



HAIGHT ASHBURY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Ted Loewenberg, President
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Mr. Ed Reiskin
San Francisco Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Dear Mr. Reiskin,

The Haight Ashbury Improvement Association (HAIA), a neighborhood group representing residents and merchants of the Upper Haight, has serious concerns regarding the potential loss of a travel lane on Oak street, in order to provide a bike lane between the Panhandle and the “wobble” bike lane. No community outreach has been conducted by the MTA on this project, which could have serious impacts on our neighborhood as well as the west side of San Francisco. According to the limited news coverage on this topic, MTA is relying on the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition for feedback on community acceptance of a proposed bike lane on Oak Street. HAIA believes a more neutral entity should be used by MTA to determine both the need and potential impacts of such a bike lane.

As you are aware, Oak Street is a major west to east transportation corridor that handles a large volume of commuter traffic to both downtown and the 101 and I-80 freeways. HAIA has seen no estimates or surveys of the numbers of bicyclists that are unable to use adjacent streets such as Page, Hayes or Fulton Street to access the “wobble.” Nor has any data been presented on the effects on Levels of Service along intersections on Oak Street with such proposed changes. Impacting the commutes of thousands of San Franciscans to make more convenient the rides of an unknown number of bicycle commuters would be premature. A serious, objective analysis is needed.

HAIA is especially concerned that MTA Planner Mr. Sallasberry has been quoted as supporting fast tracking this project. Without any environmental review for the potential bike lane, or outreach to the community, it is wrong fast track such plans. Sallasberry’s conclusion that “It sounds like people are open to it,” is insufficient justification for launching an experiment that could prove to be a disaster.

HAIA requests that MTA prepare a detailed study of the need, design, impact and estimated use of an Oak Street bike lane. Alternative plans to cross Oak Street to get to the “wobble” also need to be presented and evaluated. HAIA also insists that MTA meet with Haight-Ashbury and Inner Sunset community groups to receive feedback on the proposal. MTA planners should not be simply promoting the wishes of a city group with an agenda, such as the SFBC.

HAIA supports improved transportation options for all San Franciscans, including cyclists. The objective should be to achieve a reasonable balance of ease of use, costs, time efficiency and safety for all. This cannot be accomplished without detailed study and community buy-in. HAIA looks forward to participating in this process to get the best results for all residents of the City.

Sincerely,

Ted Loewenberg
President, Haight Ashbury Improvement Association

Cc: Mayor Ed Lee, SF Board of Supervisors