



Mobility Permit Harmonization

Phases and Timeline

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is launching a “Mobility Permit Harmonization” effort to create a standardized process for shared mobility companies to work with the City and County of San Francisco. The goal of this process is to allow new mobility service entrants a clear path for innovation on San Francisco streets, while ensuring the SFMTA has the regulatory tools needed to manage and evaluate their contributions to the City’s mobility goals, and alignment with the City’s [Guiding Principles for Emerging Mobility](#).



In order to harmonize the SFMTA’s management of current and future shared mobility services, it will be necessary to amend the Transportation Code in several respects. To accomplish this, we will (1) propose new legislation and restructure the Transportation Code to better organize and coordinate shared mobility permit programs with a consistent process; (2) coordinate data reporting and data metrics to provide the ability to understand the impacts of shared mobility services on the transportation network; and (3) standardize operational processes and tools to administer, monitor, and enforce shared mobility service permits. Overall, the SFMTA’s goal is to move from a reactive to a proactive approach to both piloting and regulating these services. The SFMTA’s effort will align with the City’s proposed creation of a [Office of Emerging Technology](#).

Transportation Code Phase I

Transportation Code Division I Amendment

Currently, if there is not an existing permit program for a new mobility service, companies can generally start operating until a violation is established and a permit program developed. This can be a lengthy process, which requires amendments to the Transportation Code, including the definition of each respective new device, as well as creating a violation for each type of service, and in the meantime, that service would still be operating outside of a structured permit program. In order to shift into a more proactive position, the SFMTA will request the Board of Supervisors amend Division I of the Transportation Code to make it a violation to operate a “Shared Mobility Device Service” without a permit or other authorization from the SFMTA. This will ensure that shared mobility services that are within the SFMTA’s jurisdiction to regulate obtain authorization before they begin operations.

Transportation Code Division II Amendments

In parallel with the proposed Transportation Code Division I amendments, staff will request the SFMTA Board approve proposed changes to Transportation Code Division II to create a clear path to test innovative transportation services in San Francisco. This “Proof of Concept Authorization” (POCA) would enable companies to test a service in a limited manner under the discretion of the SFMTA Director, presuming basic conditions for public safety, health, and welfare, and alignment with City mobility goals are met. The POCA is intended to provide a means for the SFMTA to authorize new shared mobility device services to test in limited numbers and on a limited basis, as an additional option to the SFMTA developing a conventional permit program. Division II changes would also impose basic substantive requirements, such as defining a Shared Mobility Device Service to encompass current shared mobility device services (bike share and scooter share) as well as such services that may be introduced in the future.

Transportation Code Phase II

Transportation Code Division II Restructuring

The SFMTA staff will request the SFMTA Board approve a restructure to Division II of the Transportation Code so that permit requirements for existing shared mobility services are under one umbrella. This will provide multiple benefits and efficiencies for staff, mobility service providers and the public, by providing a consistent, standard regulatory framework. This will also streamline the addition of new permit programs as they arise without having to recreate basic elements (e.g. appeals process).

Mobility Data Harmonization

Currently, data sharing requirements are tailored to the needs and key metrics of individual permit programs, resulting in many different custom data requirements. The SFMTA’s goal is to evaluate the growing number of permit programs using a consistent set of metrics framed by the Guiding Principles for Emerging Mobility. Standardizing the data requirements across services, to the extent that services operate in a similar manner – including the data requested and how it is transmitted – will enable staff to evaluate services in a more comparable way amongst the different providers and modes. Standardization will also provide service providers with a consistent and predictable approach to comply with data sharing requirements.

Timeline for Next Steps

Outreach Process	Summer/Fall 2019
Transportation Code Division II Amendment: SFMTA Board	Late Fall 2019
Transportation Code Division I Amendment: Board of Supervisors	Late Fall 2019
Data Harmonization:	On-going
Harmonizing / Standardizing Permit Programs	On-going
Launch Proof of Concept Application Process	Winter 2020
Transportation Code Division II Restructuring: SFMTA Board	Spring 2020

Additional Information and Feedback

For more information about permit harmonization and to provide feedback, see sfmta.com/projects/mobility-permit-harmonization.