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Municipal
Transportation
Agency

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TO: Ed Reiskin
Director of Transportation

FROM: Kate Toran 
Deputy Director
Taxis and Accessible Services Division

DATE: April 6, 2015

SUBJECT: Taxi Task Force Recommendations from the March 11, 2015 meeting

Background:

The SFMTA Taxi Task Force (TTF) has been established as a one-year pilot to advise the Director of Transportation on taxi-related matters. The TTF is comprised of taxi industry representatives, paratransit customers, general public customers and other stakeholders (roster attached). The TTF meets monthly and held its first meeting on February 25, 2015.

Work Plan:

At the March 11, 2015 meeting, the attached work plan was approved. The work plan will guide the work of the TTF and each meeting will include an update on work plan accomplishments. I have attached the work plan report back that will be discussed at the April 8, 2015 meeting.

Recommendations:

At the March 11, 2015 meeting, the TTF approved the following recommendations:

1. To approve all Taxi-related recommendations from the Late Night Transportation Study:

A. Shared Ride Taxi Service:

The SFMTA should develop shared-ride taxi regulations. In 2013 the SFMTA Board of Directors amended the Transportation Code to enable taxicab drivers to charge a flat rate of up to \$11 per person for trips involving two or more passengers sharing a cab to or from different origins or destinations. Before such a program can be implemented, however, the SFMTA must adopt regulations guiding its development. By reducing the cost of taxi rides for shared trips, a shared-ride program would better enable all-night travelers to afford taxi rides. Such a program would work best with a smartphone taxi-hailing app that could facilitate shared rides

among people with similar origins or destinations and enable easy payment of shared fares.

B. Subsidies for Low-Income Workers:

Consider subsidies to low-income workers for taxi fares during hours when all-night public transportation options do not serve travel needs. A model exists in paratransit service, where rides are subsidized for people with disabilities using federal funds (\$5 for \$30 worth of rides).

C. Pop Up Taxi Stands:

Installing upgraded taxi stands with painted curbs, additional signage, and staffing by queue supervisors or security officers. This could include piloting a “pop-up” taxi stand that serves another function (for example, as a bus stop) except during designated all-night hours.

2. Support and endorse the recommendations of the Taxi Industry White Paper on the authority and need to regulate new ride services and convey support to the SFMTA Board and elected officials.

A. Safety

San Francisco should regulate ride services in the interest of public safety and protection. This should include requirements for driver training and background checks and vehicle inspections over and above the CPUC’s requirements.

B. Service

San Francisco should adopt regulations ensuring that ride services comply with the ADA by providing equal access to the disabled community. All ride services should provide wheelchair-accessible vehicles at no additional charge to the passenger.

C. The environment

San Francisco should adopt reasonable regulations designed to protect the environment. These should include vehicle emissions standards and limits on the number of vehicles providing service at a given time.

D. The workers

Taxis render an essential public service. The quality and safety of this service are dependent on the well-being of the workforce that performs it. Ride service rules must be crafted to allow cab drivers a fair opportunity to earn a decent living.

E. City Revenues

San Francisco should charge ride services and their drivers to defray the costs of their regulation and compensate the city for the consequences of their use of the streets.

F. Enforcement

The District Attorney, City Attorney and Police Department should enforce the law against ongoing and future violations when and as they occur, including insurance fraud, failure to comply with the ADA, and commercial vehicle licensing requirements. Legal limits on the number of hours a commercial driver may work should be enforced for the protection of the public and the workers themselves.

cc: SFMTA Board of Directors