

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Nathaniel P. Ford Sr. | Executive Director/CEO

****PRESS RELEASE******Mayor Newsom and SFMTA Announce Change to Pilot Program to Improve Transit and Pedestrian Conditions on Market Street**

San Francisco—Mayor Gavin Newsom today announced that the City will change one of the locations where traffic is required to turn right on eastbound Market Street from 8th Street to 10th Street as part of the Better Market Street Project pilot. This traffic diversion pilot project is part of a larger effort to re-make Market Street into a world-class place in San Francisco.

Beginning Tuesday, January 26, private motorists traveling eastbound on Market Street will be required to turn right on 10th Street instead of at 8th Street. Motorists will continue to be diverted at 6th Street as well. Traffic flowing north and south across Market Street will be unaffected, as will cars traveling westbound on Market Street. Public transit, bicycle, emergency vehicles and delivery vehicles will continue to have full access to Market Street. Motorists will still be able to access eastbound Market Street by turning right from northbound streets such as 9th, 7th, 6th or 5th streets, or by turning left from southbound streets such as Polk, Hyde or Stockton streets.

“We have an incredible opportunity to make Market Street into one of the greatest streets in the world,” said Mayor Gavin Newsom. “We must be innovative about our strategies for achieving this vision.”

“This pilot project takes a measured approach to improving conditions for transit customers and pedestrians,” said Nathaniel P. Ford Sr., SFMTA Executive Director/CEO. “Adjusting the pilot will provide us with additional information to shape our collective decisions about Market Street’s future.”

The right-turn-only regulations at 8th and 6th streets began on Sept. 29, 2009. The regulations resulted in improved transit travel times for eastbound Market Street, and have been well received by bicyclists, taxi drivers and pedestrians. Most of the traffic removed from eastbound Market Street has diverted to eastbound Mission and Folsom streets, where it has been accommodated.

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The change from 8th Street to 10th Street is being made in order to reduce conflicts between traffic turning right off of Market Street and pedestrians and bicycles. Unlike the intersection of Market and 8th streets, the intersection of Market/10th streets has a continuous bike lane, made possible because it is one of the few Market Street intersections that does not have a Muni boarding island. The Market/10th intersection also has less pedestrian traffic than the 8th Street intersection, which is directly above the Civic Center/United Nations Plaza BART/Muni Metro station. The lower pedestrian volume at Market/10th streets makes this intersection more conducive to handling right turning traffic than 8th Street.

The right-turn-only requirement on eastbound Market Street at 10th Street will be in place for at least six weeks. After six weeks, the impact of the change will be evaluated.

The next several months will see the continuation of 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 storefront art displays.

"The Market Street improvements continue to be planned and implemented," said Carolyn Diamond, Market Street Association Executive Director. "I am pleased that Market Street is the focus of these concentrated efforts to improve San Francisco's safety, livability and vitality."

Lessons learned from these traffic changes will inform the larger effort by the City to make Market Street a world-class corridor. This effort is led by the Department of Public Works, the Planning Department, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, 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 Market Street pilot projects were 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 NYC for piloting ways to use streets as open space.

For additional information about the Better Market Street Project please visit <http://marketstreet.sfplanning.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 and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 35,000 extra vehicles enter San Francisco on any given business day, and rely on the SFMTA to keep the flow of cars, transit vehicles, taxis, delivery trucks, pedestrians and bicycles moving smoothly through the streets.