

# Memorandum to the Board of Directors



TO: SFMTA Board of Directors  
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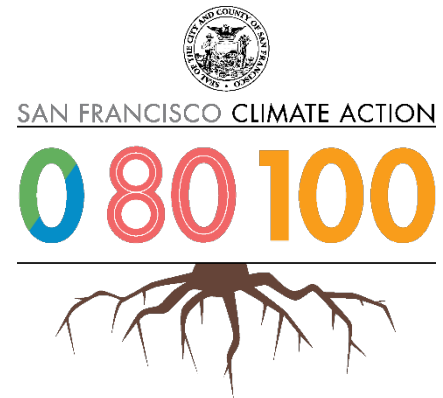
THROUGH: Edward D. Reiskin, Director of Transportation

FROM: Tom Maguire, Director of Sustainable Streets Division

DATE: March 29, 2019

RE: Resolution No. 107-18, Biodiversity Resolution and the SFMTA

On April 17, 2018 the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 107-18 which establishes biodiversity goals and articulates a vision wherein San Francisco is a place where local biodiversity thrives in climate-resilient ecosystems throughout our city's physical environment, connecting all San Franciscans to nature daily and inspiring stewardship in every neighborhood. Over the past 10 months, SFMTA staff have participated in an interagency biodiversity working group to help meet the requirements of the resolution. Pursuant to the resolution, SFMTA conducted a baseline biodiversity survey, therein identifying agency plans, policies and initiatives that support biodiversity. This memo highlights agency accomplishments to date and outlines potential opportunities to advance biodiversity in San Francisco.



The biodiversity resolution is integrated with the **0-80-100 Roots** climate framework which is the city's call to climate action; committing to zero waste by 2020, shifting 80 percent of trips to sustainable trips by 2030, shifting 100 percent of energy to renewables by 2030, protecting our urban green spaces and promoting biodiversity. The resolution establishes five citywide goals:

1. **Biologically Rich Ecosystems:** Restore, maintain, and monitor robust habitats, natural areas, open spaces, watersheds, marine ecosystems, and urban forests to support diverse ecosystems and mitigate climate change impacts.
2. **Equitable Access, Awareness, and Experience of Nature:** Connect all residents, workers, and visitors with nature every day in neighborhood green spaces, parks, and natural habitats.
3. **Community and Ecological Stewardship:** Empower people and partnerships to promote cultivate, enjoy, and restore nature in every neighborhood.

4. **Ecological Planning and Design:** Incorporate biodiverse, purposeful greening into all building and open space development; creating diverse habitats for many species of wildlife.
5. **Resilience in a Living City:** Leverage local natural ecosystems to sequester carbon, conserve water, manage flooding, control pests, and improve air quality to support climate adaptation

SFMTA recognizes the critical role of biodiversity, green infrastructure and the city’s urban canopy in addressing the public health and environmental crisis caused by climate change. The city’s transportation sector generates approximately half of all citywide emissions. Our ecosystems, natural areas and green infrastructure in our urban spaces are integral in making sustainable travel options more attractive, improving air quality and quality of life, and helping to sequester carbon emissions to meet our ambitious climate goals.

### Accomplishments to Date

SFMTA is committed to collaboration and partnership across the city family to advance the city’s biodiversity vision, as laid out in the Resolution, in line with the city’s transportation and climate goals. SFMTA supports and advances the city’s biodiversity vision and goals by connecting people with neighborhood green spaces, parks, and natural habitats and promoting partnerships to support ecological planning and design for a resilient city. SFMTA’s vision is excellent transportation choices and the agency’s mission is to connect the city through a safe, equitable and sustainable transportation system. From the city’s Transit First policy and the 2017 Transportation Sector Climate Action Strategy, to the Strategic Plan; environmental stewardship is at the heart of what we do.

For example, SFMTA’s **2018 Strategic Plan** sets forth the goal to improve the quality of life and environment in San Francisco and the region and establishes the objective to provide environmental stewardship to improve air quality, enhance resource efficiency, and address climate change. The **2017 Transportation Climate Action Strategy** provides a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing the resilience of the city’s transportation system to future climate impacts. One of the strategies in the Transportation Sector Climate Action Strategy calls for integration of green infrastructure into transportation projects as an approach to increasing biodiversity, improving the public realm and sequestering carbon emissions. Street projects like **Page Street Neighborway** make streets safer and more pleasant place to walk and bike. These projects, delivered in partnership with critical city partners, provide green connections the nearby parks and include landscaping and green infrastructure which help to manage stormwater and support local ecosystems.



Additionally, Muni service is the cornerstone of SFMTA's climate mitigation strategies and key component of how the agency supports biodiversity. Muni helps to connect San Franciscans and visitors to over 4,000 acres and 230 parks, natural areas, and recreational areas; including weekend service to Marin Headlands. Transit improvement projects (**Muni Forward**) across the city ultimately help to ensure equitable access to nature in neighborhood green spaces, parks, and natural habitats. Additionally, many of SFMTA's 20+ operation yards incorporate green infrastructure and landscaping that support native plants.

## Opportunities

Engagement and collaboration with key partners across the city family will be critical to ensure the city's biodiversity goals and vision are advanced and prioritized. The below highlight potential opportunities that SFMTA could advance to help realize the city's biodiversity goals.

1. Continue to provide transit service and deliver **Muni Forward** projects to ensure access to biologically rich ecosystems, neighborhood green spaces, parks and natural open spaces.
2. Deliver the **Forest Hill Irrigation Improvement Project** which aims to significantly reduce water usage at the Forest Hill Muni Station by replacing the station area's 40-year-old irrigation system. It will also reduce a portion of the sod area and introduce drought tolerant and native plants.
3. **Foster partnerships** with city agencies and community organization to explore strategies for the inclusion and maintenance of green infrastructure in street projects, assess resource constraints, and equip staff with tools to advance those projects and partnerships.
4. Assess opportunities to incorporate native plants and green infrastructure into planned **facility upgrades** and maintenance of SFMTA **real estate** such as transit adjacent open spaces, and operator restrooms. Assess opportunities to incorporate biodiversity and green infrastructure into new facility projects and **Transit Oriented Development** on SFMTA property.
5. Incorporate biodiversity into agency **climate and sustainability communications** by way of the 0-80-100 Roots Citywide Climate Action framework and identify opportunities to increase public outreach and awareness that emphasizes the importance of biodiversity.
6. **Increase staff capacity** by participating in and supporting trainings and workshops provided by the Department of the Environment and others on topics of biodiversity, local nature conservations, green infrastructure and climate resiliency.

SFMTA staff will continue to participate in the interagency biodiversity working group and looks forward to helping to achieve the city's biodiversity goals. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to reach out to me or Emily Stefiuk at [emily.stefiuk@sfmta.com](mailto:emily.stefiuk@sfmta.com).