

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO. : 14

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Sustainable Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Approving permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modifications associated with the Commuter Shuttle Program.

SUMMARY:

- The SFMTA Board of Directors has authority to adopt changes to parking and traffic regulations.
- On March 1, 2016, the SFMTA Board adopted revisions to the Commuter Shuttle Program which permits eligible commuter shuttle operators to use a designated network of stops in San Francisco. The current Commuter Shuttle Program went into effect on April 1, 2016 and will expire on March 31, 2017.
- The current Commuter Shuttle Program was established after an 18-month pilot program that evaluated a regulatory framework for commuter shuttles in San Francisco. The current Program includes a number of changes, including a requirement that shuttles over 35 feet in length travel only on Caltrans-designated arterial streets.
- Restricting large shuttles to arterial streets requires removal of commuter shuttle zones located on non-arterial streets and creation of new zones on arterials. The SFMTA also makes periodic adjustments to the shuttle network in order to address safety concerns and accommodate construction.
- The SFMTA may designate up to 125 shuttle stop locations across the City at any time, including shared Muni zones and shuttle-only loading zones.
- The San Francisco Planning Department has determined that the Commuter Shuttle Program is exempt from environmental review.

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution

APPROVALS:

DATE

DIRECTOR _____ 7/12/16

SECRETARY R. Boomer _____ 7/12/16

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: July 19, 2016

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PURPOSE

Approve permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modifications to support the Commuter Shuttle Program.

GOAL

This action supports the following SFMTA Strategic Plan Goal and Objectives:

Goal 1: Create a safer transportation experience for everyone

Objective 1.3: Improve the safety of the transportation system.

Goal 2: Make transit, walking, bicycling, taxi, ridesharing and carsharing the preferred means of travel

Objective 2.3: Increase use of all non-private auto modes

DESCRIPTION

Commuter Shuttle Program Overview

On March 1, 2016, the SFMTA Board approved revisions to the Commuter Shuttle Program which permits eligible commuter shuttle operators to use a designated network of stops including both designated Muni stops and a number of permitted commuter shuttle-only loading zones in San Francisco. The current Commuter Shuttle Program went into effect on April 1, 2016 and will expire on March 31, 2017.

The SFMTA conducted an 18-month pilot from August 2014 through January 2016 to evaluate a regulatory framework in which eligible commuter shuttles that pay a fee and comply with permit terms are permitted to stop in designated shared Muni zones and shuttle-only loading zones. The new Commuter Shuttle Program expanded on the Pilot and will inform any future changes in commuter shuttle regulation.

The 2016-2017 program includes the following characteristics:

- A network of up to 125 shuttle stop locations, including shared Muni zones and shuttle-only loading zones
- Large shuttles over 35 feet in length may travel and load only on the arterial network as designated by the California Department of Transportation
- Shuttle service providers apply for a permit to use network, and pay a permit fee based on the number of stops made at authorized locations, with the permit fee covering the SFMTA's costs for administering and enforcing the program
- Permittees are responsible for ensuring that their operators comply with agreed-upon operating guidelines
- Shuttles must display permit placards on four sides of vehicle and display a "how is my driving?" sticker
- The program is enforced by SFMTA Parking Control Officers and Muni Inspectors, including a dedicated team of Parking Control Officers focused solely on commuter shuttles
- Permittees are required to share data on operations with the SFMTA, following specifications established by the SFMTA

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- Permittees must submit a Service Disruption Prevention Plan with their permit application

The Commuter Shuttle Program includes clear and enforceable guidelines for shuttle loading and unloading which lead to increased safety when shuttles interact with other road users, reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and associated emissions reduction and lessening of congestion, as well as minimal impact on Muni service.

Van Ness and Gough Locations

In order to accommodate Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) construction, the SFMTA is relocating a number of commuter shuttle zones from Van Ness Avenue to Franklin and Gough Streets. The SFMTA Board has already approved three new shuttle stops on Franklin and Gough Streets. A potential fourth location at Gough and Bush Streets (Item A) was identified later in the process as a result of community feedback as an alternative to an earlier proposal for a shuttle stop at Gough and Pine Streets.

Staff were unable to bring Item A to the SFMTA Board before shuttle zones had to be moved off of Van Ness in order to allow bus rapid transit construction to proceed. Therefore, the City Traffic Engineer signed a construction directive implementing the stop on a temporary basis while the approval process is ongoing.

Franklin Street is weight-restricted between Lombard and California Streets, and Gough Street is weight-restricted between Union and California Streets. Therefore, the commuter shuttle zones at Van Ness Avenue and Union Street cannot be relocated to Franklin and Gough Streets and will remain on Van Ness Avenue during construction. Item B creates a commuter shuttle-only loading zone separate from the current shared commuter shuttle-Muni zone at Van Ness Avenue and Union Street in order to eliminate conflicts between commuter shuttles and Muni vehicles.

Cesar Chavez Location

Currently, northbound commuter shuttles stop at a shared Muni zone at the northeast corner of Valencia and 25th Streets. This Muni zone is directly adjacent to a loading zone for the Synergy School. During school loading times, parents and stakeholders at the school have reported conflicts between shuttles and parents dropping off students at the school.

In order to eliminate these conflicts, the SFMTA is proposing to create a new shuttle loading zone at Cesar Chavez and Bartlett Streets (Item C). Shuttles would no longer be permitted to stop at the Muni zone at the northeast corner of Valencia and 25th Streets. The new stop location would be in effect during the morning and afternoon peak periods.

These proposed changes would remain in effect only for the duration of the current Commuter Shuttle Program.

The proposed Items were presented at duly noticed public hearings on May 20, 2016 and June 17, 2016.

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These changes require SFMTA Board approval:

- A. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY NO PARKING, PERMITTED COMMUTER SHUTTLE BUS ZONE, 6 AM TO 10 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Gough Street, west side, from Bush Street to 78 feet southerly (restricts parking through 4 RPP spaces)
- B. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY NO PARKING, PERMITTED COMMUTER SHUTTLE BUS ZONE, 4 PM TO 8 PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Van Ness Avenue, east side, from Union Street to 85 feet southerly
- C. ESTABLISH – TOW AWAY NO STOPPING PERMITTED COMMUTER SHUTTLE BUS ZONE, 6 AM TO 10 AM AND 4 PM TO 8PM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Cesar Chavez Street, north side, from Bartlett Street to 135 feet westerly (restricts parking at 3 metered spaces and restricts 2 yellow loading zone spaces from 8 AM to 10 AM and 4 PM to 6 PM)

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Items A and B were discussed at the May 20, 2016 engineering public hearing, and Item C was discussed at the June 17, 2016 engineering public hearing. Public hearing notices were posted on sign poles with information about the proposed change and hearing. In addition, postcards with further details about the proposed change and hearing were mailed to nearby residents and business owners for Items A and C prior to the hearings.

Public comments on Item A related to concerns about congestion impacts, parking loss, and pedestrian safety. In addition, some neighbors expressed concerns about the use of a construction directive to implement the shuttle zone on a temporary basis prior to SFMTA Board approval.

No public comment have been received regarding Items B or C.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The SFMTA carefully considered a number of potential locations before proposing the creation of these new commuter shuttle zones. Alternatives were evaluated based on a number of criteria, with the highest priority being the safety of people walking, biking and driving in the area. Specific factors include, among others:

- Adjacency to an intersection – shuttle zones located at the “near-side” of an intersection can obstruct right-turning drivers’ view of pedestrians in a crosswalk
- Curb access – tree limbs or other extending over the roadway or zones located in the middle of a block can prevent shuttles from pulling all the way to the curb, leading to blocked travel lanes
- Driveways and parking – the SFMTA works to minimize shuttle zones’ impact on driveways and on neighborhood parking supply

Gough and Bush (Item A) Alternatives Considered

- Gough at Pine: Staff previously proposed creating a commuter shuttle zone at Gough and Pine Streets. Neighbors expressed concerns regarding blocked driveways at that location.
- Gough at California: In order to access a shuttle zone at Gough and California from Van Ness Avenue, commuter shuttles would have to turn left from California into the right

lane of Gough, forcing them to cross over multiple lanes of traffic. In addition, a zone at this location would block a residential driveway.

- Gough at Sutter: The block of Gough between Sutter and Post is relatively steep compared with adjacent blocks, which could result in visibility problems.
- Gough at Post: A shuttle zone in this location would block a driveway serving a very large apartment complex.
- Gough at Geary: Staff is considering proposing a shuttle zone at this location. A potential zone there would require additional engineering work and extensive outreach to neighbors and community stakeholders. In addition, this location is over a mile from Van Ness and Union, resulting in a relatively long stop spacing in this high ridership corridor.
- Pine at Franklin: A stop in this location would block driveways serving an auto repair business, and a tree trunk extends out over the roadway, potentially preventing shuttles from pulling all the way to the curb. In addition, the block is relatively steep, and shuttles would have to cross three lanes of traffic in one block in order to turn left onto Gough and continue towards the freeway.
- Sutter at Franklin: A stop in this location would partially block a transit-only lane. In addition, shuttles would have to cross three lanes of traffic in one block in order to turn left onto Gough and continue towards the freeway.

Cesar Chavez and Bartlett (Item C) Alternatives Considered

- Valencia and 26th: Staff previously proposed creating a commuter shuttle zone at the northeast corner of Valencia and 26th. Nearby businesses and stakeholders expressed concerns about parking loss associated with this stop. In addition, removing commuter shuttle zones entirely from Valencia in the northbound direction could enhance safety for people bicycling on one of the busiest bicycle corridors in San Francisco.
- Cesar Chavez and Mission: There is a Muni bulb at this location, so shuttles stopping there would block the bicycle lane and partially block the travel lane.

FUNDING IMPACT

All costs associated with the Commuter Shuttle Program are being recovered through the Designated Stop Use and Permit Fee.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

On October 22, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined (Case Number 2015-007975ENV) that the Commuter Shuttle Program is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301 and Section 15308.

The Planning Department's determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve the proposed permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modifications, to remain in effect for the duration of Commuter Shuttle Program.

SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has identified a need for parking modifications in support of the Commuter Shuttle Pilot program as follows:

- A. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY NO PARKING, PERMITTED COMMUTER SHUTTLE BUS ZONE, 6 AM TO 10 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – Gough Street, west side, from Bush Street to 78 feet southerly (restricts parking through 4 RPP spaces)
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WHEREAS, On October 22, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined (Case Number 2015- 007975ENV) that these traffic and parking modifications are categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301 and Section 15308; and,

WHEREAS, The Planning Department’s determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, The Commuter Shuttle Program established by the SFMTA Board of Directors calls for the creation of a network of designated stops, composed of shared existing Muni zones, and to include extensions of existing Muni zones and permitted commuter shuttle only loading zones as needed; and,

WHEREAS, The public has been notified about the proposed parking modifications and has been given the opportunity to comment on those modifications through the public hearing process; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves the permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modifications listed as A through C above, to remain in effect for the duration of Commuter Shuttle Program.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of July 19, 2016.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency