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Edward D. Reiskin, *Director of Transportation*

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Contact: Erica Kato

415.271.7177, cell

erica.kato@sfmta.com

****PRESS RELEASE****

SFMTA Starts Construction for Near-term Improvements along Taraval Street

Part of the first phase of the L Taraval Rapid Project, roadway changes will improve safety and Muni reliability

San Francisco— The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which manages all surface transportation in the city, including the Municipal Railway (Muni), began construction of near-term roadway changes along Taraval Street, part of the Muni Forward program and in support of Vision Zero, the city's goal to eliminate traffic fatalities. The initial improvements are the first phase of improvements rolling out to make Taraval safer for everyone who depends on it, and improve the reliability of Muni's L line.

"Taraval Street is part of the City's High Injury Network," said SFMTA Chairman of the Board, Cheryl Brinkman. "This project will get critical safety improvements on the street now, furthering our commitment to Vision Zero, and ensuring that people are safe when getting on and off Muni, or walking along the corridor."

"As part of our Muni Forward program, the L Taraval Rapid Project aims to make Muni a better, safer, more reliable experience that gets people where they're going faster," said SFMTA Director of Transportation, Ed Reiskin. "We're working to organize the street to improve Muni's performance while increasing safety for all road users along Taraval."

The second phase of the L Taraval Rapid Project will include more permanent safety improvements, such as pedestrian bulbs that shorten the distance to cross intersections, transit boarding islands to separate train boarding from car traffic, and traffic signals to better organize the street for the safety of all those who depend on it. Near-term, lights will be added to the back of trains to increase visibility and make for a safer experience for drivers, pedestrians and transit rides along Taraval Street.

Other near-term improvements include:

1) Clear Zones for safer train stops. Clear zones are painted markings on the street that provide a separation between streetcars and the traffic lane. This gives people a safe space to step off Muni now until boarding islands can be installed. Clear zones will be installed at eight intersections:

- Westbound only (north side of Taraval Street): 26th, 30th, 32nd, 40th and 46th avenues.
- Eastbound and westbound: Taraval Street at 19th, 42nd and 44th avenues.

2) Painted safety zones at sidewalk corners. Until concrete sidewalk bulb-outs can be installed with Taraval's larger reconstruction, painted safety zones will temporarily extend the sidewalk corners at six intersections: Taraval at 20th, 21st, 22nd, 24th, 33rd and 38th avenues.

3) Six-month painted boarding zone pilot. A boarding zone pilot will test the effectiveness of using painted street markings and improved signage to inform drivers that they are required to stop behind trains when passengers are getting on and off. Currently, only approximately 72 percent of drivers stop as required by law. Once implemented, the painted boarding zones will be considered successful if at least 90 percent of drivers comply with stop requirements and if there are no injuries at these locations.

Painted boarding zones will be installed at the following five intersections in the eastbound direction: Taraval at 26th, 30th, 32nd, 35th and 40th avenues. Parking at these locations will be retained during the pilot period. Should the pilot criteria not be achieved, the SFMTA will install boarding islands at these locations starting in 2018.

4) Transit stop removal. Beginning Saturday, February 25, eight stops along the L Taraval line will be discontinued to create more consistent stop spacing and a quicker service along the line.

- Eastbound and westbound: Taraval at 28th Avenue, Ulloa at 15th Avenue
- Eastbound only: Taraval at 24th Avenue
- Westbound only: Taraval at 17th, 22nd and 35th avenues

Based on direction from the SFMTA Board of Directors, the eastbound stop at 17th Avenue will be retained during the pilot period and SFMTA will study ridership patterns during that time. The SFMTA will return to the Board of Directors at the end of the evaluation period for their final decision on retaining the stop.

5) Transit-only lane markings along the track lanes of Taraval. Drivers will be able to enter the lanes only to pass or make left turns. The SFMTA is committed to closely evaluating the transit-only lane to measure its impact on congestion and traffic flow for one year to identify any necessary adjustments or mitigations.

To make room for the clear zones, 81 parking spaces will be removed along Taraval.

- **North side of Taraval from 18th to 46th Avenues– 55 parking spaces removed**
- **South side of Taraval from 19th to 45th Avenues – 26 parking spaces removed**

The final design of the L Taraval Rapid Project came as the result of multiple meetings to listen to and gather input from stakeholders, including local businesses and residents. The project was approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors on September 20, 2016.

Construction details

Construction is anticipated to be complete by the end of February, weather permitted. During construction, the striping and grinding of paint may require closing one lane of traffic temporarily on individual blocks, but traffic will still be able to travel through Taraval throughout construction. Muni service will not be impacted.

Coming 2018

The early enhancements are the first phase of a multi-year rehabilitation of Taraval Street that will replace infrastructure like the worn rails, overhead wires and sewers, as well as repave the entire street. Permanent features like concrete boarding islands and pedestrian bulbs will begin construction in 2018 with the larger project.

More information about the L Taraval Rapid Project can be found at www.sfmta.com/LRapid.

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Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.

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