

July 12, 2019

Malcolm Heinicke, Chair  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors  
1 South Van Ness Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
[MTABoard@SFMTA.com](mailto:MTABoard@SFMTA.com)

**RE: Octavia Open Streets Project**

Dear Chairman Heinicke and SFMTA Board of Directors,

The Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association (HVNA) enthusiastically supports the package of “Octavia Open Streets” improvements on Octavia Street between Hayes Street and Fell Street. Car traffic in Hayes Valley and in the Octavia Boulevard Corridor has become untenable and this is a small but welcome remedy for one piece of the larger problem.

Since 2014, HVNA has worked closely with SFMTA staff to produce a set of priority projects for reducing chronic congestion and increasing public safety along the entire Octavia Boulevard corridor. In 2014 there was already too much congestion from private cars but now the area around Patricia’s Green has become especially unsafe and congested with private TNCs swarming the area. In 2017 and 2018 the temporary demonstration projects showed the promise of the Octavia Open Street scheme, and now it is time to make it permanent.

We point out that the Octavia Open Street Project includes only a half-block on both sides of Patricia’s Green – not the full block. While we would prefer making both sides of Patricia’s Green completely car free, we understand that compromise might be required at this juncture. We need immediate relief and this creates a welcoming public space while ensuring that residents with private cars on Linden Street can still access their private parking spaces.

In addition, the parcel immediately east of Patricia’s Green, “Parcel K” will soon be developed as much needed affordable housing. By opening Octavia to more human public access, the future households that will live in the new development will have safe and welcoming space for their children and families.

We are also supportive of the attention to cycling and urge careful implementation to ensure this important north-south cycling route is strengthened. If the SFMTA is going to meet its aspirations for transit first, reduced emissions, and green mobility, there must be a significant uptake in cycling, and schemes like the Octavia Open Streets can help.

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We commend the staff at SFMTA's Sustainable Streets division for their diligent and persistent work in the Octavia Corridor. Casey Hildreth and Mark Dreger are to be especially recognized for their creative and innovative approaches to addressing traffic and safety in our community.

There is much more work that needs to be done and many moving pieces, including addressing the chronic congestion and increasingly dangerous conditions on Page and Haight Streets. Moving forward, our hope is that SFMTA adopts a green mobility framework (prioritizing cycling, transit, and walking, and managing private car traffic) for the full length of the Fell-Oak-Page-Haight corridor from Stanyan to Octavia.

We look forward to working with SFMTA staff to do this and we urge you, the SFMTA Board of Directors, to pay attention to this.

For now, HVNA requests that you please approve and implement the Octavia Open Streets proposal without delay.

Sincerely,



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Chair, Transportation and Planning Committee,  
Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association  
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