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Contact: Paul Rose

(415) 601-1637, desk

[paul.rose@sfmta.com](mailto:paul.rose@sfmta.com)

**\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\***

## **SFMTA Board Enhances, Extends Commuter Shuttle Regulations**

*Program builds off pilot, requires greener fleet, restricts larger buses from smaller streets*

**San Francisco** — The SFMTA Board of Directors on Tuesday unanimously approved enhanced regulations for commuter shuttles that will restrict larger shuttle buses from smaller streets, require greener fleets to reduce emissions and put in place rules to prevent labor disruptions.

The new regulations create an ongoing program that builds off an 18-month pilot program set to expire at the end of January 2016. Under the ongoing program, the fee charged to shuttle operators will increase to pay for stepped-up enforcement. The higher fee will also help cover the cost of street improvements like boarding islands and sidewalk bulbs that will also improve Muni performance and enhance pedestrian safety.

Under state law, the fee is limited to the cost of running the program. The updated amount will depend on a number of factors, but it will be higher than the \$2.4 million per year collected from shuttle companies under the pilot program.

"Our commuter shuttle program gets thousands of San Francisco residents to work, reduces the number of cars on our congested streets, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions," said District 8 Supervisor Scott Wiener, whose district includes a high number of shuttle stops. "The program is working, and it will help us find ways to address impacts on Muni and on our neighborhood streets as we work to make the overall program more efficient. I'm also thrilled that the MTA has adopted the labor harmony requirement as requested in the legislation I authored at the Board of Supervisors."

In January 2014 the SFMTA Board of Directors approved an 18-month Commuter Shuttle Pilot Program to regulate and better understand the hundreds of commuter shuttles using the city's streets to take people to work or school either in San Francisco or to Peninsula and South Bay destinations. The voluntary program included charging private shuttles to stop in Muni bus zones, concentrated enforcement and extensive data collection on the frequency and location of shuttle loadings.

"The SFMTA's Commuter Shuttle Pilot Program showed encouraging results in improving order and safety on San Francisco's streets," said SFMTA Board of Directors Chair Tom Nolan. "Commuter shuttles get thousands of people to work every day without a car. We must do everything we can as a city to improve the flow the traffic, reduce congestion and cut pollution while improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods."

“Every aspect of our transportation network is connected,” said SFMTA Director of Transportation Ed Reiskin. “For every person who rides a shuttle, that’s potentially one more open seat on transit or one less car clogging traffic or competing for a parking space. The Commuter Shuttle Pilot Program demonstrated that a regulatory framework can help ensure the city realizes the transportation benefits the shuttles provide while minimizing impacts to Muni and our neighborhoods. Now we will have an improved set of regulations and enhanced enforcement that reduce emissions, restrict larger buses to major streets designed to handle them, and create safety benefits for all.”

Under the new regulations, which take effect February 1, 2016, commuter shuttles over 35 feet long must stay on Caltrans arterial street network.

All shuttle vehicles not already approved for use in the pilot as of January 31, 2016 must be either model year 2012 or newer, or be equipped with a power source that complies with emissions standards applicable to the 2012 class of vehicle. As of January 1, 2020, all shuttle vehicles used in the program must be model year 2012 or newer. After 2020, all shuttle vehicles must be no more than 8 years old.

Shuttle operators must also comply with the San Francisco Board of Supervisors’ March 2015 Labor Harmony Resolution, including the submission of a Service Disruption Prevention Plan that describes the shuttle operators’ efforts to ensure efficient and consistent service in the event of potential disruptions, including labor disputes.

The new regulations also require increased data sharing from participating shuttle operators to better understand where their vehicles are operating and assist in enforcement.

An analysis of the pilot program found that conflicts with Muni buses were reduced by about 35 percent on a per-stop basis, and the number of commuter shuttle stop locations were halved from about 250 before the pilot to 124 during the pilot.

The analysis also found:

- Shuttles in the permit program had about 17,000 daily boardings on average weekdays, or 8,500 people taking a daily roundtrip from or within San Francisco
- Nearly half (45 percent) of shuttle rider survey respondents do not own cars
- 45 percent of those who do not own cars cited shuttles as the “main reason” they did not own one
- If the shuttles are not an option, nearly half (47%) of survey respondents said they would drive alone to work. That would translate to almost 8,000 more one-way car trips a day, the equivalent of every car that uses 24<sup>th</sup> Street daily. That’s more than 2 million one-way car trips a year on what are already congested streets.
- Only 5 percent of shuttle riders said they would move closer to work
- By taking cars off the road, shuttles remove nearly 4.3 million vehicle miles traveled from the streets each month

With limited exceptions, shuttles are free to use San Francisco’s streets regardless of an SFMTA regulatory program. The agency’s regulatory efforts are an evolving process that has and will continue to take into account community concerns.

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*Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.*

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