



London Breed, Mayor

Amanda Eaken, Chair
Stephanie Cajina, Vice Chair
Steve Heminger, Director

Fiona Hinze, Director
Manny Yekutieli, Director

Jeffrey Tumlin, Director of Transportation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Market Street Railway Contact: Rick Laubscher
415-305-5242, rick@streetcar.org

SFMTA Contact: Stephen Chun
MediaRelations@sfmta.com

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****PRESS RELEASE****

SAN FRANCISCO CELEBRATES 150 YEARS OF CABLE CARS

Six months of special events are planned, including promotional fares

- To mark the 150th anniversary of the cable car's invention, a dozen San Francisco organizations are joining forces to promote increased cable car ridership.
- Events kick off on June 13 at 11 a.m., as Mayor London Breed rides the oldest cable car that once ran part of Andrew Hallidie's original line; re-enactors will bring Hallidie's first cable car run to life on the 150th anniversary date, August 2, 2023.
- A six-month slate of special events includes: (1) the first-ever public tours of the Muni shop where cable cars are built and rebuilt; (2) history-themed walk/ride tours of neighborhoods served by the cable car lines; (3) the planned operation of "ghost" cable cars from disappeared lines; and much more.
- Residents and visitors can take advantage of an existing all-day, all-Muni pass for \$13 to hop on and off cable cars, F-line historic streetcars, Muni trains and buses to take walking tours of neighborhoods near the cable car lines.
- **From July 1 to the end of 2023, a special \$5 all-day pass will let riders hop on and hop off the California cable car line as well, to encourage exploration of neighborhoods along the route.**
- For more information, visit sfcablecars.org.

SAN FRANCISCO – The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and its nonprofit preservation partner, Market Street Railway, have joined together with a dozen organizations, including business and merchant groups and history and preservation nonprofits, to stage a slate of special events in the Summer and Fall of 2023 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of cable cars, San Francisco's iconic symbol.

"For the last 150 years, residents and visitors have enjoyed the incredible experience of riding our cable cars through our neighborhoods to experience stunning bay views that are famous all over the world," said San Francisco Mayor London Breed. "You cannot imagine San Francisco



without our iconic cable cars. In celebration of the 150th anniversary, we invite everyone to ride our wonderful cable cars to experience the magic of San Francisco.”

The six-month-long celebration kicks off on June 13 at 11:00 a.m. at California / Drumm and Market Streets, when Mayor Breed, Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin and SFMTA Director of Transportation Jeffrey Tumlin will join civic, business and neighborhood leaders to ride the oldest surviving cable car, ‘Big 19’, originally built for service on Market Street in 1883 and one of the largest cable cars ever built. The inaugural ride will take them through the Financial District, Chinatown and over Nob Hill to Polk Gulch and Van Ness Avenue.

“San Francisco is famous for creating wonderful civic events, and what could be more wonderful than celebrating 150 years of cable cars,” said Jeffrey Tumlin, SFMTA Director of Transportation. “SFMTA owns and operates the cable cars as part of Muni, but really, they belong to everyone, and we invite people from around the world, around the Bay, and around the block, to enjoy our iconic cable cars.”

“No other city in the world has cable cars. San Francisco was the first city with cable cars, and since 1957, we’ve been the only city to run them,” said Rick Laubscher, President of Market Street Railway. “Our special 150th anniversary website, sfcablecars.org, is filled with cable car history and little-known stories. It also makes it easy to combine cable car rides with walking tours of Chinatown, the Barbary Coast, Fisherman’s Wharf, Nob Hill, Russian Hill, Union Square, Polk Gulch and the Financial District. It’s a great year to rediscover San Francisco and the cable cars.”

The cable car starring in the kickoff event is unique. In the 1880s, it was open-sided, and carried throngs of riders from the Ferry Building out Market and Haight streets to enjoy Golden Gate Park. After the 1906 earthquake and fire, ‘Big 19’ moved to the Sacramento-Clay route, successor to Andrew Hallidie’s original 1873 cable car line, and ran there from 1907 until 1942, when that line shut down. Restored by Muni crafts workers, ‘Big 19’, one of the largest cable cars ever built, will inaugurate the celebration with a trip up California Street through Chinatown and over Nob Hill, just two blocks south of inventor Hallidie’s Clay Street line.

Later in the summer, Muni hopes to have ‘Big 19’ in regular service every Saturday on the California Street line through the fall as part of the celebration. Likewise, if work can be completed, Muni plans monthly operation of cable car 42 on its original Hyde Street trackage. Cable car 42 ran the O’Farrell, Jones & Hyde line until 1954, when the southern half of the line was abandoned and the tracks on Hyde were connected to part of a Powell Street line. Car 42 retains its original 1907 paint scheme and details. Decades after being sold as surplus to a cattle rancher in Santa Barbara County when the O’Farrell line closed, Market Street Railway brought it back to San Francisco and worked with Muni to restore it for service.



Other special events to celebrate 150 years of cable cars include the first-ever public tours of Muni's carpentry shop in the Dogpatch, where cable cars are built and rebuilt; a free phone app combining a ride on the California Street line with walking tours of historic spots along the line; and much more. All are detailed on sfcablecars.org.

The SFMTA already offers a great fare bargain with its \$13 all-day, all-Muni pass, available on the Muni Mobile smartphone app, giving unlimited access to all Muni services, including all three cable car lines, the F-line historic streetcars on Market Street and the waterfront, plus all Muni Metro trains and all Muni buses. Additionally, to celebrate Muni's oldest surviving cable car line on California Street, Muni Mobile will offer a special \$5 all-day pass for just the California line starting on July 1 and lasting until year-end. The California line, with larger cable cars than the Powell line, has available capacity, making it easy for riders to hop on and hop off anywhere along the line for the entire day without paying an additional fare. It is hoped this special fare will bring more visitors to the businesses along the line.

On the actual 150th anniversary date, August 2, history reenactors portraying Andrew Hallidie, Emperor Norton, Domingo Ghirardelli, Lotta Crabtree and other notable San Franciscans from 150 years ago will gather at Hallidie Plaza at Powell and Market Streets at 10 a.m. to honor Hallidie's historic first run. A by-invitation luncheon will follow, honoring cable car heroes including Hallidie; Friedel Klussmann, who saved the cable cars in 1947; Senator Dianne Feinstein, who as Mayor personally led the rebuilding of the cable car system 40 years ago; Fannie Mae Barnes, the first woman to work as a "gripman" operating a cable car 25 years ago; and others.

The San Francisco Public Library has compiled a list of cable car books available at its various branches for interested readers. The Main Library's San Francisco History Center will mount an exhibit of historic cable car photos later this summer, in collaboration with the [SFMTA Photo Archive](#). Market Street Railway's free San Francisco Railway Museum on Steuart Street across from the Ferry Building will debut a special exhibit on 150 Years of cable cars in mid-July.

Participating partners in the celebration include [Chinatown Merchants Association](#), [Chinese Historical Society of America](#), [Downtown SF Partnership](#), [Fisherman's Wharf Merchants](#), [Friends of the Cable Car Museum](#), [Pier39](#), [San Francisco Chamber of Commerce](#), [San Francisco Chinese Chamber of Commerce](#), [San Francisco City Guides](#), [San Francisco Historical Society](#), [San Francisco Public Library](#), [SF Travel](#), [SF Heritage](#) and [Union Square Alliance](#).

ABOUT MARKET STREET RAILWAY

Market Street Railway is a nonprofit whose mission is preserving historic transit in San Francisco. Founded in 1976, Market Street Railway has worked closely with eight mayors, dozens of elected supervisors, and scores of city leaders to restore and revitalize San Francisco's historic streetcars and cable cars. As an independent non-profit, Market Street Railway relies entirely on



donations to repair and acquire historic vehicles, as well as advocating for extensions and enhancements to San Francisco's vintage rail operations. To learn more about Market Street Railway, visit streetcar.org. To learn more about the 150th Anniversary, visit sfcablecars.org, a comprehensive hub featuring: cable car history and stories; tips on riding, sightseeing, dining, and shopping along the cable car lines; and event details.

ABOUT THE SFMTA

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is a department of the City and County of San Francisco responsible for the management of all ground transportation in the city. The SFMTA has oversight over the Municipal Railway (Muni) public transit, as well as bicycling, paratransit, parking, traffic, walking, and taxis. Established by voter mandate in 1999, the SFMTA aggregated multiple San Francisco city agencies, including the Department of Parking and Traffic, Muni, and since 2007, the Taxi Commission.

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