

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO.: 11

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Re-authorizing the Slow Streets designation on four Slow Streets corridors: Golden Gate Avenue, Lake Street, Sanchez Street, and Shotwell Street, to extend beyond the COVID-19 Emergency.

SUMMARY:

- In response to the COVID-19 Emergency, the SFMTA implemented the Slow Streets program to create additional space in the roadway for socially distanced essential travel and exercise.
- The SFMTA Board of Directors approved four phases of Slow Streets corridors. Under this authorization, the temporary Slow Streets remain in effect until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Emergency unless the SFMTA Board takes further action.
- The SFMTA developed evaluation criteria to assess these temporary Slow Streets corridors to determine which are meeting citywide goals and should be extended in the neighborhoods they serve.
- Over 30 temporary Slow Streets were approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors over the past 15 months. The SFMTA Board is requested to designate four of these Slow Streets corridors as post-pandemic Slow Streets: Golden Gate Avenue, Lake Street, Sanchez Street, and Shotwell Street.
- For each of these four corridors, a 3-4 month community outreach process would occur to inform the design of post-pandemic Slow Streets elements to be installed.
- The Planning Department has determined that re-authorization of four designated Slow Street corridors and potential additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements that may be installed on these Slow Streets is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S. F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution
2. Map of Proposed Post-Pandemic Slow Streets Corridors

APPROVALS:

DIRECTOR  _____

DATE

July 28, 2021

SECRETARY  _____

July 27, 2021

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: August 3, 2021

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PURPOSE

Re-authorizing the Slow Streets designation on four Slow Streets corridors: Golden Gate Avenue, Lake Street, Sanchez Street, and Shotwell Street, to extend beyond the COVID-19 Emergency.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND TRANSIT FIRST POLICY PRINCIPLES

The proposed project will 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.

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 3.1: 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.

The proposed project will support the following Transit First policies:

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.
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.

DESCRIPTION

The Slow Streets Program was a response to the COVID-19 Emergency that allowed roadways to be used to create more space for socially distanced walking and biking as well as open space for people to conduct essential travel or be outdoors during the COVID-19 pandemic in a physically distant

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manner. Motor vehicle traffic was allowed on these streets but signage, cones, and other impermanent treatments were placed at intersections along designated Slow Streets to limit traffic, divert through vehicle traffic, and slow down overall vehicle speeds. Access to driveways and deliveries were maintained for residents and businesses, as well as for emergency vehicles.

The SFMTA Board of Directors approved four phases of Slow Streets corridors. Under this authorization, the temporary Slow Streets remain in effect until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Emergency unless the SFMTA Board takes further action. Over 30 temporary Slow Streets were approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors over the past 15 months.

These corridors were selected based on the following criteria:

- Streets located in primarily residential areas,
- Streets with two lanes of traffic (one lane in each direction),
- Streets with mostly stop-controlled intersections (limited signalized intersections acceptable),
- Streets with no conflicts with commercial loading zones, Muni routes (existing or planned), or emergency response routes, and
- Streets that are mostly flat with no visibility issues.

These temporary Slow Streets were implemented using temporary materials such as cones, barricades, and plastic delineators to slow and discourage vehicular through traffic in order to enable people to safely walk, run, or bike and maintain six feet social distancing in the streets. The installation of a temporary Slow Street did not require any changes to the existing number of travel lanes, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, loading zones, or parking. These traffic restrictions were limited in duration and are set to expire 120 days following the expiration or termination of the COVID-19 Emergency unless the SFMTA Board takes further action.

Slow Streets Corridor Evaluation:

Staff have collected data on Slow Streets on a rolling basis throughout the period of the COVID-19 Emergency. For each corridor, the collected data includes:

- Traffic count data, measuring vehicle volumes, bicycle volumes, pedestrian volumes on each corridor.
- Traffic diversion data, measuring changes to vehicle traffic volumes on corridors parallel to the Slow Street.
- User and resident perception surveys, sent via mail to known addresses within ¼ mile of every Slow Street corridor. These surveys were accessible to all, and staff worked with neighborhood organizations to promote distribution.

The collected data has informed staff understanding of how Slow Streets corridors are meeting expectations, and has provided a basis for making changes to implemented materials in the field. Using this data analysis, along with community and stakeholder input, SFMTA staff created a set of five criteria desired in a Slow Street for post-pandemic implementation. These criteria included:

1. The corridor is a low-volume residential street appropriate for traffic diversions,
2. As measured in SFMTA-issued surveys, there is strong community support among

neighborhood residents for elements of the Slow Street to continue,

3. There is a known community partner organization in the area supportive of the Slow Street,
4. The implementation of a Slow Street on this corridor is consistent with previous planning efforts for this corridor (i.e., the corridor is identified in the Bicycle Program, the Green Connections Program, the Neighborways Program, or another community plan)
5. Data has been collected for the corridor showing that the implementation of the Slow Street has not caused significant transportation impacts on adjacent streets or elsewhere in the transportation network.

Of the Slow Streets corridors that met all criteria, the four with the most widespread support were selected as the first to begin a community outreach process to determine a post-pandemic design:

Corridor	Low-Volume Residential Street Classification	Support for Permanence (Residents on Street, Total)	Community Organization Support	Consistency with Plans	Minimal Traffic Impacts
Golden Gate Ave	✓	83%, 72%	✓	✓	✓
Lake Street	✓	67%, 84%	✓	✓	✓
Sanchez St	✓	64%, 82%	✓	✓	✓
Shotwell St	✓	94%, 95%	✓	✓	✓

Two of these corridors (Sanchez Street in Noe Valley and Shotwell Street in the Mission) began an outreach process in March 2021 to engage residents and stakeholders about the design of the Slow Street. For each corridor, several public meetings were held to determine community needs, gauge support for certain additional transportation elements, and review draft and final designs for additional Slow Streets tools. Both corridors now have thoroughly-vetted designs using elements that could extend beyond the pandemic.

Golden Gate Avenue and Lake Street communities will be engaged beginning in September 2021 for similar 3-4 month outreach processes. These community engagement processes would inform the design of the corridors using the materials identified below. Following this review process, corridor designs would proceed through an interagency design review, culminating in an Engineering Public Hearing. Following the Engineering Public Hearing, the City Traffic Engineer would approve the installation of selected materials.

Following installation of Post-Pandemic Slow Street materials on a corridor, data will be collected and presented to the MTA Board of Directors within 18 months.

Materials:

For the temporary COVID-19 Emergency installations, the Slow Streets Program installed temporary traffic barricades, delineators, and signs to implement traffic restrictions. As determined through community planning processes, additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements may be installed on these Post-Pandemic Slow Streets. These materials could include program-specific delineators or signs in the roadway, turn restrictions or median delineators, wayfinding and signage

improvements, program-specific pavement markings, pedestrian visibility improvements, and traffic calming devices. Implementing these various improvements and modifications are necessary for the safety and protection of persons who are to use these Slow Streets.

Implementation of Circulation Element of the City’s General Plan:

California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f) provides that “(l)ocal authorities... may adopt rules and regulations by ordinance or resolution on the following matters: ... (f) Prohibiting entry to, or exit from, or both, from any street by means of islands, curbs, traffic barriers, or other roadway design features to implement the circulation element of a general plan adopted pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 65350) of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code. The rules and regulations authorized by this subdivision shall be consistent with the responsibility of local government to provide for the health and safety of its citizens.”

In an April 12, 2021 memo, the Planning Department Director determined that the Slow Streets program implements the following policies of the General Plan’s Transportation Element:

Policy 15.1: Discourage excessive automobile traffic on residential streets by incorporating traffic-calming treatments.

Policy 15.2: Consider partial closure of certain residential streets to automobile traffic where the nature and level of automobile traffic impairs livability and safety, provided that there is an abundance of alternative routes such that the closure will not create undue congestion on parallel streets.

Policy 18.4: Discourage high-speed through traffic on local streets in residential areas through traffic-calming measures that are designed not to disrupt transit service or bicycle movement.

Policy 24.5: Where consistent with transportation needs, transform streets and alleys into neighborhood-serving open spaces or “living streets.”

Policy 26.2: Partially or wholly close certain streets not required as traffic carriers for pedestrian use.

Further, the Planning Department Director concluded that the benefits of the Slow Streets program complemented the City’s bicycle and pedestrian network and created public space for community activity or gatherings. All these benefits are important to public health, safety, and civic life, whether the City is experiencing a pandemic or not, and are aligned with the General Plan’s vision for San Francisco. Based on these findings, the Planning Department determined that the Slow Streets program implements the above stated policies of the General Plan’s Transportation Element and provides for the health and safety of citizens consistent with California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f).

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ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The alternative to re-authorizing these four Slow Streets corridors is to allow them to expire 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Emergency. Staff does not recommend this alternative because Slow Streets have become an important element of the infrastructure during the COVID-19 pandemic, and because the majority of San Franciscans living near these corridors have stated that they want Slow Streets to continue post-pandemic. Slow Streets complement the citywide bicycle and pedestrian network and have created public space for community activity. All these benefits are important to public health, safety, and civic life, whether the City is experiencing a pandemic or not, and are aligned with the General Plan's vision for San Francisco.

FUNDING IMPACT

There is no cost associated with the extension of the Slow Streets authorization on the four recommended corridors.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The re-authorization of four designated Slow Street corridors and potential additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements that may be installed on these Slow Streets are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA provides a statutory exemption from environmental review for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including new facilities, and projects that improve customer information and wayfinding for transit riders, bicyclists, or pedestrians pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.25. The Planning Department determined, on July 21, 2021 that the re-authorization of four designated Slow Street corridors and potential additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements that may be installed on these Slow Streets (Case Number 2021-007227ENV) are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.25.

The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the 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 <https://sfplanning.org/> and 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400 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.

RECOMMENDATION

SFMTA staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors re-authorize the Slow Streets designation on four Slow Streets corridors: Golden Gate Avenue, Lake Street, Sanchez Street, and Shotwell Street, to extend beyond the COVID-19 Emergency.

SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, In response to the COVID-19 Emergency, the SFMTA implemented the Slow Streets program to create additional space in the roadway for socially distanced essential travel and exercise; and,

WHEREAS, The SFMTA Board of Directors approved four phases of Slow Streets corridors. Under this authorization, the temporary Slow Streets remain in effect until 120 days after the termination or expiration of the COVID-19 Emergency unless the SFMTA Board takes further action; and,

WHEREAS, The SFMTA developed evaluation criteria to assess these temporary Slow Streets corridors to determine which are meeting citywide goals and should be extended post-pandemic in the neighborhoods they serve; and,

WHEREAS, Over 30 temporary Slow Streets were approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors over the past 15 months and the SFMTA Board is requested to designate four of these Slow Streets corridors as post-pandemic Slow Streets: Golden Gate Avenue, Lake Street, Sanchez Street, and Shotwell Street; and,

WHEREAS, The re-authorization for these corridors will allow for planning and outreach to occur on each corridor to inform a design for post-pandemic Slow Street on each corridor. The decision whether to make permanent any Slow Streets will be subject to applicable public hearings, approvals, and review under CEQA; and,

WHEREAS, As determined through community planning processes, additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements may be installed on extended Slow Streets. These materials could include program-specific delineators or signs in the roadway, turn restrictions or median delineators, wayfinding and signage improvements, program-specific pavement markings, pedestrian visibility improvements, and traffic calming devices. Implementing these various improvements and modifications are necessary for the safety and protection of persons who are to use these Slow Streets; and,

WHEREAS, In an April 12, 2021 memo, the Planning Department Director determined that the Slow Streets program implements Policy 15.1, 15.2, 18.4, 24.5, and 26.2 of the General Plan's Transportation Element; and,

WHEREAS, The Planning Department Director further concluded that the benefits of the Slow Streets program complemented the City's bicycle and pedestrian network and created public space for community activity or gatherings which are important to public health, safety, and civic life, whether the City is experiencing a pandemic or not, and are aligned with the General Plan's vision for San Francisco; and,

WHEREAS, Based on these findings, the Planning Department determined that the Slow Streets program implements the above stated policies of the General Plan's Transportation Element and provides for the health and safety of citizens consistent with California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f); and,

WHEREAS, Slow Streets installed under this extension may be removed at the discretion of the SFMTA Director based on consultation with the San Francisco Fire Chief regarding Slow Streets impacts to emergency vehicle response times as determined through joint data analysis conducted with the San Francisco Fire Department; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed re-authorization of four designated Slow Street corridors and potential additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements that may be installed on these Slow Streets are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); CEQA provides a statutory exemption from environmental review for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and projects that improve customer information and wayfinding for transit riders, bicyclists, or pedestrians pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.25; and,

WHEREAS, The Planning Department determined, on July 21, 2021 that the re-authorization of four designated Slow Street corridors and potential additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements that may be installed on these Slow Streets (Case Number 2021-007227ENV) are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.25; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed action is the Approval Action as defined by the S. F. Administrative Code Chapter 31; and,

WHEREAS, A copy of the CEQA determination is on file with the with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors, and may be found in the records of the Planning Department at <https://sfplanning.org/> and 49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400 in San Francisco, and is incorporated herein by reference; be it,

RESOLVED, That the SFMTA Board of Directors designates four corridors as Slow Streets to extend beyond the COVID-19 Emergency:

1. Golden Gate Avenue from Masonic Avenue to Broderick Street
2. Lake Street from 28th to 2nd avenues
3. Sanchez Street from 23rd to 30th streets
4. Shotwell Street from Cesar Chavez to 14th Street

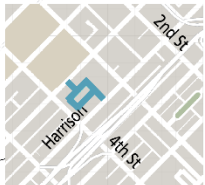
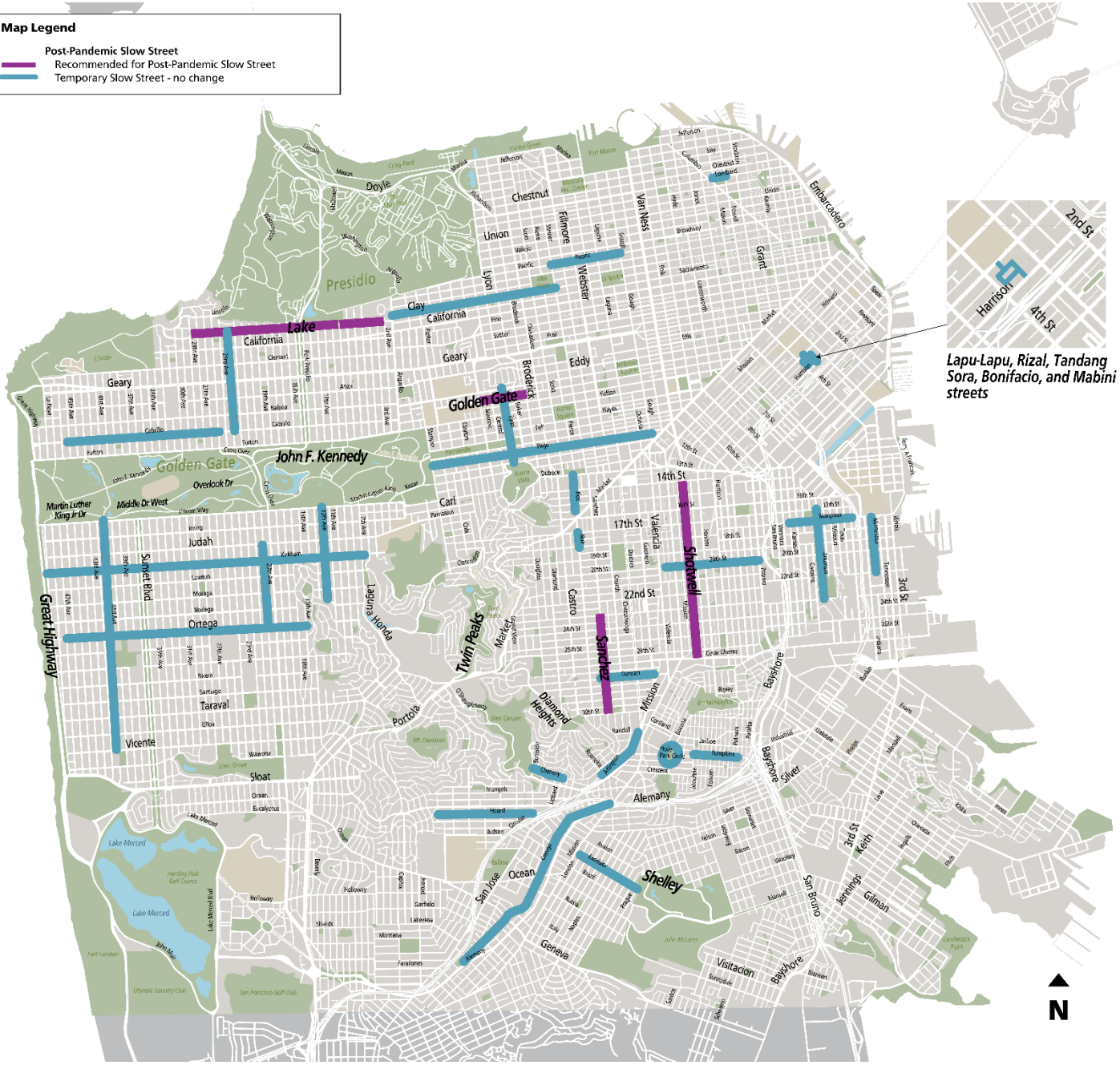
I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of August 3, 2021.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

Enclosure 2

Map Legend

- Post-Pandemic Slow Street
- Recommended for Post-Pandemic Slow Street
- Temporary Slow Street - no change



Lapu-Lapu, Rizal, Tandag Sora, Bonifacio, and Mabini streets

