



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

**SFMTA Announces Polk Street Improvement Project Preferred Alternative**

**San Francisco** — The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) today announced its [preferred alternative](#) for the [Polk Street Improvement Project](#). The Polk Street Improvement Project will improve safety, create a more organized street and improve general neighborhood livability for everyone who uses Polk Street between Union and McAllister streets, while also building on the vibrancy of the corridor.

“The SFMTA’s recommendation is a direct result of the city’s continued efforts to balance the goals of the Polk Street Improvement Project with the diverse needs of all those who live, work and travel along Polk Street,” said San Francisco Board of Supervisors President and District 3 Supervisor, David Chiu. “The SFMTA’s preferred alternative will bring increased safety for those walking and biking on Polk Street while investing in the continued vitality of Polk Street and the neighborhood’s character.”

The preferred alternative, Option B for Upper/Middle and Lower Polk, presents important safety enhancements for those traveling on Polk Street. For Upper/Middle Polk, a green bicycle lane is proposed southbound and green shared lane markings northbound to help guide those biking and alert drivers to expect people on bicycles. A part-time bike lane is proposed northbound in the morning commute hour, when commuting is more intense. For Lower Polk, this alternative adds nearly a mile of cycletrack (protected green bike lane) in one direction, with a buffered bike lane in the opposite direction. The proposal in the Lower Polk area also includes turn pockets and signal timing adjustments to reduce conflicts between people walking and bicycling and turning motor vehicles.

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“Safety is a fundamental driving force here at the SFMTA, and Polk Street’s crash records point to a corridor in dire need of improvements,” said Ed Reiskin, SFMTA Director of Transportation. “The SFMTA’s recommended alternative offers a balanced solution that not only addresses immediate safety needs, but also improves neighborhood livability for all using the corridor, and creates a more organized street by reducing chaos and confusion.”

For both segments of the Polk Street proposal, the SFMTA’s preferred alternative recommends enhanced safety measures such as:

- High visibility crosswalks at all intersections
- Red zones near intersections to improve pedestrian visibility
- Corner “bulbout” sidewalk extensions at key locations to slow turning vehicles and make pedestrians more visible
- Pedestrian countdown signals where they are currently absent
- Adjustments to traffic signal timing to slow vehicles and prioritize pedestrians at key locations

Funded by Proposition B General Obligation Bonds, and coordinated with street repaving in 2015, the corridor was presented with the opportunity to improve safety. Polk Street has some of the highest pedestrian and bicycle collision rates in San Francisco:

- On average, one person walking and one person biking are hit by a car each month on Polk Street (122 in a five year period)
- The lower portion of Polk Street has been designated by the city as a High Priority Corridor for pedestrian improvements, due to its inclusion on the citywide list of the seven percent of streets that account for more than 50 percent of pedestrian collisions citywide

To address the key safety needs of Polk Street, the SFMTA worked closely with local residents, merchants and other stakeholders between the fall of 2012 and summer of 2013 to identify project goals and develop design options. The preferred alternative chosen by the SFMTA is based on technical analysis and feasibility, consistency with city and project goals to improve safety and promote neighborhood commercial districts, and the needs of the public identified throughout an extensive community outreach process.

For both Upper/Middle and Lower Polk, streetscape amenities will be added to the street such as plantings and new street furniture to make Polk Street more attractive.

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The SFMTA will host an open house on July 25 to showcase Option B to the community and take public input on public realm and aesthetic streetscape improvements for the project.

**WHAT:** Polk Street Project Open House

**WHERE:** 1751 Sacramento Street between Van Ness and Polk Street  
(the Old First Church Fellowship Hall)

**WHEN:** 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., July 25, Thursday (Open House)

The final Polk Street Improvement Project decision will be made by the SFMTA’s Board of Directors after environmental planning and detailed design efforts, which will take place through 2014.

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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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