

**THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO. : 11**

**SAN FRANCISCO  
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

**DIVISION:** Sustainable Streets

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION:**

Directing staff to perform a six-month review of the Commuter Shuttle Program, explore a “hub” or potentially more efficient zone network model in collaboration with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and monitor air quality and significant increases in stop-events at individual locations; and amending the Transportation Code, Division II, Section 914 to limit the Commuter Shuttle Program to one year and cap the number of designated stops at 125.

**SUMMARY:**

- The SFMTA launched a Commuter Shuttle Pilot Program (Pilot) in August 2014, which established a permit program and fee to enable eligible shuttle service providers to use a network of designated Muni and white curb loading zones to load and unload passengers, to determine if management of shuttles could reduce traffic conflicts and other issues.
- An extensive evaluation determined that the Pilot was successful in managing the impacts of commuter shuttles.
- On November 17, 2015, the SFMTA Board approved a Commuter Shuttle Program (Program) that continues the regulation of commuter shuttles with revisions, including phasing in a newer and greener fleet, limiting large shuttles to the arterial street network, allowing shuttles that are free to the public to use the zone network without a fee, and requiring a plan to address service disruptions, including those arising from labor issues.
- On February 9, 2016, the Board of Supervisors introduced a resolution urging the SFMTA to consider revisions to the Program.
- On February 16, 2016, the SFMTA Board adopted a Resolution supporting these revisions and directed staff to present a revised Commuter Shuttle Program for consideration.

**ENCLOSURES:**

1. SFMTAB Resolution
2. Transportation Code Division II Amendment

**APPROVALS:**

**DATE**

DIRECTOR \_\_\_\_\_

2/24/16

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_

2/24/16

**ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE:** March 1, 2016

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this item is to request that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve Transportation Code amendments to revise the authorized Commuter Shuttle Permit Program to 1) limit the duration of the program to one year, and 2) to limit the number of designated stops to 125; and, to direct staff to 1) provide a six-month program review to the SFMTA Board of Directors and the Board of Supervisors, 2) explore a “hub” or potentially more efficient zone network model in collaboration with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and 3) monitor air quality and significant increases in stop-events at individual locations.

## **GOAL**

The proposed program supports the following SFMTA Strategic Plan goals:

1. Create a safer transportation experience for everyone.
2. Make transit, walking, bicycling, taxi, ridesharing and carsharing the preferred means of travel.
3. Improve the environment and quality of life in San Francisco.

## **DESCRIPTION**

Commuter shuttles, typically used for taking workers and students to jobs or schools, have operated for decades in San Francisco, but their use has significantly increased over the past several years. This has led to an increase in issues related to Muni operations, street safety, and complaints from residents. Under law, commuter shuttles are allowed to drive on most of San Francisco’s streets, and the SFMTA cannot ban shuttles from the City. Commuter shuttles provide alternatives to single-occupant vehicle trips, and are associated with reduced auto ownership and increased use of transit, walking, and bicycling for non-commute trips. In order to address the issues arising from the increased use of commuter shuttles, in 2014 the SFMTA created a Pilot to gather accurate and up-to-date information on commuter shuttle activity and operations and to determine if active regulation of shuttles could reduce traffic conflicts and other issues.

After evaluating the Pilot, the SFMTA developed a Commuter Shuttle Program Policy for establishment of an ongoing Commuter Shuttle Program. On November 17, 2015, the SFMTA Board of Directors approved a Commuter Shuttle Program that enhanced the regulatory approach developed under the Pilot and the network of designated Muni zones and passenger loading zones available for use by participating shuttle providers. The enhancements to the program were based upon the Pilot Evaluation Report and input from elected officials, community members, the SFMTA’s transit and traffic engineering teams, shuttle service providers, employers, and other interested stakeholders.

The City’s determination under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) that the Commuter Shuttle Program is categorically exempt from CEQA was appealed to the Board of Supervisors. On February 9, 2016, the Board of Supervisors introduced a resolution urging the SFMTA to consider revisions and additions to the Program, including: limiting the Program to one year, requiring a six-month program review, capping the number of loading zones at 125, exploring a “hub” or potentially more efficient zone network model, monitoring air quality and significant increases in stop-events at individual locations. The Board of Supervisors also urged the SFMTA Board to commission a comprehensive study of the relationship between transportation programs (including commuter shuttles) and housing costs, with an analysis of all

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other contextual factors influencing housing costs and displacement.

On February 16, 2016 the SFMTA Board of Directors directed the Director of Transportation to present revisions to the Commuter Shuttle Program for consideration by the SFMTA Board on March 1, 2016, pending resolution of the CEQA appeal on February 23, 2016. The proposed revisions would:

- Limit the duration of the program to one year; the program as previously approved would be on-going
- Limit the number of stop locations to 125; the program as previously approved authorized 200 stop locations. This revision caps the number of locations in the network at its current number.
- Call for a review of the program after six months, to be presented to the SFMTA Board of Directors and the Board of Supervisors
- Direct SFMTA to work with the SFCTA to study a “hub” or other potentially more efficient zone network model
- Direct SFMTA to work with the Planning Department to monitor air quality and assess operations at locations where stop events grow by fifty percent above the level at the beginning of the Program
- Direct SFMTA to commission a comprehensive study of the relationship between transportation programs (including commuter shuttles) and housing costs, with an analysis of all other contextual factors influencing housing costs and displacement.

On February 22, 2016, the CEQA appeal was withdrawn. On February 23, the Board of Supervisors tabled the appeal. The Board of Supervisors also directed the Budget and Legislative Analyst’s Office to conduct the comprehensive study of the relationship between transportation programs (including commuter shuttles) and housing costs, with an analysis of all other contextual factors influencing housing costs and displacement, which they had previously requested that the SFMTA commission.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The SFMTA maintained an online project page for the Pilot, and members of the public could sign up for email updates about major project developments. During the Pilot, SFMTA staff received extensive comments from the community via, among other avenues: 311 (the City’s customer service center), offices of members of the Board of Supervisors, SFMTA engineering hearings, direct telephone or email contact with SFMTA staff, and communications directly from shuttle service providers.

In preparation for the release of the Commuter Shuttle Program policy, SFMTA staff met with members of the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor’s office, as well as shuttle service providers and some of the companies that use those shuttle service providers to transport their employees. SFMTA staff also met with various community members who had expressed interest in or concerns about shuttle activity in their particular neighborhoods.

The SFMTA held an informational open house on the proposed Commuter Shuttle Program for the public on November 4, 2015.

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The Program adopted by the SFMTA Board of Directors in November, 2015 included numerous elements that resulted from outreach, including: the need for more enforcement at shuttle zones, specific changes to the shuttle zone network, the requirement that large shuttle vehicles travel only on the major and minor arterial street network as defined by the California Department of Transportation, fleet age requirements to reduce emissions, allowing shuttles that are free to the public to use the zone network without a fee, and requiring a plan to address service disruptions, including those arising from labor issues.

The revisions and additional study currently proposed are the direct result of input from labor, environmental, and senior and disability stakeholders as well as from members of the Board of Supervisors.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency approved the Program on November 17, 2015. The modifications outlined in this report represent alternatives to the Program as adopted.

In developing the Program, the SFMTA considered prohibiting shuttles from all Muni zones and requiring them to use existing white zones, or seek new white zones for operations. This alternative was not pursued because it would require the establishment of a large network of new white zones, many of which would require parking removal, and because the Pilot demonstrated that sharing Muni zones works in most instances (for example, SFMTA's Pilot Evaluation showed that fewer than 3% of shuttle stop-events resulted in blocked Muni buses).

SFMTA also considered allowing shuttles to use all Muni zones, with exception of those Muni zones identified by the SFMTA as particularly unsuitable for sharing. This alternative is very similar to conditions before the Pilot, where shuttles stopped wherever they found space, including in many Muni zones. The problems with this approach include unclear rules and shuttles blocking Muni, which were the motivations for the Pilot and this Commuter Shuttle Program. In addition, allowing commuter shuttles to use all Muni zones could encourage other types of private buses like tour buses or party buses to use Muni zones for loading and unloading, which would result in increased congestion and delays of Muni service.

## **FUNDING IMPACT**

The costs of the Commuter Shuttle Program are paid for via the fee paid by participating shuttle service providers. Any future increases in program costs would be covered by corresponding increases to the fee.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

On February 10, 2016, the Environmental Review Officer determined that the modified Commuter Shuttle program is within the project description analyzed in the October 22, 2015 Categorical Exemption determination and that the Planning Department's determination of October 22, 2015 remained valid.

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

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**OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED**

No other approvals are required.

The City Attorney has reviewed this report.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The SFMTA recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors direct staff to perform a 6-month review of the Commuter Shuttle Program, explore a “hub” or potentially more efficient zone network model in collaboration with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and monitor air quality and significant increases in stop-events at individual locations; and amend the Transportation Code, Division II, Section 914 to limit the Commuter Shuttle Program to one year and cap the number of designated stops at 125.

SAN FRANCISCO  
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, The SFMTA launched a Commuter Shuttle Pilot Program (Pilot) in August 2014, which established a permit program and fee to enable eligible shuttle service providers to use a network of designated Muni and white curb loading zones to load and unload passengers, in order to determine if the Pilot was successful in managing the impacts of commuter shuttles and reducing traffic conflicts, among other issues; and,

WHEREAS, An extensive evaluation released in October 2015 determined that the Pilot was successful in managing the impacts of commuter shuttles; and,

WHEREAS, On October 22, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined that the proposed Commuter Shuttle Program and Transportation Code amendments are exempt from environmental review pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Sections 15301 and 15308 as a Class 1 and Class 8 categorical exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and,

WHEREAS, On November 17, 2015, the SFMTA Board approved a Commuter Shuttle Program (Program) that continues the regulation of commuter shuttles with revisions, including phasing in a newer and greener fleet, limiting large shuttles to the arterial street network, allowing shuttles that are free to the public to use the zone network without a fee, and requiring a plan to address service disruptions, including those arising from labor issues; and,

WHEREAS, On February 9, 2016, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors introduced a resolution urging the SFMTA Board to consider adjustments to the Program, including: limiting the Program to one year, requiring a six-month program review that is presented to the SFMTA Board and Board of Supervisors, capping the number of loading zones at 125, exploring a “hub” or potentially more efficient zone network model in collaboration with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, monitoring air quality and significant increases in stop-events at individual locations, and commissioning a comprehensive study of the relationship between transportation programs (including commuter shuttles) and housing costs, with an analysis of all other contextual factors influencing housing costs and displacement; and,

WHEREAS, On February 16, 2016, the SFMTA Board approved a resolution supporting the revisions in the Board of Supervisors’ Resolution and directing staff to present a revised Commuter Shuttle Program for consideration by the SFMTA Board on March 1, 2016; and,

WHEREAS, On February 23, 2016, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors directed the San Francisco Budget and Legislative Analyst’s Office to conduct the comprehensive study of the relationship between transportation programs (including commuter shuttles) and housing costs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the SFMTA Board amends the Transportation Code, Division II, Section 914 to limit the duration of the Commuter Shuttle Program to one year, and limit the number of Designated Stops to 125; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Director of Transportation shall provide a six-month program review to the SFMTA Board of Directors and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors that explores a “hub” or potentially more efficient zone network model in collaboration with the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and monitors air quality and significant increases in stop-events at individual locations.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of March 1, 2016.

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Secretary to the Board of Directors  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

[Transportation Code – Limiting the Term and Number of Stops for the Commuter Shuttle Program]

**Resolution amending the Transportation Code, Division II to impose a one-year term for the Commuter Shuttle Permit Program and limit the maximum number of designated stops under the Program.**

NOTE: Additions are single-underline Times New Roman; deletions are ~~strike-through Times New Roman~~.

The Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors of the City and County of San Francisco enacts the following regulations:

Section 1. Article 900 of Division II of the Transportation Code is hereby amended by revising Section 914, to read as follows:

**Sec. 914. COMMUTER SHUTTLE STOP PERMITS.**

\* \* \* \*

**(c) General Permit Program Requirements.**

(1) The Director is authorized to implement a program for the issuance of Shuttle Permits beginning on a date designated by the Director. The duration of the program shall not exceed 12 months from the date of commencement designated by the Director.

(2) The Director may issue a Shuttle Permit for the use of Designated Stops upon receipt of an application from a Shuttle Service Provider on a form prescribed by the SFMTA which application meets the requirements of this Section 914.

(3) The Shuttle Permit shall authorize the Shuttle Service Provider to receive a specified number of Shuttle Placards issued by SFMTA.

(4) The Director is authorized to establish up to 200125 Designated Stops for the purposes of this program. ~~The Director may establish additional Designated Stops following a public hearing.~~



RESOLUTION NO.

\* \* \* \*

Section 2. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 31 days after enactment. Enactment occurs when the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves this ordinance.

Section 3. Scope of Ordinance. In enacting this ordinance, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors intends to amend only those words, phrases, paragraphs, subsections, sections, articles, numbers, letters, punctuation marks, charts, diagrams, or any other constituent parts of the Transportation Code that are explicitly shown in this ordinance as additions or deletions in accordance with the "Note" that appears under the official title of the ordinance.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID A. GREENBURG  
Deputy City Attorney

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of March 1, 2016.

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Secretary to the Board of Directors  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

