

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO.: 12

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Transit

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Approving temporary traffic modifications, including turn restrictions, one-way street designation, and restricting vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles on northbound 4th Street between Channel and Berry Streets; and holding a public hearing regarding establishing temporary transit-only lanes as part of the 4th Street Bridge Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes (TETL) project to reduce the impact of traffic congestion during the COVID-19 pandemic on essential Muni T Third Street rail service until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation.

SUMMARY:

- In response to the COVID-19 Emergency, the SFMTA is implementing the 4th Street Bridge TETL project to reduce the impact of traffic congestion on Muni T Third Street transit service.
- The 4th Street Bridge TETL project will designate temporary transit-only lanes on 4th Street between Berry and Channel Streets in the northbound and southbound directions; temporary traffic modifications including required turns, turn restrictions, and designation of the 4th Street Bridge as a one-way street in the southbound direction; and temporarily restrict vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles northbound on the 4th Street Bridge.
- The 4th Street Bridge TETL project will be in effect until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Emergency unless the SFMTA Board takes further action.
- The Planning Department has determined that the proposed 4th Street Bridge TETL project is statutorily and categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution

APPROVALS:

DATE

DIRECTOR	<u>Jeffrey Tumbin</u>	<u>December 29, 2020</u>
SECRETARY	<u>Caroline Celaya</u>	<u>December 29, 2020</u>

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: January 5, 2021

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PURPOSE

Approving temporary traffic modifications, including turn restrictions, one-way street designation, and restricting vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles on northbound 4th Street between Channel and Berry Streets; and holding a public hearing regarding establishing temporary transit-only lanes as part of the 4th Street Bridge Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes (TETL) project to reduce the impact of traffic congestion during the COVID-19 pandemic on essential Muni T Third Street rail service until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND TRANSIT FIRST POLICY PRINCIPLES

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

Goal 1: Create a safer transportation experience for everyone.

Objective 1.1: Achieve Vision Zero by eliminating all traffic deaths.

Objective 1.2: Improve the safety of the transit system.

Goal 2: Make transit and other sustainable modes of transportation the most attractive and preferred means of travel.

Objective 2.1: Improve transit service.

Objective 2.2: Enhance and expand use of the city's sustainable modes of transportation.

Objective 2.3: Manage congestion and parking demand to support the Transit First Policy.

Goal 3: Improve the quality of life and environment in San Francisco and the region.

Objective 3.1: Use agency programs and policies to advance San Francisco's commitment to equity.

Objective 3.2: Advance policies and decisions in support of sustainable transportation and land use principles.

Objective 3.4: Provide environmental stewardship to improve air quality, enhance resource efficiency, and address climate change.

Objective 3.5: Achieve financial stability for the agency.

This item would 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

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signalization, shall be made to expedite the movement of public transit vehicles (including taxis and vanpools) and to improve pedestrian safety.

5. Bicycling shall be promoted by encouraging safe streets for riding, convenient access to transit, bicycle lanes, and secure bicycle parking.
6. New transportation investment should be allocated to meet the demand for public transit generated by new public and private commercial and residential developments.
7. The ability of the City and County to reduce traffic congestion depends on the adequacy of regional public transportation. The City and County shall promote the use of regional mass transit and the continued development of an integrated, reliable, regional public transportation system.

DESCRIPTION

Background

On February 25, 2020, Mayor London Breed issued a Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency (COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation), finding that the COVID-19 pandemic posed a threat to the lives, property or welfare of the city and county and its residents. On March 16, 2020, San Francisco's Health Officer issued a Public Health Order in response to the COVID-19 Emergency, requiring that residents shelter in place, with the only exception being for essential needs. This significantly impacted San Francisco's transit system and required the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to reduce transit service. Specifically, the health order and the impacts of COVID-19 Emergency reduced both the supply and demand of transit service and other mobility services. Shortly after San Francisco's shelter-in-place order was issued, the SFMTA implemented and has continued to operate the COVID-19 Muni Core Service Plan, which provides limited transit service by allocating limited resources to the locations where they are most needed. This was determined based on equity, routes with a high proportion of people of color or members of low income households, communities of concern, places where people are dependent upon bus service and critical services such as hospitals and grocery stores among other factors. Muni Metro light rail service was closed on March 30, 2020, following the Public Health Order to minimize risk to front-line staff and the community and redirect custodial resources to other facilities. Buses have been providing substitute service along the T Third Street rail line since that time, except for a period when rail service briefly reopened in August 2020.

During the first several months of the COVID-19 Emergency, traffic was generally lower than previously. As a result, Muni travel times initially decreased by about 15% systemwide during the peak period. This allowed buses to provide more frequent service with the same number of vehicles, which helped to partially mitigate the effect of reduced operator availability and vehicle capacity. Notably, where the SFMTA provided dedicated transit-only lanes, there was generally very little travel time savings after the start of the COVID-19 Emergency, because there was already less traffic congestion. As more vehicular traffic returns, transit service frequency and availability across the City could be reduced unless the SFMTA takes measures to protect transit from increased traffic congestion.

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In addition, individual transit vehicles are generally able to carry only about one-third as many passengers as they could prior to the COVID-19 Emergency due to physical distancing requirements. As a result, many essential workers and people making essential trips who must use Muni have had access to fewer lines, with reduced frequency and capacity, and are subject to pass-ups when buses reach their capacity.

Initial TETL Corridors Approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors in June 2020

On May 28, 2020, Mayor London Breed released a plan and timeline, informed by the Economic Recovery Task Force, to safely reopen San Francisco. The SFMTA has developed the Transportation Recovery Plan (TRP) in close coordination with key stakeholders, public officials, members of the public, and the City's Economic Recovery Task Force. On June 30, 2020, the SFMTA Board of Directors approved an initial nine-corridor phase of the TETL project, a component of the TRP, which creates limited and temporary transit-only lanes in order to prevent essential Muni trips from being delayed due to congestion and avoid gridlock for transit service as the City reopens, which would increase exposure to COVID-19 for transit riders. The SFMTA Board of Directors also delegated authority to the City Traffic Engineer under Division II, Section 602(b) of the Transportation Code ("Section 602(b)") to designate additional TETLs on corridors based upon a determination of public convenience and necessity, including meeting the following criteria and after a public hearing:

1. the corridor is running transit service, or is reasonably expected to run transit service within 45 days of the determination;
2. the corridor will be a Temporary Transit-Only Area 24 hours a day/seven days a week if approved;
3. the corridor is delineated in the color red on the map referenced in Appendix A of Section 602(b) of the Transportation Code and is within the boundaries of the City and County of San Francisco as described in said map; and either
4. the corridor runs bus transit service and
 - a. there has been more than a 12% time travel savings for the bus transit service functioning on the corridor between the time preceding the COVID-19 Emergency (February 2020) and during the COVID-19 Emergency (April 2020); and
 - b. the proposed Transit-only Area will not remove more than one traffic lane in each direction and will preserve one traffic lane in each direction for uses otherwise authorized; or
5. the corridor has a Municipal Railway line.

During discussion of this delegation of authority at the June 30, 2020 meeting, the SFMTA Board asked staff to bring to the SFMTA Board for discussion any potentially controversial TETLs that the City Traffic Engineer was considering for approval under Section 602(b).

SFMTA staff have determined that the proposed 4th Street Bridge TETLs satisfy criteria 1, 2, 3, and 5 of Section 602(b) such that the City Traffic Engineer could exercise delegated authority to approve based on a determination of public convenience and necessity following this public hearing.

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These temporary dedicated transit-only lanes facilitate higher frequency, more efficient transit service in order to maintain social distancing for passengers. These lanes also reduce passengers' risk of exposure to COVID-19 by providing quicker, shorter Muni trips by allowing Muni vehicles to avoid traffic delays.

Proposed 4th Street Bridge TETL

To support San Francisco's COVID-19 response and economic recovery, and to increase the number of transit vehicles providing passenger service, the SFMTA plans to resume rail service in January 2021 on the portion of the T Third Street Muni Metro line between Bayshore/Sunnydale and Embarcadero station. While the T Third Street line mostly operates in exclusive transit only lanes, there are locations where light rail vehicle (LRV) trains share lanes with general vehicular traffic and can be delayed by traffic congestion and signal timing that accommodates traffic. A location that causes delays for many LRV trains is the 4th Street Bridge, located on the approximately 700-foot stretch of 4th Street between Berry and Channel Streets. The 4th Street Bridge has three travel lanes (two southbound, one northbound), all of which are currently open to all vehicular traffic. The T Third Street line's tracks are located in one of the two southbound lanes and in the sole northbound lane. The current lane configuration on the 4th Street Bridge is shown in Figure 1. T Third Street trains and the current substitute buses are frequently delayed along this stretch of 4th Street, especially at the intersection of 4th and Berry streets, where trains are required to wait while traffic crosses the tracks to make left turns from 4th Street onto Berry Street. The signal phasing required for these turning movements often causes trains to be substantially delayed, resulting in longer travel times for transit passengers and less reliable spacing of trains along the T Third Street line, which can contribute to crowding. This adds to the overall reliability issues on the T Third Street, as evidenced by its on-time performance which ranged from 30 to 40% on average during 2019.

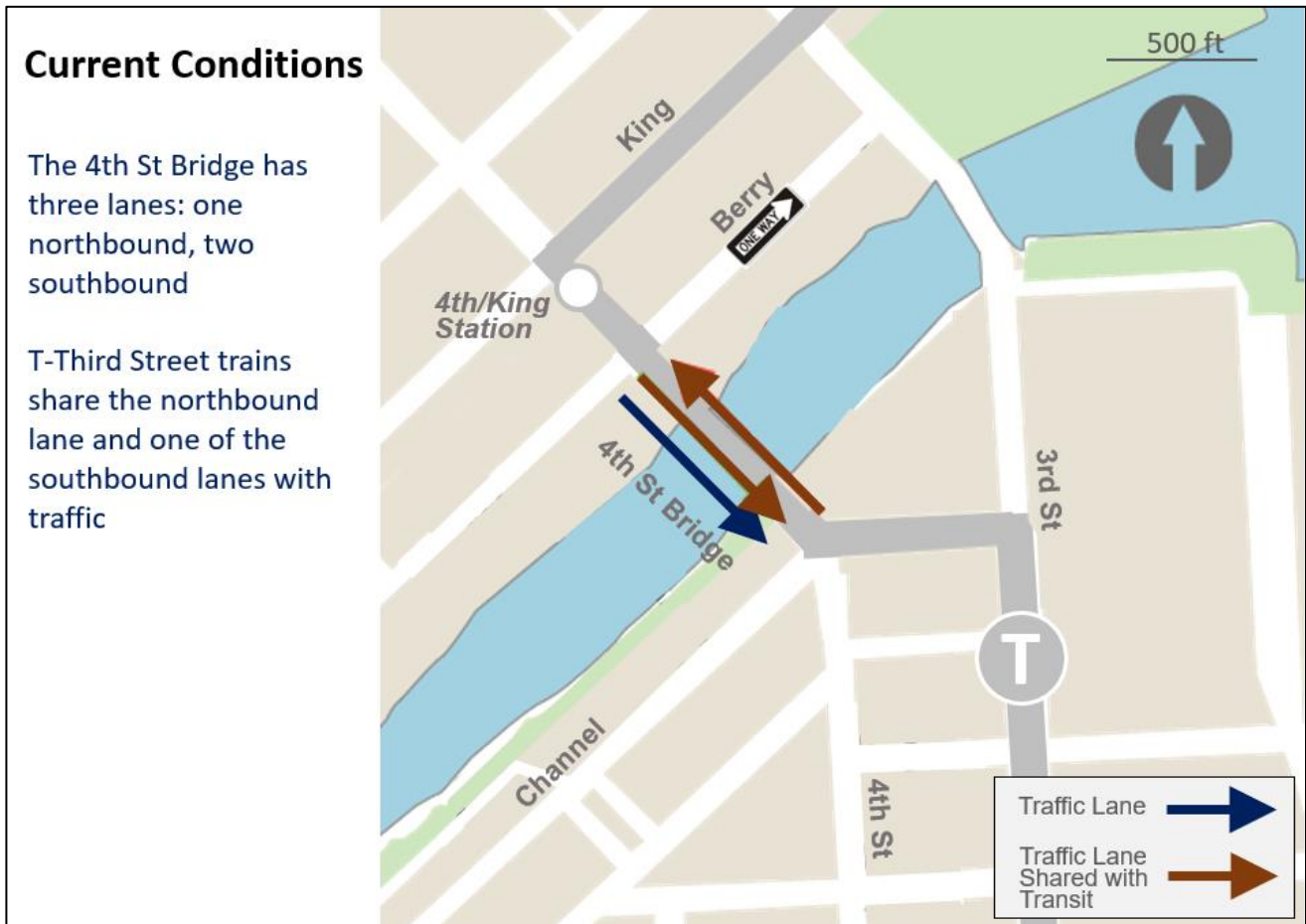


Figure 1: Current 4th Street Bridge Lane Configuration

To address the causes of transit delay, support transit reliability, reduce transit travel times and crowding, and improve safety conditions in light of reduced capacity on Muni vehicles and increasing congestion, SFMTA staff are bringing this proposed action to the SFMTA Board of Directors to hold a public hearing to consider public comment as required under Section 602(b) in order to direct the City Traffic Engineer whether temporary transit-only lanes should be implemented in the sole northbound lane and in one of the two southbound lanes on the 4th Street Bridge. SFMTA staff calendared this hearing before the SFMTA Board of Directors in accordance with the request the SFMTA Board made at its June 30, 2020 meeting to consider TETL proposals that are potentially controversial. At the close of the public hearing, the SFMTA Board of Directors is asked to consider whether the Board agrees with staff's recommendation that the 4th Street Bridge Corridor meets the criteria in Section 602(b) described above for designation of temporary transit-only lanes; and, if the SFMTA Board so agrees, to provide direction to the City Traffic Engineer whether to establish temporary transit only lanes on the 4th Street Bridge (northbound and southbound directions) pursuant to the SFMTA Board's delegation under Section 602(b) until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation.

Other Proposed Traffic Modifications

SFMTA staff is also proposing additional temporary traffic modifications on or near the 4th Street Bridge including full-time turn restrictions (some of which are already in effect after ballpark events), one-way street designation, and restricting vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles on northbound 4th Street between Channel and Berry Streets as follows:

- Pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 21101(c), temporarily prohibit all vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles on northbound 4th Street between Channel and Berry Streets;
- Designate 4th Street, in the southbound direction, a one-way street for all vehicles except transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles;
- Implement a series of turn restrictions and required turns as follows:
 - Rescind the existing left turn restriction after ballpark events, and implement a left turn restriction at all times for eastbound Channel Street onto northbound 4th Street for all vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles
 - Rescind the existing right turn restriction after ballpark events, and implement a right turn restriction at all times for westbound Channel Street onto northbound 4th Street for all vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles
 - Rescind the existing required left or right turn (no through traffic) after ballpark events, and implement a required left or right turn (no through traffic) at all times on northbound 4th Street at Channel Street for all vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles
 - Implement a left turn restriction at all times for northbound 4th Street onto westbound Berry Street for all vehicles

The above-listed turn restrictions and required turns proposed at 4th and Channel Streets would prevent unauthorized vehicles from accessing northbound 4th Street. The northbound left turn restriction at 4th and Berry Streets would prevent transit delay caused by vehicles turning left across the transit tracks. These vehicles would have to use alternate routes to access Berry Street, such as 5th Street (via Interstate 280) or Mission Bay Drive.

The traffic modifications are illustrated in Figure 2 below. A cross-section of the proposed configuration of the 4th Street Bridge is shown in Figure 3 below.

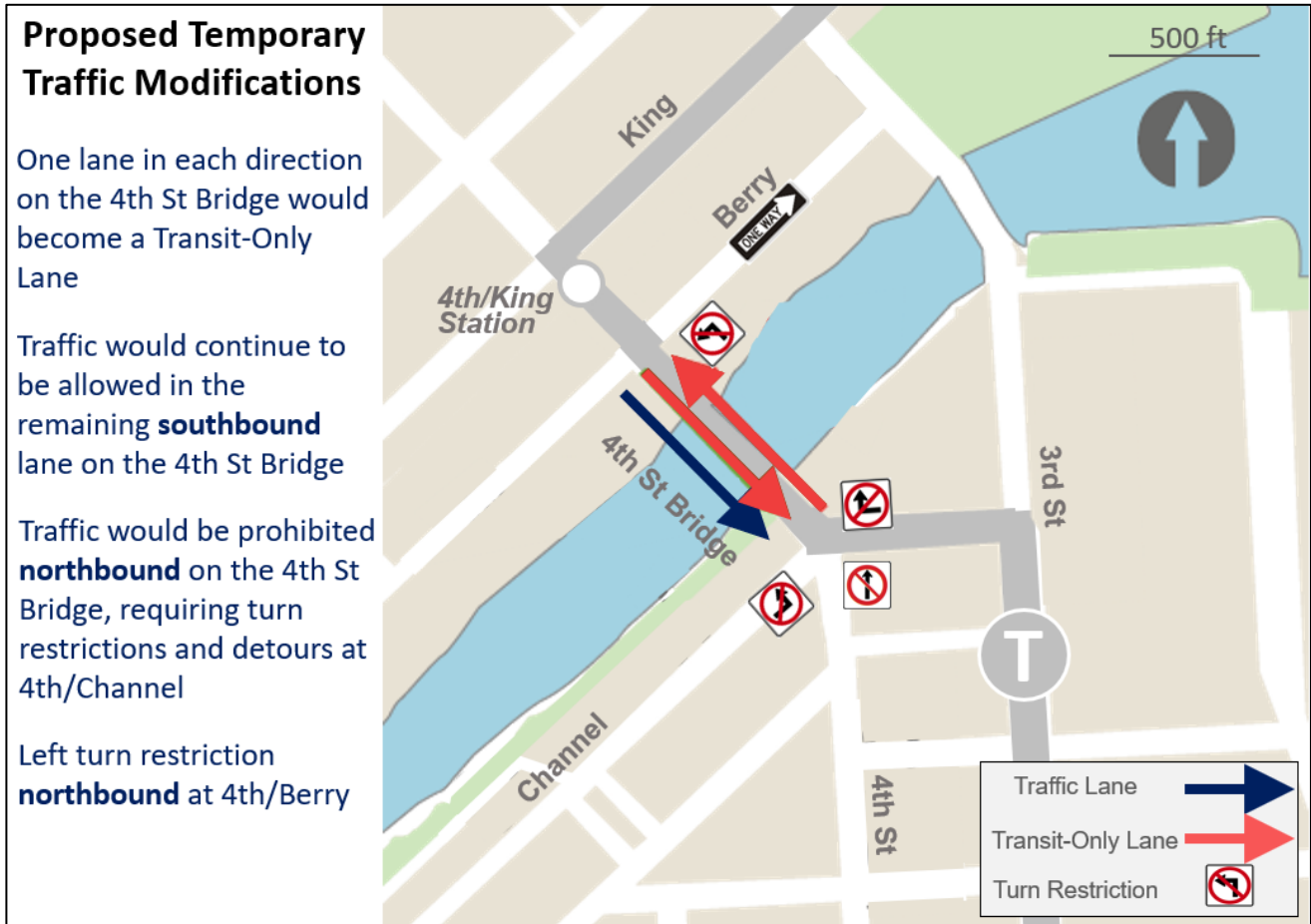


Figure 2: Proposed Temporary Traffic Modifications



Figure 3: Proposed 4th Street Bridge Cross-Section

All of the above modifications would be limited in duration and expire 120 days following the expiration or termination of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation, unless the SFMTA Board takes action to make them permanent. All of the proposed changes would be made with signs and paint that are easily reversible. In order for these proposed temporary changes to become permanent, additional environmental review, public outreach, and SFMTA Board approval would be required.

Temporary Traffic Modifications Being Sought

The proposed 4th Street Bridge TETL project includes the following temporary traffic modifications, which would expire 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation:

- A. ESTABLISH - RESTRICTING VEHICULAR TRAFFIC EXCEPT TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - 4th Street, northbound, between Channel Street and Berry Street;
- B. ESTABLISH - ONE-WAY STREET EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - 4th Street, southbound, between Berry Street and Channel Street
- C. RESCIND - NO LEFT TURN AFTER BALLPARK EVENTS AND ESTABLISH - NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY

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VEHICLES - Channel Street, eastbound, at 4th Street;

- D. RESCIND - NO RIGHT TURN AFTER BALLPARK EVENTS EXCEPT BUSES AND TAXIS, AND ESTABLISH - NO RIGHT TURN EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - Channel Street, westbound, at 4th Street
- E. RESCIND - NO THROUGH TRAFFIC AFTER BALLPARK EVENTS EXCEPT BUSES AND TAXIS, AND ESTABLISH - NO THROUGH TRAFFIC EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - 4th Street, northbound, at Channel Street;
- F. ESTABLISH - NO LEFT TURN - 4th Street, northbound, at Berry Street.

Construction and Evaluation

For the proposed 4th Street Bridge TETL project, construction would occur in January 2021. Work would consist of painting lane markings, installing signage, and making traffic signal modifications. The temporary project would be installed gradually. Initially, the southbound transit-only lane would be installed, left turns would be restricted from northbound 4th Street onto westbound Berry Street, and the left turn pocket at that location would be converted to a transit-only lane. Northbound traffic would initially be permitted to continue to use the 4th Street Bridge, to allow for evaluation. If northbound traffic still causes transit delays, the remainder of the project would be implemented, including prohibition of northbound traffic on the 4th Street Bridge.

Evaluation would occur from January 2021 until up to 120 days after the conclusion of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation, at which time additional construction to reverse the project would occur, unless the SFMTA Board takes further action. SFMTA staff would conduct a thorough and transparent project evaluation, including soliciting stakeholder feedback, measuring healthy and safety benefits, economic health, equity, neighborhood impacts, traffic safety, impacts to other road users, and transit performance. SFMTA staff would also consult neighborhood stakeholders regarding potential measures to include in the evaluation. Results from the 4th Street Bridge TETL project evaluation would be publicized on the SFMTA website, where staff would report evaluation findings and recommendations.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To respond to the COVID-19 emergency, SFMTA staff have rethought and developed new ways to engage with stakeholders. Much of the engagement for the project has occurred in an online format, in lieu of in-person meetings, though on-site multilingual posting has continued as normal and a multilingual mailer was sent to 5,200 project neighbors.

Briefings with stakeholder groups directly affected by the project, such as the Mission Bay Community Advisory Committee and the 15 Bayview-Hunters Point Express Community Advisory Committee were held in November and December 2020. An online virtual public meeting was also held on December 8, 2020. To provide broader access, participants were able to join online or by phone.

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To publicize the proposed project, staff posted announcements on social media, conducted an online community survey, and placed 40 posters around the project corridor to inform community members of the proposed project, public meetings, and ways to provide input. Staff also sent 5,000 e-mails to T Third Street customers, briefed Supervisor offices, and provided briefings for individual stakeholders upon request.

As these lanes are a response to the public health emergency and temporary in nature, additional stakeholder engagement will happen after implementation, which would allow people to experience the impacts and provide feedback about the changes. The SFMTA would employ a suite of updated engagement options such as text message and online surveys, virtual stakeholder meetings, website updates, and email blasts during our evaluation process, as well as other measures to ensure particularly that engagement with marginalized communities is prioritized.

In addition to general support or opposition to the proposed project, as of December 8, 2020, staff received stakeholder feedback, on the following topics:

- Support for improvements to T Third Street service.
- Garage access and egress along the project corridor.
- Requests to retain the ability of Mission Bay Shuttle service to continue to use the 4th Street Bridge in the northbound direction, and to avoid route changes or disruptions.
- Concerns about the length of detours that would be required to reach destinations on Berry Street, particularly due to then-proposed temporary southbound left turn restrictions at the intersection of 4th and Berry streets that has since been removed from the project. Feedback focused on facilitating access to Berry Street and included requests to adjust signal phasing to continue to allow left turns, requests to retain the ability for traffic to travel northbound on the 4th Street Bridge, requests to reverse the one-way direction of Berry Street between 3rd and 4th streets to run westbound, requests to convert the one-way portion of Berry Street to a two-way street, and requests to provide a dedicated right turn lane onto Berry Street from Mission Bay Drive.
- Concerns about the length of detours that would be required when exiting the One Mission Bay garage on 3rd Street near Channel Street. Feedback included requests to allow left turns from the garage exit, which are currently not permitted, to facilitate detours to northbound 3rd Street.
- Concerns about the fast pace of the project, requests for broader community engagement prior to implementation, and concern that the temporary project would become permanent before concerns are addressed.
- Requests to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in the project area.
- Concerns about increased traffic congestion in the Mission Bay area, including in residential areas, due to the proposed temporary project.
- Desire for permanent improvements to T Third Street travel time and reliability, rather than temporary ones.
- Questions about evaluation methods, with requests that benefits and drawbacks of the temporary proposed project be fully captured even if traffic congestion does not resume normal pre-pandemic patterns while the proposed temporary project is in place.

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In response, staff confirmed that bus access to northbound 4th Street and all garage access and egress would be maintained. Staff will continue to work with community shuttle operators to avoid or minimize route detours due to the proposed traffic modifications. SFMTA staff will monitor traffic congestion in the vicinity of the proposed temporary project as part of the evaluation process, including on likely detour routes, and will include the results in any future recommendations for modification, early removal, or permanent installation of the temporary project. Similarly, staff will also measure transit performance, to determine whether the proposed temporary project is achieving the anticipated transit service benefits, such as travel time and crowding reduction. The evaluation will consider the effects of congestion, even if traffic patterns differ from pre-pandemic ones while the proposed temporary project is in place.

The SFMTA staff recognized the inconvenience of added travel time for motorists who normally access Berry Street via left turns from 4th Street. Staff explored the feasibility of traffic modifications proposed by commenters, and found a way to retain the southbound left turn at 4th and Berry Streets while still providing travel time and reliability benefits for the T Third Street rail line. Staff subsequently modified the proposed temporary project to exclude the southbound left turn restriction at 4th and Berry Streets as commenters had requested. Staff will continue to explore the feasibility of further modifications proposed by commenters while the temporary project is in place and monitor the effects of all of the proposed traffic changes to determine whether early removal or modification would be needed.

Staff also developed the phased approach to implementation of the northbound transit-only lane as a result of community feedback. Initially, the southbound transit-only lane would be installed, left turns would be restricted from northbound 4th Street onto westbound Berry Street, and the left turn pocket at that location would be converted to a transit-only lane. Northbound traffic would initially be permitted to continue to use the 4th Street Bridge, to allow for evaluation. If northbound traffic still causes transit delays, the remainder of the project would be implemented, including prohibition of northbound traffic on the 4th Street Bridge.

Prior outreach conducted in 2018 and 2019 for the Bayview Community Based Transportation Plan and Southeast Muni Expansion also showed a strong community desire for travel time and reliability improvements on the T Third Street rail line and restoration of bus service along Third Street, both of which the proposed temporary project would help support.

Given that the proposed legislation is responsive to the public health emergency and temporary in nature, the proposed installation is intended to serve as a key phase of public outreach, by allowing community members to experience and evaluate the changes on a temporary basis and give feedback in support of future modifications, removal, or permanent installation. Staff will continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the duration of the temporary project.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The alternative to the 4th Street Bridge TETL project is to not pursue the proposed project or to implement a reduced project that omits some of the proposed work. If the proposed changes are not implemented, increasing congestion will lead to longer travel times, less reliable service, and

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increased crowding on the Muni T Third Street rail line. These effects would put riders at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 and would provide less effective transit service for essential workers and others who rely on Muni.

FUNDING IMPACT

The 4th Street Bridge TETL project would cost approximately \$50,000. Since the designation of these transit-only lanes would benefit not only Muni service that is transporting essential workers, but also emergency services such as paramedics, police department personnel, and fire department personnel, this project will use Transit Reliability Spot Improvement funds. Staff will be seeking Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and State reimbursement as it responds to and facilitates the city's COVID-19 response during the pandemic. If these transit-only lanes are not constructed, given the impending financial crisis due the COVID-19 Emergency, there would likely difficulty delivering needed transit service to the T Third Street corridor due to the additional travel time and reduced capacity needed to provide service on congested roadways and to provide for proper social distancing in the COVID-19 era. In short, any service reductions would restrict the number of potential riders which would ultimately impact revenue.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The 4th Street Bridge TETL project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA provides a statutory exemption from environmental review for emergency projects pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15269. CEQA provides a categorical exemption for operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities, including transit improvements such as bus lanes, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301. On June 10, 2020, the Planning Department determined (Case Number 2020-005472ENV) that the 4th Street Bridge TETL project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15269 and categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301. On December 10, 2020, the Planning Department determined that the proposed modifications to the 4th Street Bridge TETL project did not constitute a substantial modification and no further environmental review is necessary.

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 sfplanning.org and 49 South Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco and is incorporated herein by reference.

OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED

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

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RECOMMENDATION

SFMTA staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve temporary traffic modifications, including turn restrictions, one-way street designation, and restricting vehicles other than transit, buses, taxis, bicycles, and emergency vehicles on northbound 4th Street between Channel and Berry Street, and, following a public hearing, direct the City Traffic Engineer to establish temporary transit-only lanes on the 4th Street Bridge (in the northbound and southbound directions) pursuant to the SFMTA Board's delegation under Division II, Section 602(b) of the Transportation Code, until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation.

SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, On February 25, 2020, San Francisco Mayor London Breed, issued a Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency within the City in response to the pandemic (COVID-19 Emergency), and,

WHEREAS, On March 16, 2020, San Francisco's Health Officer issued a Public Health Order in response to the COVID-19 Emergency, requiring that residents shelter in place, with the only exception being for essential needs which significantly impacted San Francisco's transit system and required the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to reduce transit service, including closing the Muni Metro rail service to minimize risk to front-line staff and the community and redirect custodial resources to other facilities; and,

WHEREAS, On May 28, 2020, Mayor London Breed released a plan and timeline, informed by the Economic Recovery Task Force, to safely reopen San Francisco; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, in response to the COVID-19 Emergency and the City's reopening timeline, developed a Transportation Recovery Plan (TRP) that serves as a framework for temporary improvements to the multimodal transportation system; and,

WHEREAS, On June 30, 2020, the SFMTA Board of Directors approved an initial nine-corridor phase of the Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes (TETL) project, a component of the TRP, which creates limited and temporary transit-only lanes in order to prevent essential Muni trips from being delayed due to congestion and avoid gridlock for transit service as the City reopens; and delegated authority to the City Traffic Engineer to designate additional TETLs pursuant to Division II, Section 602(b) of the Transportation Code; and,

WHEREAS, The 4th Street Bridge Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes (TETL) project, a component of the TRP, would provide temporary transit, bicycle and taxi only lanes, which would serve to reduce travel times on the Muni T Third Street line and make transit service and essential trips safer and more reliable; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is committed to making San Francisco a Transit First city; and,

WHEREAS, Transportation Code Division II, Section 602(b) delegates authority to the City Traffic Engineer to designate additional TETLs on corridors based upon a determination of public convenience and necessity, including meeting the following criteria and after a public hearing:

1. the corridor is running transit service, or is reasonably expected to run transit service within 45 days of the determination;

2. the corridor will be a Temporary Transit-Only Area 24 hours a day/seven days a week if approved;
3. the corridor is delineated in the color red on the map referenced in Appendix A of Section 602(b) of the Transportation Code and is within the boundaries of the City and County of San Francisco as described in said map; and either
4. the corridor runs bus transit service and
 - a. there has been more than a 12% time travel savings for the bus transit service functioning on the corridor between the time preceding the COVID-19 Emergency (February 2020) and during the COVID-19 Emergency (April 2020); and
 - b. the proposed Transit-only Area will not remove more than one traffic lane in each direction and will preserve one traffic lane in each direction for uses otherwise authorized; or
5. the corridor has a Municipal Railway line; and,

WHEREAS, SFMTA staff have determined that the proposed 4th Street Bridge TETLs satisfy criteria 1, 2, 3, and 5 of Section 602(b) such that the City Traffic Engineer can exercise his delegated authority to approve based on a determination of public convenience and necessity; and,

WHEREAS, SFMTA staff has calendared this hearing before the SFMTA Board of Directors in accordance with the request the SFMTA Board made at its June 30, 2020 meeting to consider TETL proposals that are potentially controversial; and,

WHEREAS, At the close of the public hearing, the SFMTA Board of Directors is asked to consider whether the MTA Board agrees with staff's recommendation that the 4th Street Bridge Corridor meets the criteria in Section 602(b) described above for designation of temporary transit-only lanes; and, if the SFMTA Board so agrees, to provide direction to the City Traffic Engineer whether to establish temporary transit only lanes on the 4th Street Bridge (northbound and southbound directions) pursuant to the SFMTA Board's delegation under Section 602(b) until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation; and,

WHEREAS, Pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 21101(c), local authorities can prohibit the use of particular highways by certain vehicles, except as otherwise provided by the Public Utilities Commission pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 1031) of Chapter 5 of Part 1 of Division 1 of the Public Utilities Code; and,

WHEREAS, Consistent with state law, SFMTA staff have determined that temporarily prohibiting the use of northbound 4th Street between Berry and Channel Streets by all vehicles other than transit, buses, bicycles, taxis, and emergency vehicles will reduce transit travel times and crowding to allow for social distancing as outlined in the Public Health Order; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has proposed the installation of temporary traffic modifications as a part of the 4th Street Bridge TETL project as follows:

- A. ESTABLISH - RESTRICTING VEHICULAR TRAFFIC EXCEPT TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - 4th Street, northbound, between Channel Street and Berry Street
- B. ESTABLISH - ONE-WAY STREET EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - 4th Street, southbound, between Berry Street and Channel Street
- C. RESCIND - NO LEFT TURN AFTER BALLPARK EVENTS AND ESTABLISH - NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - Channel Street, eastbound, at 4th Street
- D. RESCIND - NO RIGHT TURN AFTER BALLPARK EVENTS EXCEPT BUSES AND TAXIS, AND ESTABLISH - NO RIGHT TURN EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - Channel Street, westbound, at 4th Street
- E. RESCIND - NO THROUGH TRAFFIC AFTER BALLPARK EVENTS EXCEPT BUSES AND TAXIS, AND ESTABLISH - NO THROUGH TRAFFIC EXCEPT FOR TRANSIT, BUSES, TAXIS, BICYCLES, AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES - 4th Street, northbound, at Channel Street
- F. ESTABLISH - NO LEFT TURN - 4th Street, northbound, at Berry Street; and,

WHEREAS, The temporary improvements of the 4th Street Bridge TETL project shall include a thorough and transparent evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of the changes, including soliciting stakeholder feedback, collecting and analyzing safety and performance data, and posting evaluation results on the SFMTA website; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed traffic modifications will be temporary in nature and will expire 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation; and,

WHEREAS, The 4th Street Bridge TETL project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); CEQA provides a statutory exemption from environmental review for emergency projects pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15269; CEQA provides a categorical exemption for operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities, including transit improvements such as bus lanes, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301; and,

WHEREAS, On June 10, 2020, the Planning Department determined (Case Number 2020-005472ENV) that the 4th Street Bridge TETL project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15269 and categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301; and,

WHEREAS, On December 10, 2020, the Planning Department determined that the proposed modifications to the 4th Street Bridge TETL project did not constitute a substantial modification and no further environmental review is necessary; 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 49 South Van Ness Avenue 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, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, Pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 21101(c), the SFMTA Board of Directors approves temporarily prohibiting the use of northbound 4th Street between Berry and Channel Streets by all vehicles other than transit, buses, bicycles, taxis, and emergency vehicles; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the SFMTA Board of Directors directs the City Traffic Engineer to establish temporary transit-only lanes on 4th Street between Berry and Channel Streets in the northbound and southbound directions as a part of the 4th Street Bridge Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes (TETL) project, pursuant to the SFMTA Board of Directors' delegation under Division II, Section 602(b) of the Transportation Code, to be in effect until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Local Emergency Proclamation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the SFMTA Board of Directors approves the temporary traffic modifications, as set forth in Items A through F above, as a part of the 4th Street Bridge TETL project; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all actions and traffic modifications approved herein are to be in effect temporarily during the COVID-19 emergency referenced in the Proclamation of the Mayor Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency dated February 25, 2020 and shall expire 120 days after the termination or expiration of such proclamation.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of January 5, 2021.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency