

xxx, 2023

Board of Directors  
Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District  
P.O. Box 29000, Presidio Station  
San Francisco, CA 94129-9000

Dear President Thériault and Members of the Board of Directors,

The Golden Gate Bridge is one the great icons of American infrastructure. In addition to linking San Francisco to the North Bay for motorists and transit riders, it also serves as a critical link for those traveling by bicycle, whether they be commuters or the thousands of visitors seeking to experience the bridge up close.

In contrast to the relative simplicity of using the bridge as a motorist, the rules for those walking and biking are more complex. Visitors are presented with a bewildering array of signs featuring a wide range of iconography, which mix universal prohibitions (e.g. “no skateboards,” or “no animals”) with information about when bicyclists use the east vs. the west sidewalk.

Additionally, though bridge users come from all over the world, signage is primarily in English with no options for non-English speakers.

There are two primary negative outcomes from unclear signage. Some users experience confusion, trying to piece together where they are allowed to ride, potentially having to double back to access the correct sidewalk. Others still find themselves mistakenly violating bridge rules, typically by riding a bicycle on the wrong sidewalk, potentially leading to collisions or near-misses.

We, the members of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Advisory Committee, recommend that the Bridge District undertake several near-term and medium-term steps to improve signage and wayfinding for users crossing the bridge by foot or by bike.

### **Near-Term Signage/Wayfinding Modifications**

#### *Inventory and Update Signage at Sidewalk Entrances*

These signs (see example below) have errors and out-of-date information and should be updated.

- Speed limit is regulatory and no longer advisory
- Pedestrian and Cyclist signs both warn of high winds
- Pedestrian and Cyclist signs both prohibit “scooter” but appear to be referring to different devices.
- Permitted usage times are difficult to parse
- Fonts and colors are inconsistent

- Signs at southeast sidewalk entrance suggest that pedestrians use roadway side of sidewalk when in fact they are direct to walk adjacent to bridge railing

Given the need for an update, we recommend clearly separating the list of prohibited activities (e.g. skateboarding, drone usage, etc) from usage times (e.g. east vs. west sidewalk) and rules of road (“yield to pedestrians,” 15 mph speed limit, which mostly apply to bicyclists).

#### *Increase Frequency of Stencils on East Sidewalk*

As recommended by the 2020 Bicycle Safety Study, stencils were installed on the east sidewalk to indicate for users that pedestrians should use the east (bayside) of the sidewalk and bicyclists should use the west side (adjacent to the roadways). These stencils were recommended to be 500’ apart. We recommend considering adding additional stencils to increase the frequency and improve compliance. Clear, color-coded icons should start at the very beginning of the sidewalk at the north and the south ends.

#### *“Report a Problem” signage*

There is currently no indication what to do or who to call in the event of an emergency on the bridge or if one sees a dangerous condition. We recommend that signage be installed periodically that offers a phone number to call to “Report collision or other hazard.”

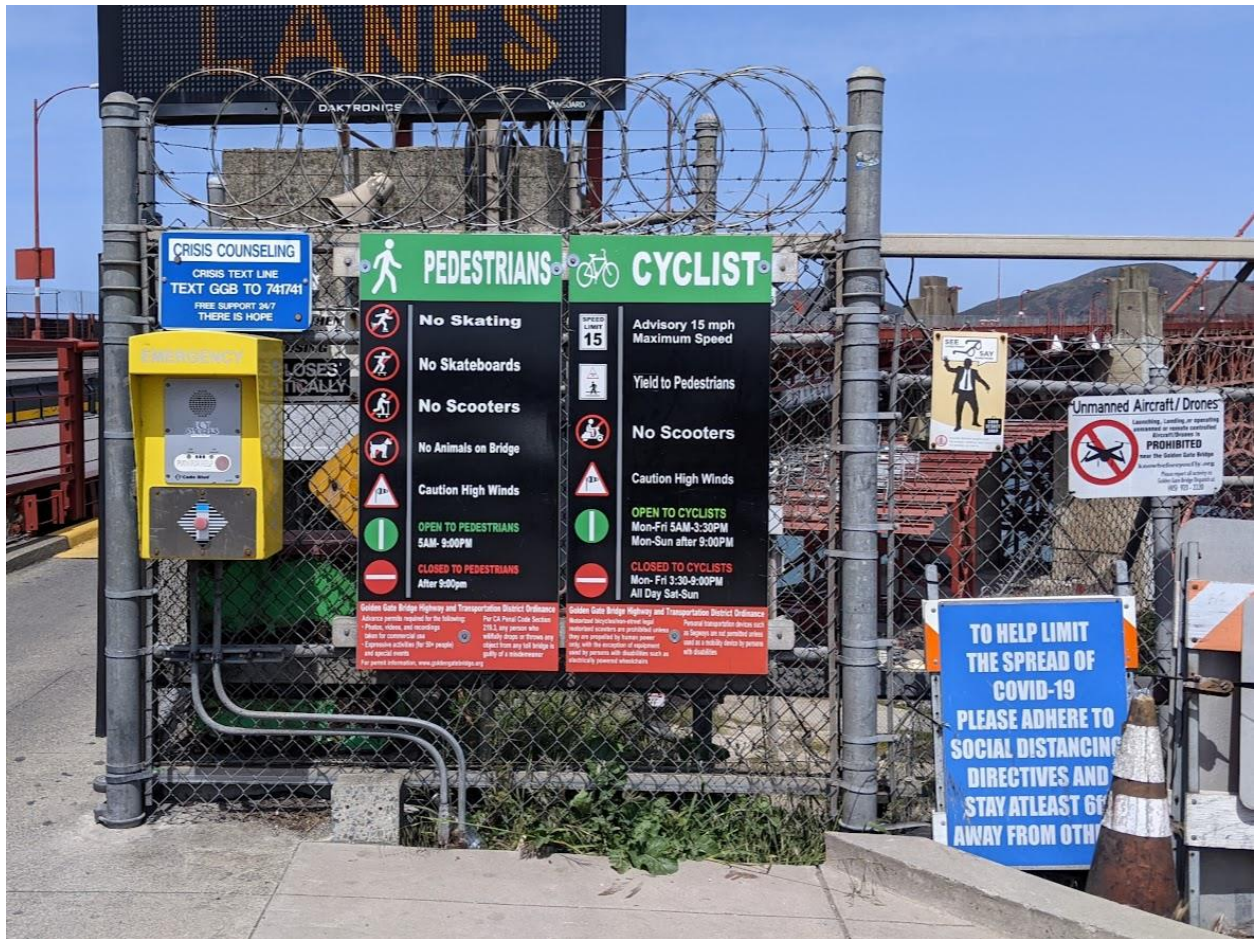
### **Medium-Term Signage/Wayfinding Modifications**

In order to reduce user confusion and improve compliance with sidewalk usage and other regulations, we recommend that the Bridge District undertake a comprehensive signage and wayfinding plan led by an experienced consulting firm with input from the public. Some considerations for this effort should include:

- Universal design, maximizing comprehension by people of all abilities
- Clear iconography and multiple language, ensuring that visitors understand signage
- QR code which visitors can scan for additional details
- Partnership with Caltrans and National Parks, since bicycle access to the bridge requires traveling through land managed by those agencies
- Flexibility to allow for changes necessitated by events or maintenance

We appreciate your continued efforts to improve the experience for those crossing the bridge by foot or by bicycle (including the creation of and staff support for the PBAC), and hope that this letter can provide direction for low-cost but high-impact changes that could be made in support of those goals.

Sincerely,



Attachment 1: Signage at southeast sidewalk gate (taken April 2022)

DRAFT



Attachment 2: Signage at northwest sidewalk gate (taken September 2021)