



# Memorandum

## AGENDA ITEM 7

**DATE:** May 29, 2020  
**TO:** Transportation Authority Board  
**FROM:** Anna LaForte - Deputy Director for Policy and Programming  
**SUBJECT:** 6/9/2020 Board Meeting: Adopt the District 3 Pedestrian Safety Improvements Final Report [NTIP Planning]

**RECOMMENDATION**

Information  Action

Adopt the District 3 Pedestrian Safety Improvements Final Report [NTIP Planning].

**SUMMARY**

In July 2019, at Chair Peskin’s request, the Transportation Authority amended the scope of work for the District 3 Pedestrian Safety Improvements [NTIP Planning] project, funded by \$100,000 in Prop K funds allocated to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). The project focused on near-term pedestrian safety improvements at Kearny and Jackson streets, Kearny and Washington streets, and Columbus Avenue at Green and Stockton streets, which were identified as community priorities. In addition, the NTIP project analyzed options for improving pedestrian safety by removing dual-turn lanes at intersections along Kearny Street between Post and Pine streets. Lastly, the project developed recommendations for Muni bus stop consolidation to support improved transit speed and reliability along Kearny Street between Market Street and Columbus Avenue. In anticipation of the final report’s recommendations, in April 2020, the Transportation Authority allocated \$819,800 in Prop K funds, including \$750,000 in District 3 NTIP capital funds, to SFMTA for design and construction of the pedestrian scramble at Kearny/Jackson and opening a new crosswalk connecting the northeast and southwest corners at Columbus/Green/Stockton. The project’s draft final report is included as an enclosure in this packet.

- Fund Allocation
- Fund Programming
- Policy/Legislation
- Plan/Study
- Capital Project Oversight/Delivery
- Budget/Finance
- Contract/Agreement
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



## **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Transportation Authority's NTIP is to build community awareness of, and capacity to provide input to, the transportation planning process and to advance delivery of community-supported neighborhood-scale projects that can be funded by Prop K sales tax and/or other sources.

Kearny Street is a major street in the Financial District of San Francisco that carries multiple transportation modes including drivers, transit riders (the 30 Stockton, 8 Bayshore and the 8AX and 8BX Bayshore Express), people walking, and people biking. The street has been identified as a Vision Zero High Injury Corridor, indicating a high number of severe injuries or fatalities to people using the street. The Kearny/Montgomery corridor was also flagged as a key corridor for improving facilities for people biking as part of the SFMTA 2013 Bicycle Strategy.

The original District 3 NTIP-funded study, requested by former Commissioner Julie Christensen and previously called the Kearny Street Multimodal Implementation Plan, was broadly aimed at the full length of Kearny Street between Market Street and Broadway, with the goals of studying safety improvements for people walking and biking and transit performance improvements. In July 2019, at Chair Peskin's request, the Board approved the amended scope of work for this study, now called District 3 Pedestrian Safety Improvements to focus on specific intersections as described above.

## **DISCUSSION**

The District 3 Pedestrian Safety Improvements project's recommendations build upon recommendations from transportation planning studies and projects in various phases of development within District 3, including: the Columbus Avenue Multimodal Project, the Chinatown Neighborhood Transportation Plan, the Portsmouth Square Area Project, and the Central Subway.

**Recommendations for Near-Term Improvements at Three Intersections.** SFMTA has made the following recommendations to improve pedestrian safety at key intersections along Kearny Street.

Kearny/Washington. SFMTA recommends implementing a scramble at Kearny and Washington. A new pedestrian countdown signal can be accommodated on existing signal poles and there is capacity within the underground conduits for necessary wiring. In February 2020, the SFMTA Board approved legislation granting restrictions on turns on red at Kearny/Washington and the SFMTA plans to implement the pedestrian scramble in spring 2020.

Kearny/Jackson. SFMTA recommends implementing a scramble at Kearny and Jackson. A pedestrian scramble at Kearny/Jackson will require substantial signal hardware modifications as underground conduits cannot accommodate additional wiring and the traffic signal pole at the northeast corner of the intersection needs to be replaced. In April 2020, the Board approved \$450,000 in Prop K NTIP capital funds to SFMTA to implement this recommendation.



Columbus/Green/Stockton. SFMTA recommends designating a new crosswalk across Columbus Street. In 2018 bulb outs were added to improve pedestrian safety, however Columbus/Green/Stockton continues to be a challenging intersection for pedestrians to navigate. SFMTA staff analyzed numerous alternatives and engaged local stakeholders in this process.

A new crosswalk between the northeast and southwest corners in addition to modifications to the intersection signal timing would improve pedestrian convenience and greatly reduce pedestrian delays without substantially impacting traffic or transit delay. This new crosswalk would receive a walk signal overlapping with a green signal for turning vehicles entering the intersection from Green Street and Beach Blanket Babylon Boulevard. This alternative highlighted the desired path of travel for pedestrians by the North Beach Neighbors and Telegraph Hill Dwellers.

In April 2020, the Board allocated \$370,000 in Prop K NTIP capital funds to SFMTA to design and construct this new crosswalk and associated improvements, including curb ramps and upgraded signal equipment.

**Recommendations for Bus Stop Consolidation - Market to Columbus Streets.** SFMTA recommends bus stop balancing to help improve transit reliability on Kearny Street. Additionally, the location of some existing stops contributes to added delay and safety issues, such as the far side Bush Street stop is difficult to access due to cross-street traffic blocking the intersection, there is currently a substandard length bus zone at the far side Clay Street stop results in stopped buses blocking the busy crosswalk, and right-turning vehicles conflict with buses at the nearside Jackson Street stop.

SFMTA generally recommends that bus stops be spaced around 800-1000 feet apart, however many of the bus stops on Kearny are much closer than recommended. Based on community input and staff analysis, the SFMTA has developed a bus stop rebalancing proposal for Kearny Street between Market Street and Columbus Avenue. These recommendations include removing bus stops at Kearny/Bush, Kearny/California, Kearny/Clay, and Kearny/Jackson and adding stops at Kearny/Pine, Kearny/Sacramento, and Kearny/Washington.

The SFMTA will complete an outreach and implementation plan which builds off the preliminary outreach and design work that has been done between 2017 and 2019. Pending additional community input and further analysis, these bus stop changes could be implemented by late 2020. Prior to finalizing any stop change recommendations, the SFMTA will share details for potential transit shelter locations at new or relocated stops.

**Recommendations for Dual-Turn Lanes.** Dual-turn lanes can create conflicts between motorists and people crossing the street due to limited visibility from the outside turning lane. SFMTA recommends the removal of dual-turn lanes at the intersections of Kearny with Post, Sutter and Pine to help improve pedestrian safety on the corridor. At Post, SFMTA recommends removing the dual turn lane but providing a Muni exception to allow buses to turn from the through lane adjacent to a single left turn lane. At Sutter, SFMTA recommends removing the tow-away left-turn lane and permitting Muni vehicles to turn left from the number two (through) lane, thereby permitting buses to bypass the queue of left-turning



vehicles. And lastly, at Pine, the recommendation is to remove the tow-away left turn lane. SFMTA does not recommend modifying the dual-turn lane configuration at the Bush intersection.

SFMTA will continue to coordinate with stakeholders to pursue legislation for removal of dual-turn lanes at the Kearny/Post, Kearny/Sutter and Kearny/Pine streets intersections, and anticipates implementing changes by late 2020.

**Community Outreach.** SFMTA staff met several times with Chinatown Transportation Research and Improvement Project (TRIP) to learn about their priorities for pedestrian safety along Kearny and to share details regarding the pedestrian scrambles proposed at Kearny and Jackson streets and Kearny and Washington streets as well as bus stop modifications along the Kearny corridor. Staff also met with representatives of the North Beach Neighbors and Telegraph Hill Dwellers that informed the proposal for opening a new crosswalk at Columbus/Green/Stockton. In April 2019, the Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee passed a resolution in support of a pedestrian scramble or other pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection Columbus/Green/Stockton.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There are no impacts on the agency's adopted Fiscal Year 2019/20 budget or proposed provisional three-month Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget associated with the recommended action.

## **CAC POSITION**

At the February 26, 2020 CAC meeting, SFMTA staff provided an update to the CAC on the draft recommendations in the final report. We will include the final report on the Consent Agenda for the CAC at its June 24, 2020 meeting.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

Enclosure 1 - District 3 Pedestrian Safety Improvements Final Report [NTIP Planning]