

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO. : 11

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Sustainable Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Approving the temporary street closure of eastbound Lombard Street between Larkin and Leavenworth Streets on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21st through July 13th, and on Friday, July 4th.

SUMMARY:

- Under state law and Proposition A, the SFMTA has authority to approve a temporary street closure due to safety concerns.
The portion of Lombard Street between Hyde and Leavenworth known as the Crooked Street has experienced vehicular accidents and injuries in prior years.
- Neighbors have asked the Board of Supervisors and SFMTA to pilot a trial closure of Lombard Street on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21 to July 13, 2014, and on Friday, July 4th in order to determine the effects of such a temporary street closure.

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution

APPROVALS:

DATE

DIRECTOR _____

5/12/14

SECRETARY _____

5/12/14

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: May 20, 2014

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PURPOSE

Approving the temporary closure of eastbound Lombard Street between Larkin and Leavenworth Streets on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21st through July 13th, and on Friday, July 4th.

GOAL

This action supports the following SFMTA Strategic Plan Goal and Objective:

Goal 1: Create a safer transportation experience for everyone

Objective 1.3: Improve the safety of the transportation system.

DESCRIPTION

At the request of Lombard Street residents and Supervisor Mark Farrell's Office, SFMTA is considering the temporary street closure of a two-block portion of eastbound Lombard Street between Larkin and Leavenworth streets. Lombard Street will remain open to local residential traffic during this period. The closure of the Crooked Street block between Hyde and Leavenworth streets, as it is popularly known, is to address safety concerns for motorists, residents, and pedestrians. In prior years, this portion of Lombard Street has experienced a number of vehicular collisions, pedestrian injuries, and residential property damage. For example, in July 2011, SFPD officers responded to a collision in which a vehicle collided with the metal railing causing injury to pedestrians. In March 2012, a vehicle traveling at an excessive speed ran into a fire hydrant causing it to break off at its base, flooding the surrounding area including residential buildings. Finally, in December 2012, a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed struck a retaining wall, and rolled over causing injury to the vehicle's passenger. The vehicle's driver fled the scene.

Chronic congestion in the summer months created by the large number of motorists who seek to drive down this portion of Lombard Street extends from the Hyde Street intersection to and past the intersection of Lombard Street and Van Ness Avenue three blocks to the west. When congestion reaches Van Ness Avenue it can delay regional transit and vehicular traffic. Residents are also concerned about the mixing of large pedestrian crowds at Hyde and Leavenworth streets with vehicular traffic.

The additional one-block eastbound closure of Lombard Street between Larkin and Hyde streets is designed to prevent all through vehicles from being diverted north and south at Hyde Street. The intersection of Hyde and Lombard streets has more pedestrian traffic, a cable car line, and an uncontrolled approach for southbound Hyde Street. Larkin Street at Lombard Street is an all-way STOP with less pedestrian activity. Westbound access would be maintained, as would eastbound access to residents during the proposed closure.

Longer-term, this pilot would serve to inform staff as to whether the City should pursue temporary street closures on a more regular basis or, more long-term, seek State legislation to allow the City to gate Lombard Street so that only local traffic can drive down the Crooked Street at all times or when deemed necessary.

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All roadway closures will be done by uniformed City staff using temporary measures. The SFMTA already deploys Parking Control Officers (PCOs) to Lombard Street on weekends and holidays during peak summer season. The dates of the closure would be as follows:

- Saturday and Sundays in June: 21, 22, 28, 29
- Friday 4th of July
- Saturday and Sundays in July: 5, 6, 12, 13

The street closure times would coincide with summer PCO deployment hours, approximately Noon to 6 PM. Lombard Street may be closed before or after these hours depending on set-up times and field conditions. Advance signage will be installed to alert the public of the closure.

MONITORING

The temporary street closure will be discontinued if the SFMTA or neighborhood groups requesting it observe problems that require reversal of the temporary street closure schedule, or as of July 13th. SFMTA will have enforcement supervisors on site to monitor conditions and report back on results. We will also work closely with residents and the San Francisco Police Department. The main areas of observation will include:

- Does the street closure remove the queue on Lombard Street between Hyde Street and Van Ness Avenue? Does the queue develop on alternate routes? Resulting queues will be documented through observations.
- How does the intersection of Hyde and Lombard streets operate with the street closed? Results will be discussed with Parking Control Officers deployed and Muni Cable Car Division.
- How difficult is it for residents to access Lombard Street? Do pedestrians on the street impede local vehicular circulation? Results will be discussed with Parking Control Officers deployed and key neighborhood contacts.
- How does the intersection of Leavenworth and Lombard streets operate with no vehicular traffic coming down Lombard Street? Do pedestrians block the intersection for other cross vehicular traffic? Results will be discussed with Parking Control Officers deployed and key neighborhood contacts.

ITEMS

- A. ESTABLISH – TEMPORARY DAYTIME STREET CLOSURE (June 21, 22, 28, 29 and July 4, 5, 6, 12, 13)
Lombard Street, eastbound, from Larkin Street to Leavenworth Street

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The project has the support of the Lombard Hill Improvement Association (April 18, 2014 letter) and the Russian Hill Neighbors (April 26, 2014 letter). Supervisor Mark Farrell and his office have also been supportive and convened multiple meetings with staff and residents to discuss solutions. Since the Transportation Code does not require a public hearing prior to the Board of Directors considering this item, no SFMTA public hearing was conducted.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The congestion created by Lombard Street has been a matter of discussion for some time. In 2000, the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT) convened a Task Force to try to reach consensus about possible solutions. Various options were discussed in DPT's final report, but no permanent solutions were agreed to. Since then, the City committed to fund Parking Control Officers during summer weekends to better manage the queuing.

Alternative proposals that have been considered include:

- Gate the street so that only residential vehicles can use Lombard. California law currently prohibits the use of permanent gates to allow selective entry of individuals to a street. Allowing the installation of a permanent gate on Lombard Street would require amending state law.
- Create a pedestrian mall. Turning the street into a pedestrian mall would remove vehicular access to the residents so is not practical given the number of private driveways.
- Privatize the street. If the property owners acquire ownership of this block, they could decide who has access to the street but also would be responsible for its maintenance and upkeep.
- Prohibit right turns on Hyde Street northbound at Lombard. The SFMTA has implemented this turn restriction which helps prevent Hyde Street cable car backup impacts and removes a conflicting vehicular approach to the Lombard queue. However this solution does not address the vehicle queuing issues on Lombard Street itself.
- Close Lombard Streets between Van Ness and Polk Streets during peak traffic periods. This was discussed by the 2000 Task Force as a way to discourage queuing on Lombard Street. However this solution could shift the congestion problem to parallel streets so long as the Crooked Street remains open to vehicular traffic.

FUNDING IMPACT

None. Street closure will coincide with anticipated deployment of Parking Control Officers to the Lombard Street area during the summer season. Some advance signage costs can be covered with operating funds.

The Board of Supervisors provided \$100,000 in supplemental funding to the SFMTA for this fiscal year to pay for additional enforcement around the Crooked Street. These funds have been primarily used to extend enforcement deployment beyond peak summer months to other congested weekends.

OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED

On April 10, 2014, the Planning Department reviewed the proposed temporary street closure and issued a categorical exemption from environmental review pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15306 (Class 6 - Information Collection).

The Planning Department's determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors. The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this calendar item.

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RECOMMENDATION

SFMTA staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve the temporary closure of eastbound Lombard Street between Larkin and Leavenworth Streets on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21st through July 13th, and on Friday, July 4th.

SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, The SFMTA has the authority to approve a temporary street closure due to safety concerns to allow for both the protection of residents and pedestrians who will use the sidewalk; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has received a request for the following temporary street closure:

- A. ESTABLISH – TEMPORARY DAYTIME STREET CLOSURE (June 21, 22, 28, 29 and July 4, 5, 6, 12, 13)
Lombard Street, eastbound, from Larkin Street to Leavenworth Street

WHEREAS, The portion of Lombard Street between Hyde and Leavenworth known as the Crooked Street has experienced a number of vehicular accidents, pedestrian injuries, and residential property damage; and,

WHEREAS, Lombard Street residents and Supervisor Mark Farrell’s office has requested the SFMTA to pilot a trial closure on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21 to July 13, 2014 and on Friday, July 4th in order to determine the effects of such a temporary street closure; and,

WHEREAS, The chronic congestion in the summer months created by the large number of motorists who seek to drive down this portion of Lombard Street impedes vehicular and transit circulation, as well as interferes with the use of the street by pedestrians and residents; and,

WHEREAS, The SFMTA already deploys Parking Control Officers during summer weekends to manage this congestion and these Parking Control Officers can be redeployed to facilitate a temporary daytime street closure during four consecutive weekends this summer; and,

WHEREAS, On April 10, 2014, the Planning Department reviewed the proposed temporary street closure and issued a categorical exemption from environmental review pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15306 (Class 6 - Information Collection); and,

WHEREAS, The Planning Department’s determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors. The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves the temporary closure of eastbound Lombard Street between Larkin and Leavenworth Streets on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21st through July 13th, and on Friday, July 4th.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of May 20, 2014.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency