

Mission Boulevard Streetscape

Fremont, CA



Mission Boulevard needed streetscape improvements with a light touch to complement historic Mission San Jose and nearby shops as well as to provide basic drainage. The resulting design added post-top decorative streetlights between parked cars to help “pinch down” and reduce the visible street width.

BEFORE

- The street’s lack of storm drains, curbing and consistent sidewalks had rural charm but was substandard and noncompliant with the ADA.
- Sections of Mission Boulevard to the north and south had previously been widened into 5 lane wide high speed arterial highways.
- Local residents and businesses had previously convinced the City Council to retain its 3 lanes.
- Local groups feared improvements would introduce an arterial look not sympathetic to Mission San Jose and surrounding historic buildings.



Mission Boulevard had rural charm but lacked curbs, storm drainage, ADA access, and pedestrian-friendly lighting.

ASSIGNMENT

- Through a community workshop process, design and implement basic storm drainage, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and furnishings for a one mile long segment of Mission Boulevard on a limited budget.
- Enhance the street’s pedestrian-oriented scale and detail to support the historic character of the Mission San Jose district and its visitor-based economy.

OUTCOMES

- Design began in 1996 and construction was completed on time and within budget in 1999.
- At modest cost, the streetscape added corner bulb outs, paving accents, warm-white metal halide lighting, historically compatible light fixtures, benches, and trash receptacles.
- Existing roadway height “Mission Bell” streetlights were retained and post-top lights were supplemented in between.
- New streetlights and street trees were strategically placed to visually “narrow” the perceived road width and put light where needed most by bicyclists and pedestrians.

CLIENT: Nolte & Associates, Inc. (prime consultant) for the City of Fremont

IN COLLABORATION WITH: MTH Engineers, Inc.; Fehr & Peers Associates, Inc.; ISC Group, Inc.

FTB: When this project was completed the firm name was Freedman Tung & Bottomley (FTB).



Mission Boulevard’s pedestrian scale was strengthened through placement of new decorative post-top streetlights between parked cars to visually “pinch down” the apparent street width for drivers and widen the pedestrians’ perceived areas.



Sidewalk corner bulb-outs, limited use of decorative pavers, new street trees, benches, and irrigated hanging flower baskets at streetlights provide focused pedestrian-oriented amenity along Mission Boulevard.



An aerial view of the Mission Boulevard street corridor showing Mission San Jose (center left), adjacent historic shops and homes, and new infill development (upper right) along the streetscape.