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

## **Mayor Newsom and Community Leaders Look Forward to Beginning of Better Market Street Transportation Pilot Project on Tuesday, September 29**

*Private Automobiles Headed Downtown to be Diverted at 8<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets to Improve Transit and Pedestrian Experience*

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** - Mayor Gavin Newsom, city officials and community leaders are looking forward to the start next Tuesday, September 29 of a pilot project designed to improve public transit and the pedestrian experience along Market Street.

"This is the beginning of making Market Street into one of the greatest streets in the world," said Mayor Newsom. "The pilot transportation improvements that begin on Tuesday are only part of a broad plan to continue the momentum we have enjoyed with efforts like Sunday Streets where we have made streets into real places for people."

Beginning Tuesday, September 29, private motorists travelling eastbound on Market Street will be encouraged to turn right on 10th Street and will be required to turn right at 8th Street. Motorists who turn right onto Market Street from 7<sup>th</sup> Street will be required to turn right at 6th Street. Traffic regulations east of 6<sup>th</sup> Street will not change and private automobiles will be allowed on Market Street east of 6<sup>th</sup> Street (for example, a car turning right onto Market from northbound 5<sup>th</sup> Street).

Traffic flowing north and south across Market Street will be unaffected, as will cars travelling west. Public transit, bicycles, emergency vehicles and delivery trucks will continue to fully access Market Street (see attached map). Signs have been installed on eastbound Market Street informing motorists of the upcoming changes, and regulatory signs will be installed Monday.

***Note: SFMTA officials and project supporters will be available for media interviews at the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> and Market streets from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Monday, September 28 and from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Tuesday, September 29.***

The next 6 to 12 months will see other trial changes and place-making efforts in addition to diverting traffic, including concerts and other events along the street, and mini-plazas featuring outdoor seating, tables, food kiosks, landscaping, and public art displays in at least 10 storefronts. Beginning in October, the Arts in Storefronts program will install the work of local artists on vacant storefronts in the Tenderloin.



The series of pilots is part of a larger effort by the City to make Market Street a world class corridor and is led by the Department of Public Works, the Planning Department, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), the Mayor's Office of Workforce and Economic Development, and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority. The full implementation of the redesign will begin in 2013 following community input, engineering, and environmental review.

The transportation pilot and the larger Better Market Street Project have enjoyed widespread support from business and neighborhood groups along Market Street as well as sustainability advocates.

"I am excited to see the beginning of these trial improvement projects," says Carolyn Diamond, Executive Director of the Market Street Association. "Many of the Market Street stakeholders have worked together for a long time discussing how to improve Market Street. These trials will tell us what works and what doesn't. It will be a learning experience for all of us."

"One goal of this traffic diversion pilot is to reduce through traffic on eastbound Market Street," said Nathaniel P. Ford Sr., Executive Director/CEO of the SFMTA, which is leading the traffic pilot implementation. "Fewer cars on Market Street downtown should reduce delays to Muni and improve the pedestrian experience by reducing conflicts with right-turning vehicles at busy intersections."

The traffic pilot and future pilots will be regularly monitored and refined as needed, with the first evaluation coming six weeks after the required turns begin on Tuesday. The project team will work with community partners to gather on-the-ground data that will inform the desired improvements for Market Street and other streets serving surrounding districts and neighborhoods.

The series of pilots to improve Market Street was inspired by Swanston Street in Melbourne, for its multi-modal main street character for pedestrians and public transit, Las Ramblas, Barcelona and Unter den Linden, Berlin for their public amenities, pedestrian comfort and use of streets as open space, and by Broadway Street in New York City for piloting ways to use streets as open space.

For more information about the project, including additional community voices in support of it, please go to: <http://marketstreet.sfplanning.org>.

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