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Transportation
Agency

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****PRESS RELEASE****

SFMTA Launches New “Smart” Bike Lockers and Installs Largest On-Street Bicycle Parking Corral in the Nation

Thirty-two New Electronic Bike Lockers Installed at Three Garages as Agency Continues to Make Overall Transportation Network More Comprehensive and Efficient

San Francisco—The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which oversees all transportation in the city, today announced the installation of 32 “smart” electronic bike lockers (e-lockers) at three City-owned garages: Ellis and O’Farrell, 5th and Mission, and Sutter and Stockton, with plans to expand to other SFMTA parking garages and surface lots in the future. The agency also announced today that it has worked in partnership with Mission Cliffs indoor rock-climbing gym to install the largest on-street bike corral in the U.S. The corral location is in front of Mission Cliffs on Harrison Street near 19th Street and includes over 50 bike parking spaces to help meet the overwhelming demand for bike parking at the popular rock climbing gym.

Bicycling is the fastest growing mode of transportation in San Francisco. By implementing more bicycle amenities, such as secure long-term bike parking facilities, more people can see and experience bicycling as a convenient and practical transportation option. When an individual rides a bike to get where they need to go, there is one less person trying to drive on already congested city streets or squeeze onto crowded Muni vehicles.

“Since 2006, San Francisco has seen bicycling nearly double, and with more people getting around on two wheels, ensuring the availability of convenient and secure bike parking is key,” said Mayor Ed Lee. “The security of better bike parking facilities makes it easier for people to choose biking as their transportation of choice and gives them more time and less stress as they enjoy all that San Francisco has to offer.”

Bicycle lockers are containers that provide secure long-term bicycle parking for users at convenient locations. The new, smart e-lockers overcome many shortcomings of older lock-and-key lockers, such as high operating costs, limited availability and low turnover. The new lockers also feature transparent, perforated metal doors to reduce misuse and make it clear at a glance which lockers are available for use.

Compared to typical sidewalk or on-street bike parking, which is intended to be used for no more than a couple of hours, long-term bicycle parking facilities offer bicycle storage for longer periods of time and provide a higher degree of security and weather protection. Demand for well-organized and secure long-term bicycle parking is becoming increasingly important as the number of bicycle trips in San Francisco continues to rise. Since 2006 alone, the SFMTA has observed a 96 percent growth in bicycle ridership at the same 21 intersections in the city.

“Leveraging new technology, these smart lockers provide secure, attractive and affordable places to park your bike day or overnight without worry,” said SFMTA Director of Transportation, Ed Reiskin. “This work is part of a larger effort to make our city more bike-friendly, moving us towards a healthier San Francisco with less congestion, more room on Muni and reduced air pollution.”

The smart lockers, built by an innovative local company called BikeLink and employed extensively in the BART system, are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, and provide on-demand, secure and covered bike parking. To use the smart lockers, individuals need to obtain a BikeLink card and register online at www.bikelink.org. BikeLink cards cost \$20 and typically take three business days to arrive by mail. Cards arrive activated and ready for use.

The smart locker fee of \$.05 per hour is collected at the locker and helps pay for the locker system’s operations. The maximum rental time for any one rental period is 10 days and only a bicycle and its accessories may be stored in the locker. All use fees are deducted from the card; there are no membership fees or ongoing costs aside from the hourly rental fee. A BikeLink card also gives individuals seamless access to an extensive network of BikeLink lockers and stations in the San Francisco Bay Area at 28 BART stations and over 1,000 other lockers.

“These new smart lockers have really made my trips downtown more convenient. Now I feel much more secure about the safety of my bicycle while I am away for longer periods of time,” said San Francisco resident, Michael Charley. “I am looking forward to the expansion of long-term bike parking facilities, both in commercial areas to make visiting shops and restaurants easier, as well as in residential locations to support people who do not have access to garages for storing their bicycle.”

The SFMTA’s long-term bike parking initiative has its foundations in a successful bike parking program that has helped create more than 7,100 bike parking spaces through sidewalk bike racks and on-street bike corrals. Citywide, there is a total of 8,500 bike parking spaces to-date. Just four years ago, the SFMTA started to install on-street bike corrals, with one corral typically repurposing one curbside car-parking space to accommodate five or more bike racks. To date, the SFMTA has installed 55 corrals citywide that can lock 668 bicycles, with the newest and biggest corral being developed in a private-public partnership with local rock-climbing gym, Mission Cliffs. With space to lock 54 bicycles, the Mission Cliffs bike corral is 108 feet long and is the largest on-street bike corral in the U.S. outside of a college or university setting.

“With more people getting to Mission Cliffs by bike, it was really important for us to offer high-quality bike parking racks, and more bike parking spaces, to meet the growing demand. We’re thrilled that our collaboration with the SFMTA not only helped us create another amenity for our patrons, but also created the largest bike parking corral in the nation,” said Mission Cliffs manager, Donna Hawkins.

On May 13, 2014, Mayor Edwin M. Lee and all 11 members of the Board of Supervisors introduced a proposed \$500 million general obligation bond for the November 2014 ballot for infrastructure projects that would significantly improve San Francisco’s transportation network without raising property tax rates. This bond would increase the speed and reliability of Muni, improve pedestrian safety and prepare the city’s transportation infrastructure for future growth. The bond would also support improvements to make San Francisco safer for people biking and more livable for all.

Please see www.sftransportation2030.com for more information about upcoming community meetings, the ballot measure, the critical improvements it will fund, and why it is important to maintaining and enhancing San Francisco’s transportation infrastructure.

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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.

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