



NEWS EVENT
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MAYOR NEWSOM UNVEILS FIRST BIKE LANE IN THREE YEARS 53% increase in ridership since 2006; Judge partially lifts 3-year injunction

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA) – Mayor Gavin Newsom, along with bicyclists, City leaders, neighborhood groups and business owners welcomed the City’s first bike lane in more than three years along the city’s popular “Wiggle” bike route at Scott and Oak streets and helped paint the city’s first green-colored “Bike Box” (an advanced stop line that gives bicyclists priority waiting room in front of cars at stop lights) at that same intersection. This bike route has also received additional improvements such as “sharrows” (shared lane arrows), new sidewalk bike racks, a temporary on-street bike parking corral for 16 bicycles (at Steiner and Waller streets), as well as improved bicycle way-finding signage.

These bicycle upgrades and others being added to neighborhoods across the city come just days after the SF Superior Court ruled to partially lift the three-year-old Bike Plan injunction that has prevented all physical improvements for bicycles in San Francisco. The Court’s decision allows the City to move forward with striping ten bike lanes (one of which is Scott St.) and painting 75-miles of “sharrows,” installing hundreds of sidewalk bike parking racks all across San Francisco and moving forward with innovations, like the “Bike Box,” which will enhance the safety and convenience of bicycling.

“Bicyclists have waited more than three years for new bike lanes, so today is an important beginning for better bicycling and a better San Francisco,” says Leah Shahum, Executive Director of the 11,000-member San Francisco Bicycle Coalition (SFBC), which promotes bicycling for everyday transportation. “We’re pleased that the city is acting so quickly to get these new improvements on the ground, especially given the huge increase in the number of people bicycling for transportation in San Francisco.”

The SF Municipal Transportation Agency has reported that bicycle ridership in the city has increased 53% since 2006 and ridership along the popular “Wiggle” route has grown a whopping 76% since 2006. The “Wiggle,” named for the circuitous path it takes from Market Street to the Panhandle of Golden Gate Park, is an important route connecting the western neighborhoods with Downtown and the Financial District.

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Residents who live nearby this bike route are excited about these improvements. “Bikes are an important part of this neighborhood—it’s how people get to work, the store, or out on a Saturday night—and we are happy to see it become easier and safer to bike this past week,” says Cheryl Brinkman, spokesperson for the Duboce Triangle Neighborhood Association.

New bike lanes will increase safety and create continuous biking routes for the 128,000 people who already bike regularly, and will attract tens of thousands of new bicyclists. **According to a just-released poll, more than half of San Franciscans say they *would* ride if streets had bike lanes and were more inviting for bicycling.** Official City counts reinforce this, as bicycling activity increases, on average, by 50% after a bike lane is added, including the following noteworthy increases where bike lanes have been added in the past: Howard St. (300% increase); Valencia St. (144%); Arguello (67%).

More than 35 projects remain on hold until the SF Superior Court hears the matter of the lawsuit which brought about the Bike Plan injunction, at which point the lawsuit could be dissolved and bring about a full lifting of the injunction. The City expects this hearing to take place in June 2010.

See <http://www.sfbike.org> for more information.

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