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Municipal  
Transportation  
Agency

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 10, 2015

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## **\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\***

### **San Francisco to Make Busiest Stretch of Market Street Safer**

*Starting Aug. 11, City Reducing the Number of Private Vehicles to Advance Vision Zero*

**San Francisco**— The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is poised to improve safety and transit reliability for all users of Market Street by reducing the number of private vehicles on the most crowded, downtown stretch of the street.

The SFMTA, which oversees all ground transportation in the city, is launching a range of safety improvements, including turn restrictions for private vehicles on Market Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> streets. The upcoming changes also include extending existing transit-only lanes and adding new loading and painted safety zones.

“Market Street is our City’s main thoroughfare, and we are committed to making it safer for all those who travel on it,” said Mayor Edwin M. Lee. “This project will make it safer for everyone to enjoy this tremendous boulevard and help us reach our Vision Zero goals.”

The turn restrictions will take effect starting on Tuesday, Aug. 11, with private vehicles generally not allowed to turn onto Market between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> streets. All motorists will still be free to cross Market Street. Muni, taxis, emergency vehicles, paratransit vehicles, and commercial vehicles will be exempt.

By limiting the number of vehicles making turns onto Market Street, the chance of someone getting seriously injured or killed by a turning vehicle or mid-block is dramatically reduced.

“Market Street is a high injury corridor and one of the city’s busiest,” said District 6 Supervisor Jane Kim. “I’m excited that we are moving towards realizing a vision of Market Street that is safe for all street users.”

“Smart, data-driven projects like these will help San Francisco reach its Vision Zero goal of zero traffic deaths,” said District 3 Supervisor Julie Christensen. “This is a very simple approach that will have an immediate impact, making Market Street safer for everyone.”

“This project is driven by the sobering collision data on Market Street and our Vision Zero goal of ending traffic fatalities in San Francisco,” said SFMTA Director of Transportation, Ed Reiskin. “Traffic collisions are preventable, and these focused turn restrictions will create a safer, better Market Street for the millions of residents, visitors and workers that travel on it.”

The range of improvements, known as Safer Market Street, are one of 24 priority safety projects that the city has pledged to complete by February 2016 as part of Vision Zero, the city’s commitment to eliminate all traffic deaths. Sixteen of those projects have already been completed. All 24 are slated to be complete by February 2016.

Market Street is the city’s premier civic and commercial corridor, hosting hundreds of thousands of people a day that arrive by transit, walking, biking or driving. It is the spine of San Francisco’s transit network. Twelve transit lines run on it and will benefit from five new blocks of red transit only lanes which will improve Muni’s reliability. At times, more bikes travel down Market Street than private vehicles, making it one of the busiest bikeways in the country.

High collision rates, however, also make Market Street a high-injury corridor, with four of the top 20 intersections for pedestrian-injury collisions and the top two intersections for bicycle injury collisions.

Market Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> streets saw 162 injury collisions take place in 2012 and 2013 alone. Of these collisions, 58 percent were people walking or biking being struck by automobiles. Roughly half of these collisions happened at or near an intersection.

“The transportation investments in Safer Market Street fundamentally promote the health of our community,” said San Francisco Department of Public Health Director Barbara Garcia. “These evidence-based improvements are directed at saving lives and reducing injuries on one of San Francisco’s streets where injuries and deaths are most concentrated.”

The project will allow the city to immediately improve traffic safety while long-range enhancements – part of the separate Better Market Street program – are in progress to make the street a world-class boulevard.

The Safer Market Street Project is expected to cut traffic volumes on Market Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> streets by up to 50 percent, which will reduce delays for people riding Muni and commercial vehicles that need to deliver goods. Rather than being stuck in a bus waiting for a private vehicle that is blocking a transit island, passengers will be able to disembark and get where they’re going faster. The traffic impact to adjacent streets will be minimal as traffic would be dispersed throughout San Francisco’s downtown grid network. As part of the project, the SFMTA is also adding eight white passenger loading zones, four accessible parking spaces and converting a white zone to a commercial loading zone.

The SFMTA is also coordinating with navigation tool providers to ensure the turn restrictions are reflected in GPS and online map services.

### Key Facts

- Auto traffic represents between 10 to 30 percent of the Market Street traffic volume, but is involved in 82 percent of traffic injuries, 66 percent of severe traffic injuries and 100 percent of traffic fatalities on Market Street
- With the new turn restrictions, private vehicles are generally not allowed to turn onto Market between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> streets
- Muni, bicycles, taxis, commercial, paratransit and emergency vehicles are exempt
- Restrictions divert traffic throughout the network to improve safety conditions
- The SFMTA is implementing 14 turn restrictions on Market, and is also installing five new blocks of red, bus-only lanes, as well as new passenger, accessible and commercial loading zones

### Enforcement

- To help drivers adjust to the traffic changes, automated signs alerted drivers to the changes during construction
- Street signs for the turn restrictions will be covered until all are in place by Aug. 11
- When they take effect on Aug. 11, parking control officers will be at the relevant intersections to guide traffic for the first two weeks after implementation
- The San Francisco Police Department will immediately begin to enforce violations

More information on Safer Market Street can be found on the [factsheet](#) and the project [page](#).

The city adopted Vision Zero as a policy in 2014, committing to build better and safer streets, educate the public on traffic safety, enforce traffic laws, and adopt policy changes that save lives. The result of this collaborative, citywide effort will be safer, more livable streets as San Francisco works towards the Vision Zero goal of zero traffic fatalities by 2024. For more information, go to: [www.visionzerosf.org](http://www.visionzerosf.org)

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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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