

## MEMORANDUM

November 8, 2018

**TO:** MEMBERS, PORT COMMISSION  
Hon. Kimberly Brandon, President  
Hon. Willie Adams, Vice President  
Hon. Gail Gilman  
Hon. Victor Makras  
Hon. Doreen Woo Ho

**FROM:** Elaine Forbes  
Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Informational presentation of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Embarcadero Enhancement Project and plan to increase safety along The Embarcadero.

**DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION:** Informational Only; No Action Required

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is the lead agency for The Embarcadero Enhancement Project (the "Project"), a transportation and streetscape project that strives to improve safety, mobility, and accessibility for all modes along the heavily-used Embarcadero corridor. SFMTA staff provided a project status update to the Port Commission on August 14, 2018, where the Commission made requests regarding near-term actions that could be implemented to improve safety and further information on SFMTA's work to advance the Project. The Port has an interest to support City and regional transportation agency planning and projects to improve transportation service along the waterfront that works in sync with current and planned maritime, industrial, commercial and recreational activities along The Embarcadero waterfront.

Through this report and at the Port Commission meeting, Port and SFMTA staff will report back on recently-completed and upcoming safety and circulation improvements, summarize public feedback from the recent Project "*Design Showcase*" held on October 25, and will outline the expected timeline and next steps for the longer-term Enhancement Project.

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## **PORT'S STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE**

This project supports the goals of the Port's Strategic Plan as follows:

### Livability:

Ensure Port improvements result in advances in the environment, social equity and quality of life for San Francisco residents and visitors.

- Work with transportation agency partners to ensure an integrated transportation plan that includes programs to ease traffic congestion along the waterfront and expand public transit - including water taxis and ferries – as well as pedestrian and bicycle access.

### Engagement:

Promote the richness the Port has to offer through education, marketing, and maintaining strong relationships with Port users and stakeholders.

- Enhance strategic partnerships with citizen advisory committees, government agencies and waterfront stakeholders through meaningful public participation and incorporating community feedback into Port initiatives.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Embarcadero is “a thriving business corridor, a key transportation artery, a key destination in the City’s tourism industry, a popular recreation route, and a worldwide attraction.” The SFMTA has determined after several years of study, that it is over-subscribed and ill-equipped to serve these growing uses safely and efficiently. Most people when asked about the corridor agree: the competition for space has become chaotic, it feels unsafe or stressful to move around and do business, and something should be done to improve conditions.

Much of The Embarcadero roadway is listed on the city’s High Injury Network, which represents the 13% of city streets where 75% of the severe and fatal injuries occur. In the same year the city adopted its Vision Zero policy to eliminate traffic fatalities (2014), the SFMTA began a community engagement process to identify a preferred street design concept for The Embarcadero that improves public safety for all travel modes between Fisherman’s Wharf and AT&T Ballpark.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Working with a diverse set of stakeholders, the Embarcadero Enhancement Project will develop and implement “Complete Street”<sup>1</sup> improvements along The Embarcadero from Townsend Street near AT&T Park to North Point Street near Pier 39 and Fisherman’s Wharf. Primary project goals are to improve safety, support economic vitality, and enhance the connectivity and accessibility of the northeast waterfront.

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<sup>1</sup> Complete Streets are defined as: Streets that include a complete design that balances among a wide variety of functions, including safe pedestrian travel for all ages and abilities, stormwater management, use as public space, bicycle, transit, and vehicle movement, parking and loading requirements, ease of maintenance, and emergency access.

Following several community workshops, SFMTA has identified a preferred conceptual design for a two-way, physically-protected bikeway on the east (or water) side of The Embarcadero to reduce conflicts with other modes. The project design concept also includes:

- shorter, more accessible pedestrian crossings
- more efficient traffic signals and intersections
- improved load zones and curb management
- better streetcar access and service
- enhanced urban design and place-making opportunities

Funded in part by grants from the federal government and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and City work order funding by the Port, the community process to define the concept design for the project also includes partnership with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA). SFMTA has responsibility for managing the funding and regulatory processes required to implement the Project.

## **PROJECT STATUS**

### **NEAR-TERM IMPROVEMENTS**

Per the Port Commission's direction provided in August of 2018, Port staff worked with SFMTA to deliver prioritized 'near-term' improvements in recognition of the extent of safety issues and the long timeframe required for environmental review, design and implementation of The Embarcadero Enhancement Project. Recently completed and upcoming improvements include:

- **Full-Time Southbound Bike Lane and Parking, Broadway to Mission Street.** On October 29, 2018, SFMTA crews began re-striping The Embarcadero from Broadway to Mission streets with a new full-time, buffered bike lane and parking/right-turn lane. Changes include the removal of peak period parking restrictions that had resulted in a third travel lane during busier commute hours. The more consistent, full-time lane configuration allows for future potential sidewalk extensions (or bulb-outs) depending on the final design of the larger project.
- **'Hot Spot' Signage and Striping Upgrades.** The SFMTA, Port, and various stakeholders are working to identify feasible, low-cost safety upgrades to existing travel, bike and parking lanes, and to improve pedestrian safety. Implementation of high-visibility crosswalks with advanced vehicle stop lines, bike lane enhancements at intersections, expanded/adjusted passenger loading zones, and potential signal timing adjustments will be ongoing through spring 2019.
- **Battery and Sansome Connections Project.** This separate but complementary project will add a bike lane (without physical protection) to both Battery and Sansome streets between The Embarcadero and Broadway, and south of Broadway on Davis Street, to provide an attractive alternative to The Embarcadero for bicycle trips between the Financial District and Northeast Waterfront. The SFMTA plans to complete outreach and design in early 2019 and implement the bike lanes by mid-summer. At the Chestnut/Sansome/

Embarcadero intersection (within the Port's jurisdiction), a number of turn and parking restrictions and potential future sidewalk extensions are recommended to address significant safety, comfort and signal timing inefficiency issues while providing a 'down payment' on the larger vision for the Embarcadero Enhancement Project.

### **OCTOBER 'DESIGN SHOWCASE' PUBLIC EVENT**

SFMTA held a public open house on October 25, 2018 to present the draft preferred conceptual design study for The Embarcadero Enhancement Project, and alternatives requiring further. Over 200 members of the public attended the meeting, as did San Francisco Supervisor Aaron Peskin and Captain Raj Vaswani from the SFMTA Traffic Enforcement Company in addition to SFMTA, Port, and Public Works staff. The preferred concept drawings, available for review on the project website [www.sfmta.com/embarcadero](http://www.sfmta.com/embarcadero), include the following elements:

- A two-way, physically-protected bikeway along the east side of The Embarcadero that is achieved through the repurposing of the third northbound travel lane and existing bike lane, and various other changes;
- Sidewalk extensions (bulb-outs) at many locations to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and allow greater "green" time for traffic movements along The Embarcadero;
- Circulation changes to reduce the number of "U-Turn" movements and left-turns in order to simplify intersections and improve traffic signal timing efficiency; and
- Removal of all on-street parking, and retention/expansion of loading zones, adjacent to the water-side promenade.

Draft project alternatives that were presented, but require further study, include potential streetcar stop removals/adjustments, bikeway design options at intersections, and the relocation of all vehicle through lanes onto the city-side of Harry Bridges Plaza and establishment of a local access lane in front of the Ferry Building (known as the "Ferry Building Frontage Road Concept").

Open house attendees had opportunities to comment on all aspects of the design concept, but were asked specific preferences on a number of topics including potential phasing priorities and additional project rendering locations. Participant responses were still being compiled at the time this staff report was written, but SFMTA staff will present a summary of feedback to the Port Commission at the meeting.

### **PROJECT TIMELINE AND FUNDING**

The SFMTA plans to release a concept design report by January 2019, to mark the completion of the Embarcadero Enhancement Project planning and conceptual design phase. Additional project renderings and a conceptual project cost estimate will be included in this deliverable.

In early 2019, the SFMTA also will initiate environmental review (California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA) in coordination with the San Francisco Planning Department and with assistance from a technical consultant. The project will also

conduct a topographic survey to support preliminary engineering. The type of environmental review necessary for project approval is unknown at this time, but the project schedule assumes a 12-16 month timeframe for completion, to be followed by two years of detailed design and construction of an initial project phase beginning in 2022.

The SFMTA secured multiple grant sources to complete the project planning phase, which the Port supplemented with a \$50,000 funding contribution. A total of \$500,000 in SFCTA Prop K sales tax funds are currently programmed to support preliminary engineering and environmental review, with a preliminary budget (but no secured funds) of \$12.5 million for detailed design and construction of an initial project phase. The estimated cost to complete the full project scope is not yet known, but roughly is expected to be in the range of \$50-\$80 million.

Given the severity of safety issues and regional importance of The Embarcadero corridor, the project should be well-positioned to receive additional outside grant funding once the project environmental review and approval is completed.

#### **COORDINATION AND NEXT STEPS**

As described above, SFMTA has been coordinating with the Planning Department, Port staff and Public Works to ensure that the outreach, alternatives, and conceptual designs are responsive and coordinated. In addition, SFMTA and Port staff are sharing information and tracking work to coordinate The Embarcadero Enhancement Project with the Port's Seawall Earthquake Safety and Disaster Protection Program (Seawall Safety Program)<sup>2</sup> to identify opportunities to leverage data and public outreach, and to efficiently and effectively implement both of these important safety projects as quickly as possible.

Throughout the next phases of work, SFMTA will continue to engage the public and other stakeholders to advance The Embarcadero Enhancement Project. Port and SFMTA staff will keep the Port Commission updated of the status of the project as it progresses.

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<sup>2</sup> A July 10, 2018 Port Commission report provides the most recent progress reports on Seawall Safety Program.