

Mobility at Left Coast Crime 2026

by Mysti Berry

If you use a scooter, wheelchair, or other mobility device to get around at Left Coast Crime, you'll be able to fully participate in the activities at the Hyatt Regency, the convention hotel, as well as visiting many of the attractions and views near the hotel. I spent the day in the area in my electric wheelchair recently, traveling all the way up Market Street from the hotel to Civic Center without any problems.

I'll explain what I found to be accessible, things to watch out for, and if you are not mobility challenged, a few hints for how to be helpful to those of us who struggle to get around. Please know that I've traveled all over San Francisco, and all over the country in my electric wheelchair—fighting broken curb cuts in Times Square and occasionally wrestling with mobility dead ends. I'm so excited that Left Coast Crime is being held in such an accessible city, my home town! I'd like to share what I know, so you can attend fully prepared to have a great convention and a great visit to our fair City by the Bay.

The hotel and the Embarcadero

This venue hosted a Bouchercon in years past, so rest assured it's large enough for our Left Coast Crime this year. Given the vertical nature of most of the buildings in San Francisco, you might find that it requires a few extra minutes to board an elevator during the busiest times: between panels and just before big events. I've attended over a dozen Bouchercon, Left Coast Crime, and ThrillerFest conventions and have never been late for a panel yet. LCC 2026 should be no exception.

The Hyatt Regency has an arrival level, a lobby and bar level, and convention room levels, followed by guest room floors. You're going to spend some time in the elevators during your conference day, and the elevators, which are lovely and have see-through walls, aren't large, though there are eight or ten of them. Each car can comfortably fit one or maybe two scooters, or one or two wheelchairs plus a half-dozen or so people without devices. If you add an extra five minutes for heavy-traffic times, you should arrive on your desired floor in plenty of time.

I've recently driven my wheelchair all over the Hyatt, and the ground level of all the Embarcadero Center buildings (the Hyatt Regency is in 5 Embarcadero Center), as well as going from the Hyatt Regency to the nearby parks, and all around and through the Ferry Building. I'm happy to report that it is all accessible from mobility devices!

Rooms in San Francisco run toward the small side, but I've never had to request an accessible room for me, my husband, our luggage, and my chair to fit comfortably in the room. Like any hotel, the Hyatt Regency has a fixed number of rooms with accessible showers, but if you aren't able to get one upon check-in, consider requesting a shower chair. I did this at a Westin Hotel in Hawaii and it worked like a charm!

Renting a mobility device

If you don't have your own preferred vendor for renting mobility devices, you can explore any of the following vendors. There may be others, but these are the companies that I have either used or had recommended to me.

- <https://scootaround.com/en/san-francisco> This was my vendor of choice until I bought my own electric wheelchair.
- <https://sanfranciscoca.mobilitycity.com/rentals/> I use them to repair my wheelchair, but they also have rentals. It's not a huge shop, so book as early as you can.
- [Cloud of Goods](#) I had an unsuccessful experience in NYC with this vendor four years ago, but other people recommend their San Francisco service, so I am including them here.

San Francisco is accessible

I wouldn't recommend trying to get on a cable car with a mobility device, but San Francisco has put a lot of time and energy into making this small, hilly city as accessible as possible.

If you leave the hotel, and I recommend that you do explore our city if you have time, you'll find much of it accessible, despite its reputation for steep hills. Luckily, the area around our hotel is quite flat and fitted with many accessibility aids:

- You must roll across narrow Muni rails to get to [the Ferry Building](#) across the road, but I've never had trouble getting across (though I do take care to cross the rail tracks at a 90-degree angle). The gaps are small and the narrow; the small front wheels on my device never get stuck. Also, traffic is very well controlled along this stretch. I've never felt unsafe crossing to the Ferry Building from any of the marked intersections.
- The restrooms in the Ferry Building have more than one accessible stall (at least, the ladies room does!).
- Many Ferry Building shops can be browsed without having to exit your device, and most of the restaurants are accessible as well. I love visiting the bookstore, located in the middle and toward the back of the Ferry Building.
- There's a long pedestrian walkway along the Embarcadero with views of the Bay. It's a wide, accessible path all the way from Pier 39 and Fisherman's Wharf in the north direction, and down to at least Oracle Park heading south. There are more restaurants and lovely views, including large public artworks all around, and the during the day this area bustles with locals and tourists alike.
- The SF Bay Ferry and Golden Gate Ferry are accessible, and can be boarded from the Ferry Building. I remember some problems visiting areas on the Larkspur Landing side, but it's been a few years and things may have improved. But the ferries themselves are fully accessible.
- Sue Bierman Park, a block away from the Hyatt, is accessible and serves as a pleasant break if you want to get away from the crowds. Note: there's now a fence around the inaccessible [Vaillancourt Fountain](#) and the somewhat inaccessible area around it, which sits right next to the Hyatt Regency. To enjoy the park, head north between the Hyatt and the fence and you'll find the park with no accessibility blockers. In the hours

before dawn, flocks of wild parrots wake up and squawk in the willowy trees in one part of the park. It's an amazing sound. I'm not sure if they're as noisy as they settle in for the night.

- If you are fond of Dashiell Hammett's San Francisco, you can get to places like Tadich Grill or John's Grill without encountering steep inclines. Sadly, the Tonga Room is on California, and I'm not sure my electric wheelchair would make it up [that hill](#). The farther away from the Embarcadero you go, the more likely you are to encounter a hill that will challenge your device, or you or your caregiver's ability to push, so consider the hills when making your plans outside the Embarcadero area.
- If you want to stay close, there are four large buildings in addition to the Hyatt that make up the Embarcadero Center. Use [this map](#) to find your way around, and to find the elevator you'll need to visit the upper floors.

Local Transportation

So many wonderful sights and museums are a bit farther out from the Embarcadero, so you may be wondering about local transportation.

The bad news

There are challenges to using BART or SF Muni trains downtown. The trains downtown run underground, and only certain stations have elevators. Even worse, the elevators frequently break down (and also, they often reek of odors you don't want to smell even when they are working).

Note: the antique trains that run the length of the Embarcadero, the F train, are said to be wheelchair accessible. These trains are so small, I don't know if they would accommodate a scooter. I've never tried to ride an F train with a device, so proceed with caution.

The good news

Most of our other transportation options do support mobility device users! For example, many SF Muni buses, which run above ground, have accessibility features. There are wheelchair taxis, though larger devices may require advance booking. Uber, Lyft, and Waymo also offer some mobility device support.

Transportation services that support wheelchair users include:

- <https://city.ridewithvia.com/fog-city-access>
- Most of the taxi services in San Francisco are equipped to carry foldable devices. If you have a large device, be sure to request a "ramp taxi" when you book. They can be more expensive (I used a ramp taxi in NYC to get to the Met, and it was roughly \$70 each way). For more information, see [the SFMTA's guide](#), which has a list of taxi services.
- Lyft and Uber do support disabled riders. For more information, see [this recent guide](#).
- Waymo also supports disabled riders. I've never ridden in a Waymo, and there are strong feelings about them amongst locals (both positive and negative!). For more information, see [Google's help topic](#).

- Most SF Muni buses, and the trains once they get above ground, support access with mobility devices. But since it can be hit-or-miss whether you can get into a Muni station downtown, where the trains run underground, I don't recommend relying on the trains when traveling downtown.

San Francisco is welcoming

You'll see other locals and tourists in mobility devices as you move around this part of the city, as well as people from all over the world. Sadly, you may also see some down-on-their-luck buskers or homeless people, but not many of them. The city (or perhaps it's the cold breeze off the bay?) keeps this area free of encampments and other dangerous activity. I've often zoomed around this area alone and have never felt threatened. As long as I treat everyone with the dignity and respect they deserve, I am treated with dignity and respect in return.

In the evenings, the area nearest the Hyatt has also felt safe, though I'm not sure how far south of Market Street that I'd travel without a companion. As with any city, situational awareness is key.

San Francisco is recovering

If you visit the other Embarcadero buildings, you'll notice that there are fewer shops and fewer restaurants open on the weekends than in years past. We are still building back, so be sure you check whether your favorite coffee shop or restaurant is still in business before setting off.

Restaurants and coffee shops along the Embarcadero have bounced back more quickly than the businesses in the Embarcadero Center buildings. And don't forget there's a bookshop in the Ferry Building. I've been able to maneuver in there pretty easily. The employees are friendly, so don't be afraid to ask for help.

Everyone's taste is different, and everyone's budget. I found the following nearby restaurants delicious and delightful. However, your mileage may vary! Each of them was accessible when I visited.

- <https://www.barcha-sf.com/about>
- <https://www.waterfrontsf.com/menus/> (the views!)
- <https://www.ferrybuildingmarketplace.com/shops/cholita-linda/>
- <https://www.sens-sf.com/>

See you in February!

If you have questions about mobility and this year's LCC, please don't hesitate to reach out to mystiberry@gmail.com. I'm not officially a representative of LCC, but I know a lot about zooming around in a wheelchair, and I've lived in San Francisco for decades. It is my sincere hope that anyone who wants to attend a conference can do so, regardless of mobility challenges.