

Merchants on the 1400 Block of Polk Street (Between Pine and California)  
1418 Polk Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

August 14, 2013

Director Ed Reiskin  
cc: SFMTA Board

Dear Mr. Reiskin,

Firstly, I would like to be clear that we are not in opposition of the entire SFMTA Polk street project. With a city that is the hub of going green and supports the use of alternative ways to sustain the environment, we understand that changes are necessary. We support the gentrification as well as the intention to revise Polk Street, making it safer for pedestrians as well as cyclists. Our qualm is that a raised bicycle lane which permanently removes all parking from one side of Polk Street is unnecessary and a terrible waste of capital for the 1400 block, as there are numerous alternatives which pose a more economic allocation of resources.

According to SFMTA studies, typically only 5 percent of the population travel to Polk by bicycle, while 16 percent travel by car (Background information pg 3). Cyclists consistently spent the lowest dollar amount not only typically with a -\$7 difference between automobiles, but furthermore on the day of the study which was a -\$20 difference (Polk Street Transportation and Intercept Study results pg 7). It is unclear from the documentation how spending per week was specifically arrived at, but the sample population appeared to be a random street sample without including the merchants of Polk, many of which drive and spend a considerable dollar amount in that area. It was also reported that 56 percent of the population surveyed live directly in the vicinity of Polk St (Polk Transportation Study pg 1). What must not be overlooked is that over 20 small businesses such as Doctors' offices, restaurants, beauty salons, and family owned markets are why the other 44 percent of the population are attracted to Polk St. With the the aging baby boomer population, by 2020 the population age 65-74 would grow 74 percent under middle series projections, while the population under 65 would increase only 24 percent (Aging in the US pg 2). Many Elders are not able to cycle or take public transportation, so parking and having somewhere to be dropped off is essential. Furthermore, it is very difficult for families to travel together without the use of an automobile and available parking. A significant number of individuals and families also travel from outside of the city, where public transportation is not a viable option.

Additionally, figure 6 of the Polk Street Transportation and Intercept survey, which compares the Polk Street transportation study and the Columbus Ave Study, is skewed. Although it appears to show an increase in the growth of cyclist, the "other" category is linked with the cyclist category, which increases the bicycle transportation percentage from 6 to 9.8 percent (Polk Transportation Study pg 5). Without combining the two categories the cyclist percentage has actually not increased since 2008. Moreover, this information is nearly negligible because the area covered in the Columbus Ave Study does not represent the Polk Street area.

In regards to cyclist safety, only two cyclist collisions have occurred within a 5-year period on the corner of California and Polk Street (Background Info pg 1). Spending vast amounts of capital for two incidents in a 5-year time period is highly inefficient and could certainly be allocated in a more cost effective manner than a raised bicycle lane on one side of Polk Street which eliminates all parking. At minimum, the boundary line of the North Polk St project should be relocated south one block to the corner of Pine and Polk, where 4 collisions have taken place over the 5-year span. Several other options were listed on the SFMTA website which many believe would be much more sensible and still accommodate all parties involved: Option A: Shared Roadway, Option B: One bike lane with 5% of the parking affected per block, Option C: two non-raised bike lanes with 18% of the parking effected per block, or Part-time bike lanes (Options Under Consideration).

Although accidents occur due to congested roads and unsafe automobile drivers, collisions also occur due to inexperienced cyclists. One way to increase city funding while making the streets safer is to implement licensing for cyclists under the California Vehicle Code. CVC 39002 allows local authorities to implement mandatory licensing for bicycles and prohibit unlicensed riding. In a city with an increasing amount of alternative modes of transportation, it is important that all cyclists are physically capable and properly trained to safely ride under these high traffic conditions. This would insure that all parties are trained to operate their respective vehicles safely and responsibly.

The raised bicycle lane which permanently removes all parking from one side of 1400 block of Polk Street is unnecessary and an inefficient use of capital for the city of San Francisco. There are numerous alternatives which pose a more economic allocation of resources that still insure the safety and interest of all parties. Minimally, the boundary line should be shifted south one block to the busier corner of Polk and Pine. This will group the 1400 Block with the plans for upper Polk which has shared bike lanes. Most of the merchants on this block are of minority descent and losing parking on this street would place undue hardship on these businesses.

Sincerely,

Royal Liquors (Sammy Sulieman, Jordanian), Pho Vietnam Restaurant (Tom Lam, Vietnamese), Luscious Wear (Emma Smith, Japanese), Darbar Restaurant (Mohammad and Naila Khan, Pakistanian), Drs. Hiura & Hiura Optometrists (Ronald and Christopher Hiura, Japanese), New Village Cafe (David and Anna Yam, Chinese), Polk Street Gym (Simon Redmond, European), Jeet Big Time (Charanjit Singh, Indian), Fashion Exchange (Dianna Klinkovich and Floriya Pavlichenko, Russian), Crustaceans Restaurant (Ken Lew, Vietnamese), Golden Veggie Market (King Chan, Chinese), Bamboo Restaurant (Jimmy Wu, Chinese), Myconos Restaurant (George Papafilis, Greek), Snip 2 Curl (Winnie Bi, Vietnamese), Victors Pizza (Andy Eskandarian, Iranian)

## References

Economics and Statistics Admin, Aging in the United States. *US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census*. Website:

<http://www.census.gov/population/international/files/97agewc.pdf>. Aug 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013

SFCTA, Columbus Avenue Neighborhood Transportation Study. Website:

<http://www.sfcta.org/transportation-planning-and-studies/neighborhood-transportation-planning/columbus-avenue-neighborhood-transportation-study>. Aug 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

SFMTA, Options Under Consideration (PDF). Website: <http://sfmta.com/projects-planning/projects/polk-street-improvement-project/documents>. Aug 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013

SFMTA, Polk Street Transportation and Purchasing Intercept Survey Results (PDF). Website: <http://sfmta.com/projects-planning/projects/polk-street-improvement-project/documents>. Aug 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013

SFMTA, Background Information (PDF). Website: <http://sfmta.com/projects-planning/projects/polk-street-improvement-project/documents>. Aug 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**Stanis, Paul**

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**From:** Reiskin, Ed  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 17, 2013 8:27 AM  
**To:** Stanis, Paul  
**Subject:** FW: Polk Street Improvement Project  
**Attachments:** 1400 Block of Polk Street Proposition.pdf

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**From:** Ronald Hiura [<mailto:info@drhiura.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 16, 2013 4:18 PM  
**To:** Reiskin, Ed  
**Cc:** Boomer, Roberta; MTABoard  
**Subject:** Polk Street Improvement Project

Dear SFMTA,

Please consider our suggestions for the Polk Street improvement project.

Thank you,

The merchants on the 1400 block of Polk Street (btw California and Pine)



**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Ed Reiskin, Director of Transportation

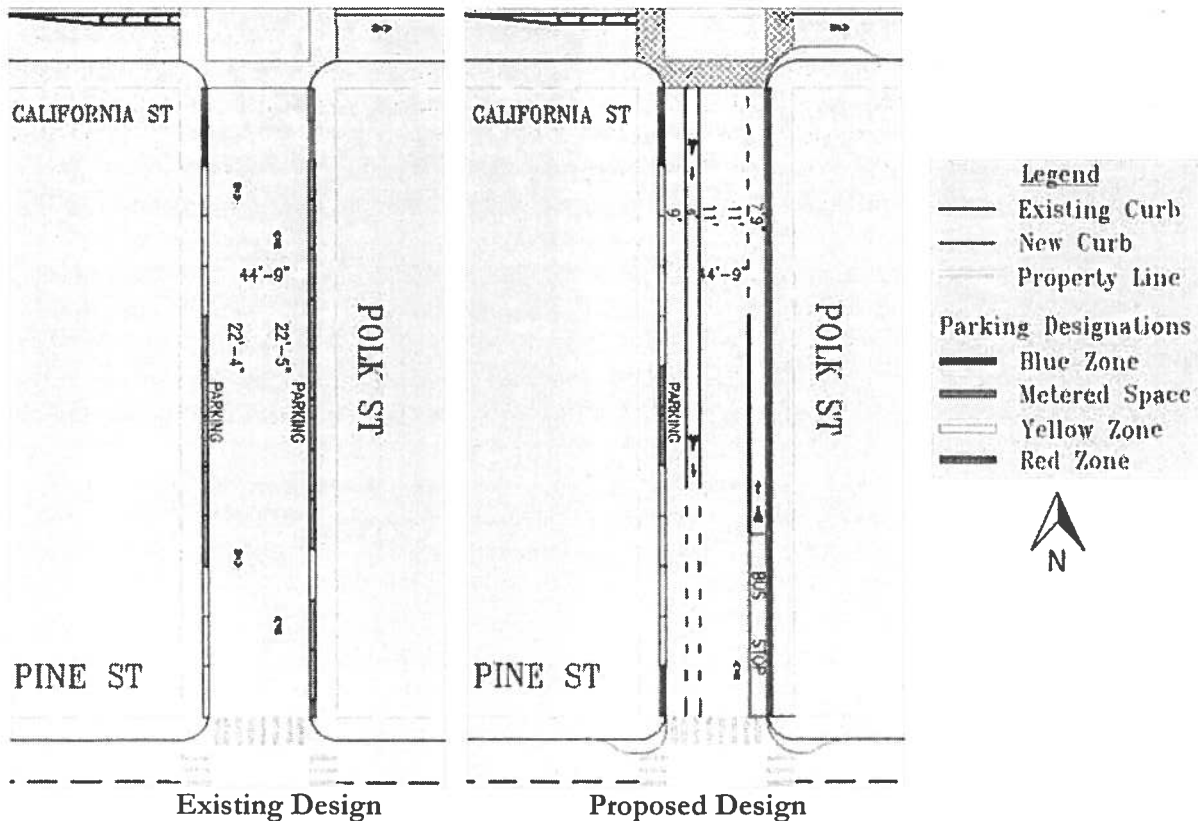
**From:** Paul Stanis, Junior Engineer – Livable Streets

**Through:** Luis Montoya, Acting Section Leader – Livable Streets  
Jerry Robbins, Interim Director of Sustainable Streets

**Date:** August 15, 2014

**Subject:** Polk Streetscape Project Design – Pine Street to California Street

This memo provides a description and justification for the recommended design for the Polk Streetscape Project between Pine St. and California St. Under existing conditions, bicyclists must negotiate with trucks, buses and private autos for space in the general travel lanes on this block, and metered parking is present on both sides of the street. The proposed design for this segment of Polk St. would remove parking on the east side of the street to install a northbound raised cycletrack and add a southbound green bike lane adjacent to parking and loading zones on the west side. Figures representing the existing and proposed designs are shown below.



### Justification

- The SFMTA's goal is to provide continuous and clearly marked bikeways in both directions between California and McAllister streets because this is the segment of Polk Street that experiences the most bike collisions, has more hills, and is generally daunting for the beginner and intermediate bicyclists that we are trying to attract.
- The raised cycle track and green bike lanes will help address the observed pattern of bicycle injury collisions along the corridor which include collisions between turning vehicles and bicyclists and between bicyclists and car doors.
  - Four of the 16 crashes on Polk St. between Pine St. and California St. between 2006 and 2011 involved bicyclists
- The design will create a designated space for bicyclists so that they do not have to share the lane with Muni, which could potentially reduce delay and driver stress.
- Some parking changes between Pine St and California St. would occur even without the raised cycletrack
  - A northbound 19-Polk bus stop will be relocated from the near side to the far side at Pine St. to improve Muni operations and on-time performance
  - Relocating this stop will remove 4 of 12 existing parking spaces on the east side of Polk St.

### Current Bicycle Use

- Bicycle lanes in both directions will provide dedicated space for the moderately high number of bicyclists already traveling along Polk St.
  - AM peak hour: approximately 130 southbound and 70 northbound bicyclists
  - PM peak hour: approximately 65 southbound and 155 northbound bicyclists
  - Weekend bicycle counts have not been conducted but Polk St. is a vibrant commercial corridor that attracts people every day of the week

### Parking and Loading

- The proposed design for this block would add one net additional commercial loading zone based on staff observations and interviews with merchants on the block.
- Paratransit vehicles and taxis carrying people with disabilities would be permitted to pick-up and drop off passengers in the new bikeways.
- Proposed parking changes on this block are summarized in the following table:

Space Type	Existing	Proposed
General Metered	16	2
Yellow Zones	7	8
White Zones	0	0
Green Zones	0	0
Blue Zones	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>

- Our observations indicate that parking utilization is low on weekday mornings and moderate to high later in the day:

Peak Period	Capacity	Demand	Rate
AM	24	7	29%
Midday	24	21	88%
PM	24	17	71%



## Drs. Hiura & Hiura Optometrists

1418 Polk St. San Francisco, CA. 94109  
Phone: (415)776-2352 Fax: (415)776-5872  
E-mail: info@drhiura.com

July 22, 2013

To: Mayor Ed Lee  
Supervisor David Chiu  
SFMTA Director Ed Reiskin  
Ms. Darcie Lim and The SFMTA Board

I am writing in opposition to the "Polk Street Improvement Project" and the designated bike vs. parking lanes. My name is Dr. Ronald Hiura, owner of Hiura & Hiura Optometrists located at 1418 Polk Street. We have been a family optometric practice for over 64 years at this location serving generations of San Franciscans. Just this year my son has graduated optometry school and plans to continue the family business for decades to come.

We understand the goals of making Polk Street an inviting neighborhood to walk, bike, live and shop - as well as improving the safety for everyone. As a San Franciscan for over 50 years and a business owner for 33 years, I would like to emphasize - the importance of the "Polk Street Improvement Project" should be to serve all citizens of San Francisco.

Eliminating the parking going north on Polk Street south of California Street and replacing them with a raised bike lane would affect our seniors and disabled patients, limiting them access to our practice and prohibit them from being dropped off. This is a safety issue for many of them. Public transportation and bikes are not an option for these citizens. Patients complain that there is already restricted parking and tow away zones during rush hour making parking difficult as well as the increase parking rates in the area.

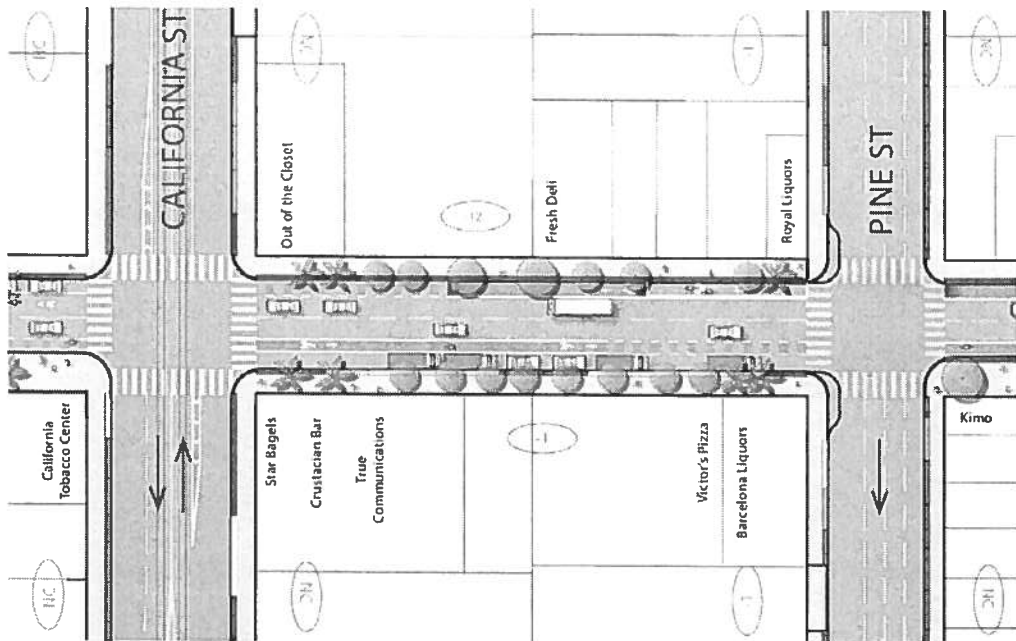
Hiura & Hiura takes pride in serving patients from toddlers to seniors often into their 80-90's, serving not only San Franciscans but patients from throughout the greater Bay Area. They come for vision care and often stay in San Francisco to attend events, shop and dine, adding revenue to the City.

We have watch generations pass through our doors and are here to support our patients as well as protect our future as one of the largest optometric practices in San Francisco. We are urging SFMTA to make a responsible decision in designing a plan that will enhance yet protect all San Franciscans, including the small businesses along the Polk Street corridor.

Please take consideration to reevaluate the effects of the proposed changes and the negative impact it will place on the businesses and safety of patients.

Sincerely yours,

Drs Ronald Hiura & Dr. Christopher Hiura  
Hiura & Hiura Optometrists



# POLK STREET PROJECT

## PROPOSED PARKING AND LOADING CHANGES

- Curb Colors**
- General (regular) metered parking
  - Yellow metered loading stalls
  - White passenger loading, taxi, or liver bus zone
  - Short term metered parking
  - Accessible parking
  - No parking/emergency access

Following the release of the full streetscape Polk Street Plan in March, the Planning and Conceptual Design Phase for the Polk Streetscape Project is now completed. The project has moved into the Detail Design and Environmental Review Phases which will develop the project to a more refined level while keeping in mind the project goals of improving safety for everyone, creating a green, vibrant street for people shopping and living nearby, and making Polk Street an inviting place to walk and bike.

### OPTIMIZING CURB SPACE USE

#### CONTINUED OUTREACH

Based on extensive public outreach, a plan was developed to optimize street space by making changes to parking and loading to improve safety and enhance the vibrancy of the street. The proposed parking and loading changes in your vicinity are shown above and can be viewed in more detail on our website. Red indicates areas where parking will be restricted, yellow boxes are proposed loading zones, and blue are proposed accessible parking spaces.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the parking and loading changes, please contact SFMTA.

#### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Improving loading efficiency, addressing double parking, identifying under and over utilized loading zones, and improving vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety to better organize the street are all goals of reorganizing the loading zones on Polk Street.

#### TIMEFRAME

The SFMTA would like to hear any feedback by the end of April. Further public comment will be heard at a public hearing and at the SFMTA Board meeting this summer.



**FOR QUESTIONS AND MORE INFORMATION...**

Contact Cameron Beck: [Cameron.Beck@sfmta.com](mailto:Cameron.Beck@sfmta.com)  
415.749.2413

Project website: <http://polkstreetscape.sfplanning.org>  
<http://www.sfmta.com/Polk>

Si Usted quiere información sobre el Polk Street Project, favor de llamar a Jeffrey Banks a 415.701.5331

如果您有任何疑問, 請聯繫 Ken Kwong 415.701.4575





**From:** [Robbins, Jerry](#)  
**To:** [Montoya, Luis](#)  
**Cc:** [Smith, Bridget](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Response for Ed  
**Date:** Thursday, August 14, 2014 5:26:06 PM  
**Attachments:** [Pine - California Design Memo JR tc 8-14-14.docx](#)

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Hi Luis:

I made a couple of edits on the attachment for your consideration. OK to send with changes.

Thanks,

Jerry

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 14, 2014 5:00 PM  
**To:** Robbins, Jerry  
**Cc:** Smith, Bridget  
**Subject:** Polk Response for Ed

Hi Jerry,

Attached is the design justification for one of the blocks of Polk Street that Ed requested at our meeting on 7/30. Ed indicated that he needed it for his meeting that I believe occurs next week.

Please let me know if you have any suggested changes or whether I should send it to him directly.

Thanks,

Luis

**From:** [Patel, Neal](#)  
**To:** [Montoya, Luis](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary  
**Date:** Monday, September 15, 2014 3:14:04 PM

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Thanks Luis – let me know what info you need from me on this. Probably easiest to grab me in person

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 10, 2014 2:52 PM  
**To:** Smith, Bridget  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Sorell, Miriam; Patel, Neal; Stanis, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Hi Bridget,

I'll confer with Neal next week about exactly how to get the message out, but my estimate assuming modest outreach is about \$6,000 for the following tasks:

- Update the striping drawing and parking plans
- Update the environmental review submission
- Update the legislation packet
- Update the project budget and coordinate with DPW design team
- Outreach (focused meetings with merchants & advocates, email and website updates to project list)

I can provide an update once Neal and I scope out the outreach more.

-Luis

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**From:** Smith, Bridget  
**Sent:** Friday, September 05, 2014 5:06 PM  
**To:** Montoya, Luis; Patel, Neal  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Sorell, Miriam  
**Subject:** Re: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Before you respond, can you outline what you will need to do to alter the project limit at this point and associated costs? I imagine it will require design, environmental and community outreach effort.

Also, isn't the Bush garage a factor in house parking loss is absorbed?

Thanks  
Bridget

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 5, 2014, at 11:42 AM, "Reiskin, Ed" <Ed.Reiskin@sfmta.com> wrote:

Due to merchant concerns on this block, let's move the line from California to Pine.

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 4:20 PM  
**To:** Reiskin, Ed  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Smith, Bridget  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Hi Ed,

It's true that current demand will outstrip supply on the block of Polk in question, but when you factor in the parking spaces in a 1-block radius, the expected utilization after both Van Ness BRT and Polk Street are implemented should be around 80% in the early evening (we didn't analyze overnight but I imagine the utilization would be closer to 100%).

The last outreach we had with the businesses on that block was when we went door to door in April with custom flyers that showed our proposal for each block and invited them to contact us with any questions. Many of the merchants on that block were also at the March open house where I had an extended conversation with them about their concerns and our justification for the project.

Thanks,

Luis

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Luis Montoya  
<image001.png> **SFMTA** | Municipal Transportation Agency  
Phone: (415) 701-4376  
[website](#) | [facebook](#)

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**From:** Reiskin, Ed  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 12:43 PM  
**To:** Montoya, Luis  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Smith, Bridget  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Thanks. Looks like our plan would provide fewer spaces than needed to meet current PM demand. What is our thinking in terms of how that demand will be met? Also, have we had current contact with

businesses on that block re our most current proposal?

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Friday, August 15, 2014 12:06 PM  
**To:** Reiskin, Ed  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Smith, Bridget  
**Subject:** Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Hi Ed,

Attached is the brief description and justification you requested for the proposed design of Polk Street between California and Pine. Please let me know if there is anything further we can add or provide.

Thank you,

Luis

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Luis Montoya  
<image001.png> **SFMTA** | Municipal Transportation Agency  
Phone: (415) 701-4376  
[website](#) | [facebook](#)

## Montoya, Luis

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**From:** Stanis, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 2:48 PM  
**To:** Montoya, Luis  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary  
**Attachments:** Post Planning Flyer 1400.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Luis,

Attached is the flyer we distributed on Polk St between Pine St and California Street detailing the parking and loading changes. We distributed the flyer to businesses and residences in April after our last open house.

Within one block of Polk St between Pine St and Bush St, existing on-street parking utilization would be 72% and 69% for the respective midday and PM peak periods while future on-street parking utilization would be 83% and 80% with the Polk Streetscape Project and Van Ness BRT.

Thanks,  
Paul

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 12:55 PM  
**To:** Stanis, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Also, Cameron is out but can you confirm by looking at the files that we made a flyer showing the proposed parking changes specifically for that block so that I can tell Ed out our recent outreach. I believe we did that in April?

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 12:50 PM  
**To:** Stanis, Paul  
**Subject:** FW: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Paul,

Is it possible for you make occupancy projections for the block in question? I believe this was done for the project at large for environmental review, but does the logic make sense for a single block?

-Luis

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**To:** Montoya, Luis  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Smith, Bridget  
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Thanks. Looks like our plan would provide fewer spaces than needed to meet current PM demand. What is our thinking in terms of how that demand will be met? Also, have we had current contact with businesses on that block re our most current proposal?

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**To:** Reiskin, Ed  
**Cc:** Robbins, Jerry; Smith, Bridget  
**Subject:** Polk Street: Pine to California Summary


Hi Ed,

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Thank you,

Luis

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Luis Montoya  
 **SFMTA** | Municipal Transportation Agency  
Phone: (415) 701-4376  
[website](#) | [facebook](#)

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 3:47 PM  
**To:** Stanis, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Got it thanks!

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**From:** Stanis, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 3:47 PM  
**To:** Montoya, Luis  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Yes.

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**From:** Montoya, Luis  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 3:46 PM  
**To:** Stanis, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Thanks. Do you mean Pine and California?

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**From:** Stanis, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2014 2:48 PM  
**To:** Montoya, Luis  
**Subject:** RE: Polk Street: Pine to California Summary

Hi Luis,

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Thank you,

Luis

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Luis Montoya  
 **SFMTA** | Municipal Transportation Agency  
Phone: (415) 701-4376  
[website](#) | [facebook](#)



**From:** [Amy Chen](#)  
**To:** [Montoya, Luis](#)  
**Subject:** Re: sunshine ordinance: documentation for the Polk Streetscape Project  
**Date:** Monday, February 09, 2015 9:25:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Luis,

Thank you very much for your reply; apologies for the delay in responding. Here are a few more details as to what I'm looking for:

When I attended the final Polk Street open house, I remember looking at this version of the plan, where the northbound protected bike lane extends all the way to California: [http://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/projects/Polk-Street-Plan\\_Union-to-Sutter.pdf](http://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/projects/Polk-Street-Plan_Union-to-Sutter.pdf)

But in the most recent update on the SFMTA blog, the protected bike lane only goes up to Pine: <http://www.sfmta.com/about-sfmta/blog/designs-safer-polk-street>

I'd like to know what motivated the decision to remove the one block of protected bike lane between Pine and California. What changed between the open house and Mr. Jose's blog post on January 30, 2015?

Thank you again for your help!

Cheers,  
Amy Chen

On Thu, Feb 5, 2015 at 10:36 AM, Montoya, Luis <[Luis.Montoya@sfmta.com](mailto:Luis.Montoya@sfmta.com)> wrote:

Hi Amy,

I am the SFMTA project manager for the Polk Streetscape Project. I'd like to pass along the documents and correspondence you are requesting, but it would be helpful if you could give me a little more detail about what you are looking for so that I can focus my effort and respond in a timely manner.

Are you available for a quick phone call to go over your request? I can be reached at [\(415\) 701-4376](tel:4157014376).

Thank you,

Luis Montoya

Phone: [\(415\) 701-4376](tel:(415)701-4376)

[website](#) | [facebook](#)

**From:** Amy Chen

**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2015 5:17 PM

**To:** SFMTA Sunshine Requests

**Subject:** sunshine ordinance: documentation for the Polk Streetscape Project

To whom it may concern:

My name is Amy Chen, and I am writing to request all documentation and correspondence related to the Polk Streetscape Project between Pine and California from the SFMTA.

Please let me know where I can pick up said documentation & correspondence when this request is fulfilled.

Thank you very much,  
Amy Chen

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"For a man to help others with all his gifts and native strength -- that is the noblest work."

"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little." --  
FDR

--

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FDR