

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO.: 11

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Sustainable Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Approving permanently closing both directions of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets to vehicular traffic except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, changing the one-way direction of Linden Street from westbound to eastbound between Laguna and Octavia streets, establishing a protected bike lane on Hayes Street westbound from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound), and approving related parking and traffic modifications to improve safety, enhance bicycle connectivity, and expand public open space around Patricia's Green in Hayes Valley.

SUMMARY:

- The Octavia 'Open Street' Project will permanently close both directions of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets to traffic, except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, to improve safety and comfort for vulnerable street users.
- The project will change the one-way direction of Linden Street from westbound to eastbound between Laguna and Octavia streets to maintain local access.
- It will also establish a protected bike lane on the south side of Hayes Street westbound to enhance connectivity and safety for people bicycling northbound on Octavia Street.
- A new passenger load zone on Fell Street, visibility daylighting on Hayes Street, a turn restriction from Octavia Boulevard, and other related parking changes are also included.
- The project was developed with neighborhood input during a series of temporary closures tied to community events between 2015 and 2018.
- The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.
- The proposed parking modifications to support the permanent street closure, new passenger load zone, relocation of motorcycle parking, and associated changes (Items E, F, G, and H listed below with a "#") are subject to review by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to Ordinance 127-18.

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution
2. Octavia 'Open Street' Project Concept Plan

APPROVALS:

DIRECTOR  _____

SECRETARY  _____

DATE

July 9, 2019

July 9, 2019

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: July 16, 2019

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PURPOSE

Approving permanently closing both directions of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets to vehicular traffic except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, changing the one-way direction of Linden Street from westbound to eastbound between Laguna and Octavia streets, establishing a protected bike lane on Hayes Street westbound from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound), and approving related parking and traffic modifications to improve safety, enhance bicycle connectivity, and expand public open space around Patricia's Green in Hayes Valley.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND TRANSIT FIRST POLICY PRINCIPLES

This action supports the following SFMTA Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives:

- Goal 1: Create a safer transportation experience for everyone.
Objective 1.1: Achieve Vision Zero by eliminating all traffic deaths.
- Goal 2: Make transit and other sustainable modes of transportation the most attractive and preferred means of travel.
Objective 2.2: Enhance and expand use of the city's sustainable modes of transportation.
- Goal 3: Improve the quality of life and environment in San Francisco and the region.
Objective 3.3: Guide emerging mobility services so that they are consistent with sustainable transportation principles.
Objective 3.4: Provide environmental stewardship to improve air quality, enhance resource efficiency, and address climate change.

This action also supports the City's Transit First Policy with the following principles:

- 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.
- 5. Pedestrian areas shall be enhanced wherever possible to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and to encourage travel by foot.
- 6. Bicycling shall be promoted by encouraging safe streets for riding, convenient access to transit, bicycle lanes, and secure bicycle parking.
- 8. New transportation investment should be allocated to meet the demand for public transit generated by new public and private commercial and residential developments.
- 10. The City and County shall encourage innovative solutions to meet public transportation needs wherever possible and where the provision of such service will not adversely affect the service provided by the Municipal Railway.

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DESCRIPTION

Background

In the project area, Octavia Street is a two-way street with the northbound and southbound travel lanes separated by Patricia's Green, a park managed by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department; northbound traffic flows to the east and southbound traffic to the west of the park. Average daily traffic on Octavia Street is approximately 1,200 vehicles in the northbound direction and 1,100 vehicles in the southbound direction; peak hour volumes are approximately 100 vehicles in each direction. At the heart of the Hayes Valley neighborhood, the intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets experiences very high pedestrian volumes. Linden Street on either side of Patricia's Green is a narrow alley, carrying one-way traffic away from the park. Average daily traffic is low with 320 westbound vehicles on the Laguna-Octavia block and 480 eastbound vehicles on the Octavia-Gough block. Pedestrians on both Octavia and Linden streets often walk in the roadway to avoid narrow sidewalks or take the most direct route to their destinations.

Adjacent to the project area, PROXY is a temporary privately-operated, publicly-accessible open space on the east side of Patricia's Green north of Linden Street, occupying former Central Freeway parcels and hosting small retail businesses including a bike shop, coffee shop, ice-cream store, and beer garden. These parcels will eventually be developed into affordable and market rate housing, furthering the need for pedestrian safety and open space improvements.

The Octavia 'Open Street' Project proposes to improve safety for people walking and bicycling and expand public open space around Patricia's Green in the Hayes Valley neighborhood. The project will restrict vehicle traffic on one block of Octavia Street, between Linden and Hayes streets, on both sides of Patricia's Green, except for bicycles and emergency vehicles.

Linden Street between Laguna and Octavia streets, which is currently one-way westbound, will be converted to one-way eastbound to maintain local access. A short contra-flow protected bike lane on the Hayes Street side of Patricia's Green will improve connectivity and safety for people biking northbound on Octavia Street, along with visibility daylighting and painted safety zones to improve pedestrian crosswalks at the intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets. A new passenger load zone on the north side of Fell Street east of Patricia's Green will accommodate passenger loading proximate to the park. Lastly, access to northbound Octavia Street from Octavia Boulevard (at Fell Street) will be limited to the northbound local lane only.

A significant goal of the Octavia 'Open Street' Project is to improve safety within the project area for those who walk, bike, ride transit, and drive in the neighborhood. This project furthers the City's Vision Zero goal to eliminate all traffic deaths. The proposed changes on Octavia and Hayes streets will make improvements on the Vision Zero High Injury Network – the 13% of streets that account for over 75% of traffic collisions resulting in severe and fatal injuries. Further, these improvements support the growth in population and activity in the neighborhood, helping to provide people with more sustainable mobility options and public open space.

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PROJECT ELEMENTS

Street Closure on Octavia Street

The project will permanently close both directions of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets, except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, to enhance safety and comfort for vulnerable street users and to improve traffic and transit operations in the vicinity, since SFMTA staff have determined that the street is no longer needed for vehicular traffic pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 21101. The closure will also provide more public space protected from traffic near Patricia's Green, as well as a safer connection to the park and for walking on Hayes Street.

At the Hayes Street (north) end of the street closure, visibility daylighting and painted safety zones at the intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets will improve sight lines and shorten the crossing distance for people walking in the western and eastern crosswalk legs, improving safety at this high pedestrian volume location on the Vision Zero High Injury Network.

Bike traffic will continue to be permitted along the sections of Octavia Street closed to vehicles, offering a car-free connection between Linden and Hayes streets. By removing Octavia Street as a through north-south driving route, the project is expected to reduce vehicle volumes approaching the closure area, benefitting people bicycling along the Octavia Street bike route.

The intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets is currently off-set, with Octavia Street's northbound lane meeting Hayes Street several feet east of the other three legs of the intersection. This arrangement frequently results in congestion on Hayes Street – delaying the 21-Hayes Muni bus line. By removing the southern legs of the Hayes and Octavia intersection, it becomes a standard T-intersection, benefitting legibility for people driving and reducing transit delay.

The expansion of car-free space will particularly benefit the area once PROXY – the temporary privately-operated, publicly-accessible open space on the east side of Octavia Street opposite Patricia's Green – is developed into housing, as the development will reduce the amount of open space and add more people to the area. The Octavia 'Open Street' Project anticipates this change by implementing the street closure prior to the construction of housing.

The proposed closure area will remain fully accessible to all street users. Existing accessible curb ramps will be contained within the car-free area, providing direct access to the roadway. The SFMTA's Accessible Services Division have reviewed this project through the interagency Transportation Advisory Staff Committee (TASC).

Change of One-Way Street Direction on Linden Street

The project will change the one-way direction of Linden Street from westbound to eastbound between Laguna and Octavia streets to maintain local access to this block as well as to Octavia Street southbound between Linden and Fell streets, which will remain open to traffic.

Protected Bikeway on Hayes Street

The project will establish a short, protected bikeway on the south side of Hayes Street westbound from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound) – along the north side of Patricia’s Green – to enhance connectivity and safety for people bicycling northbound Octavia Street. Currently, the intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets is challenging to navigate for people bicycling. Public comment and observations have conveyed the difficulty of negotiating traffic in the northbound direction which requires people bicycling to merge into often congested westbound traffic on Hayes Street followed by an immediate right-turn to continue traveling northbound on the Octavia Street bike route. The proposed protected bikeway will allow people bicycling to negotiate this intersection without merging into and out of Hayes Street traffic.

A Class IV bikeway is a bikeway for exclusive use of bicycles and includes required separation between the bikeway and vehicle traffic. The project would use a combination of raised islands and plastic delineators as physical separation. Double parking and parking in the bike lane is a frequent occurrence and forces people who ride bikes to merge into the vehicle lane when blocked. The proposed protected bike lane will reduce the frequency of vehicles stopped in the bike lanes and improve safety.

Separated bikeways are authorized under California State law (Assembly Bill No. 1193 effective January 1, 2015). Section 891 of the Streets and Highways Code provides that agencies responsible for the development or operation of bikeways or roadways where bicycle travel is permitted may utilize minimum safety design criteria other than those established by Section 890.6 if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The alternative criteria are reviewed and approved by a qualified engineer with consideration for the unique characteristics and features of the proposed bikeway and surrounding environs;
2. The alternative criteria, or the description of the project with reference to the alternative criteria, are adopted by resolution at a public meeting, after having provided proper notice of the public meeting and opportunity for public comment; and
3. The alternative criteria adhere to guidelines established by a national association of public agency transportation officials.

The proposed protected bikeway on Hayes Street meets these three conditions. The alternative criteria for the protected bikeway design have been reviewed and approved by a qualified engineer prior to installation. The alternative criteria for the project are to discourage motor vehicles from encroaching or double parking in the bicycle lane, provide a more inviting and greater sense of comfort for bicyclists, and provide a greater perception of safety for bicyclists. These alternative criteria will be adopted by SFMTA Board of Directors as part of this calendar item. Lastly, the project’s alternative criteria adhere to guidelines set by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide, Federal Highway Administration Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide, and California Department of Transportation Design Bulletin Information Number 89 Class IV Bikeway Guidance. The

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NACTO guidelines state that parking protected bikeways require the following features:

- A separated bikeway, like a bike lane, is a type of preferential lane as defined by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
- Bicycle lane word, symbol, and/or arrow markings shall be placed at the beginning of a cycle track and at periodic intervals along the facility based on engineering judgment.
- If pavement markings are used to separate motor vehicle parking lanes from the preferential bicycle lane, solid white lane line markings shall be used. Diagonal crosshatch markings may be placed in the neutral area for special emphasis. Raised medians or other barriers can also provide physical separation to the cycle track.

The separated bikeway for Hayes Street will conform to these NACTO design guidelines. The separated bikeway will also conform to best practices and design standards, including design guidelines developed jointly by the SFMTA, Mayor's Office of Disability, and Department of Public Works to ensure accessibility for all street users. It was also reviewed by the San Francisco Fire Department.

Associated Parking, Loading, and Traffic Changes

In total, approximately 11 vehicle parking spaces will be removed and seven motorcycle spaces will be relocated within the project area. On Octavia Street, six parking spaces will be removed within the street closure area, one-quarter of a parking space on the west side south of Linden Street will become a red zone to support large vehicle turns, and approximately one and a half parking spaces on the east side of Octavia Street just north of Fell Street will become replacement motorcycle parking. On Hayes Street, one parking space on the south side, west of Octavia Street will become a painted safety zone. Four motorcycle parking spaces on Octavia Street (within the street closure area) and three on Hayes Street (to be converted into a protected bike lane) will be relocated to Octavia Street as noted above.

The project will add a 42-foot white passenger loading zone on the north side of Fell Street east of Octavia Street, effective at all times, to support the high and growing demand for passenger loading in the Hayes Valley neighborhood, replacing two metered parking spaces. This will accommodate passenger loading close to Patricia's Green, helping to reduce traffic on the blocks of Octavia and Linden streets that will remain open to vehicle traffic.

On Octavia Boulevard northbound approaching Fell Street, a turn restriction will be established, requiring traffic in the multilane boulevard's three central lanes to turn left onto Fell Street; access to Octavia Street north of Fell Street will be limited to the single frontage road. This will eliminate the existing conflict whereby two traffic flows are permitted to enter Octavia Street at Fell Street, requiring an unexpected merge within the intersection.

Proposed Traffic and Parking Modifications

- A. ESTABLISH – ROAD CLOSURE, EXCEPT PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES, and EMERGENCY VEHICLES - Octavia Street, from Linden Street to Hayes Street (both northbound and southbound roadways)
- B. ESTABLISH – LEFT-TURN ONLY - Octavia Boulevard (center lanes), northbound, at Fell Street
- C. ESTABLISH – ONE-WAY STREET - Linden Street, eastbound, from Laguna Street to Octavia Street (reverses the existing one-way street from westbound to eastbound to provide access to Octavia Street’s southbound roadway)
- D. ESTABLISH – CLASS IV PROTECTED BIKEWAY - Hayes Street, westbound, south side, from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound)
- E. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY, NO STOPPING ANYTIME - Octavia Street, both sides, from Linden Street to Hayes Street (both northbound and southbound roadways; removes 6 permit parking Area ‘S’ parking spaces and 4 permit parking Area ‘S’ motorcycle spaces); Hayes Street, south side, from Octavia Street (southbound) to Octavia Street (northbound) (removes 3 unregulated motorcycle spaces); Hayes Street, south side, from Octavia Street to 35 feet westerly (removes 1 metered parking space - 464-05030 for a 35-foot long painted safety zone) #
- F. ESTABLISH – RED ZONE - Octavia Street, west side, from Linden Street to 10 feet southerly (for large vehicle turns) #
- G. ESTABLISH – PASSENGER LOADING ZONE AT ALL TIMES - Fell Street, north side, from 10 feet to 52 feet east of Octavia Street (converts 2 metered parking spaces - 411-03300, 411-03320) #
- H. RESCIND – 2-HOUR PARKING, 8 AM TO 9 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, EXCEPT VEHICLES WITH AREA S PERMITS; ESTABLISH – UNMETERED MOTORCYCLE PARKING – Octavia Street, east side, from 24 feet to 50 feet north of Fell Street (converts approximately 1.5 parking spaces to relocate 7 motorcycle spaces) #

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM TEMPORARY CLOSURE EVENTS

SFMTA observed traffic patterns, worked through operational issues, and engaged the public over a four-year period during community events where Octavia Street was closed to vehicular traffic (e.g., SFJAZZ Festival Block Party, Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association Design Week, PROXY events). In June 2018, these events included a 17-day temporary closure that implemented most of the parking and traffic changes currently proposed for this project.

The following outlines these temporary closures associated with various community events:

- **2015 & 2016 – 1-day closures**
 - East side of Patricia’s Green (northbound)
 - Afternoon hours only
- **April 2017 – 8-day closure**
 - East side of Patricia’s Green (northbound)
 - Daytime hours only

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- **June 2018 – 17-day closure**
 - Both sides of Patricia’s Green (northbound and southbound)
 - Overnight hours included
 - Collapsible bollards tested to secure space and provide emergency access
 - Temporarily reversed Linden Street to one-way eastbound to preserve local access

This section describes the measured and observed changes to traffic patterns as well as consideration of operational issues. The subsequent ‘Stakeholder Engagement’ section outlines public engagement efforts and public feedback themes associated with the temporary closures and additional outreach activities.

Traffic Circulation

With the closure of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets, northbound traffic on Octavia Street must utilize eastbound Linden Street as an outlet back onto the other city streets. There is a strong desire within the community to limit the increase in traffic on Linden Street, however, as it has been prioritized and enhanced by neighbors as a pedestrian-oriented alley.

The temporary closures tied to community events provided SFMTA staff an opportunity to observe and document traffic volumes on Linden Street. In April 2017, the temporary Octavia Street closure resulted in only a modest increase in traffic on the Octavia-Gough block of Linden Street – increasing from 480 to 730 daily vehicles as measured six days into the closure. Staff observations and public comment also indicated acceptable traffic volumes on Linden Street during the following year’s closure (June 2018) during which mapping providers (e.g., Google Maps, Apple Maps) temporarily removed Octavia Street as a drivable street.

Accordingly, it is expected that the relatively low number (approximately 1,100 daily vehicles; 90 vehicles in the peak hour) of people who currently drive north on Octavia Street towards Hayes Street will quickly adjust to the change and choose other higher-capacity streets (such as Franklin, Gough, Laguna, and other north-south streets). This is based on people gaining personal experience with the revised traffic patterns and/or having an alternative route identified by mapping platforms used by the public and ride hail companies.

For the Laguna-Octavia block of Linden Street, the overall volume and speed of traffic decreased when the alley was temporarily reversed from westbound to eastbound during the June 2018 temporary closure event. Traffic volumes decreased from 320 to 240 daily vehicles and prevailing travel speeds decreased from 17 mph to 15 mph as measured 12 days into the closure. The expected change with the permanent closure of Octavia Street southbound between Hayes and Linden streets is thus supportive of the alley’s pedestrian-oriented character and function.

Turning Hayes and Octavia streets into a T-intersection during community events greatly simplified the intersection for all modes of travel, both benefitting safety and improving traffic flow. Right-of-way was more clear and westbound traffic (including the 21-Hayes Muni line) appeared to move more efficiently. Community members also noted a significant reduction in

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honking and other traffic-related noise complaints. It was apparent, however, that a better-defined bicycle path-of-travel is necessary, resulting in the proposed protected bikeway on Hayes Street to facilitate the movement of bicycle traffic through the Hayes and Octavia intersection.

Emergency Access

To maintain appropriate emergency access for the San Francisco Fire Department, San Francisco Police Department, and other First Responders, the project will secure the closure area using collapsible bollards placed within the roadway. These bollards are rigid yet break-away when impacted by an emergency vehicle; they are also able to be manually removed and reinstalled as desired. The bollards will be installed and maintained by the SFMTA's Sign Shop, and in the event they are collapsed, can be reinstalled within a few minutes by replacing a small metal insert that SFMTA will keep on-hand. These bollards have been tested and were approved by both the San Francisco Fire Department and San Francisco Police Department.

Maintenance

The San Francisco Department of Public Works will use mini street sweepers (originally purchased to clean the City's protected bikeways) to fit between the collapsible bollards and mechanically clean the blocks of Octavia Street closed to vehicular traffic.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Conceptualization of the project began with constituent requests for consideration of traffic calming and safety improvements on Octavia Street, as well as more public open space around Patricia's Green. Staff evaluated traditional traffic calming (e.g., speed humps), but determined that the area would benefit more for a pedestrian-focused re-design than mere management of travel speeds. Staff coordinated the first temporary closure in 2015 to support community activity concurrently with outreach for SFMTA projects in the Hayes Valley neighborhood, including early ideas for the area surrounding Patricia's Green.

The Octavia 'Open Street' Project was subsequently developed as a related effort within the Octavia Boulevard Enhancement Program – a series of capital projects, guided by the Market-Octavia Area Plan, to make the boulevard and surrounding streets safer, more pedestrian-friendly, and better at serving multiple users. Outreach for the project began in 2015 with the first temporary closure and has been on-going since.

The following summarizes major public engagement activities over the past four years:

- **2015 & 2016**
 - Outdoor open houses to discuss planned projects
- **2017**
 - April 1, 5 – Two outdoor open houses (Saturday and weeknight)
 - April 6 – Walking tour along Octavia to discuss planned projects
 - April 6 – Engaged stakeholders at Walk to Work Day hub

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- **2018**
 - April 25, 26 – Two ‘office hours’ in Patricia’s Green
 - April 28 – Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association outdoor brunch
 - June 10 – Sunday meeting with Linden Street neighbors
- **2019**
 - April 22 – Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association Transportation & Land Use Sub-Committee meeting
 - May 23 – Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association general community meeting
 - June 4 – Open house (Hayes Valley Playground)
 - June 11 – SFJAZZ fest at PROXY
- **Throughout the Four-Year Period**
 - Door-to-door outreach
 - Mailings and postings (to promote hearings, open houses, office hours, etc.)
 - Direct correspondence with constituents

During this time, the project team engaged with the following groups and major stakeholders:

- Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association
 - Including their Transportation and Land Use Sub-Committee
- Linden Street neighbors
- Businesses on Octavia, Linden, Hayes, and Fell streets – including:
 - Blue Bottle Coffee
 - Build, Inc.
 - Dark Garden
 - Optical Underground
 - Fell Street Auto Service
 - Dompport Auto Body
 - PROXY – representing the following tenants: Ritual Coffee, Smitten Ice Cream, Juice Bar, CityRide Bike Rentals, and other tenant businesses
 - Biergarten (parent restaurant: Suppenkuche)
 - Stacks
 - Miette
- Walk San Francisco
- San Francisco Bicycle Coalition

SFMTA staff have worked directly with the San Francisco Fire Department to assure adequate emergency access to the area with the street closed to traffic, including testing the proposed collapsible bollards. The San Francisco Fire Department, San Francisco Police Department, and San Francisco Department of Public Works have reviewed the project through the interagency Transportation Advisory Staff Committee (TASC); the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department is also aware and supportive of the project. Further, the offices of District 5 Supervisor Vallie Brown have been briefed on the project.

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Over the four years of project development, several hundred public comments were received at meetings or by direct correspondence, and countless others were collected during the temporary closures. Preceding each outreach event and temporary street closure, promotional materials were posted around Patricia's Green, hand-delivered to Octavia, Linden, Hayes, and Fell street residents and businesses, and otherwise communicated via SFMTA's project website, electronic project updates, and various community channels.

The consensus from the Hayes Valley neighborhood and immediate stakeholders is positive on the proposed street closure. Major themes of feedback include concerns for additional traffic on Linden Street, opposition to the loss of on-street parking, and the desire to see a car-free space expanded to additional blocks, as discussed in more detail below.

Summary of Public Feedback on the Proposed Changes

The following are major themes of feedback:

- General support for improved safety and expanded public space around Patricia's Green: The consensus among Hayes Valley residents and business owners, including many who live or work on Octavia and Linden streets, is that the project will provide an improvement to the area with minimal trade-offs. Some foresee the need for more public space once the temporary PROXY space is developed into housing.
- Expand Octavia car-free space between Fell and Linden streets: Many constituents have requested that the Fell-Linden block also be closed to vehicle traffic, providing car-free space along the full length of the west and east sides of Patricia's Green.
- Support for a better bicycle path-of-travel through the area: Citing the existing confusion and difficulty of travelling through the Octavia & Hayes intersection, most bike riders support the proposed protected bikeway and improved demarcation for bike traffic.
- Concerns regarding additional traffic on Linden Street: Several members of the public with residences or businesses on Linden Street have expressed concern regarding additional traffic on their block. Some would like to see Linden Street access limited to local traffic only.
- Concerns regarding loss of parking: Citing high demand for on-street parking in Hayes Valley, some members of the public oppose the removal of parking spaces.
- Concerns regarding closing Octavia Street on the west side of Patricia's Green: A few members of the public oppose the closure on the west side of the park, saying this side has less public activity and is not as directly connected to the park due to raised planters.

Project Modifications Based on Public Feedback

SFMTA's public outreach and engagement identified concerns among area residents and businesses that resulted in modifications to the project proposal. These include the following:

- Concerns regarding additional traffic on Linden Street: Staff have focused attention over the four years spent developing this proposal on possible increases in traffic volumes on

Linden Street with Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets closed to traffic. As discussed above, large increases in vehicle volumes were not observed on the Octavia-Gough block during the temporary closures, and traffic decreased on the Laguna-Octavia block. Staff have nonetheless addressed this concern in four ways: [1] working with mapping providers (e.g., Google Maps, Apple Maps) to remove Octavia Street as a driveable route so north-south through drivers are not routed onto Octavia and Linden streets; [2] adding signs at and approaching the street closure area to inform drivers that Octavia Street does not provide through access; [3] pursuing a ‘living alley’ and traffic calming improvements (e.g., raised crosswalks, stamped asphalt) in a later project phase to enhance the pedestrian character of Linden Street; and [4] locating passenger loading zones on surrounding arterial streets to accommodate ride-hail activity away from Patricia’s Green. The proposed passenger loading zone on Fell Street will be in addition to passenger loading zones on Gough and Hayes streets.

- Concerns regarding the loss of motorcycle parking: In addition to traditional motorcycles, electric mopeds are popular in the neighborhood (including shared mopeds operated by Scoot Networks), so staff sought to retain curb space for this mode of transportation. As a result, staff proposes to relocate the seven motorcycle parking spaces currently on Octavia and Hayes streets to the east side of Octavia Street north of Fell Street.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Closing Octavia between Fell and Hayes Streets: Staff considered closing Octavia Street between Fell and Linden streets, in addition to the block between Linden and Hayes streets, at the request of community members. Ultimately staff determined that the Fell-Linden block of Octavia Street is needed to provide access for residents and businesses on Linden Street, which is too narrow to function as a dead-end two-way street. In particular, access for commercial deliveries, garbage collection, and emergency vehicles would be difficult if this portion of Octavia Street was closed to vehicular traffic.

Local Access Only for Octavia and Linden Streets: Staff considered restricting Octavia Street between Fell and Linden streets and Linden Street between Laguna and Gough streets to local traffic, in addition to restricting all traffic on the block between Linden and Hayes streets, at the request of community members. This was determined to not be an option under state law. However, in response to residents’ concerns regarding additional traffic on Linden Street, staff purpose to install signs at the Fell Street entry to Octavia Street with ‘No Access to Hayes Street’ to communicate that the street is not a through north-south street.

Restricting Traffic in the Northbound Direction Only: Staff considered only closing the northbound lane (east side) of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets, and evaluated this change during temporary closures from 2015 to 2017. It was noted, however, that the temporary closure of Octavia Street in both directions in June 2018 realized some key benefits including reduced use of Octavia Street for Central Freeway access, removal of all vehicle conflicts for pedestrians walking along the south side of Hayes Street at Octavia Street, and

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simplification of the Hayes and Octavia intersection. In particular, since the intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets is on this Vision Zero High Injury Network, maximizing safety improvements was prioritized.

No Project: Staff considered not proposing any improvements. However, given the opportunity to improve safety and expand public open space in a high pedestrian activity area on the Vision Zero High Injury Network without appreciably affecting traffic circulation and access, the proposed project is recommended by staff.

FUNDING IMPACT

This project is funded by approximately \$25,000 in developer impact fee funds for transportation improvements within the Market-Octavia Plan Area.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed Octavia ‘Open Street’ Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); CEQA provides a categorical exemption from environmental review for operation, 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 May 24, 2019, the Planning Department determined that the proposed Octavia ‘Open Street’ Project is categorically exempt from CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301.

The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by 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 1650 Mission Street in San Francisco, and is incorporated herein by reference.

OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED

Final SFMTA decisions, whether made by the City Traffic Engineer or the SFMTA Board, can be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to Ordinance 127-18. Information about the review process can be found at:

https://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/SFMTA_Action_Review_Info_Sheet.pdf

The proposed parking modifications to support the permanent street closure, new passenger load zone, relocation of motorcycle parking, and associated changes (Item E, F, G, and H listed above with a “#”) are subject to review by the Board of Supervisors pursuant to Ordinance 127-18.

The City Attorney has reviewed this item.

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RECOMMENDATION

SFMTA staff request that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve permanently closing both directions of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets to vehicular traffic except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, changing the one-way direction of Linden Street from westbound to eastbound between Laguna and Octavia streets, establishing a protected bike lane on Hayes Street westbound from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound), and approving related parking and traffic modifications, as set forth in Items A through H above, to improve traffic safety and expand public space as part of the Octavia ‘Open Street’ Project.

SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is committed to achieving Vision Zero goals and implementing safety improvements on Octavia, Linden, Hayes, and Fell streets; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is committed to making San Francisco a Transit First city that prioritizes non-private automobile transportation; and,

WHEREAS, The project aims to improve traffic safety, improve bicycle connectivity, and expand public open space around Patricia's Green in Hayes Valley; and,

WHEREAS, The intersection of Hayes and Octavia streets experiences very high pedestrian volumes and people on both Octavia and Linden streets often walk in the roadway to avoid narrow sidewalks or to take the most direct route to their destinations; and,

WHEREAS, SFMTA staff have determined that Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets, in both directions, is no longer needed for vehicular traffic pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 21101, except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, because it is necessary for the safety and comfort for vulnerable street users and to improve traffic and transit operations in the vicinity; and,

WHEREAS, Section 891 of the Streets and Highways Code provides that agencies responsible for the development or operation of bikeways or roadways where bicycle travel is permitted may utilize minimum safety design criteria other than those established by Section 890.6 if the following conditions are met: the alternative criteria are reviewed and approved by a qualified engineer, the alternative criteria is adopted by resolution at a public meeting after public comment and proper notice, and the alternative criteria adheres to the guidelines established by a national association of public agency transportation officials; and,

WHEREAS, The protected bikeway proposed as part of the project meets these three requirements; and,

WHEREAS, The alternative criteria for the project are to discourage motor vehicles from encroaching or double parking in the bicycle facility, provide a more inviting and greater sense of comfort for bicyclists, and to provide a greater perception of safety for bicyclists; and,

WHEREAS, The project's alternative criteria adhere to guidelines set by the National Association of City Transportation Officials; and,

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has proposed traffic and parking modifications along Octavia, Linden, Hayes, and Fell streets as follows:

- A. ESTABLISH – ROAD CLOSURE, EXCEPT PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES, and EMERGENCY VEHICLES - Octavia Street, from Linden Street to Hayes Street (both northbound and southbound roadways)
- B. ESTABLISH – LEFT-TURN ONLY - Octavia Boulevard (center lanes), northbound, at Fell Street
- C. ESTABLISH – ONE-WAY STREET - Linden Street, eastbound, from Laguna Street to Octavia Street (reverses the existing one-way street from westbound to eastbound to provide access to Octavia Street’s southbound roadway)
- D. ESTABLISH – CLASS IV PROTECTED BIKEWAY - Hayes Street, westbound, south side, from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound)
- E. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY, NO STOPPING ANYTIME - Octavia Street, both sides, from Linden Street to Hayes Street (both northbound and southbound roadways; removes 6 permit parking Area ‘S’ parking spaces and 4 permit parking Area ‘S’ motorcycle spaces); Hayes Street, south side, from Octavia Street (southbound) to Octavia Street (northbound) (removes 3 unregulated motorcycle spaces); Hayes Street, south side, from Octavia Street to 35 feet westerly (removes 1 metered parking space - 464-05030 for a 35-foot long painted safety zone) #
- F. ESTABLISH – RED ZONE - Octavia Street, west side, from Linden Street to 10 feet southerly (for large vehicle turns) #
- G. ESTABLISH – PASSENGER LOADING ZONE AT ALL TIMES - Fell Street, north side, from 10 feet to 52 feet east of Octavia Street (converts 2 metered parking spaces - 411-03300, 411-03320) #
- H. RESCIND – 2-HOUR PARKING, 8 AM TO 9 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, EXCEPT VEHICLES WITH AREA S PERMITS; ESTABLISH – UNMETERED MOTORCYCLE PARKING – Octavia Street, east side, from 24 feet to 50 feet north of Fell Street (converts approximately 1.5 parking spaces to relocate 7 motorcycle spaces) #; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed Octavia ‘Open Street’ Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); CEQA provides a categorical exemption from environmental review for operation, 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 May 24, 2019, the Planning Department determined that the proposed Octavia ‘Open Street’ Project is categorically exempt from CEQA, pursuant to 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,

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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 1650 Mission Street in San Francisco, and is incorporated herein by reference; and,

WHEREAS, The public has been notified about the proposed modifications and has been given the opportunity to comment on those modifications; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors finds that Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets, in both directions, is no longer needed for vehicular traffic pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 21101, except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, because it is necessary for the safety and comfort of vulnerable street users and to improve traffic and transit operations in the vicinity; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves permanently closing both directions of Octavia Street between Linden and Hayes streets to vehicular traffic except for bicycles and emergency vehicles, changing the one-way direction of Linden Street from westbound to eastbound between Laguna and Octavia streets, establishing a protected bike lane on Hayes Street westbound from Octavia Street (northbound) to Octavia Street (southbound), and approving related parking and traffic modifications to improve safety, as set forth in Item A through H above, associated with the Octavia 'Open Street' Project.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of July 16, 2019.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

Enclosure 2.

Octavia 'Open Street' Project Concept Plan

