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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

MAYOR LEE ANNOUNCES NEW PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ACTIONS & LAUNCHES CITYWIDE SAFETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

City Ready to Invest \$17 Million in Next Five Years for Pedestrian Safety Projects at 170 Locations; WalkFirst Prioritizes Safety Projects at High-Injury Locations as "Be Nice, Look Twice" Awareness Campaign Launches & SFPD Enforcement Increases

San Francisco, CA — Today Mayor Edwin M. Lee joined by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) and other City agencies announced a data-driven action plan and map to increase safety for people walking in San Francisco through targeted pedestrian capital improvement projects, education and enforcement. Also unveiled was a pedestrian awareness campaign that is now rolling out Citywide, encouraging road users to slow down and pay more attention to their surroundings.

People walking are among the most vulnerable road users, accounting for half of all San Francisco traffic fatalities. On average, 100 people are severely injured or killed in traffic collisions every year in San Francisco.

"Any pedestrian death or serious injury is one too many," said Mayor Lee. "As we focus and invest in pedestrian safety improvement projects identified through the WalkFirst initiative to reduce serious pedestrian injuries and fatalities, we better prepare for the future as our City grows. San Francisco remains one of the most walkable cities in the world, and we all have a shared responsibility to protect and care for pedestrians. By looking out for each other and by driving more slowly and carefully, we can make a big difference in improving safety for people walking in San Francisco."

"WalkFirst represents the City's effort to improve pedestrian safety where it is most needed," said Board President David Chiu. "Given our City's density, high impact and cost-effective approaches are necessary to make San Francisco safer and even more walkable."

"The Transportation Authority shares the Mayor's commitment to reduce pedestrian fatalities to zero," said District 11 Supervisor John Avalos, Chairman of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority. "Achieving this goal will take a collaborative approach and sustained investment of resources, as well as continued leadership and new ways of doing business."

Mayor Lee joined City partners including the SFMTA, San Francisco County Transportation Authority, Planning Department, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Works and the Controller's Office to create WalkFirst, a first-of-its-kind initiative in the United States to improve pedestrian safety in San Francisco. Tasked with creating a strategic framework to identify and deliver pedestrian projects and programs in San Francisco, WalkFirst has combined public engagement with technical and statistical analysis of where and why

pedestrian collisions occur on our city streets, and updated knowledge about the effectiveness and costs of various engineering measures proven to reduce pedestrian collisions. As a result, WalkFirst has now provided the City with a roadmap of urgently needed pedestrian safety projects and programs over the next five years and the toolbox of measures that can be leveraged to reduce serious pedestrian injuries and fatalities. The City is now ready to leverage \$17 million to improve pedestrian safety at 170 high-priority locations identified by WalkFirst over the next five years.

“People should not be dying in the streets as they merely try to make their way around our great city,” said SFMTA Director of Transportation Ed Reiskin. “We will be investing in high-impact, low-cost pedestrian improvement projects at key locations of concern in San Francisco, but the overall need is much greater. We will need voter support for the funding measures proposed by the Mayor for the November 2014 ballot to implement WalkFirst, which will allow us to build a safer and more walkable San Francisco.”

A majority of the intersections and corridors identified through WalkFirst are located in Supervisorial Districts 3 and 6, which encompass San Francisco’s downtown corridor, with areas such as SoMa, the Financial District, the Tenderloin and North Beach. These two Districts are home to many residents who are dependent on walking and transit, and they also have the highest employment density in the City. WalkFirst has also identified various projects and programs Citywide that have proven to be effective in increasing pedestrian safety. Examples of potential projects include signal timing changes, speed humps, pedestrian countdown signals and protected left turns. Potential programs include increased enforcement, education campaigns and radar speed display signs.

To round out the data-driven process of WalkFirst, a public engagement campaign was initiated to better understand perception around pedestrian safety and what improvements the public supported. From November 2013 to January 2014, over 3,700 people visited the interactive WalkFirst website and more than 400 provided direct feedback through focus groups and an online survey to share their thoughts about the pedestrian safety improvements they would like to see in San Francisco. Through this engagement campaign, it was found that the vast majority of WalkFirst participants want the City to act quickly and implement temporary measures that are cost-effective, with 80 percent of respondents wanting improvements on intersections and corridors where the most collisions occurred first.

“We have to work together to make this city safer for pedestrians. If we are to be successful in reducing pedestrian serious injuries and fatalities, the three pronged approach of engineering, education and enforcement needs to work as one towards the goal of ‘Vision Zero.’ The SFPD is committed to the aggressive enforcement of traffic laws as part of the city’s collective approach to eliminate serious pedestrian injuries and fatalities,” said SFPD Chief Greg Suhr. “Through WalkFirst, we now know that 60 percent of pedestrian collisions occur on six percent of our streets. With our ‘Focus on the Five’ strategy, we are focused on the five most dangerous intersections in each of our 10 police districts and the five most common violations associated with traffic collisions across the City. So far this year, traffic citations are up over 50 percent in San Francisco as we work to do our part in keeping our City safe.”

“Walk San Francisco is proud to stand beside the City to announce WalkFirst, which will help us achieve the Vision Zero goal through engineering safer streets,” said Walk San Francisco Executive Director Nicole Schneider. “WalkFirst is a one-of-a-kind plan to fix the City’s most dangerous streets, and is the result of in-depth and meaningful collaboration between city agencies and the community. WalkFirst strategically targets resources where they’re needed most—on our city’s most dangerous streets for walking. It focuses on 6 percent of our roadway network, which is responsible for 60 percent of pedestrian injuries and fatalities, and it uses proven engineering solutions to fix those dangerous streets. The approach will ensure that the best investments are made with limited resources by using cost effective treatments first.”

Alongside the work of WalkFirst, a new pedestrian safety campaign launched by the Mayor's Office in February, hopes to create heightened awareness of some of the major factors attributed to pedestrian deaths in San Francisco. "Be Nice, Look Twice" is a trilingual, multi-media campaign, which communicates targeted safety messages and addresses some of the pervasive and illegal behaviors that contributed to a record number of pedestrian fatalities in San Francisco last year. The campaign includes ads on Muni vehicles, radio and videos featuring family members of those killed in collisions, as well as city officials. The new campaign is being distributed via broadcast, print, online and social media channels. For more information, go to: www.sfmta.com/benicelooktwice.

Mayor Lee has also endorsed "Vision Zero" – a goal of zero traffic deaths by 2024, which the SFMTA and SFPD have also adopted. This vision builds on the Mayor's commitment to cut the number of people killed and severely injured on our streets in half by 2021, a primary goal of the [San Francisco Pedestrian Strategy](#) released in April 2013.

For more information on Walkfirst, go to: <http://walkfirst.sfplanning.org>. For more information on the Mayor's SF2030 Transportation Task Force Final Report, go to: <http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=3427>.

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