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San Francisco Launches Nation's First Walk to Work Day

Win Prizes from Walk SF for Tweets about Streets

On Friday April 12, **San Francisco became the nation's first city to officially celebrate Walk to Work Day (walk2workday.org)**, with Mayor Lee and nine Supervisors walking in from **all over the city**. Local nonprofit Walk San Francisco organized the event, encouraging participants to visit hubs to power up with free coffee, then share experiences and photos online on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, using the hashtag **#Walk2Work** to win prizes.

"San Francisco is proud to lead the nation in celebrating Walk to Work Day," said Mayor Ed Lee, who walked up Market Street to City Hall with City Department Heads, calling attention to the Better Market Street project and Central Market's new Sixth Street Safety Hub, and released a new Pedestrian Strategy today.

"Our City attracts residents, workers and visitors from all over the world who love to walk here, and that's why pedestrian safety is one of my highest priorities to make the walking experience safer and better for everyone."

The Mayor's new Pedestrian Strategy lays out a plan for fixing five miles of streets a year – particularly the city's high-speed arterial streets – to cut pedestrian collisions by 25 percent by 2016, and cut them in half by 2021.

Walk San Francisco executive director Elizabeth Stampe applauded the new plan to fix streets, improve enforcement, and make walking better not just on Walk to Work Day, but every day.

"We applaud the Mayor's bold commitment to prioritize safer streets and a more livable city. When streets are safer, people are healthier and businesses thrive," said Stampe. "Walk to Work Day is an excellent opportunity for folks to see what's working, and what the city needs to take action to fix."

Nine members of the **Board of Supervisors** also walked to work today and most spoke at the press event on the steps of City Hall:

- The contender for longest commute was Supervisor John Avalos, who along with aides and constituents, set out from Mamá Art Café at 7:30 this morning to make the 5-mile trek.
- Supervisors Mar, Chiu, Campos, Wiener, and Farrell also walked from their neighborhoods.
- Supervisors Cohen and Tang joined up with Supervisor Breed in Hayes Valley, celebrating an example of a vibrant, walkable neighborhood that was created in the wake of a freeway. Ritual Coffee handed out free coffee for everyone's walk to City Hall for the press event.

"Part of your commute is always on foot. Walk to Work Day is the opportunity to notice that, and notice what could make it better," said Elizabeth Stampe, executive director of Walk San Francisco, which organized the event.

“There are a lot of things the City can do to fix streets to be safer and more walkable, with calmer traffic, wider sidewalks, more trees, and better crossings. ”

“We’re happy to be leading the nation today to recognize walking as a critical part of our transportation system,” said Ed Reiskin, Director of Transportation of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). “Every trip includes walking. We’re committed to designing streets so that whether people are walking from the bus to the office or all the walk all the way to work, they feel safe and comfortable.”

The Paramount Group, the event’s presenting sponsor, owns and operates One Market, as well as the forthcoming 75 Howard, which will eliminate an eight-story parking garage and replace it with housing.

“We’re thrilled to be a part of Walk to Work Day. It’s in keeping with our focus on being part of a healthy, walkable neighborhood in San Francisco,” said Paramount Group Vice President Marce Sanchez. “That’s why we’re planning to tear down a parking structure and build homes near workplaces and transit instead.”

Afterward, walkers are celebrating at a happy hour at Show Dogs, 1020 Market Street at Taylor. Participant photos will be shown and prizes will be awarded in contests for “Longest Walking Commute,” “Best Shoe Bling,” “Most Interesting Sight,” and “Most Employees Participating,” as well as for random drawings.

While *Prevention Magazine* introduced the idea in 2004, no U.S. city has implemented Walk to Work Day officially until now. Building on the success of Bike to Work Day, Walk San Francisco piloted the event last year; the city’s compact size and mild weather make it a good fit, and organizers said they expected thousands of participants, especially online, now that Walk to Work Day is an official city event.

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Walk San Francisco (WalkSF.org) and its members are making San Francisco a more **livable, walkable city** and reclaiming streets as shared public space for everyone to enjoy.

National Walk to Work Day is held every April, introduced by *Prevention Magazine* in 2004, to encourage walking as a healthy part of everyday life.

Paramount Group, Inc presents Walk to Work Day in San Francisco in 2013. Paramount Group is an environmentally and socially conscious real estate company that owns and operates One Market and the forthcoming 75 Howard. **Paramount-Group.com**

Thanks also to supporting sponsor **New Balance** and sponsors TMASF Connects, GJEL Attorneys, the SF Municipal Transportation Agency, 511.org, Lennar, FunCheapSF, UCSF, and John Fluevog Shoes.

