

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO. 10.3

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Sustainable Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

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

SUMMARY:

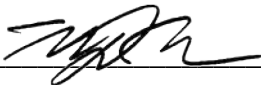
- The SFMTA Board of Directors has authority to adopt changes to parking and traffic regulations.
- On March 1, 2016, the SFMTA Board adopted revisions to the Commuter Shuttle Program which permits eligible commuter shuttle operators to use a designated network of stops in San Francisco. The current 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.
- The requested change would establish a tow-away no parking, permitted commuter shuttle bus zone, 6 am to 10 am, Monday through Friday on the west side of Gough Street, from Geary Boulevard to 135 feet southerly.
- The San Francisco Planning Department has determined that the Commuter Shuttle Program is exempt from environmental review.

ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution
2. Map of proposed commuter shuttle zone change

APPROVALS:

DATE

DIRECTOR  10/11/16

SECRETARY  10/11/16

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: October 18, 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 shuttle operators 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

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- 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
- 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.

Gough Street and Geary Boulevard Location

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 approved five new shuttle stops on Franklin and Gough Streets to replace the four stops along Van Ness Avenue between Grove and Sacramento Streets that were removed in early June to allow BRT preconstruction work to proceed.

Staff have observed capacity issues at the commuter shuttle zone at Gough Street and Bush Street in the morning peak period, causing shuttles to block travel lanes while loading and leading to sidewalk crowding. As such, the SFMTA Board has directed staff to review this stop and investigate other potential stop locations in the area. In order to provide extra capacity in the corridor, the SFMTA is proposing to add one additional commuter shuttle zone on Gough Street at Geary Boulevard. The zone would be in effect from 6 am to 10 am Monday through Friday.

The proposed item was presented at a duly noticed public hearing on September 16, 2016.

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 Geary Boulevard to 135 southerly (restricts parking at 6 RPP parking spaces)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

During the summer, before proposing a shuttle stop in this location, SFMTA staff contacted representatives from St. Mary’s Cathedral and the Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory School. St. Mary’s Cathedral staff expressed concern regarding safety of the intersection at Gough Street and Geary Boulevard and that shuttle riders could be hit while crossing the street Sacred Heart Cathedral

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Preparatory School did not express any concerns regarding the proposed stop.

This item was discussed at the September 16, 2016 engineering public hearing. Prior to the hearing, notices were posted on nearby light poles and mailed to all addresses a one- to two-block radius of the proposed stop. Two neighbors expressed concern regarding parking and traffic impacts of the shuttle stop while one neighbor expressed support for a shuttle stop in this location. Three people testified in favor of the stop at the public hearing, including one neighbor who suggested that stop be expanded from the current proposal and two residents near the existing stop at Gough and Bush Streets who supported reducing the number of shuttles at that location.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The SFMTA carefully considered a number of potential locations before proposing the creation of this new commuter shuttle zone. 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 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
- Reduction of conflicts between Muni buses and commuter shuttle vehicles
- Minimizing impacts to street trees

Specific alternatives considered include the following locations:

- 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 Pine: Staff previously proposed creating a commuter shuttle zone at Gough and Pine Streets. Neighbors expressed concerns regarding blocked driveways and safety at that location.
- 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 at least one driveway serving a very large apartment complex.
- Gough and Ellis: Previously proposed, SFMTA Board asked staff to look at alternatives due to potential conflicts with Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory School student drop-off. Grade is also very steep in this location, causing potential visibility problems.

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- Gough and Eddy: Steep grade, causing potential visibility problems. In addition, substantial tree limbs extend out over street and would have to be removed to allow shuttles to pull in to the curb.
- 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.

FUNDING IMPACT

All costs associated with the Commuter Shuttle Program are 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.

OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this calendar item.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve the proposed permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modification, 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 Geary Boulevard to 135 southerly (restricts parking at 6 RPP parking spaces)

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 modification listed as A 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 October 18, 2016.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency