

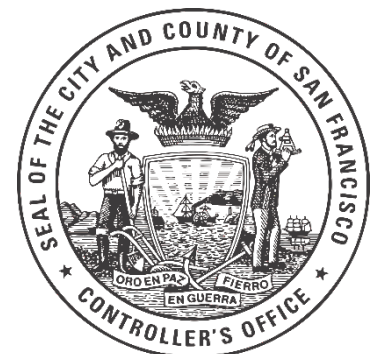
FY26 Street & Sidewalk Maintenance Standards Report



Prepared by

**OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER
CITY PERFORMANCE DIVISION**

October 7, 2026



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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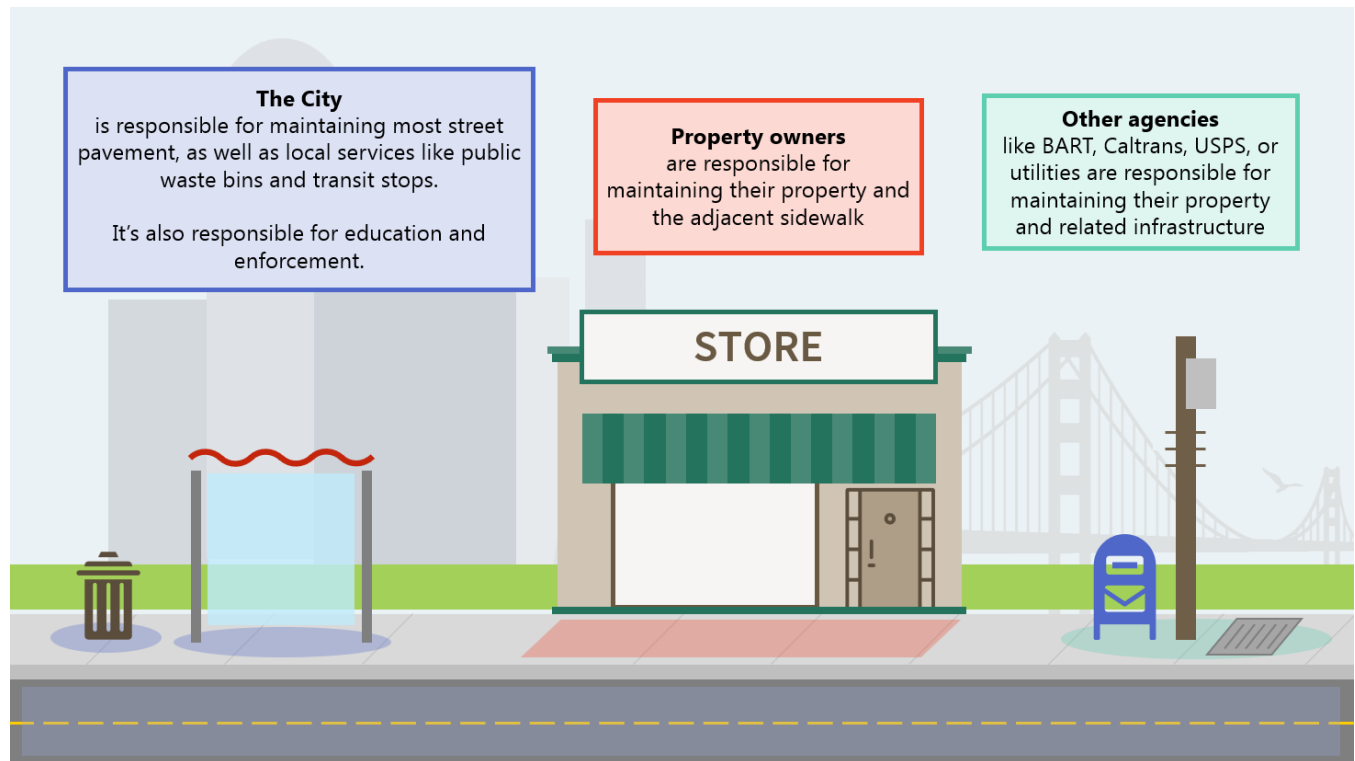
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City staff used generative AI to help create some summary graphics for this report. AI-generated visuals were carefully reviewed for accuracy prior to publication.

Introduction

The Controller's Office's (CON) Streets and Sidewalks Maintenance Standards Program measures street and sidewalk cleanliness using standardized maintenance criteria. Trained evaluators walk one- to two-block route segments and record litter, dumping, graffiti, feces, and other conditions. The resulting data show how an average pedestrian might experience a block on a given day. They do not measure the work of the City, property owners, or community organizations.

San Francisco streets and sidewalks are a shared responsibility



San Francisco's streets and sidewalks are the city's largest public space. Cleaning and maintaining them is the shared responsibility of multiple City departments, residents, and property owners. In general, the **City and County of San Francisco (the City)** is responsible for maintaining street pavement, public services like waste receptacles and transit stops, and for education and enforcement, as well as maintaining any City-owned property and adjacent sidewalks. **Property owners** are responsible for maintaining their property by removing graffiti or other issues, and for the sidewalk adjacent to any property. **Other government agencies** are responsible for maintaining their properties and any related infrastructure like BART or Caltrans stations, postal boxes, or utility poles or grates. Residents and visitors are responsible for following rules around litter and bulky item disposal as they move throughout San Francisco.

What's different this year

In previous years, City Performance evaluated and reported on a random sample of streets and sidewalks throughout the city. Because results had been relatively static for several years, this year's analysis focused on commercial and mixed-use blocks in priority neighborhoods where evaluation results have historically been low. This means that City Performance limits comparisons of results to prior years with the exception of results across the Tenderloin, which are comprehensive. This report focuses on the Tenderloin first, then results from large, commercial blocks in three other San Francisco neighborhood. The first section describes services throughout the Tenderloin that impact the condition and cleanliness of streets and sidewalks, followed by the results of FY26 evaluations, which assess the condition and cleanliness of streets and sidewalks. The second section describes results from the three other neighborhoods where CON evaluated around 50 or more routes.

City Performance evaluated additional clusters of routes in other neighborhoods but found the resulting data were insufficient to support concrete findings. Individual evaluation results from across the city in FY26 are [available online](#). Citywide and neighborhood level data from prior years are also available online and in the City's [open data portal](#) for a more comprehensive view of street and sidewalk conditions in San Francisco.

The Tenderloin: July 2025–June 2026

Multiple teams work to clean the Tenderloin every day

Multiple **City departments**, the **Tenderloin and Lower Polk Community Benefit Districts (TLCBD, Lower Polk CBD)**, **Recology**, and **community benefit organizations (CBOs)** serve the Tenderloin seven days a week. They provide both proactive and ad hoc services to respond to immediate cleanliness issues, and maintain the streets and sidewalks of the dense, mixed-used area.

The San Francisco Department of Public Works (Public Works) workers service the Tenderloin seven days a week, 24 hours a day covering litter patrol, power washing, mechanical street sweeping, steam cleaning, and bulky item removal across the neighborhood. Some of these efforts are the mandated responsibility of the City while many are additional services in response to ongoing needs. Public Works coordinates their efforts with multiple City departments, including Police, Public Health, and Homelessness and Supportive Housing on a day-to-day basis, and works in collaboration with non-City entities like Recology, CBDs, and contracted CBOs. CBDs work, both through contracts with Public Works and in their capacity as assessment-funded nonprofits, each day on services from sidewalk sweeping to hazardous material and graffiti cleanup.

Beyond daily operations, the Tenderloin is also serviced by neighborhood street teams, Pit Stop public restrooms, syringe disposal sites, a graffiti abatement program, alley steaming, bulky item pickup, regular deep-cleaning, and community beautification events.

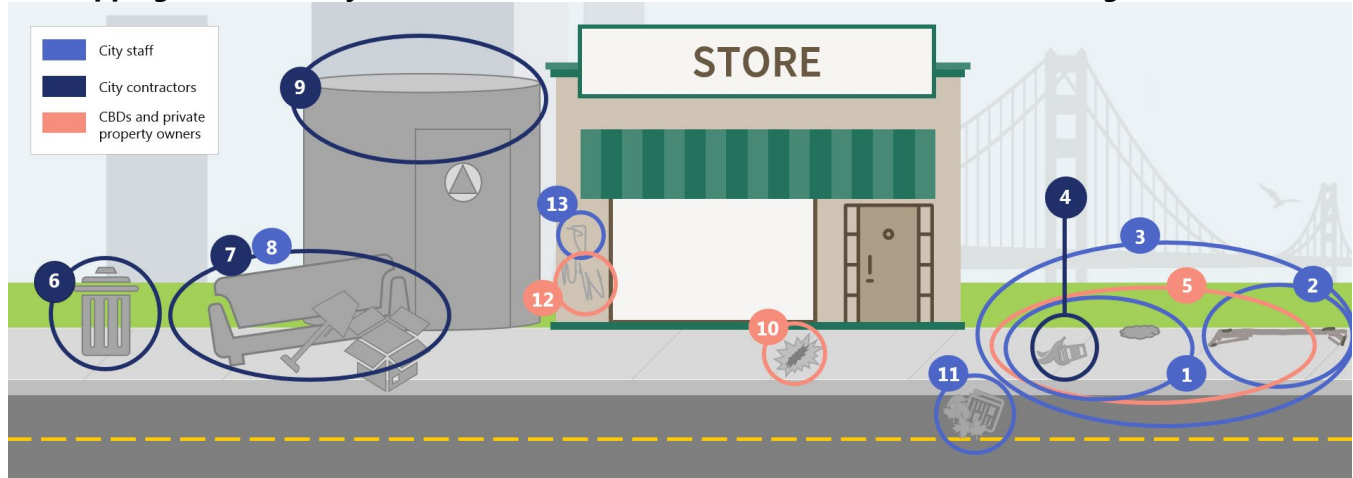
What do evaluation results represent?

Evaluations capture what an average pedestrian might experience walking along the surveyed block in San Francisco.

Evaluations do not directly assess Public Works' or city contracted vendors' cleaning. CON also does not schedule evaluations before or after cleaning efforts since it aims to represent an average point in time.

For limited information on direct impacts of cleaning see a small exploratory study of the maintenance of cleanliness after a targeted Public Works effort, which CON undertook in FY24, at the request of Public Works. The results can be found throughout the [FY24 Annual Streets Report](#) at <https://www.sf.gov/street-and-sidewalk-maintenance-standards>

Overlapping efforts of City entities and CBDs clean sidewalks of litter, hazards, and grime



Property owners are generally responsible for sidewalks. However, in areas like the Tenderloin, cleaning and maintenance of cleanliness are served by overlapping efforts by City staff, CBOs contracted by the City, property owners, and CBDs funded both by those property owners and the City.

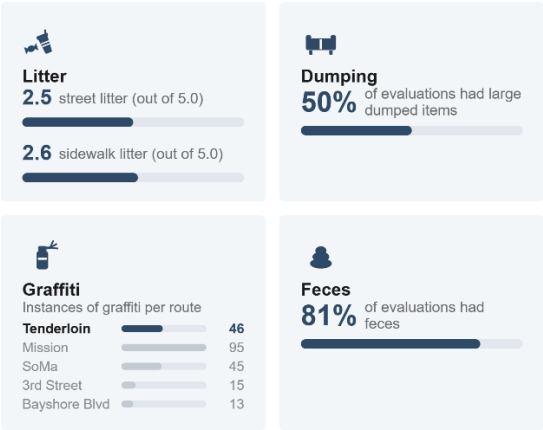
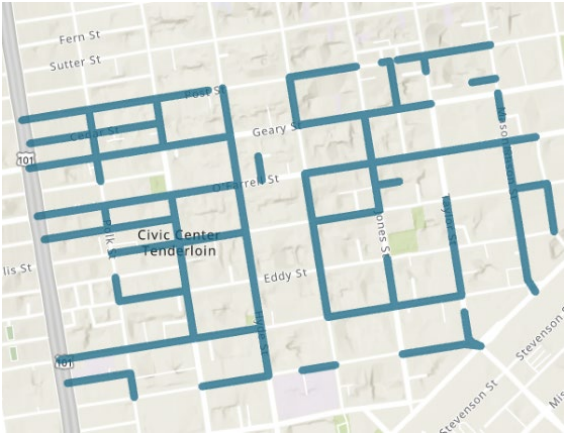
1 Public Works (PW) provides litter patrol and manual sidewalk sweepers throughout the day both in fixed patrols and reactively.	4 The City contracts with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to provide Community Ambassador services. In addition to safety and outreach work, ambassadors provide some maintenance of cleanliness services in proscribed areas, including litter pick up. Ambassadors may also enter 311 requests to alert the City to larger cleaning needs.
2 PW steam cleans and power washes throughout the Tenderloin daily.	5 The Tenderloin and Lower Polk Community Benefit Districts provide cleaning services throughout the neighborhood seven days per week. They clean litter from sidewalks and gutters, power wash, and remove health hazards like feces and syringes.
3 PW staffs a Street Team that coordinates with Police and outreach teams to clean areas after an outreach or enforcement action.	

The City maintains streets and other public services while other entities mainly cover private property

6 The City contracts with Recology to service city-owned and CBD-owned waste receptacles. Recology empties cans on a regular schedule as well as reactively, by monitoring sensors that alert when a can is full. CBDs clean waste receptacles as needed.	11 PW sweeps streets and curbs using mechanical street sweepers throughout the Tenderloin, at least two times per week. In addition to standard street cleaning, PW coordinates with SFMTA and SFPD on a more thorough street cleaning effort called A-Frame. This focuses on areas with significant ongoing cleanliness issues and involves coordinating on parking enforcement and then pressure washing the street. The department also uses a specialized mechanical sweeper on bike lanes on an ad hoc basis.
7 Recology provides bulky item clean up throughout the city in response to 311 requests.	12 The TLCBD and Lower Polk CBD abate graffiti on private property with the permission of property owners.
8 PW provides supplemental bulky item removal on an ad hoc basis.	
9 PW contracts with CBOs to staff Pit Stop public toilets throughout the city.	13 PW provides some abatement of graffiti on private property in neighborhood commercial corridors, as well as abating graffiti on public property.
10 Private property owners repair any sidewalk pavement issues in front of their properties.	

Evaluations covered all parts of the Tenderloin

In FY26, the Controller’s Office (CON) evaluated 75 routes two times each in the Tenderloin, once between August and December 2025 and once between January and June 2026.¹ CON evaluated 51 routes in FY24 (July 2023–June 2024) and 50 in FY25 (July 2024–June 2025), each once per year. Of the 75 FY26 routes, 43 were also evaluated in both FY24 and FY25.²

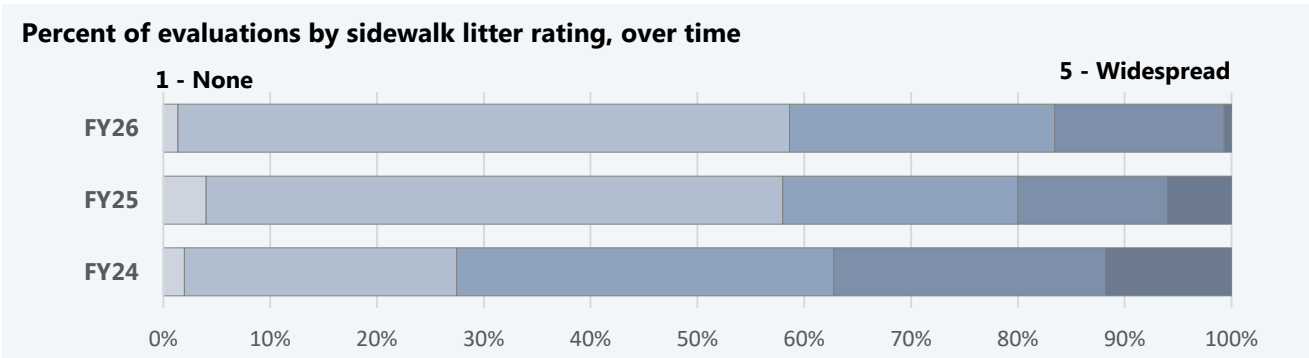


Tenderloin litter levels were similar to the most recent citywide average

Street litter averaged 2.5 in both FY25 and FY26. Sidewalk litter averaged 2.6 in both FY25 and FY26. This indicates average litter is between “a few traces” and “more than a few traces but no accumulation”. For reference, this is similar to the FY25 citywide average, where street litter was a 2.4 and sidewalk litter was a 2.6. Syringes remained low, present on 4 percent of evaluations.

The distribution of observed litter ratings has shifted over time, with fewer evaluations showing widespread litter.

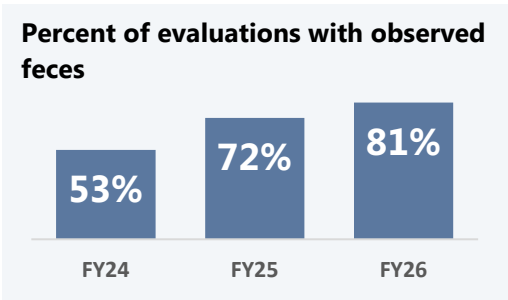
Litter rating definitions
1 - None: the sidewalk is free of litter
2 - A few traces: the sidewalk is predominantly free of litter except for a few small traces
3 - More than a few traces but no accumulation: there are no piles of litter, and there are large gaps between pieces of litter
4 - Distributed 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



¹ One route was inaccessible during the second period of FY26, resulting in 149 total evaluations rather than 150.
² Trends among the 43 overlapping routes were consistent with the full 75, suggesting the data is comparable across years.

Feces increased for the last two years

Feces appeared on 81 percent of Tenderloin evaluations in FY26, up from 72 percent in FY25 and 53 percent in FY24. The average count of feces per evaluation also grew each year, from about two in FY24, to three in FY25, to four in FY26. Feces are the most consistently worsening metric in the Tenderloin.³



Half of evaluations contained dumped items

Fifty percent of evaluations contained dumped items in both FY25 and FY26. The count of dumped items per evaluation decreased from 2.0 in FY25 to 1.2 in FY26. Boxed, bagged, and bundled materials were present on 24 percent of evaluations. Construction waste was the second largest dumping category, present on 17 percent of evaluations.

Graffiti was present on most evaluations, but the amount decreased

The percentage of evaluations with any graffiti stayed between 96 and 99 percent throughout the past three years. The average graffiti count per evaluation, however, dropped from 75 in FY25 to 46 in FY26. The percentage of evaluations with offensive graffiti also decreased from 26 percent in FY25 to 6 percent in FY26.

Glass distribution increased after two years of stable levels

The average glass distribution rose from 1.7 in FY25 to 2.4 in FY26 on a 1 to 5 scale. This indicates average glass distribution is between “a few traces” and “more than a few traces but no concentration”. Evaluations do not differentiate between different types of glass, e.g., from bottles or windows.

Glass distribution definitions
1 - None: the street and sidewalk are free of broken glass
2 - A few traces: the street and sidewalk are predominantly free of broken glass except for a few small traces
3 - More than a few traces but no concentration: there are no piles or lines of glass, and there are large gaps between pieces of glass
4 - Glass is concentrated in a single line or spot: there may be small gaps between pieces of glass
5 - Glass is concentrated in multiple lines or spots

Data does not show clear geographic trends within the Tenderloin

FY26 data do not show a clear pattern of differing conditions across the Tenderloin. San Francisco’s Neighborhood Street Teams (NST), who connect SF residents on the streets to City services, noted that people experiencing homelessness may have been moving more frequently from block to block during FY26 than in prior years when unhoused people may have been more concentrated and static. These trends are likely to be related to shifts in City response over the past few years. For evaluation results by route segment, see the [Tenderloin Results Route Map](#) dashboard.

³ Evaluations do not differentiate between different types of feces, e.g., from animals or humans.

Results Across the City: July 2025–June 2026

Evaluations of Commercial Blocks in the Mission, SoMa, and Bayview

CON evaluated additional commercial routes across the City, selected for the prevalence of 311 requests and historically low evaluation results. Reporting is limited to neighborhoods with sample sizes of roughly 50 or more routes as smaller clusters are difficult to draw conclusions from. Three neighborhoods outside of the Tenderloin met that threshold: the Mission, South of Market (SoMa), and Bayview.

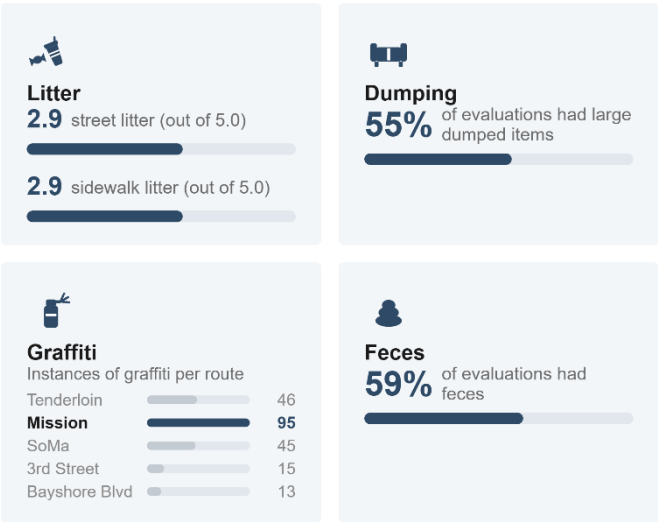
Samples in these neighborhoods are large but still represent a more commercial, and likely more challenging set of blocks. For that reason, CON cannot compare this year’s results with previous years given the shift from a random to a smaller, targeted sample focusing on commercial areas. For more detail see Appendix 1: Data Collection and Sampling Methodology.

CON evaluated routes in the Mission, SoMa, and Bayview neighborhoods twice in FY26, once in the first half of the fiscal year and again in the second half. In the Mission, CON selected routes throughout the neighborhood, with an emphasis on blocks surrounding 16th Street and 24th Street.

In SoMa, routes focused on commercial corridors between 4th Street and 10th Street. In the Bayview, CON focused on commercial corridors including 3rd Street, Bayshore Blvd, and Hunters Point.

Routes evaluated	FY24	FY25	FY26
Mission	147	144	75
Bayview	148	142	49
SoMa	80	80	50

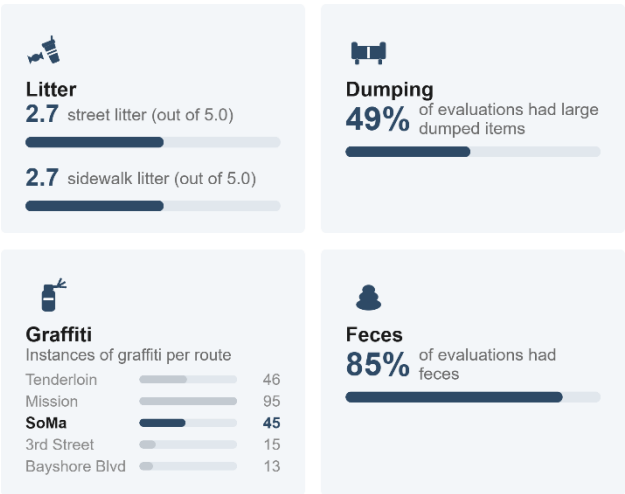
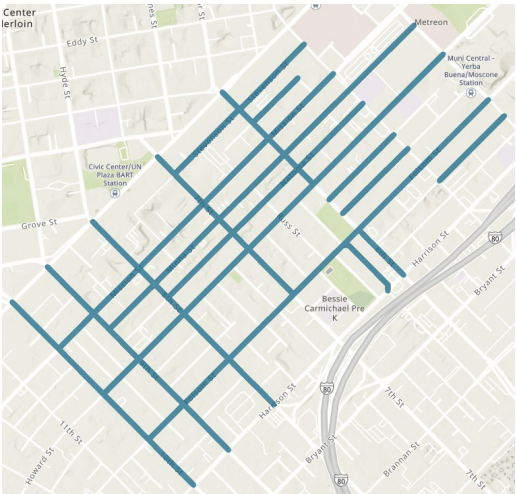
Mission



Graffiti appeared on every Mission evaluation, while offensive graffiti appeared on 30 percent of evaluations.

Dumping was also widespread. Boxed, bagged, and bundled materials were the top category, appearing on 33 percent of evaluations, followed by miscellaneous household items and luggage on 12 percent.

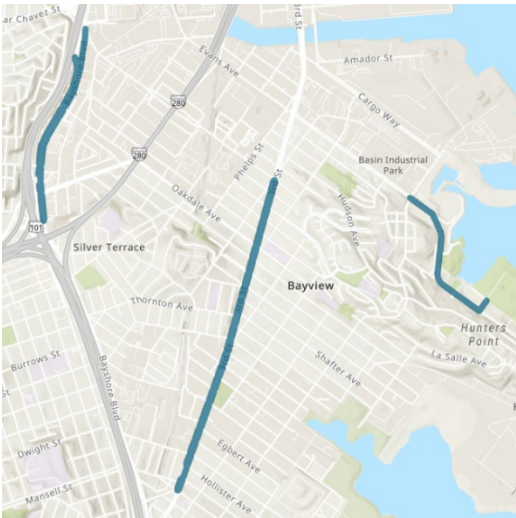
South of Market (SoMa)



South of Market (SoMa) had the highest frequency of observed feces of the neighborhoods in this report.

Dumping appeared on 49 percent of SoMa evaluations. Boxed, bagged, and bundled materials were the top dumped item category, appearing on 21 percent of evaluations, followed by clothing on 17 percent.

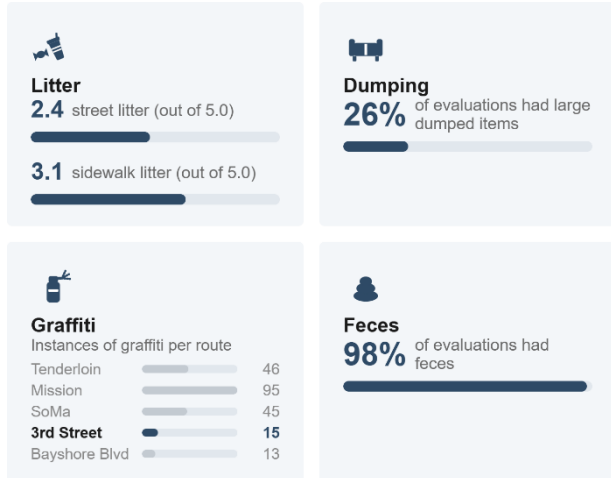
Bayview: Bayshore Blvd, 3rd Street, and Hunters Point



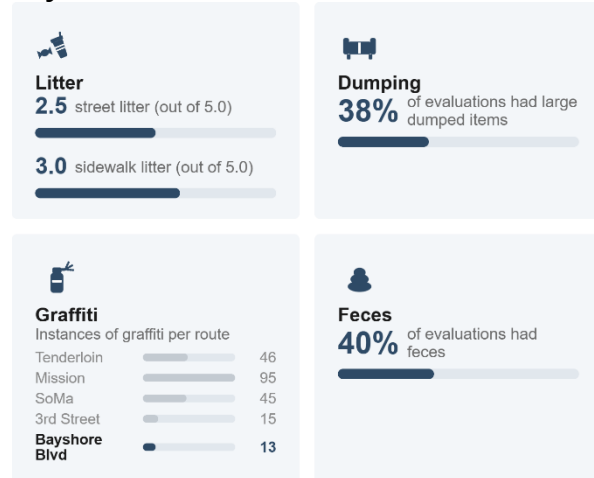
CON evaluated three clusters of routes in the Bayview: 21 routes on Bayshore Boulevard, 21 routes on 3rd Street, and 7 routes in Hunters Point. Given the size and varied nature of the Bayview, CON provides averages for individual clusters of evaluations, instead of reporting a single FY26 neighborhood average.

Because there were fewer evaluations in the cluster in Hunters Point, CON is not confident in the summary data. Future evaluations between July 2026 and June 2027 will include a larger Bayview sample, including more routes in Hunters Point.

3rd Street



Bayshore Boulevard



3rd Street and Bayshore Boulevard had almost identical litter levels. Sidewalk litter averaged a rating equal to “more than a few traces but no accumulation”. Graffiti was also similar across streets.

In contrast, the two areas showed very different incidence of feces, 40 percent of evaluations on Bayshore Boulevard compared to almost 100 percent on 3rd Street. The average feces count on the latter was over three times higher, 4.1 per evaluation to 1.2.

Hunters Point results are uncertain given the smaller number of evaluations, but feces results fell between the other areas, while sidewalk litter and incidence of dumped items was somewhat higher.

Conclusion

The Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards 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. Street conditions and cleanliness are the responsibility of a complex combination of multiple City departments, residents, and business owners. As the City faces challenges, the Controller’s Office is considering how to present the most valuable data and add important context to hard numbers. This report presents a start to that work by documenting a non-exhaustive list of the web of groups and services that clean and maintain San Francisco’s streets and sidewalks.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: DATA COLLECTION & SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Sampling Methodology

In FY24 and FY25, we evaluated a citywide random sample of San Francisco street segments, once per fiscal year. That sample was about 2,600 routes a year (2,624 routes in FY24 and 2,574 routes in FY25).

In FY26, the program reduced the number of evaluations due to budget constraints. We stopped sampling every neighborhood at random and instead selected commercial corridors and mixed-use blocks with high foot traffic, and areas where our evaluation results have historically been worse. We evaluated each selected route twice, once in each half of the fiscal year, except where a route was inaccessible. In total, FY26 included 735 evaluations on 368 routes.

Neighborhood	FY26 Routes	FY26 Evaluations
Tenderloin	75	149
Mission	75	150
South of Market	50	100
Bayview	49	98
Chinatown	25	50
South Mission St	25	50
Mission Bay	20	40
Richmond	23	46
Haight	6	12
Castro	6	12
Sunset	14	28
Total	368	735

Tenderloin has 149 evaluations because a route was inaccessible in Period 2. Full results are on the [Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards dashboards](#) and in the program's [Open Data](#).

APPENDIX 2: 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.

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 evaluations 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 evaluations 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 evaluations 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 evaluation 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 evaluation. Percent of evaluations with any broken glass.
Feces	Feces observed along the street and sidewalk.	Percent of evaluations with at least one instance of feces. Average feces count per evaluated route.
Syringes	Syringes observed along the street and sidewalk.	Percent of evaluations with at least one syringe.
Condoms	Used and opened condoms present on the street and sidewalk.	Percent of evaluations with at least one condom.
Dead Animals	Dead animals present on the street or sidewalk.	Percent of evaluations with at least one dead animal.
Odors	Presence of any strong, unpleasant, or offensive odor.	Percent of evaluations with odors.
Transit Shelters	The physical structure and space within and immediately adjacent to transit shelters.	Count and percent of evaluations 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 3: DETAILED RESULTS

Tenderloin Averages

Metric	FY24	FY25	FY26
Average street litter rating (1-5 scale)	2.9	2.5	2.5
Average sidewalk litter rating (1-5 scale)	3.2	2.6	2.6
Percentage of evaluations with feces	53%	72%	81%
Average feces count per evaluation	1.9	3.3	3.8
Average glass distribution rating (1-5 scale)	1.6	1.7	2.4
Percentage of evaluations with graffiti	96%	96%	99%
Average graffiti count per evaluation	71	75	46
Percentage of evaluations with dumped items	37%	50%	50%
Average dumped item count per evaluation	1.6	2.0	1.2

Percentage of evaluations with syringes	2%	4%	4%
Average syringe count per evaluation	0.0	0.1	0.1

Mission, SoMa, and Bayview clusters, FY26

Metric	Mission	SoMa	Bayview clusters
Average street litter rating (1-5 scale)	2.9	2.7	2.4
Average sidewalk litter rating (1-5 scale)	2.9	2.7	3.2
Percentage of evaluations with feces	59%	85%	69%
Average feces count per evaluation	2.1	3.2	2.6
Average glass distribution rating (1-5 scale)	2.8	2.6	3.0
Percentage of evaluations with graffiti	100%	97%	94%
Average graffiti count per evaluation	95	45	15
Percentage of evaluations with dumped items	55%	49%	36%
Average dumped item count per evaluation	1.7	1.2	0.7
Percentage of evaluations with syringes	3%	4%	0%
Average syringe count per evaluation	0.0	0.1	0.0