



April 5, 2021

To the SFMTA Board:

We are a broad group of community organizations who deeply care about the South of Market and have decades of experience working with SoMa residents to find community-driven solutions to improve our neighborhood.

We are writing to you today to express our support for the Slow Streets identified in the South of Market (Lapu Lapu/Rizal/Tandang Sora/Bonifacio/Mabini streets from Folsom Street to Harrison Street). These streets are historical to our community because they are named after Filipinx heroes and sheroes. These streets are also where most of our senior population live, so it's quite fitting that this be the first Slow Street in SoMa.

We know that seniors and people with disabilities have difficulties navigating crowded streets like Sixth Street. We know that the type of housing in SoMa means that most of us don't have backyard space, and many of us and our members live in studios or single-room occupancy units.

In 2013, the City's Budget and Legislative Analyst reported that District 6 has the least amount of park space per resident in the entire city, while District 2 has 147 times more park space than District 6. If there were inequalities before, the COVID-19 pandemic has made these inequalities so much more evident and painful.

Programs like Slow Streets have existed for almost a year now. We wrote to you in July of last year, calling on the SF Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to prioritize the SoMa community by expanding Slow Streets into our neighborhood. Though we are excited to see these Slow Streets moving forward, this process has taken too long and those most impacted by the lack of space in this neighborhood are the residents. The ones who, for the last year, have been living in cramped apartments and haven't been able to leave due to the lack of open space in our community.

As the SFMTA Board of Directors reviews and votes on Phase Four of Slow Streets, we encourage you all to look at this program through an equity lens and to work with urgency in expanding Slow Streets to other streets in SoMa. SoMa residents can't wait another year for spaces to congregate safely outdoors and we need places where our children and our families can play. We need streets that we can feel comfortable walking down instead of narrow, crowded sidewalks.

Thank you for your attention to this letter, and we look forward to seeing how Slow Streets can be a tool for all San Franciscans, including the SoMa community.

Sincerely,  
Galing Bata Filipino Education Center  
Kultivate Labs  
South of Market Community Action Network  
SoMa Pilipinas Cultural District  
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition  
Walk San Francisco  
West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Center  
Undiscovered San Francisco  
United Playaz