



SFMTA
Municipal
Transportation
Agency

Edwin M. Lee, *Mayor*

Tom Nolan, *Chairman*

Cheryl Brinkman, *Vice-Chairman*

Gwyneth Borden, *Director*

Edward D. Reiskin, *Director of Transportation*

Malcolm Heinicke, *Director*

Joél Ramos, *Director*

Cristina Rubke, *Director*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 16, 2015

Contact: Paul Rose

415. 701.4582, desk

Paul.Rose@sfmta.com

**** PRESS RELEASE ****

San Francisco to Make Busiest Stretch of Market Street Safer

City Reducing the Number of Private Vehicles to Advance Vision Zero

San Francisco— The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency today approved safety and transit reliability improvements for all users of Market Street by moving private vehicles off of the most crowded, downtown stretch of the street.

The SFMTA Board of Directors, which oversees all ground transportation in the city, today approved a package of safety and other improvements, including turn restrictions for private vehicles on Market Street between 3rd and 8th streets. The changes also include extending existing transit-only lanes and supplemental safety treatments to increase safety for all users.

“This project is driven by the sobering collision data on Market Street and our Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities in San Francisco,” said SFMTA Board Chairman Tom Nolan. “Traffic collisions are preventable and these focused turn restrictions will create a safer, better Market Street for the millions of residents, visitors and workers that walk on it.”

The package of improvements, known as Safer Market Street, is one of 24 priority safety projects that the city has promised to complete by February 2016 as part of Vision Zero, the city’s commitment to eliminate all traffic deaths by 2024. Fifteen of those projects have already been completed. Three more are scheduled to be finished by the end of July. All 24 are slated to be complete by February 2016.

The turn restrictions for Market Street are scheduled to be implemented in August, with the rest of the project finished by the end of the year.

Market Street is the city’s premier civic and commercial corridor, hosting hundreds of thousands of people a day that arrive by transit, walking, biking or driving. It is the spine of San Francisco’s transit network. Twelve transit lines run on it, and, at times, more bikes travel down Market Street than private vehicles, making it one of the busiest bikeways in the country.

High collision rates, however, also make Market Street a high-injury corridor, with four of the top 20 intersections for pedestrian-injury collisions and the top two intersections for bicycle injury collisions.

Market Street between 3rd and 8th streets saw 162 injury collisions take place in 2012 and 2013 alone. Of these collisions, 58 percent were people walking or biking being struck by automobiles. Roughly half of these collisions happened at or near an intersection.

Faced with that data, the SFMTA met with the community members, business owners and merchants to create a new approach to Market Street that will save lives.

“Market Street is our signature street – it should also be our safest,” said Ed Reiskin, SFMTA Director of Transportation. “The Safer Market Street project is a step we can take now to save lives.”

Now approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors, the turn restrictions will be in effect on Market Street starting in August, with private vehicles generally not allowed to turn onto Market between 3rd and 8th streets. All motorists would still be able to cross Market Street. Buses, taxis, emergency vehicles, paratransit vehicles, and commercial vehicles like delivery trucks will be exempt.

By limiting the number of vehicles making turns onto Market Street, the chance of someone getting seriously injured or killed by a turning vehicle or mid-block is dramatically reduced.

“For every person traveling in a car along Market Street, there are four more people walking,” Walk San Francisco Executive Director Nicole Ferrara said. “However, Market Street is among the 6 percent of streets responsible for over 60 percent of pedestrian deaths and serious injuries. The Safer Market Street project will use low-cost, effective measures to tackle some of the most common causes of crashes along Market, helping to ensure Vision Zero becomes a reality along our city's main thoroughfare.”

The project will allow the city to immediately improve traffic safety while long-range enhancements – part of the separate Better Market Street program – are in progress to make the street a world-class boulevard.

The project is expected to cut traffic volumes on Market Street between 3rd and 8th streets by up to 50 percent, which will reduce delays for people riding Muni and commercial vehicles that need to deliver goods. Rather than being stuck in a bus waiting for a private vehicle that is blocking a transit island, passengers will be able to disembark and get where they're going quicker. The traffic impact to adjacent streets will be minimal as traffic would be dispersed throughout San Francisco's downtown grid network. As part of the project, the SFMTA is also adding eight white passenger loading zones, four handicap parking spaces and converting a white zone to a commercial loading zone.

The SFMTA is also coordinating with navigation tool providers to ensure the turn restrictions are reflected in GPS and online map services.

Key Facts

- Auto traffic represents between 10 to 30 percent of the Market Street traffic volume, but is involved in 82 percent of traffic injuries, 66 percent of severe traffic injuries and 100 percent of traffic fatalities on Market
- With the new turn restrictions, private vehicles are generally not allowed to turn onto Market between 3rd and 8th streets
- Buses, bicycles, taxis, commercial, paratransit and emergency vehicles are exempt
- Restrictions divert traffic throughout the network to improve safety conditions

Enforcement

- To help drivers adjust to the traffic changes, automated signs will alert drivers to the changes during construction.
- Street signs for the turn restrictions will be covered until all are in place in August. Once unveiled, parking control officers will be at the relevant intersections to guide traffic for the first two weeks after implementation. The San Francisco Police Department will immediately begin to enforce violations.

More information on Safer Market Street can be found on the [factsheet](#) and the project [page](#).

The city adopted Vision Zero as a policy in 2014, committing to build better and safer streets, educate the public on traffic safety, enforce traffic laws, and adopt policy changes that save lives. The result of this collaborative, citywide effort will be safer, more livable streets as San Francisco works towards the Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities by 2024. For more information, go to: www.visionzerosf.org

###

Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.

311 Free language assistance / 免費語言協助 / Ayuda gratuita con el idioma / Бесплатная помощь переводчиков / Trợ giúp Thông dịch Miễn phí / Assistance linguistique gratuit / 無料の言語支援 / 무료 언어 지원 / Libreng tulong para sa wikang Tagalog / คว“มช่วยเหลือท“งภ“ษ“โดยไม่เคยยค่าใช้จ่าย