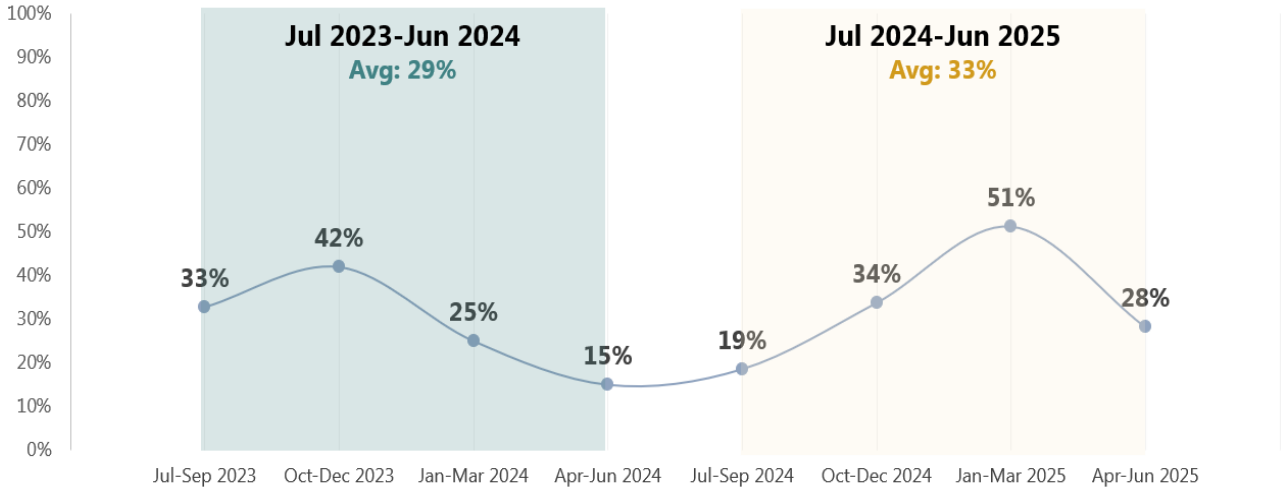
The Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards define a five-point scale of the distribution of broken glass on a route. Measuring the distribution of glass helps distinguish areas with a high concentration of broken glass from a broken car window or bottle, from a section of street or sidewalk with a small scattering of glass.[3] The standards also capture a measure of the area glass is spread over, called a count.[4]

The proportion of routes with any glass was steady or very slightly up from the prior year. Thirty-three percent of routes had any observed glass in FY25 compared to 29 percent in FY24. These rates remain below the prior two data collection periods. Average broken glass levels remained between "none" (Broken glass level = 1) to "a few traces" (Broken glass level = 2), with a small increase in average distribution levels from FY24 (1.51) to FY25 (1.60).

Neighborhood highlights

- In FY25, the presence of glass varied from neighborhood to neighborhood. The most significant changes in glass presence were in neighborhoods in the northern half of San Francisco.
- Six out of 24 neighborhoods saw an increase of over 20 percentage points in the presence of glass from FY24 to FY25, while only one decreased over 20 percentage points. Nine of 24 neighborhoods saw a decrease of over 5 percentage points.
- Overall, the varying increases and decreases in the percentage of routes with glass evened out to a citywide increase of 4 percentage points.

Percent of routes with any broken glass citywide, FY24-FY25

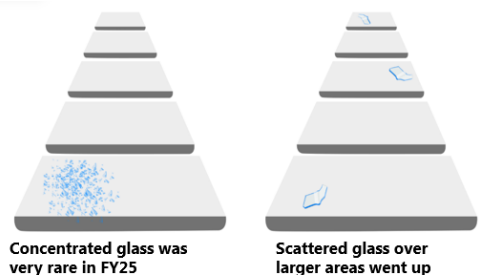


For the detailed results table, see Appendix 4.

[3] Evaluations do not collect data on the specific types of glass observed.

[4] Counts of broken glass are measured by estimating the number of pavement tiles affected. For every two pavement tiles affected by broken glass (or equivalent to two tiles), one instance is reported. If three tiles are affected, two instances of broken glass are reported. When sidewalk tiles are not present, instances of glass are grouped within six feet as one "instance." If broken glass is spread over more than six feet, it is counted as an additional instance.

In contrast, average glass counts, the measure of the spread of glass over a sidewalk, more than doubled from FY24 to FY25, returning to levels observed in calendar year 2022. This suggests broken glass was more likely to be scattered across a larger area than found in large quantities of in one or two smaller locations.



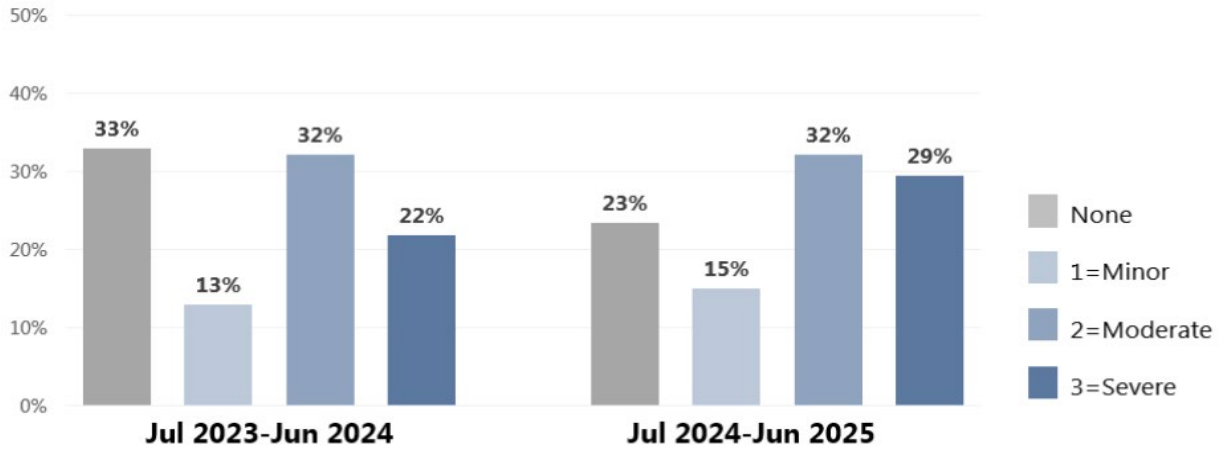
The percent of evaluated routes with a pavement defect increased from FY24 to FY25 but remained below prior periods

The pavement condition of the City's sidewalks is important for ease of passage as well as the City's broader infrastructure. Standards define sidewalk defects as missing or sunken pavement or cracks, chips, and voids, and include both those marked for repair and those not yet marked. Evaluators rate the severity of defects at each route in three categories- minor, moderate, and severe.

Defect level	Pavement defect description
1	Minor: Cracks, chips, and voids up to one inch and no raised/sunken/uneven pavement with a vertical displacement greater than 0.5 inches.
2	Moderate: Cracks, chips, and voids larger than 1 inch exist but they are generally isolated and no raised/sunken/uneven pavement with a vertical displacement greater than one inch.
3	Severe: Large areas of missing or deteriorated pavement with widespread spalling. Raised/sunken/uneven pavement exists with a vertical displacement greater than one inch.

- In FY25, more than three-quarters of evaluated routes had a pavement defect (77 percent).
- Evaluators observed moderate to severe pavement defects in more than half of evaluated routes in every period of data collection. Severe pavement defect levels increased by seven percentage points compared to the prior year, returning to a level just above January to December 2022.

Sidewalk pavement defect levels citywide, FY24-FY25



For the detailed results table, see Appendix 4.

Transit shelters continued to have significant cleanliness issues but have improved slightly over time

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is responsible for maintaining transit shelters rather than Public Works. When transit shelters are present on evaluated routes, we observe frequent cleanliness issues. This trend has remained unchanged since January 2022. Cleanliness conditions at transit shelters are important, as these are frequently visited places where residents spend more time waiting for public transit.

- Transit shelters were present on 9 percent of evaluated routes in FY25 (n=229).
- Seventy-nine percent of routes with transit shelters had observed cleanliness issues at those shelters. This is relatively steady from 82 percent in FY24 and a small decrease from 87 and 89 percent in the two prior periods.
- Across years, evaluators most commonly observed feces, graffiti, and improperly parked scooters or bicycles.

Conclusion & Future Sampling

The Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards are meant to provide a neutral and objective look at the cleanliness and condition of the city's sidewalks and streets, and at how an average pedestrian might experience them on any given day. The issues we measure and observe are the responsibility of a complex combination of multiple City departments, residents, and business owners. Over the past three-and-a-half years evaluators have collected more than 7,000 observational surveys from almost 3,500 randomly selected routes.

San Francisco struggles with cleanliness and sidewalk conditions in a number of areas, but the average street will not have significant accumulations of litter, debris, or health hazards. Results fluctuate some over time, but they have generally continued to show stability at a citywide level.

As the City faces significant challenges, we are shrinking the scope of this program over the next two years to reduce costs and focus on the most vital and valuable data collection. Between July 2025 and June 2026, we will perform approximately 700 evaluations, focusing on clusters of routes in commercial corridors and areas of high concern. This change in approach will allow the program to continue collecting objective data on street and sidewalk conditions while focusing more on areas with high traffic and known challenges.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: ABOUT THE PROGRAM

About Street and Sidewalk Standards

San Francisco's Charter requires the Controller's Office (CON) to work with San Francisco Public Works (Public Works) to develop and implement street and sidewalk maintenance standards and report out on the City's condition under the standards. CON's City Performance group manages the collection of cleanliness data from evaluations of a representative sample of San Francisco's streets and sidewalks. These standardized evaluations collect data on several characteristics, including street litter, sidewalk litter, larger dumped items, graffiti, feces (we don't differentiate between human or canine), and several other markers of cleanliness or street conditions. The 2024 Maintenance Standards provide detailed descriptions of these features.

Generally, Public Works and other City agencies maintain public streets and City property on or along the sidewalk while private property owners are responsible for keeping sidewalks and curbs in front of their property clean and maintained. For more detail on maintenance responsibilities, see Appendix D of the 2022 Annual Report.

APPENDIX 2: DATA COLLECTION & SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Sampling Methodology

San Francisco has approximately 930 miles of streets, around three-quarters of which are residential and one-quarter of which are commercial or mixed use. The Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards evaluations include over 2,500 randomly selected street segments between July 2023-June 2024. The sample represents all the streets and sidewalks across the City and County of San Francisco.

In July 2023, we modified our sampling methodology and routes evaluated to improve our ability to report at a neighborhood level. The representative sample is selected randomly from the total population of San Francisco street segments, stratifying by type of street (residential or commercial and mixed use) and neighborhood groups. Each street segment is approximately one block. The July 2024-June 2025 sample is made up of 1,685 evaluations in residential areas and 888 evaluations in commercial or mixed-use areas.

To assess differences across geographic areas of San Francisco, we stratified the sample by a set of grouped neighborhoods. The program budget does not allow for large enough samples in every neighborhood (defined by these Analysis Neighborhoods) so smaller neighborhoods are grouped geographically into sets of two or three. We oversample in some neighborhoods to get a large enough sample without raising program costs. We then weigh all outcomes across neighborhoods to control for this.

The representative sample randomly selects routes by neighborhood, evaluated one time each between July 2024-June 2025. This allows for annual reporting on analysis neighborhoods with some grouping of small ones, and also allows for six-month reporting on citywide averages.

Sampling in 2022

In January-December 2022, we evaluated approximately 1,000 randomly selected street segments that represented all the streets and sidewalks across the City and County of San Francisco. These street segments were evaluated once over the course of the year. Between January and June of 2023, these same street segments were evaluated a second time, making up the second period of data in this report. For additional details, see Appendix B of the 2022 Annual Report.

APPENDIX 3: STANDARDS & ANALYSIS MEASURES

See the updated Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards Reference Manual for more detailed data collection information and descriptions of the categories below. Note that all averages and percent of routes for a given standard are all weighted in July 2023-June 2025 to control for changes in the sampling methodology at the neighborhood level.

What is evaluated?

Category	Description	Measures we report
Street Litter	Loose litter present in a street or gutter.	Average of street litter distribution level on a 5-point scale.
Sidewalk Litter	Loose litter present on the sidewalk.	Average of sidewalk litter distribution levels on a 5-point scale.
Trash Receptacles	The number of overflowing trash receptacles.	Count and percent of evaluated routes with trash receptacles present. For routes with at least one trash receptacle present, percent with an overflowing receptacle.
Sidewalk Clearance	Sidewalk obstructed so that horizontal clearance is less than 4 feet wide or vertical clearance is less than 8 feet tall.	Percent of routes with sidewalk clearance issues. Reasons for sidewalk obstructions, such as construction, foliage, scooters, etc.
Sidewalk Pavement Condition	General condition of the sidewalk pavement.	Average of pavement condition distribution levels on a 3-point scale.
Illegal Dumping	Large, abandoned items and large debris along the street or sidewalk.	Percent of evaluated routes with at least one dumped item. Types of dumped items: 1. Blankets, bedding, & pillows 2. Furniture, mattresses, and bed frames 3. Miscellaneous household items & luggage 4. Clothing 5. Boxed materials, boxes, and bagged items 6. Construction waste/debris (including cones, signs, etc.) 7. Bicycle, automotive, other parts and accessories 8. Electronics and appliances 9. Organic debris (such as large branches, piles of leaves, or soil 10. Other

Graffiti	Illicit text, symbols and images marked on buildings, sidewalks, street pavement, trees, and other stationary assets.	Average of counts of graffiti per route by property type: SF government, private, other. Count and percent of routes with offensive graffiti.
Broken Glass	Broken glass present in the street, on the sidewalk, or immediately adjacent to the sidewalk.	Average of broken glass distribution levels on a 5-point scale. Average counts of broken glass per evaluated route. Percent of routes with any broken glass.
Feces	Feces observed along the street and sidewalk.	Percent of evaluated routes with at least one instance of feces. Average feces count per evaluated route.
Syringes	Syringes observed along the street and sidewalk.	Percent of evaluated routes with at least one syringe.
Condoms	Used and opened condoms present on the street and sidewalk.	Percent of evaluated routes with at least one condom.
Dead Animals	Dead animals present on the street or sidewalk.	Percent of evaluated routes with at least one dead animal.
Odors	Presence of any strong, unpleasant, or offensive odor.	Percent of evaluated routes with odors.
Transit Shelters	The physical structure and space within and immediately adjacent to transit shelters.	Count and percent of evaluated routes with transit shelters present. For routes with at least one transit shelter present, percent of transit shelters with cleanliness issues. Reasons for transit shelter cleanliness issues.

APPENDIX 4: DETAILED RESULTS TABLES

Category	CY22					CY23			FY24					FY25				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
Street Litter levels	2.31	2.46	2.65	2.84	**2.57**	2.60	2.63	**2.61**	2.15	2.29	2.50	2.43	**2.34**	2.47	2.45	2.45	2.40	**2.44**
Sidewalk Litter levels	2.35	2.46	2.65	2.84	**2.64**	2.60	2.63	**2.74**	2.43	2.42	2.66	2.68	**2.55**	2.75	2.64	2.53	2.59	**2.62**
% Dumping present	39%	43%	28%	33%	**36%**	28%	30%	**29%**	27%	30%	26%	24%	**29%**	28%	31%	36%	32%	**32%**
Graffiti, average count	17	19	18	26	**20**	15	23	**18**	16	19	14	19	**18**	21	23	25	23	**23**
% Feces present	35%	33%	34%	24%	**31%**	20%	17%	**19%**	38%	36%	20%	27%	**30%**	35%	37%	33%	32%	**34%**
Broken glass average level	1.86	1.57	1.80	2.33	**1.91**	1.91	2.12	**1.98**	1.53	1.71	1.42	1.33	**1.51**	1.42	1.68	1.81	1.45	**1.60**
% Broken glass present	58%	35%	40%	54%	**48%**	38%	47%	**41%**	33%	42%	25%	15%	**29%**	19%	34%	51%	28%	**33%**
Broken glass, average count	1.11	0.53	0.85	1.33	**0.98**	0.77	1.02	**0.86**	0.43	0.59	0.47	0.31	**0.46**	0.47	1.22	1.48	0.85	**1.02**
% Sidewalk pavement defects present	67%	81%	66%	91%	**78%**	92%	81%	**88%**	64%	67%	62%	75%	**67%**	77%	76%	74%	80%	**77%**
Sidewalk pavement condition average level	1.93	2.21	2.22	2.02	**2.08**	2.03	1.80	**2.00**	1.93	2.12	2.17	2.17	**2.12**	2.13	2.22	2.12	2.28	**2.19**
% transit shelters with issues present	85%	86%	86%	90%	**87%**	83%	100%	**89%**	80%	88%	80%	79%	**82%**	88%	93%	77%	64%	**79%**
% Sidewalk clearance issues	21%	22%	33%	41%	**29%**	51%	51%	**51%**	20%	15%	12%	18%	**16%**	21%	17%	15%	16%	**17%**
% Trash Receptacles overflowing	15%	6%	7%	6%	**9%**	5%	2%	**4%**	4%	6%	5%	4%	**5%**	7%	7%	6%	8%	**7%**
% Syringes present	0.8%	0.8%	1.6%	0.7%	**0.9%**	0.6%	0.9%	**0.7%**	0.2%	0.9%	0.0%	0.1%	**0.3%**	1.0%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	**0.7%**
% Condoms present	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	**0.2%**	0.0%	0.6%	**0.2%**	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	**0.2%**	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	**0.2%**
% Dead animals present	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.7%	**0.5%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	**0.1%**	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	**0.4%**
% Odors present	3.4%	2.3%	2.2%	0.3%	**2.0%**	0.2%	0.6%	**0.3%**	1.3%	2.2%	0.7%	0.6%	**1.3%**	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%	1.8%	**1.2%**