



NEWS

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Healthy Saturdays Compromise Wins New Car-Free Space in Golden Gate Park Coming Soon

San Francisco — Supporters of more safe, affordable, and accessible public space celebrated a victory for San Franciscans and visitors today, as a compromise proposal for Healthy Saturdays in Golden Gate Park passed the Board of Supervisors with a 9-2 vote.

The proposal establishes new car-free space in the Park on Saturdays on JFK Drive between Tea Garden Dr. (near 8th Ave.) and Transverse Dr. for six months each year, April through September, beginning Saturday, May 26th, Memorial Day weekend. The legislation was split into two parts for administrative purposes; the part that passed today covers this year, while the second part covers ongoing car-free space under the same terms. The Mayor's Office has committed to bring the second part of the legislation before the Board within weeks.

The victory results from years of organizing by community members and environmental, park, and neighborhood groups who championed an original proposal to make Saturdays just like the popular Sunday space, which offers a longer car-free area between Kezar Drive and Transverse Dr. in the Park. The original proposal ran into roadblocks due to the Mayor's veto last year of a six-month trial and due to opposition primarily from the de Young Museum. The Mayor's Office negotiated the winning compromise during a 15-hour negotiating session last week between the supporters and opponents of Healthy Saturdays.

"This compromise is not everything that the Park's users deserve, but it is an important step forward in creating safe, accessible car-free space in a popular section of the Park," says Leah Shahum, of the 6,100-member San Francisco Bicycle Coalition (SFBC), a member of the Healthy Saturdays coalition. "We are proud that we have helped establish more affordable recreational space in the middle of our city -- something that so many people value, particularly those without backyards of their own. We are also proud of our work in improving the accessibility of the Park for those with mobility challenges."

This Sunday, April 22nd the Healthy Saturdays coalition will team up with the Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP) to sponsor a ride in Golden Gate Park that is fun and accessible for people with, or without, disabilities. The ride, which will offer bikes equipped for people with mobility challenges, will meet Sunday at 1:30pm on JFK Dr. in front of McLaren Lodge.

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