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****PRESS RELEASE****

Comprehensive Great Highway Traffic Calming Strategy Announced for the Outer Sunset

Joint strategy from Supervisor Mar, SFMTA, Recreation and Parks, SFCTA, and SFPD will address safety impacts of traffic redirected from Great Highway during emergency closure

San Francisco— The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), along with Supervisor Gordon Mar, Recreation and Parks, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA), and the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) today announced a comprehensive traffic calming strategy for the Outer Sunset to address safety concerns on the streets impacted by traffic due to the Upper Great Highway’s emergency repurposing during the city’s COVID-19 response. The new plan builds on existing mitigation efforts, including traffic diverters and turn restrictions along Lincoln Way and four speed tables on the Lower Great Highway already installed, alongside temporary increased patrol by the SFPD Traffic Company.

Since April, the Upper Great Highway has been closed to vehicles between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard as an open space for walking and biking that has been used daily by thousands of San Franciscans. While many residents seek refuge in socially distant recreation near the beach, surrounding streets have experienced an uptick in traffic and instances of dangerous driving behavior. As this emergency closure remains in place, several city agencies are working closely with Supervisor Mar to manage the safety and use of these nearby streets in District 4.

“The transformation of the Great Highway has provided tremendous benefit, but safety always must come first,” said Supervisor Gordon Mar. “We can’t sacrifice safety for recreation, and I believe with this plan we can have both. We can only continue to enjoy this incredible new open space if we can make it safe and address these impacts.”

The traffic calming plan includes:

- 24 new speed cushions
- One speed table
- 12 new stop signs spread along Lower Great Highway, La Playa Street, Irving Street, 48th Avenue, 47th Avenue, and 46th Avenue
- Six new changeable message signs to help divert traffic away from residential streets to corridors like Sunset Boulevard

“The emergency repurposing of the Great Highway has created an unrivaled and scenic public space for thousands of people of every age, race, and gender to have additional opportunities for



physically distanced recreation and essential trips during our COVID-19 response,” said Jeffrey Tumlin, SFMTA Director of Transportation. “We’re eager to support Supervisor Mar and District 4 by installing additional traffic management tools to increase safety for all in the area, while also exploring the Great Highway’s long-term potential.”

Today, nearly 4,000 people each weekday and more than 12,000 each weekend enjoy car-free activity along the Great Highway, the roar of traffic replaced by crashing waves and chirping birds. The new traffic calming mitigation strategy will continue to offer respite for San Franciscans on the westside, while ensuring a dedication to safer streets for residents in the greater Outer Sunset.

“The pandemic has offered us a chance to experiment with strategies to create a more livable and family friendly city,” said General Manager of the Recreation and Park Department, Phil Ginsburg. “Closing two miles of the Great Highway to vehicle traffic has opened up a new world of oceanfront recreation for thousands of walkers, runners, cyclists and skaters. We want the car-free promenade to benefit neighbors, not cause traffic problems elsewhere. I am grateful to Supervisor Mar and SFMTA for coming up with solutions that ensure safety for all.”

The plan will be funded through allocations from SFMTA, SFCTA, and the Recreation and Park Department. Implementation will move quickly, with the changeable message signs and stop signs to be installed by mid-March, and the speed cushions and speed table construction beginning in March and continuing through April. Meanwhile, the SFPD Traffic Enforcement Division will conduct increased enforcement every weekend day for the next six weeks, and SFMTA Parking Control Officers will be deployed to help divert traffic.

“It is great to see the City bringing a suite of solutions to calm traffic and protect pedestrians on Lower Great Highway, La Playa, 46th Avenue, 48th Avenue, and more,” said Jodie Medeiros, Executive Director of Walk San Francisco. “San Franciscans can have both: safe neighborhood streets and people-first spaces like so many of us are enjoying on the Upper Great Highway.”

Funding for the mitigation strategy will be voted on at the San Francisco County Transportation Authority Board Meeting on Tuesday, February 9th, and the traffic calming devices will be presented on at upcoming SFMTA Public Hearings. Long-term analysis of the Great Highway will continue through the SFCTA-led District 4 Mobility Study.