

**SAN FRANCISCO  
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

**DIVISION:** Sustainable Streets

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION:**

Modify a temporary left turn restriction from O'Farrell Street onto Powell Street as part of the Powell Street Safety Pilot project, a Vision Zero supporting project, and amend Transportation Code, Division II, Section 601 to rescind the designated transit/taxi/commercial vehicle only area on Powell Street from O'Farrell Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction.

**SUMMARY:**

- On November 3, 2015, the SFMTA Board of Directors adopted Resolution 15-153 establishing a transit/taxi/commercial vehicle area on Powell Street from Ellis Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction for an eighteen month pilot period from December 4, 2015 until June 4, 2017.
- Several businesses requested private passenger vehicle access to pick up and drop off passengers on the northbound (east) side of Powell Street between O'Farrell and Geary Streets during the pilot period.
- Staff supports this request provided it can be shown that there are a reduced number of vehicles on northbound Powell Street after the implementation of the proposed modifications compared to the number of vehicles on northbound Powell Street before the pilot implementation.
- The effectiveness of the proposed modifications in reducing vehicle volumes, collisions, and cable car wear-and-tear will be studied as part of the ongoing 18-month Powell Street Safety Pilot.

**ENCLOSURES:**

1. SFMTAB Resolution
2. Existing Vehicle Restrictions
3. Proposed Vehicle Restrictions
4. Existing Transit / Commercial Vehicle Areas
5. Proposed Transit / Commercial Vehicle Areas
6. Transportation Code Division II amendment

**APPROVALS:**

**DATE**

DIRECTOR \_\_\_\_\_

1/11/16

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_

1/11/16

**ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE:** January 19, 2016

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### **PURPOSE**

Modify a temporary left turn restriction from O'Farrell Street onto Powell Street as part of the Powell Street Safety Pilot project, a Vision Zero supporting project, and amend Transportation Code, Division II, Section 601 to rescind the designated transit/taxi/commercial vehicle only area on Powell Street from O'Farrell Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction.

### **GOAL**

This action supports the Vision Zero Policy goal to eliminate traffic fatalities as well as the following SFMTA Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives:

- Goal 1: Create a safer transportation experience for everyone
  - Objective 1.3: Improve the safety of the transportation system.
- Goal 2: Make transit, walking, bicycling, taxi, ridesharing and carsharing the preferred means of travel
  - Objective 2.2: Improve transit performance.
  - Objective 2.3: Increase use of all non-private auto modes.
- Goal 3: Improve the environment and quality of life in San Francisco
  - Objective 3.4: Deliver services efficiently.

### **DESCRIPTION**

#### **Background – Powell Street Safety Pilot Project**

On November 3, 2015, the SFMTA Board adopted Resolution 15-153 establishing the Powell Street Safety Pilot and approving various traffic and parking modifications that make up the pilot, including establishing transit/taxi/commercial vehicle areas on Powell Street between Ellis and Geary streets in the northbound (outbound) direction and restricting left turns from eastbound O'Farrell Street to northbound Powell Street for all vehicles except Muni vehicles, taxis, and commercial vehicles. Following approval of the pilot, the SFMTA implemented the traffic and parking changes, and an enforcement plan was carried out by SFPD and SFMTA in time for the 2015 holiday season.

The Powell Street Safety Pilot aims to reduce collisions along this portion of Powell Street, which has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest pedestrian volumes of any location in San Francisco, and the rate at which wear causes damage to the cable propelling the cable cars. The primary means that the pilot uses to achieve these goals is a reduction in vehicle volumes, both traveling on Powell Street and turning at the intersections in the project area. A reduction in the number of vehicles is expected due to the turn restrictions and designation of transit/taxi/commercial vehicle areas that prohibit private vehicles from driving on Powell Street.

While a quantitative evaluation of the effectiveness of the Powell Street Safety Pilot is not yet possible, staff observations indicate a significant reduction in vehicle volumes, including in the area where private vehicles are permitted onto the street for passenger loading purposes only. The conditions observed so far lead staff to recommend modifying the pilot to replicate the ability of private vehicles to drop off and pick up passengers on the southbound (west) side of Powell Street between O'Farrell and Geary streets for the northbound (east) side of Powell Street between O'Farrell and Geary streets. Near the end of the pilot, staff will evaluate the traffic impact of private vehicles dropping off and picking up passengers on both sides of Powell Street between O'Farrell and

Geary streets.

**Proposed Modifications to the Powell Street Safety Pilot Project**

SFMTA staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors modify the temporary left turn restriction from O’Farrell Street onto Powell Street as part of the Powell Street Safety Pilot project, a Vision Zero supporting project, and amend Transportation Code Division II, Section 601 to rescind the designated transit/taxi/commercial vehicle only area on Powell Street from O’Farrell Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction.

The proposed changes to the pilot are:

- 1. Modify the Left Turn Restriction for vehicles from O’Farrell Street (eastbound) onto Powell Street (northbound).** *(Transit, paratransit, taxis, commercial vehicles, emergency vehicles, and vehicles picking up or dropping off passengers at the passenger loading zone in front of 230 Powell Street will be exempt.)*

Currently, only Muni vehicles, taxis, and commercial vehicles are permitted to make this turn. This modification would also allow private passenger vehicles to turn left from O’Farrell Street onto Powell Street with the intention of permitting these vehicles access to the passenger loading zone in front of 230 Powell. Other vehicles not loading passengers on Powell or otherwise exempt would be prohibited from making this turn.



Image 1: Example of modified Vehicle Exemption Sign

- 2. Rescind the Designated Transit / Taxi / Commercial Vehicles Only Lane on northbound Powell Street between O’Farrell Street and Geary Street.**

Currently, the northbound side of Powell Street between Ellis Street and Geary Street has been designated a Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicles Only Lane and is painted red. SFMTA staff propose that the Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicles Only Lane between O’Farrell Street and Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction be rescinded to permit access by private passenger vehicles. The red paint will be removed from this portion of the street. An amendment to Transportation Code, Division II, Section 601 is required to remove the Transit / Taxi / Commercial Vehicles only lane designation.



Image 2: Red Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicles Only Lane on northbound Powell

The proposed modifications conform with the guidelines and standards provided in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and enhance safety for all street users.

The SFMTA proposes the following parking and traffic modifications from January 20, 2016 until June 4, 2017:

- A. RESCIND – MUNI, PARATRANSIT, TAXIS AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ONLY  
Powell Street, northbound, from O’Farrell Street to Geary Street
- B. ESTABLISH – NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT MUNI, PARATRANSIT, TAXIS,  
COMMERCIAL VEHICLES, AND VEHICLES PICKING UP OR DROPPING OFF  
PASSENGERS AT THE LOADING ZONE IN FRONT OF 230 POWELL STREET ONLY  
O’Farrell Street, eastbound, at Powell Street

### **Pilot Project Evaluation**

Throughout the life of the pilot project, there will be extensive data collection in order to better understand the implications of the vehicle restrictions on Powell Street with regards to the rate of cable replacements and pedestrian safety. The project team has identified six major data gathering areas that will help effectively manage the pilot project: Amount of time between Powell Street cable replacements; Traffic collisions within the project area; Loading study to analyze the amount and type of usage the new or changed loading zones get; Traffic/vehicle counts along Powell Street and in the surrounding Union Square area; Transit travel time and on-time-performance for Muni routes in the area; and Traffic violations and citations issued in relation to the pilot project.

During the eighteen month pilot project, SFMTA staff will evaluate the effect of the above traffic restrictions on transit delays, traffic volumes and speeds, pedestrian safety, and cable wear-and-tear. Staff expects the pilot to reduce cable wear and tear, reduce transit delays and improve pedestrian safety. In addition, SFMTA staff will evaluate the effectiveness of permitting access onto Powell Street between O’Farrell and Geary streets for passenger loading only, while restricting all other

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access for non-exempt vehicles. An analysis of these traffic volumes would determine if permitting limited access to the passenger loading zones is desirable.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Extensive public outreach on the Powell Safety Pilot has been conducted. The proposed changes have been requested by project stakeholders during the outreach process.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The project team explored alternatives that were more restrictive than the current proposal, such as closing Powell to all vehicles other than transit and emergency vehicles for the four blocks between Ellis and Sutter. These alternatives were determined to require more evaluation before implementing.

## **FUNDING IMPACT**

The total cost of these modifications is \$10,000. State Public Transit Modernization & Improvement (PTMISEA) funds have been secured.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposed parking and traffic modifications are subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). On September 29, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined that the parking and traffic modifications for the Powell Street Pilot Project are categorically exempt from environmental review under a Class 1 exemption (CEQA Guidelines Section 15301) for minor alteration of existing public facilities and Class 6 exemption (Section 15306) for basic data information collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations. These changes were adopted by the SFMTA Board of Directors on November 3, 2015 in Resolution 15-153.

The proposed changes to the parking and traffic modifications in Resolution 15-153 which modify a temporary left turn restriction from O'Farrell Street onto Powell Street and rescind the Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicle Area on northbound Powell Street between O'Farrell and Geary Streets do not substantially change the nature of the parking and traffic modifications that were determined by the San Francisco Planning Department to be categorically exempt from environmental review. These changes are consistent with the management of an experimental activity as defined in a Class 6 exemption.

The Planning Department's determination (September 29, 2015, Case No. 2015-010035ENV) is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors.

## **OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED**

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this calendar item.

**RECOMMENDATION**

SFMTA staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors modify a temporary left turn restriction from O'Farrell Street onto Powell Street as part of the Powell Street Safety Pilot project, a Vision Zero supporting project, and amend Transportation Code, Division II, Section 601 to rescind the designated transit/taxi/commercial vehicle only area on Powell Street from O'Farrell Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction.

SAN FRANCISCO  
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, The SFMTA Board of Directors adopted Resolution 15-153 establishing the Powell Street Safety Pilot Project to support the City's Vision Zero Policy on November 3, 2015; and,

WHEREAS, SFMTA staff have proposed traffic and parking modifications to the Powell Street Safety Pilot Project in response to community input as follows:

- A. RESCIND –MUNI, PARATRANSIT, TAXIS AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ONLY - Powell Street, northbound, from O'Farrell Street to Geary Street
- B. ESTABLISH – NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT MUNI, PARATRANSIT, TAXIS, COMMERCIAL VEHICLES, AND VEHICLES PICKING UP OR DROPPING OFF PASSENGERS AT THE LOADING ZONE IN FRONT OF 230 POWELL STREET ONLY- O'Farrell Street, eastbound, at Powell Street; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed parking and traffic modifications are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and,

WHEREAS, On September 29, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined that the proposed parking and traffic modifications are categorically exempt under a Class 1 exemption (CEQA Guidelines Section 15301) exemption for minor alteration of existing public facilities and a Class 6 exemption (Section 15306) for basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations; and,

WHEREAS, A copy of the San Francisco Planning Department's determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors; and,

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

RESOLVED, That the SFMTA Board of Directors amends Transportation Code, Division II, Section 601 to rescind the designated transit/taxi/commercial vehicle only area on Powell Street from O'Farrell Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves these traffic and parking modifications as set forth in items A-B above associated with the Powell Street Safety Pilot Project from January 20, 2016 until June 4, 2017.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of January 19, 2016.

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Secretary to the Board of Directors  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

## RESOLUTION

[Transportation Code – Powell Street Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicle Only Lanes]

**Resolution amending the Transportation Code to rescind the designated transit/taxi/commercial only area on Powell Street from O’Farrell Street to Geary Street in the northbound (outbound) direction.**

NOTE: Additions are single-underline Times New Roman;  
deletions are ~~strike-through Times New Roman~~.

The Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors of the City and County of San Francisco enacts the following regulations:

Section 1. Article 600 of Division II of the Transportation Code is hereby amended by revising Section 601, to read as follows:

**Sec. 601. DESIGNATED TRANSIT-ONLY AREAS.**

(a) The locations listed in this Section 601 are designated as Transit-only Areas. Any vehicle operating within a Transit-only Area during times that the Transit-only Area is enforced is in violation of Transportation Code, Division I, Section 7.2.72 (Driving in Transit-only Area).

(1) **Cable Car Lanes On Powell Street Between California Street and Sutter Street.** Except as to cable cars, Municipal Railway vehicles, and authorized emergency vehicles, no vehicle may operate within, over, upon or across the cable car lanes, or make any left or U-turn on the exclusive cable car lanes on Powell Street between California and Sutter Streets except to pass a disabled vehicle.

(2) **West Portal Avenue Between 15th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard.** Except as to streetcars and Municipal Railway vehicles, no vehicle may operate within Transit-only Areas on West Portal Avenue between 15th Avenue and Sloat Boulevard.

(3) **Exclusive Commercial Vehicle/Transit Area on Sansome Street.** Except as to buses, taxis, authorized emergency vehicles, and commercial vehicles, no



vehicle may operate within the Transit-only Area running southbound on Sansome Street between Washington Street and Bush Street.

(4) **Exclusive Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicle Area on Powell Street from Ellis Street to Geary O'Farrell Street in the northbound (outbound) direction, and from O'Farrell Street to Ellis Street in the southbound (inbound) direction.** Except as to buses, taxis, authorized emergency vehicles, and commercial vehicles, no vehicle may operate within the Transit/Taxi/Commercial Vehicle-only Area on Powell Street from Ellis Street to Geary O'Farrell Street in the northbound (outbound) direction, and from O'Farrell Street to Ellis Street in the southbound (inbound) direction.

(5) **Judah Street, from 9th Avenue to 20th Avenue.** Except as to streetcars and Municipal Railway vehicles, no vehicle may operate within Transit-only Areas on Judah Street from 9th Avenue to 20th Avenue.

(6) **Van Ness Avenue, from Filbert Street to Market Street.** Except as to Municipal Railway and Golden Gate Transit vehicles and authorized emergency vehicles, no vehicle may operate within the Transit-only Areas on Van Ness Avenue from Filbert Street to Market Street.

(7) **Van Ness Avenue, from Filbert Street to Lombard Street.** Except as to Municipal Railway and Golden Gate Transit vehicles and authorized emergency vehicles, no vehicle may operate within the Transit-only Areas on Van Ness Avenue from Filbert Street to Lombard Street southbound.

(8) **South Van Ness Avenue, from Market Street to Mission Street.** Except as to Municipal Railway and Golden Gate Transit vehicles and authorized emergency vehicles, no vehicle may operate within the Transit-only Areas on South Van Ness Avenue from Market Street to Mission Street.

(9) **Other Transit-Only Areas.** Except for buses, taxicabs, vehicles preparing to make a turn, vehicles entering into or existing from a stopped position at the curb, and vehicles entering into or exiting from a driveway, no vehicle may operate in the following Transit-only Areas during the times indicated:

Hours of Operation	Street	From	To
All Times	1st St.	Market St.	Howard St.
	3rd St.	Townsend St.	Market St.
	4th St.	Harrison St.	Townsend St.
	4th St.	Market St.	Howard St.
	Church St.	16th St.	Duboce Ave.
	Clay St.	Sansome St.	Davis St.
	Fremont St.	Mission St.	Market St.
	Geary St.	Market St.	Powell St.
	Geary St.	Mason St.	Gough St.
	Geneva Ave. (Outbound)	Delano Ave.	280 Freeway Overpass
	Judah St.	20th Ave.	La Playa St.
	Market St. (Inbound)	12th St.	3rd St.
	Market St. (Outbound)	So. Van Ness Ave.	3rd St.
	Mission St. (Inbound)	Randall St.	Cesar Chavez St.
	Mission St. (Outbound)	11th Street	South Van Ness Ave.
	Mission St. (Outbound)	Duboce Ave.	Randall St.
	O'Farrell St.	Gough St.	Hyde St.
	O'Farrell St.	Jones St.	Powell St.
	Otis St. (Outbound)	South Van Ness Ave.	Duboce Ave.
	Post St.	Gough St.	Grant St.
Potrero Ave. (SB)	25th St.	18th St.	
Stockton St.	Bush St.	Geary St.	
Sutter St.	Gough St.	Kearny St.	
7:00 AM-7:00 PM, Monday-Friday	Sacramento St.	Drumm St.	Kearny St.
7:00 AM-7:00 PM, Monday-Saturday	Stockton St.	Geary St.	O'Farrell St.
7:00 AM-6:00 PM, Monday-Friday	Mission St. (Inbound)	5th St.	Beale St.
	Mission St. (Outbound)	Main St.	4th St.
7:00 AM-9:00 PM, Monday-Friday	Mission St. (Inbound)	11th St.	5th St.
	O'Farrell St.	Hyde St.	Jones St.
	Clay St.	Powell St.	Battery St.
4:00 PM-6:00 PM, Monday-Friday	Mission St. (Inbound)	11th St.	5th St.
	Mission St. (Outbound)	4th St.	11th St.
	Geary St.	Mason St.	Powell St.
	Sacramento St.	Kearny St.	Larkin St.
3:00 PM-6:00 PM, Monday-Friday	Sutter St.	Sansome St.	Kearny St.
3:00 PM-7:00 PM, Monday-Friday	Bush St.	Montgomery St.	Battery St.
	4th St.	Howard St.	Clementina

Section 2. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 31 days after enactment. Enactment occurs when the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves this ordinance.

Section 3. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, letters, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Transportation Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions or deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under the official title of the ordinance.

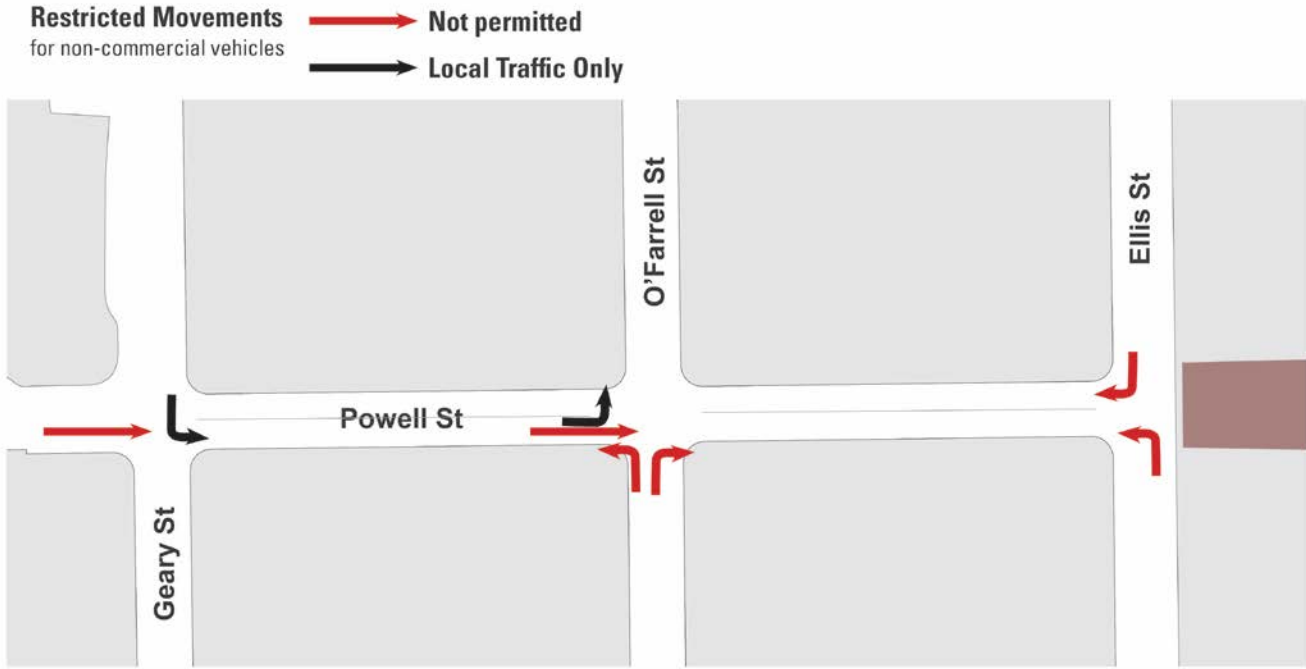
APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN I. KENNEDY  
Deputy City Attorney

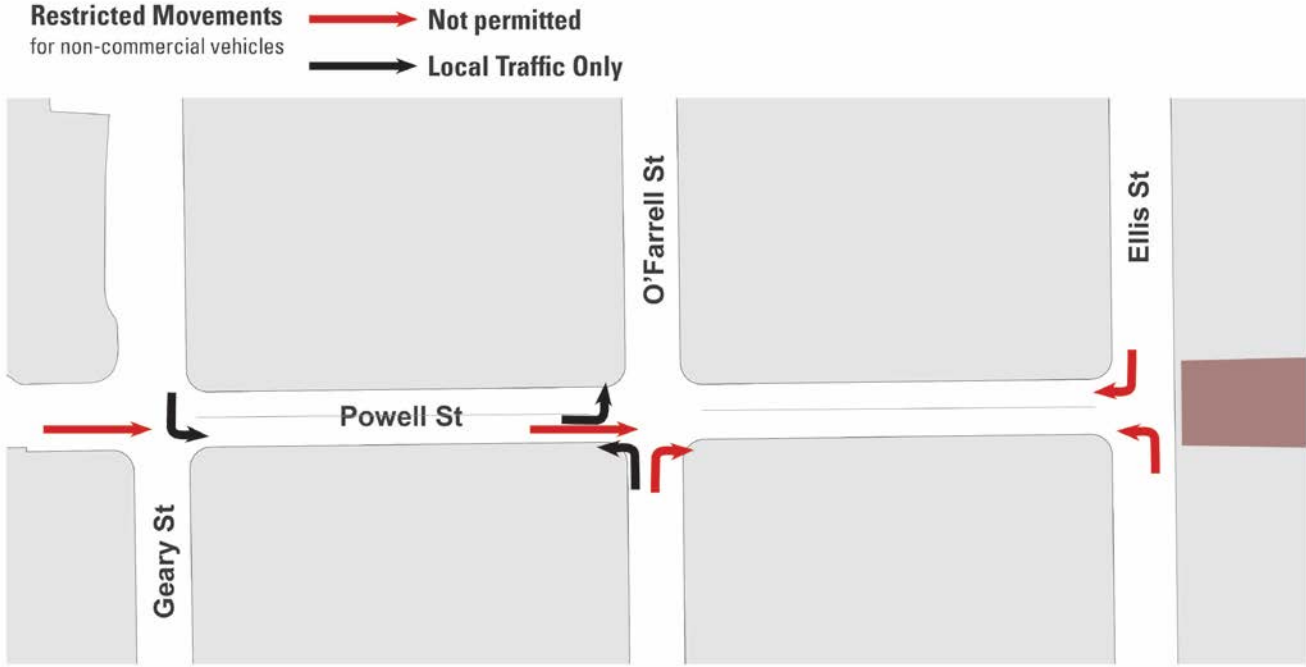
I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of January 19, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary to the Board of Directors  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

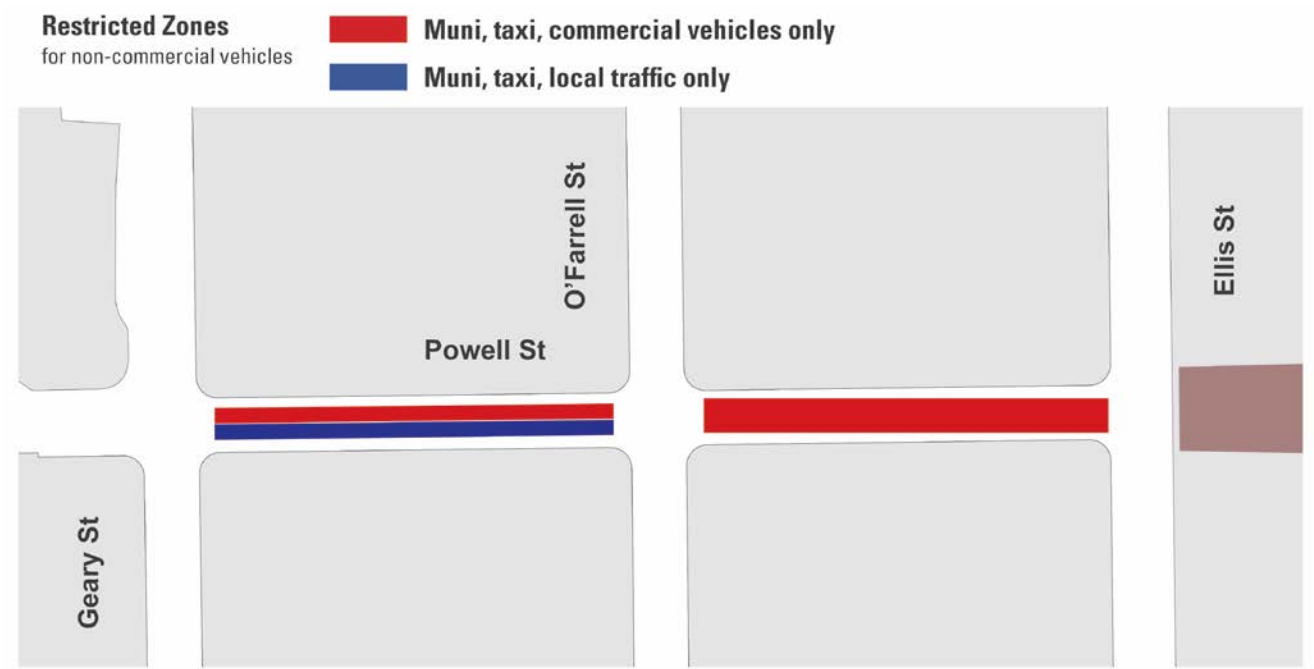
Enclosure 2: Existing Vehicle Restrictions



Enclosure 3: Proposed Vehicle Restrictions



Enclosure 4: Existing Transit / Commercial Vehicle Areas



Enclosure 5: Proposed Transit / Commercial Vehicle Areas

