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****PRESS RELEASE****

SAN FRANCISCO COMMITS TO ALL-ELECTRIC BUS FLEET BY 2035

Muni currently operates greenest fleet in the U.S. and is developing “Green Zones” to test current hybrid vehicles and their ability to run only on battery power

SAN FRANCISCO—Mayor Mark Farrell and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which operates Muni, today announced San Francisco’s commitment to have an all-electric bus fleet by 2035. This means that the SFMTA will only purchase all-electric buses starting in 2025 to meet the goal for 2035. An all-electric bus does not use fuel and relies solely on the battery within its operating system.

“San Francisco is proud to once again lead on sustainable initiatives that not only improve our city, but improve the world,” said Mayor Farrell. “This new investment represents a bold shift in how we move hundreds of thousands of people on public transit, while reaffirming San Francisco’s commitment to sustainable energy practices.”

The SFMTA Board of Directors today approved a resolution supporting the commitment towards an all-electric bus fleet. Muni currently operates the largest fleet of zero emissions electric trolley buses. Trolley buses, like all light rail, streetcar, and cable car vehicles, run on 100 percent greenhouse gas-free Hetch Hetchy electricity via overhead wires. Muni also runs a fleet of low emissions electric hybrid vehicles. The electric hybrid vehicles run on battery, as well as clean, renewable diesel.

“We are excited about the possibility that by 2035 we will be able to provide an all-electric fleet that won’t require overhead wires,” said Cheryl Brinkman, Chairman of the SFMTA Board of Directors. “As an agency, we have always been forward thinkers when it comes to greening our fleet and we will continue to take steps to test electric vehicles here in San Francisco to reach our goal.”

The SFMTA has been rolling out new electric hybrid buses with higher capacity on-board battery systems. The increased on-board battery capacity will allow the SFMTA to run a test program to operate “Green Zones” along several electric hybrid routes that would run only by battery for significant portions of the route. The “Green Zone” signifies an area in which the vehicle will not produce any emissions. The SFMTA is working to identify these zones throughout the city.



“Muni’s transit system is the cornerstone of our city’s environmentally sustainable transportation system and is one of the greenest in the world,” said Ed Reiskin, SFMTA’s Director of Transportation. “Our efforts to take our fleet to the next level won’t only make for better and more efficient service, but they will continue the work we are doing to be one of the cleanest fleets in the country and improve rider experience.”

The SFMTA is at the ready to move forward with electric bus technology when manufacturers can prove their electric buses can withstand heavy ridership and steep hills. The agency would also have to consider new facilities that can charge a large fleet and developing a systemwide infrastructure to charge vehicles in service or on the street. John Haley, SFMTA’s Transit Director said, “While the battery technology is emerging rapidly, it isn’t quite ready for primetime. Manufacturers aren’t yet producing the number of all-electric buses San Francisco and other urban areas would need, nor could we guarantee that the vehicles would work for the required 15 years with heavy ridership and challenging topography.”

In 2019, the SFMTA intends to purchase a limited number of zero-emission battery electric buses and test them in service throughout San Francisco to evaluate how they perform on crowded and hilly routes. The most important step to support the zero-emission goal is to determine the infrastructure needs for electric buses, including upgrades for our existing facilities to accommodate charging requirements and maintenance.

Of the nearly 900 all-electric buses purchased across the country, only 207 are actually in service. By contrast, Muni is currently operating 250 electric trolley vehicles.

In recent years, the SFMTA has replaced over 90 percent of its older diesel buses with cleaner, more efficient electric hybrid vehicles that run on renewable diesel. These electric hybrid vehicles offer dramatically lower fuel consumption, decreased engine idling time while in service, and a substantial reduction in emissions. The SFMTA’s switch from conventional diesel to electric hybrid vehicles has reduced consumption of fuel by 5.4 million gallons and 82,000 tons of CO₂ over the 12-year life of the fleet.

Over 50 percent of the transit fleet, including light rail, cable cars, historic streetcars and electric trolley buses are largely powered by greenhouse gas-free hydropower generated from Hetch Hetchy. Beyond that, our new electric hybrid buses use 100 percent renewable fuel. This eliminates greenhouse gas emissions and petroleum fuel and saves a million gallons of fuel each year. San Francisco’s transportation sector generates approximately 46 percent of the City’s total greenhouse gas emissions mostly generated by the use of private cars and commercial trucks. By contrast, Muni carries 26 percent of all trips in the city, but accounts for less than two percent of these emissions.

On April 19, 2018, in celebration of Earth Day, Mayor Mark Farrell committed San Francisco to net-zero greenhouse gas emission by 2050, a move that will eliminate the City’s carbon footprint.



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Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.

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