



Geary Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes

Public Hearing Meeting Summary

October 1, 2020

On September 24, 2020, the SFMTA held a virtual public hearing for temporary emergency transit lanes and other temporary transit priority treatments proposed for Geary Boulevard in the Richmond District. Approximately 55 attendees joined the meeting, and an additional 38 people submitted comments in advance of the meeting. Figure 1 summarizes the number and sentiment of comments received prior to and during the hearing through September 25, with the majority (over 70%) of comments in support of the proposal.

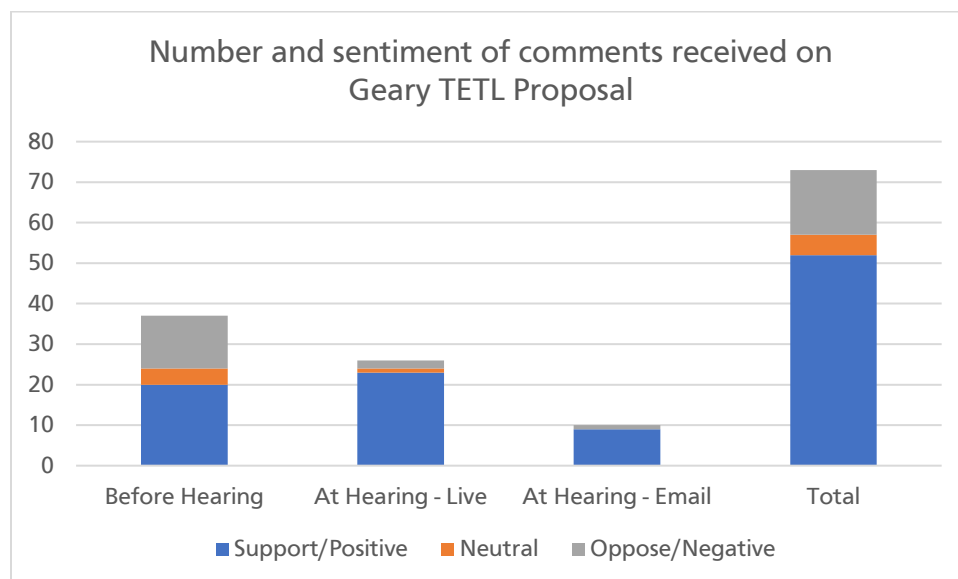


Figure 1: Number and sentiment of comments received on Geary Temporary Emergency Transit Lane Proposal

The following summarizes key themes of comments as well as provides staff responses to those themes.

1. Suggestion to include transit lanes between 15th and 25th avenues.

The Geary temporary emergency transit lane project only proposes transit lanes on segments of Geary Boulevard with three existing travel lanes per direction, leaving two for general-purpose traffic and converting one to a temporary emergency transit lane. In order to maintain two travel lanes and provide a temporary emergency transit lane in the requested segment, angled parking would need to be converted to parallel parking. This could be considered in the future, but is not proposed at this time.

2. Request to implement earlier than November 2020.

SFMTA is working to implement a variety of street changes to respond to COVID-19 (such as Slow Streets and other Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes that are all competing for the limited time

of the field staff who implement projects like this one. Moving forward more quickly would defer another project. That said, Geary is proposed to be among the first temporary emergency transit lane projects to be implemented because it is such an important, high-ridership transit corridor.

3. Comments regarding impacts to parallel streets.

The proposed evaluation framework would monitor traffic speeds and collisions on parallel streets. This proposal would maintain two travel lanes on Geary which should be adequate for the typical amount of traffic.

4. Comments that the proposal is important to help address climate change.

While the main objective for the program is to protect those making essential trips from COVID-19 exposure, several commenters noted that improving transit is critical to addressing climate change, which has been front-of-mind due to the recent wildfires and air quality issues in the region.

5. Question regarding when it is legal to drive in a transit lane.

Vehicles may enter a transit lane to make a right-turn, enter/exit a driveway or access parking. When doing so, exit the transit lane before the next intersection or whenever it is safe to do so. Please see "[The Rules for When You Can Enter a Transit-Only Lane](#)" on SFMTA's blog for more information.

6. Questions about the need for the project.

In order to protect the approximately 18,000 daily customers who continue to ride the 38 Geary and 38R Geary Rapid on an average weekday, we are proposing temporary emergency transit lanes in order to keep buses moving as congestion returns. Data presented in the project presentation, available [online](#), describes the need for the temporary emergency transit lanes. Traffic speeds (as a proxy for congestion) are now at their slowest speeds since the beginning of Shelter in Place. Crowding on buses (based on reduced COVID capacity) has gotten worse since June, while ridership has remained stable (and service has remained constant). Crowding getting worse is strongly correlated with traffic speeds slowing down. By dedicating lane space to transit, Temporary Emergency Transit Lanes protect transit customers from the impacts of congestion.

More information and the full project proposal are available at [SFMTA.com/TempLanes38](https://www.sfmta.com/TempLanes38).