

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Approving parking and traffic modifications as part of the Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project, including removing part-time tow-away restrictions to restore all-day parking and loading and designating a full-time transit lane on Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets, and restoring all-day residential parking on one block of Sacramento Street.

SUMMARY:

- The Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project proposes removing part-time tow-away restrictions on Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets to restore all-day parking and loading in response to merchants requests for more parking in Chinatown.
- The part-time tow-away restrictions on Clay Street are in place to enable a part-time transit lane, which improves reliability on the 1 California, one of Muni's most heavily used bus routes with bus speeds that average as slow as 3 MPH during peak periods in Chinatown.
- The proposal would address both parking access and transit reliability goals in Chinatown, where the 1 California runs every 5 minutes.
- These improvements would also convert an afternoon tow-away zone on Sacramento Street into all-day residential parking, with no impacts to transit reliability.
- Community engagement found broad support for the proposed improvements.
- The San Francisco Planning Department determined that the proposed modifications are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S. F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution

APPROVALS:

DIRECTOR



DATE

July 16, 2026

SECRETARY



July 16, 2026

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: July 21, 2026

PURPOSE

Approving parking and traffic modifications as part of the Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project, including removing part-time tow-away restrictions to restore all-day parking and loading and designating a full-time transit lane on Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets, and restoring all-day residential parking on one block of Sacramento Street.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND TRANSIT FIRST POLICY PRINCIPLES

The proposed project will support the following goals and objectives of the SFMTA Strategic Plan:

4. Make streets safer for everyone.
5. Deliver reliable and equitable transportation services.
6. Eliminate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by increasing use of transit, walking, and bicycling.
7. Build stronger relationships with stakeholders.
8. Deliver quality projects on-time and on-budget.
10. Position the agency for financial success.

This item will support the following Transit First Policy Principles:

1. To ensure quality of life and economic health in San Francisco, the primary objective of the transportation system must be the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.
2. Public transit, including taxis and vanpools, is an economically and environmentally sound alternative to transportation by individual automobiles. Within San Francisco, travel by public transit, by bicycle and on foot must be an attractive alternative to travel by private automobile.
3. Decisions regarding the use of limited public street and sidewalk space shall encourage the use of public rights of way by pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit, and shall strive to reduce traffic and improve public health and safety.
4. Transit-priority improvements, such as designated transit lanes and streets and improved signalization, shall be made to expedite the movement of public transit vehicles (including taxis and vanpools) and to improve pedestrian safety.

DESCRIPTION

The Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project (the project) would reconfigure traffic lanes and parking to better serve transit riders and businesses. These changes would involve restoring parking spaces for all-day access and expanding a part-time transit lane to a full-time transit lane by moving it to the middle general-purpose lane on Clay Street between

Kearny and Leidesdorff streets. Part-time tow-away restrictions would also be removed on Sacramento Street between Stockton and Powell streets to restore additional all-day parking with no impacts to transit.

The 1 California runs along Clay and Sacramento streets and is one of Muni's most heavily used bus routes, serving 20,000 daily boardings. It connects the Richmond District to some of the most transit-dependent neighborhoods in the city, including Chinatown, where 72% of households do not own a car. However, average bus speeds are among the slowest in the Muni system. In Chinatown, the 1 California runs every five minutes and sees frequent bunching on Clay Street on the way to downtown. Part-time tow-away restrictions were previously installed on Clay Street in Chinatown to improve reliability on the 1 California due to bus speeds that average as slow as 3 miles per hour during peak periods.

Merchants and other community members in Chinatown have requested removal of the 3PM-to-6PM tow-away transit lane on Clay Street to restore street parking near Portsmouth Square. Staff identified opportunities to add street parking in Chinatown while supporting reliable 1 California service. The project is proposed to be implemented within weeks of approval in response to merchant requests for more street parking and in anticipation of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department's (RPD) renovation of Portsmouth Square, which would temporarily close access to the garage in August 2026.

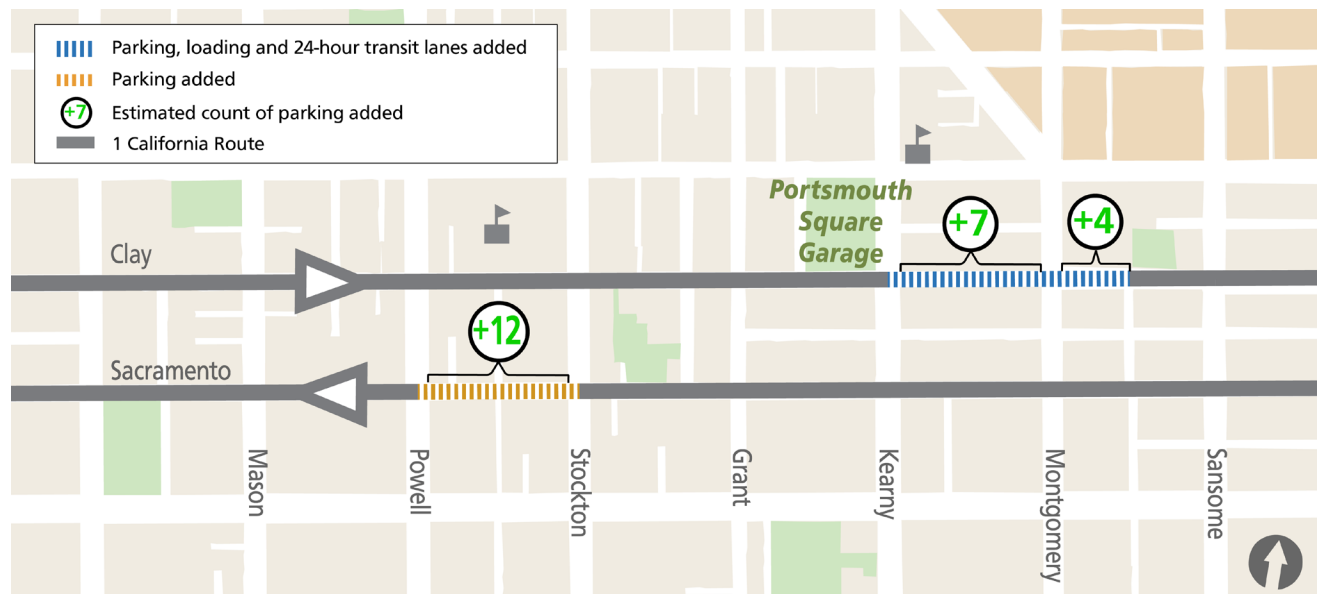


Figure 1: Project Limits

The project would remove the existing part-time tow-away restrictions on the southern side of Clay Street used by the 1 California between Kearny and Leidesdorff Street. The existing 13 time-restricted curbside parking and loading spaces would be converted to 11 all-day parking and loading spaces. This slight decrease in total spaces available still results in a 33% increase

in total parking hours available during daytime hours. An adjacent general-purpose travel lane would be converted to a full-time transit lane to maintain and enhance transit reliability.

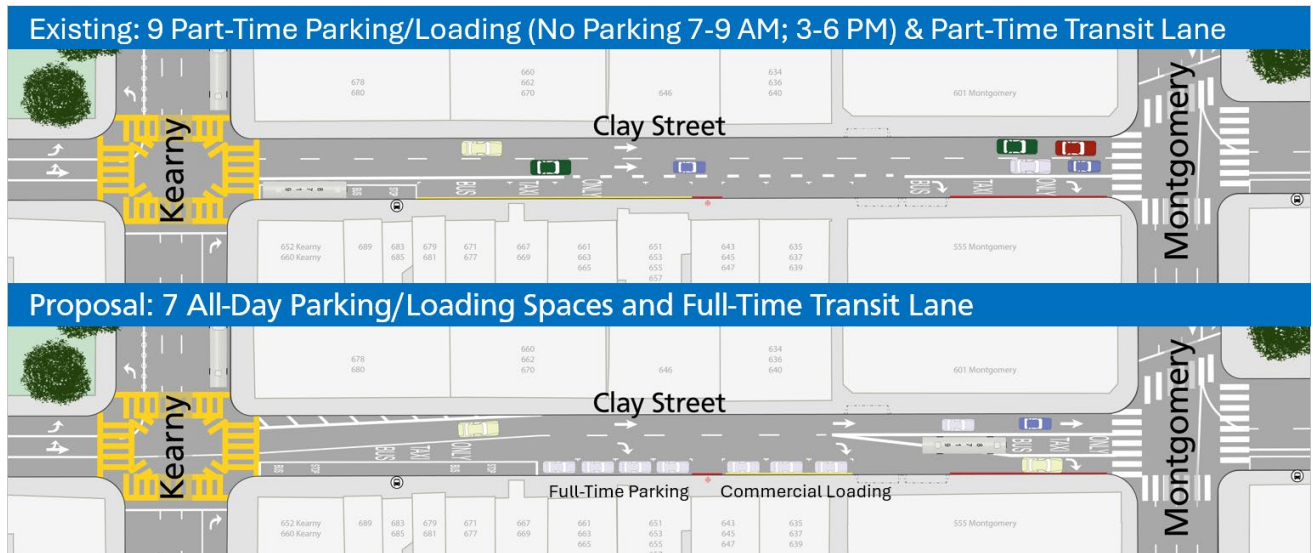


Figure 2: Existing and proposed plan view of Clay Street between Kearny and Montgomery

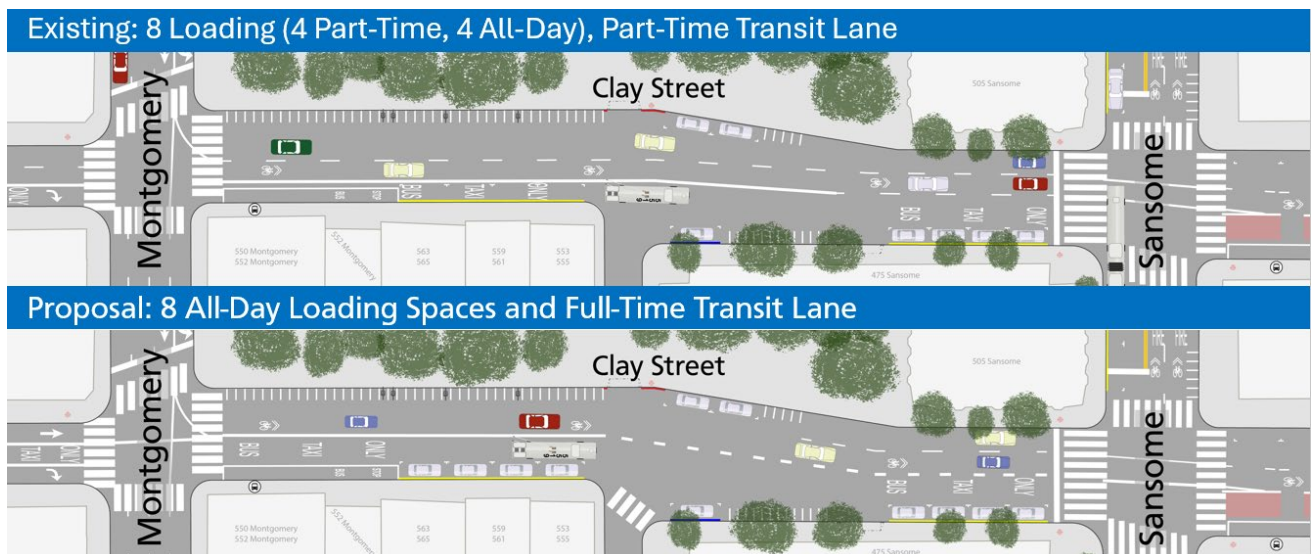


Figure 3: Existing and proposed plan view of Clay Street between Kearny and Montgomery

On the south side of Sacramento Street between Powell and Stockton streets, the project would remove existing weekday afternoon tow-away restrictions and convert part-time curbside parking to 12 all-day residential permit parking spaces. This all-day parking conversion on the south (leftmost) side of Sacramento Street would not impact the 1 California bus route,

which runs along the north (rightmost) side of the Street, and has a dedicated transit lane during the hours that parking would be restored on the south side.

The SFMTA evaluated the traffic, parking, and loading impacts of the project and did not identify any major delays to vehicles and transit as a result of the project. Based on review of traffic volumes on Clay Street, staff do not anticipate added traffic delay from removing the general-purpose travel lane to add the full-time transit lane.

Implementation

Implementation of the parking and loading changes and the full-time transit lane on Clay Street will be delivered in-house by SFMTA field crews. The construction required would be limited to restriping existing lane lines, posting new signage, and adding new curb paint. Reprogramming parking meters would only be required on Clay Street. No excavation would be required.

Proposed Parking and Traffic Modifications

The SFMTA recommends that the SFMTA Board approve the following parking and traffic modifications along Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets to convert part-time tow-away restrictions to full-time parking and loading and to establish a full-time transit lane.

- A. RESCIND – BUS AND TAXI ONLY LANE, 7 AM TO 9 AM AND 3 PM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Clay Street, eastbound, from Kearny Street to Montgomery Street
- B. RESCIND – BUS AND TAXI ONLY LANE, 3 PM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Clay Street, eastbound, from Montgomery Street to Leidesdorff Street
- C. ESTABLISH – BUS AND TAXI ONLY LANE, AT ALL TIMES – Clay Street, eastbound, from Kearny Street to Leidesdorff Street
- D. ESTABLISH – BUS ZONE – Clay Street, south side, from Kearny Street to 135 feet easterly (extends existing 80-foot bus zone by 55 feet and removes 3 metered yellow commercial loading parking spaces)
- E. RESCIND – YELLOW METERED ZONE, COMMERCIAL LOADING, 1-HOUR TIME LIMIT, 9 AM TO 3 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Clay Street, south side, from 135 feet to 206 feet east of Kearny Street (establishes 4 general metered parking spaces)
- F. ESTABLISH – YELLOW METERED ZONE, COMMERCIAL LOADING, 1-HOUR TIME LIMIT, 7 AM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Clay Street, south side, from 223 feet to 285 feet east of Kearny Street (3 spaces)

- G. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY, NO STOPPING ANYTIME – Clay Street, south side, from 287 feet to 415 feet east of Kearny Street

The SFMTA recommends that the SFMTA Board approve the following parking modifications along Sacramento Street between Stockton and Powell streets to rescind part-time tow-away restrictions to allow full-time parking.

- H. RESCIND – TOW-AWAY, NO STOPPING, 4 PM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Sacramento Street, south side, from Stockton Street to Powell Street

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The SFMTA engaged in extensive community outreach for this project. Overall, community engagement found support for the project, with some modifications to support adjacent parking and loading needs as discussed below.

The community outreach process for this project began in summer 2025 when Chinatown merchants near Portsmouth Square requested more street parking. Major components of the project's engagement have included:

- **Summer 2025 through winter 2026 meetings with Chinatown community partners and merchants.** Staff consulted with merchants and community organizers for a six-month period to discuss and co-develop the project. Community organizations that the project team engaged with include the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Chinatown History & Culture Association, Chinatown Community Youth Center (CYC), Chinatown Transportation Research and Improvement Project (TRIP), and Self-Help for the Elderly. The team also regularly provided updates to representatives from the Office of the District 3 Supervisor and the Mayor's Office:
 - Thursday, July 17, 2025: Chinatown quarterly meeting
 - Wednesday, August 20, 2025: Mayor's Office Chinatown Townhall
 - Friday, October 3, 2025: email update with Chinatown TRIP
 - Thursday, October 9, 2025: Chinatown quarterly meeting
 - Tuesday, October 21, 2025: meeting with Chinatown TRIP
 - Thursday, January 29, 2026: Chinatown quarterly meeting
- **April 2026 door-to-door merchant loading surveys on Clay Street.** Staff spoke to every business on Clay Street between Kearny and Montgomery streets to determine parking and loading needs. In response to merchant needs and field observations, staff added 24-hour commercial loading zones and extended the project limits to include the block east of Clay Street between Kearny and Montgomery streets.
- **Spring through summer 2026 feedback period.** Staff presented design proposals for feedback and public comment. Staff found opportunity to include adding an

additional block of parking on Sacramento between Stockton and Powell streets. In collaboration with community partners, staff attended a community event, provided additional briefings, and reached out to community-based organizations and community members to provide an opportunity for review of project proposals and to answer questions about the project:

- Wednesday, April 29, 2026: SFMTA leadership meeting with key Chinatown stakeholders
- Saturday, May 9, 2026: Multilingual tabling at the Chinatown Wellness Festival
- Tuesday, May 12, 2026: Meeting with SF Transit Riders
- Thursday, May 21, 2026: Canvassing at Committee for Better Parks and Recreation in Chinatown
- Thursday, June 4, 2026: Meeting with Chinatown TRIP
- **Multilingual posters** were posted and distributed door-to-door throughout the project limits more than two weeks in advance of the Engineering Public Hearing.
- Key project information was shared via **digital platforms** including a multilingual project website with information on the proposed changes.
- Multiple **briefings and ongoing communication** with the District 3 Supervisor's office and key Chinatown community partners:
 - Chinatown Merchants United Association of San Francisco
 - Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC)
 - Portsmouth Square Parking Garage Board
 - Chinatown Transportation Research and Improvement Project (TRIP)
 - Be Chinatown
 - Chinatown History and Culture Association
 - Chinatown Community Youth Center
 - Chinese Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco
- An **Engineering Public Hearing Meeting** on June 12, 2026, to gather public feedback about the project.

No comments concerning the project were raised at the Engineering Public Hearing. Key concerns from comments raised during stakeholder engagement included:

- **Maintaining transit reliability:** 1 California riders have shared support for the transit lane and expressed a need to add curb changes without compromising transit reliability in Chinatown.
- **Improving parking and curb access for Chinatown:** Project staff received comments of support for adding the all-day parking spaces on Clay and Sacramento streets.
- **Maintaining loading for Clay Street businesses in Chinatown:** Project staff engaged with every business and several delivery truck drivers on Clay Street between Kearny and Montgomery streets to discuss curbside loading needs and issues. Project staff confirmed with merchants on this block that their most crucial loading zones would be maintained.

- **Interest in evaluating parking and loading spaces outside the project scope:**
Several stakeholders requested that staff evaluate changes to other parking and loading locations. To avoid delays to the project, these additional changes were not included in the proposal. However, SFMTA staff are continuing to meet with community members to discuss potential changes separate from this project.

The project is located within District 3. Supervisor Danny Sauter’s office has been briefed on the project and is supportive of it.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

One alternative is to remove the part-time tow-away restrictions without pursuing the proposed full-time transit lane on Clay Street. The project team does not recommend this alternative because it would reduce transit reliability and increase travel time for the high volume of buses and riders on the 1 California.

Staff also considered not pursuing the project. However, this alternative would not be responsive to merchant needs for improving parking and loading access.

FUNDING IMPACT

The total cost for the project is estimated at \$200,000, which covers materials and labor by City crews to perform traffic striping, signage, curb paint and parking meter modifications. The project would be funded using Proposition B Population Baseline General Funds from the Transit Reliability Spot Improvements Fund.

Table 1: Project cost estimate by phase

Source	Quick-Build Construction	Total
Population Baseline General Fund Transfer	\$200,000	\$200,000

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA provides a categorical exemption from environmental review for operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities as defined in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301.

On June 18, 2026, the Planning Department determined that the ([Case Number 2026-004689ENV](#)) that the proposed Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements project is categorically exempt from CEQA as defined in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301.

The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S. F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

A copy of the CEQA determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors and may be found in the records of the Planning Department at <https://sfplanninggis.org/pim/?tab=Planning+Applications&search=2026-004689ENV> and 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400 in San Francisco, and is incorporated herein by reference.

OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this calendar item. No additional approvals are required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approving parking and traffic modifications as part of the Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project, including removing part-time tow-away restrictions to restore all-day parking and loading and designating a full-time transit lane on Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets, and restoring all-day residential parking on one block of Sacramento Street.

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, Chinatown merchants have requested more parking and curb access; and,

WHEREAS, Part-time tow-away restrictions on Clay Street were installed previously to improve reliability on the 1 California; and,

WHEREAS, The 1 California is one of Muni's most heavily used bus routes with bus speeds that average as slow as 3 MPH during peak periods in Chinatown; and,

WHEREAS, In Chinatown, the 1 California runs every five minutes and sees frequent bunching on Clay Street on the way to downtown; and,

WHEREAS, The proposal would address both parking access and transit reliability goals in Chinatown by removing the part-time tow-away restrictions on Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets to restore all-day parking and loading; and,

WHEREAS, These improvements would also convert an afternoon tow-away on Sacramento Street into all-day residential parking with no impacts to transit reliability; and,

WHEREAS, Community engagement found broad support for the proposed improvements; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has proposed parking and traffic modifications as follows:

- A. RESCIND – BUS AND TAXI ONLY LANE, 7 AM TO 9 AM AND 3 PM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Clay Street, eastbound, from Kearny Street to Montgomery Street
- B. RESCIND – BUS AND TAXI ONLY LANE, 3 PM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Clay Street, eastbound, from Montgomery Street to Leidesdorff Street
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- H. RESCIND – TOW-AWAY, NO STOPPING, 4 PM TO 6 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Sacramento Street, south side, from Stockton Street to Powell Street; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); CEQA provides a categorical exemption from environmental review for operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities as defined in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301; and,

WHEREAS, On June 18, 2026, the Planning Department determined that the ([Case Number 2026-004689ENV](#)) that the proposed Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements project is categorically exempt from CEQA as defined in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S. F. Administrative Code Chapter 31; and,

WHEREAS, A copy of the CEQA determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors and may be found in the records of the Planning Department at <https://sfplanninggis.org/pim/?tab=Planning+Applications&search=2026-004689ENV> and 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400 in San Francisco, and is incorporated herein by reference; and,

WHEREAS, The public has been notified about the proposed improvements and has been given the opportunity to comment on those improvements through the public hearing process; and

WHEREAS, Parking and loading concerns raised by stakeholders have been addressed through the community engagement process; and, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves the parking and traffic modifications as set forth in Items A through H, including designating a full-time transit lane on Clay Street between Kearny and Leidesdorff streets, and restoring all-day residential parking on one block of Sacramento Street, as part of the Chinatown Parking and Transit Improvements Project.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of July 21, 2026.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency