



**San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations**

*The Council is dedicated to the promotion, preservation and enhancement of San Francisco's business community.*

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September 25, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

The San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations support the Geary Boulevard Merchants in their contention that the Bus Rapid Transit plan to install light rail on Geary Boulevard to 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is not in the best interests of the businesses or the residents along that corridor.

We object to the plan for the following reasons:

1. The 55,000 cars that travel Geary Blvd. on a daily basis would clog all the parallel streets.
2. Hundreds of parking places that provide commerce for the businesses along that corridor would be lost.
3. The years of construction and congestion will unalterably cause business failures and change shopping patterns, i.e. the devastation along Third Street during construction of that light rail and the construction of BART along Market Street.
4. The effects of the threat of construction are already visible because some business owners have closed and moved or have decided not to renew long-term leases.
5. The merchants want and deserve an economic impact study to determine what damage, if any, will be caused by this project.

The Council agrees with the Geary Merchants that there is a need for negotiation with the community that has not taken place. We also agree that the Geary Merchants have a plan that should be tested, as follows:

1. Establish a dedicated transit lane on the right side, similar to what has been installed east of Van Ness.
2. Enforce the bus-dedicated lanes.
3. Activate the enhanced traffic signals that give the buses priority green lights upon approach.
4. Establish tow-away no parking to provide an express thoro-fare for buses during commute hours, i.e. up to 9 a.m. and from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m (times to be negotiated).

In other words, create a bus friendly environment for peak service hours - and at low cost. Don't force this light rail construction down the throats of the local merchants. Work with them to improve transit service and retain a viable commercial zone in San Francisco.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Maxwell, President

Cc: Mayor Gavin Newsom  
Members of the Board of Supervisors