

2024 Accessible Transportation Update

Taxis, Access & Mobility Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff at the SFMTA were honored to join the SFMTA Board in September 2023 to recognize former Director of Accessible Services Annette Williams for more than 30 years of service improving the accessibility of San Francisco's transportation network. At that time, the SFMTA Board requested an annual accessibility update.

This report provides the 2024 annual accessibility update, outlining the Accessible Services subdivision's recent accomplishments and ongoing initiatives to continue improving mobility and access for older adults and people with disabilities.

KEY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Published the agency's first [Accessible Transportation Needs Assessment](#) and received more than 1,000 responses to our Accessible Transportation Needs Survey
- Delivered high quality and cost-efficient paratransit services, achieving 98.7% on-time performance for SF Access van service and 92% customer satisfaction across all programs
- Added 59 new blue zones (accessible parking spaces) and completed a major update to our publicly available [accessible parking data](#)
- Reached more than 7,000 customers with accessibility needs through targeted outreach and travel training, including a customized travel training on board Muni with Francis Scott Key Elementary students with disabilities.
- Expanded surface rail accessibility 23% with the L Taraval Improvement Project and improved access at more than 200 bus stops through the [Flag Stop Conversion Program](#).
- Increased accessible on-demand services by launching the SFMTA's Bayview Community Shuttle and awarding more than \$3.5 million in Access for All grants to three service providers to provide on-demand wheelchair accessible service.

PREVIEW OF WORK TO COME IN 2025

- Share the results of the Accessible Transportation Needs Survey and address the highest-priority needs by developing resource-constrained action plans with public input. (see page 9)
- Oversee the Bayview Shuttle and the Access for All grant-funded services that provide on-demand wheelchair accessible service for a one-year term. (see page 8)
- Develop accessibility guidelines for San Francisco's Electric Vehicle Curbside Charging Pilot in collaboration with San Francisco's Department of the Environment, Mayor's Office on Disability, and Public Works. (see page 11)
- Continue innovation initiatives, including testing two electric paratransit vehicles and piloting Clipper 2.0 for SF Access Paratransit fare payments. (see page 11)
- Provide accessibility design and compliance review and evaluation for all agency projects, including new accessible surface rail stops along the M and J lines, Muni Metro elevators at Powell and Castro stations, and new floating parklets along Valencia. (see page 10)
- Celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26th. (see page 10)
- Release a Request for Proposals for Paratransit services for a new contract term, beginning July 1, 2026, including: ADA Paratransit eligibility, fare media sales, service quality monitoring and subcontracting of all taxi services, and the direct provision of SF Access paratransit and Group Van services. (see page 10)

OVERVIEW OF THE ACCESSIBLE SERVICES SECTION

The SFMTA's Accessible Services Section is housed within the Taxis, Access & Mobility Services (TAMS) Division. The work of TAMS is anchored in making the transportation system more accessible. As a subdivision of TAMS, the Accessible Services Section works to ensure the transportation system of the City and County of San Francisco is accessible to older adults and people with disabilities, and we collaborate with the Office of Civil Rights to ensure our programs meet all mandate requirements. The team is responsible for managing the San Francisco Paratransit program and providing technical expertise and assistance to other SFMTA divisions that deliver all the SFMTA's services, including fixed-route transit, capital projects and construction, long-range planning, parking, bicycle and pedestrian projects and permitted mobility services. Members of the team also operate the San Francisco Regional Transit Connection Discount Card (RTC) program, providing free or reduced transit options to people with qualifying disabilities.



2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the past year, Accessible Services focused on strengthening our professional capacity to better serve our constituents. We worked collaboratively to identify training and development opportunities for team members, and were also excited to welcome ongoing support from a Public Relations Officer in the Chief of Staff's Office to improve how we communicate our work internally and to the public. In early 2024, the entire team attended a workshop on communication styles and set development goals for the coming year. Most team members also participated in a full-day 9163 operator training to gain a deeper understanding of the Muni bus operator experience.

Our commitment to team building and strategic planning led to many exciting accomplishments since our last MTAB update in September 2023. Below is a summary of our 2024 accomplishments organized by key functions:

Policy Development and Permitting

1. Completed Phase One of the SFMTA Accessibility Strategy

In September 2024, we published the SFMTA's first [Accessible Transportation Needs Assessment](#). The assessment is the first part of the agency's broader [Accessibility Strategy](#), aimed at identifying gaps and opportunities to improve transit access for people with disabilities. Developed through extensive community outreach and input over more than 40 years via our longstanding community advisory bodies, the assessment provides critical insights into current accessibility challenges and will guide future improvements.

2. Collaborated with the Taxi and Mobility Services Section in TAMS to Issue New Scooter Permits

The FY25-FY26 Powered Scooter Share Program began on July 1, 2024. In preparation for a renewed scooter permit, staff across the TAMS Division updated the permit application, applying lessons from past permit cycles and continuing to prioritize safety and accessibility. The adaptive scooter program, which became permanent during the last major permit update in 2021, continues to serve people with disabilities, seniors, and anyone else who may prefer a seated scooter.

3. Brought Critical Accessibility Perspective to Biking and Rolling Plan

Accessible Services staff were active members of the Biking and Rolling Plan Technical Advisory Committee, ensuring the needs of cyclists with disabilities and senior cyclists and the needs of disabled and senior pedestrians navigating parking protected bike lanes were addressed. Staff also provided multiple rounds of input to ensure proposed design guidelines were both usable by people with disabilities and compliant with accessibility regulations, including new Public Right Of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) standards.

4. Completed a Major Update to Accessible Parking Data

Between June 2024-May 2025, staff in Accessible Services completed a comprehensive overhaul of [the Agency's accessible parking database and public-facing online map](#). This overhaul included verifying almost 1,000 accessible parking records for accuracy and linking this database to our sign shop's new GPS-enabled asset management system, ensuring that new blue zones are added to our records and map automatically. This newly accurate map has already helped planners in our division find appropriate locations for new blue zones. These efforts are crucial to help us reach our federally mandated goal of ensuring that 4% of metered parking spaces are accessible.

Public Outreach

1. Hosted Two Adaptive Transportation Outreach Events in Golden Gate Park

Since 2021, we have been coordinating with the SF Adaptive Bike Program, the Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP), and our scooter share permittees to host annual adaptive transportation demonstrations, which allow members of the community to try different types of adaptive cycles and scooters. We also hold annual adaptive transportation demonstrations in partnership with AccessSFUSD, a program for students ages 18-22 with disabilities. These demonstrations allow the AccessSFUSD students to try new transportation options and provide direct feedback on their accessibility to permittees and program operators. In the past year, we held one demonstration open to the public and one demonstration with AccessSFUSD and look forward to continuing this tradition.

2. Reached Over 7,000 Seniors and People with Disabilities Through Mobility Management Outreach and Community Advisory Committees

The Mobility Management Center is located within the SF Paratransit office and is a one-stop information and referral center for older adults and people with disabilities. The Center's services help seniors and older adults make informed decisions about their travel options by assisting customers over the phone, by email, in person at the SF Paratransit office, and at community events throughout the year. In 2024, staff conducted 34 outreach events focused on reaching people in areas identified as Equity Priority Communities. Mobility Management staff has also been conducting weekly in-person visits at two public health centers, Potrero Hill Health Center and Southeast Health Center, as part of their work with the CHOICE program, a pilot with Department of Public Health to connect clients with transportation services to attend medical appointments and address other relevant health-related needs, like grocery shopping or

pharmacies. Through these efforts, we reached over 7,000 older adults and people with disabilities. This December, the SFMTA's official podcast, Taken With Transportation, featured our Mobility Management services on [a special episode called Mobility for Everyone](#).

Accessible Services staff also facilitate regular input from the community by staffing monthly meetings of the SFMTA's Paratransit Coordinating Council and the Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee. Active for over 40 years, these council meetings are open to the public and provide a regular venue for older adults and people with disabilities to provide feedback and guidance on the agency's accessibility-related operations and policies.

3. Hosted Travel Training for Elementary School Children with Disabilities

Accessible Services, in coordination with the San Francisco Unified School District, conducted a travel training at Francis Scott Key Elementary School for 10 students with disabilities. Participants joined us on board a Muni bus to learn about Muni's accessibility features, how to plan a trip, and how to ride Muni. Students then practiced what they learned. The next day several participants rode Muni unassisted for the first time.



4. Produced a Scooter Safety Campaign Featuring Accessible Services Staff

It is a priority for the SFMTA that seniors and people with disabilities feel safe as pedestrians on our streets. To emphasize this priority, TAMS staff developed a multi-part scooter social media campaign to promote scooter riding as a fun, convenient mode of transportation that also requires such safe practices as wearing a helmet, proper parking, avoiding sidewalk riding, and riding one person to a scooter. The safety campaign was targeted towards riders of the shared Powered Scooter program as well as those on private powered scooters, because these riders have also practiced unsafe behavior, like sidewalk riding. Phase I of the safety campaign was developed in collaboration with the Mayor's Office on Disability, and addressed key concerns raised by the disabled community. The campaign included transit vehicle and shelter print ads, YouTube videos, and Instagram reels/TikToks -- one of which had over 4,300 likes on Instagram and over 8,400 views on TikTok.

Capital Projects and Design Review

1. Awarded Federal Transit Administration Grant to Improve Surface Rail Accessibility

In May, the SFMTA received a \$4.7 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP). We will use the funds to design and construct wheelchair-accessible platforms and make other accessibility improvements at eight Muni surface street stops on the J Church and M Ocean View lines. These improvements will reduce gaps between widely spaced wheelchair-accessible stops, improving access for the many thousands of mobility-impaired residents and visitors who rely on our surface rail system.

2. Expanded Surface Rail Accessibility 23% with L Taraval Improvement Project

The L Taraval Improvement Project is a multi-agency project to upgrade transit, water and sewer infrastructure that started construction in 2019. The SFMTA rehabilitated aging rail, made transit reliability and pedestrian safety improvements, and constructed new accessible light rail platforms along Taraval Street. The seven new accessible stops that are part of this project, increase surface rail accessibility from 30 stops to 37. Accessible Services worked closely with the project team on design review and developed an Accessibility Checklist to be sure that the new platforms complied with accessibility requirements. The project is substantially complete, and rail service resumed in September 2024.

3. Piloted Muni Quick-Builds to Improve Transit Accessibility Before Construction

The Muni Forward program uses quick-build projects to implement short-term improvements to transit reliability that do not require major construction, including making bus stop changes, painting transit-only lanes, changing roadway striping, and changing signal timing. Quick-build improvements are implemented prior to major construction along a transit corridor, when improvements such as pedestrian bulbs and accessible platforms are built. In coordination with Department of Public Works, Accessible Services worked with the Muni Forward team to support the design and construct a temporary concrete boarding island at San Jose Avenue and Niagara Street on the M Ocean View line to provide immediate safety improvements, as well as at several locations on Ocean Avenue on the K Ingleside line. These quick-build concrete light rail boarding islands were the first of their kind for the city. The long-term M Ocean View project will install a permanent boarding island at San Jose Avenue and Niagara Street with a wheelchair accessible platform in the future.

4. Reviewed 20 Streets Projects for Accessibility and Added 59 New Accessible Parking Zones

Accessible Services staff provided accessibility technical assistance on Quick-Build and permanent capital projects, reviewing over 20 projects and installing 59 new accessible blue parking zones (bringing the city-wide total to 901) in the last year. Staff worked with other divisions of the agency, especially Streets and Transit, to ensure the SFMTA's projects improve or maintain accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities by meeting, and oftentimes exceeding, local, state, and federal accessibility guidelines. Projects reviewed include the updated Valencia side-running bike lane project, which involved extensive discussion and in-person testing of accessible crossings to floating parklets, and Lake Merced, where staff applied new federal Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) to floating transit boarding island design. In addition, the team has focused on internal review process streamlining. Increased coordination with the Mayor's Office on Disability and the Department of Public Works Disability Access Coordinator has led to more timely and consistent guidance for project teams.

Muni Operations and RTC Discount ID Office

1. Conducted Accessibility Trainings for Muni Staff

Our team's Fixed Route Accessibility coordinators conducted ten (10) ADA training sessions for customer-facing Muni personnel, including new operators, station agents, and customer service staff. By "training the trainer," we also reached veteran operators in an additional 93 accessibility focused trainings included as part of the Practical Communication Tools (PaCT) training.

2. Improved Access at Over 200 Bus Stops

Working with Transit Engineering and Service Planning Staff, Accessible Services assisted in daylighting Muni bus stops to improve visibility of waiting passengers, and the accessibility of the stop. As part of the SFMTA's Flag Stop Conversion Program, the team analyzed a total of 546 flag stops for daylighting, adding red curb daylighting to 267 suitable stops by the end of 2024.

3. Operated the Busiest RTC Discount ID Program in the Bay Area

The Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Discount ID Card is available to persons with qualifying disabilities. Customers may use the card as proof of eligibility to receive discount fares on fixed-route, rail and ferry systems throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. It is also a Clipper card, and cardholders can add cash value or products. Applications for the RTC Discount ID Card are accepted at San Francisco Bay Area transit agency locations, including the SFMTA. The SFMTA administers the busiest RTC processing location, processing close to 4,000 applications this year. On average, RTC Card holders tap on to Muni 158,000 times per month and approximately 20,224 RTC card holders in the Bay Area have addresses in San Francisco.

Paratransit

1. Delivered High Quality Paratransit Service

Like Muni, paratransit services are experiencing a significant rebound in ridership, increasing 42% between FY21-FY24, or 75% of pre-pandemic levels. In FY24, SF Paratransit provided over 550,000 trips on SF Access, Group Van, and paratransit taxi services. On-time performance for the SF Access van service was 98.7%.

The SF Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey was completed in May 2024. Conducted by Corey, Canapary & Galanis Research, this independent survey interviewed 517 Paratransit riders and community agency staff for their opinions about their most recent trip as well as Paratransit Broker. Among the key findings include:

- 92% overall satisfaction (up from 89% in 2022)
- 93% satisfaction with surveyed trip (up from 92% in 2022)
- 96% satisfaction with Broker's services (same as 2022)

2. Implemented Customer Friendly Paratransit Policies and Procedures

In January 2024, we published a new SF Paratransit Rider's Guide. This new guide combined the content from the three individual program and service guides into one booklet, updated photos, and added a section on new technology for the SF Paratransit program. In addition to English, this guide was translated into eight non-English languages, including Chinese, Spanish and Russian. The SF Paratransit [Rider's Guide](#) is available online as well as in paper format.

In support of regional ADA Paratransit eligibility initiatives to improve efficiencies as well as customer service, SF Paratransit launched a short recertification form. Customers with permanent disabilities that will likely not change will be eligible to reapply for ADA Paratransit services using a short application as opposed to the full regular ADA Paratransit application. Approximately one-third of current ADA eligible clients should be eligible for this simplified recertification form. We also extended the maximum eligibility term from three years to five years, aligning with changes made by all regional ADA Paratransit programs.

Ramp Taxis and Other Accessible On-Demand Services

1. Administered the SFMTA's First-Ever Competitive Funding Program

Collaborating with the SFMTA Contracts and Procurement team and the City Attorney's Office, we designed and implemented the San Francisco Access for All program on behalf of the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Access for All program. This is the first competitive grant program ever administered by the SFMTA. We awarded \$3.7 million, funded by the CPUC, in grants to three providers of on-demand wheelchair accessible transportation: Green Cab LLC, Nomad Transit LLC, and Tower WAV LLC for the following projects and amounts:

- SF Green Cab LLC - Awarded \$113,705 for the acquisition, maintenance, and operation of a retrofitted wheelchair-accessible vehicle that will serve as a ramp taxi. The grant agreement was finalized in December 2024.
- Nomad Transit LLC - Awarded \$1,828,576 for the operation of a turn-key service (named [Fog City Access](#)) that will provide a fleet of six wheelchair-accessible vehicles to service rides in the Ingleside, Excelsior, and Portola neighborhoods, providing access to possible destinations like the Sunset Branch Public Library, City College of San Francisco, and SF General Hospital. The grant agreement was finalized in January 2025, and service launched March 17, 2025.
- Tower WAV LLC - Awarded \$1,496,000 for the operation of a turn-key service (named [Tower Transit SF](#)) that will provide a fleet of four wheelchair-accessible vehicles to service

rides within in the Richmond, Sunset, and Lake Merced neighborhoods of San Francisco and to external areas, including Noe Valley, Western Addition, and Mission. The grant agreement was finalized in December 2024, and service started on January 21, 2025.

2. Launched the Agency's First On-Demand Shuttle Program: The Bayview Community Shuttle

On November 12th, the agency launched the Bayview Shuttle service to provide residents of Bayview-Hunter's Point and the general public with a low-cost, flexible transportation option, funded by a grant from the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The service runs every day, 7 a.m.–7 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m.–6 p.m. on weekends. During operating hours, anyone can request a ride via app or phone call to be picked up in a wheelchair accessible van or standard van anywhere within the service area (the Bayview-Hunter's Point community) or to/from external access points: SF General Hospital, 22nd St Caltrain Station, Bayshore Caltrain Station, and 24th St/Mission BART.



Accessible Services staff is managing the project implementation, working with the shuttle and technology operator, Via, to ensure we provide high-quality service, report required metrics to CARB and report on service performance to the Bayview Community Congress advisory body and broader community. Through our quarterly meetings, we listen to and incorporate feedback we hear from the Community Congress, as feasible, to improve service.

2025 PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

In 2025, the Accessible Services team is excited to work in collaboration with internal staff and community partners on these current and upcoming initiatives:

Policy Development and Permitting

1. Develop Accessibility Guidelines for San Francisco's Electric Vehicle Curbside Charging Pilot

Accessible Services staff is supporting colleagues implementing San Francisco's first Electric Vehicle (EV) curbside charging pilot by providing accessibility technical assistance. Over the next year, Accessible Services staff will collaborate with teams within SFMTA, Mayor's Office on Disability, Department of Public Works, and San Francisco Environment to develop San Francisco EV charging standards to ensure access for older adults and people with disabilities.

2. Support Implementation of Public Right Of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) in Transit Projects

In December 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) adopted the U.S. Access Board's Public Right of Way Guidelines (PROWAG). This means there will no longer be a need for each state or local agency to evaluate sources of guidance and make an independent determination on how to design transit stops and other facilities to achieve accessibility for different types of users. Since the U.S. Access Board's final rule was issued in August 2023, the Accessible Services staff has worked with various city offices to understand and apply these new federal regulations. We've focused on areas such as parking, bike lane design, and transit boarding islands, developing written guidance on parking-protected bike lanes. Accessible Services will continue helping colleagues with understanding and applying PROWAG by hosting brown bags and developing trainings.

3. **Submit Policy Comments on Autonomous Vehicle Deployment and Accessible Ridehail (TNCs)**

Accessible Services staff will continue engagement and collaboration with colleagues internally at the SFMTA, and at the San Francisco County Transportation Authority and Mayor's Office on Disability on the accessibility of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) to contribute to policy comments for the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and to continue advocating for increased accessibility of TNCs and AVs. Staff anticipate that the CPUC will begin Stage 2 of its AV deployment rulemaking sometime in 2025, and we will address accessibility issues in our comments. Additionally, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recently proposed a voluntary framework for the evaluation and oversight of certain AVs, known as the Automated Driving Systems (ADS)-equipped Vehicle Safety, Transparency, and Evaluation Program, or AV STEP. The notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) includes content on disability and accessibility issues, and staff anticipates filing comments or supporting others' comments on the NPRM. Furthermore, reauthorization of the TNC Access for All program, which is currently set to sunset in January 2026, is under consideration for the California legislative session. We will be working with the SFMTA Legislative Affairs team to advocate for continuation of the TNC Access for All program.

We will also explore allowing wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) trips to be provided by ramp taxis for TNC-originated WAV trips, which would be similar to the existing Taxi Upfront Fare Pilot. This requires approval from the CPUC and would also likely require SFMTA Board approval.

4. **Develop Data-Informed Policy Guidance to Improve Transit Stop Accessibility**

Working with Transit Engineering and Service Planning, Accessible Services is developing policy guidance for the next phase of the flag stop conversion project. This phase will look at far side and mid-block flag stops and examine ways to make these stops more accessible to our passengers. The phase may also include modifications to near side stops we have already daylighted to further improve their accessibility. In addition, using data on wheelchair ramp use at each bus stop, Accessible Services is developing a method for identifying transit stops that have a high rate of ramp deployment and prioritizing those stops for accessibility improvements.

5. **Muni Funding Working Group Technical Assistance**

The San Francisco Controller's Office is leading and facilitating a working group that includes the Mayor's Office, Board of Supervisors, Controller, SFMTA leadership, community partners, and members of the public to gather public input, identify solutions, and provide recommendations to address the near-term and medium-term funding gap. Accessible Services staff provide technical assistance to the working group as needed, to ensure the discussion includes customers with disabilities and older adults, and that the final recommendations are well-informed by their needs.

Public Outreach

1. **Analyze the Results of the Accessible Transportation Needs Survey and Facilitate Public Input on our 5 Year Action Plan**

The Accessibility Survey builds on the Needs Assessment published in September, which summarizes the SFMTA's history of accessibility work to date. The assessment identified several key needs across Streets, Taxis, Muni, and Paratransit. The Accessibility Survey asked respondents to rank which of these needs are the most important to prioritize. The survey was launched in September and closed in January. We conducted extensive outreach, reaching out to community partners and tabling at local events and community centers throughout the fall. We received 1,334 survey responses, exceeding our goal of 1,000. In 2025, we will share the results of the survey and engage with the public to develop a 5-year, resource-constrained action plan focused on the highest priorities identified by the survey.



2. Celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Planning is currently underway for celebrations in recognition of the 35th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 2025. We look forward to collaborating with other city agencies and community-based organizations to celebrate the history and legacy of accessible transportation in San Francisco, which predates the ADA. We anticipate hosting at least one celebratory event as well as celebrating with and educating our customers through social media campaigns.

3. Support Mobility Hub Community Outreach and Planning

The SFMTA received a planning grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to study Mobility Hub preferences in Southeast San Francisco. Mobility hubs are centralized, multimodal transportation centers where various forms of transit and mobility services converge to facilitate seamless travel and transfers between modes for users. Mobility hubs facilitate multimodal integration, promote connectivity, prioritize accessibility, and provide other amenities and services for those using them. Accessible Services staff look forward to participating in project outreach to ensure we hear from customers with disabilities and educate community members on how mobility hubs can improve mobility for a wide range of customers.

4. Recruit New Members of the Paratransit Coordinating Council and Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee

This year, our goal is to continue recruiting new members for the PCC and MAAC who will bring diverse perspectives and expertise. We are targeting underrepresented communities, collaborating with local organizations, and promoting the councils through social media and events. We aim to attract individuals with a variety of skills and backgrounds to ensure the committees reflect the community's needs.

Capital Projects and Design Review

1. Provide Design and Compliance Review of New Accessible Surface Rail Stops and Muni Metro Elevators

This year, Accessible Services staff will continue to work closely with Transit Engineering and Capital Projects & Construction (CP&C) to provide design review for capital projects that will greatly improve transit access for older adults and people with disabilities. Once built, the Accessible Services team will visit newly constructed infrastructure to ensure compliance with federal and state accessibility guidelines in our Accessibility Checklist.

Projects include island and platform designs of new surface rail stops on the M Ocean View and J Church lines, including a major transfer point at Market, Church and Duboce; a multiagency effort to improve Castro Station, including improvements to Harvey Milk Plaza and a new 4-stop elevator that serves bus stops on Market Street, Harvey Milk Plaza, the station concourse and the platform level; and a new elevator between the station concourse and the Muni platform level at Powell Station.

Paratransit Capital and Operational Improvements

1. Paratransit Service Request for Proposal

The existing Paratransit agreement expires on June 30, 2026. The current scope of the agreement consists of Paratransit Brokerage services, which includes ADA Paratransit eligibility, fare media sales, service quality monitoring and subcontracting of all taxi services, as well as the SF Access and most of the Group Van service. Given the scope and expected cost/duration of this new Paratransit agreement, staff has begun work on updating the scope of work and are working to update relevant exhibits in preparation for the RFP. Staff anticipates presenting the RFP for the new contract term to the SFMTA Board of Directors for approval by summer 2025.

2. Install a New Paratransit Phone System

As part of our work to continually improve the customer service experience, the SF Paratransit program is updating its phone system. The new phone system will provide enhanced features and capabilities, including voice-to-text and text-to-voice features. SF Paratransit conducted a competitive solicitation for a new vendor for the Broker and Operations Call Center phone system. Genesys was selected as the vendor and is working with SF Paratransit and its IT contractor to bring over all the current functionalities to make the transition as seamless as possible. The transition will be a twofold approach, with the Broker's office expected to transition in late winter 2025 and the Operations Call Center approximately one month thereafter.

3. Pilot Clipper 2.0 on SF Paratransit

The SFMTA signed a cooperative agreement with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to implement the E-Z Wallet API with Trapeze to facilitate the use of the Clipper Card as a form of payment for all SF Access van trips. SF Paratransit will be the pilot Paratransit agency in the region. The project kick-off with MTC, Trapeze and Cubic took place in December 2024, and we expect to launch the pilot in spring 2025.

4. Pilot Two Electric Paratransit Vehicles

As part of its procurement process to replace Paratransit vehicles, the SFMTA will procure an electric Paratransit cutaway vehicle. This will enable SF Paratransit to evaluate electric vehicles for daily operations. After seeing demonstrations of four different vans, including a Ford E-Transit, a Sunset Van from RO Sales, an Endera electric shuttle and a Turtle Top Ultimate EV1, the SFMTA decided to purchase the Turtle Top. The Transportation Fund for Clean Air, funded by the SFCTA, will also allow SFMTA to replace a gasoline-powered Paratransit vehicle with an electric Paratransit vehicle. As this will be the second electric Paratransit vehicle in our fleet, we plan to purchase a vehicle from Endera, which will provide an opportunity to compare the models and help inform the agency of future electrification procurements.

The SFMTA will be required to ensure that future Paratransit vehicles meet the state's Innovative Clean Transit requirements -- beginning in 2029, 100% of new purchases by transit agencies must be zero emission buses, with a goal for full transition by 2040. The ability for our Paratransit program to accomplish the targeted goals of this program requires a facility with the requisite infrastructure that can support a fully electric Paratransit fleet, which the current facility does not, as noted below.

5. Continue Exploring Options for a Permanent Paratransit Facility

Our SF Paratransit operations (administrative/call center, vehicle yard, and maintenance) are currently housed at three separate facilities within a mile of each other in San Francisco and Brisbane. Under the Paratransit agreement, the selected contractor is responsible for identifying and leasing the facilities for operations. The lease on the current facilities runs through February 2028, with two two-year options available, which would extend the term until February 2032.

Due to the limited availability of facilities in San Francisco to support Paratransit operations, it has become increasingly difficult and expensive to identify a suitable property. The location of the current operations facility has been slated for redevelopment by the current owner. Additionally, it cannot support infrastructure improvements, including the installation of charging facilities, to support an electric Paratransit vehicle fleet.

Given that the Americans with Disabilities Act requires complementary Paratransit service to be available for eligible riders, identifying a suitable location for a permanent Paratransit facility is critical to provide operational and financial stability for the agency. SFMTA recognizes this need and has incorporated an SFMTA-owned Paratransit facility in its long-range Capital Plan. Accessible Services is working closely with the SFMTA Real Estate team to identify suitable alternative locations for a Paratransit operations facility when the current lease agreement expires.

Ramp Taxis and other Accessible On-Demand Services

1. Bayview Shuttle Operations and Evaluation

In 2025, SFMTA staff will continue to work with the grant administrator, California Air Resources Board, the community, and the shuttle and technology operator, Via, to track and evaluate Bayview Shuttle performance. This work includes weekly tracking of performance indicators and the preparation of a data collection plan, including a post trip rider survey, that determines data/metric collection practices and analyses that will be conducted and reported out publicly throughout the duration of the pilot period. This information and broader shuttle performance indicators will be reported to the project committees (outreach, workforce development, and transportation resource center) and the Community Congress on a quarterly basis.

Based on the results of the performance analysis and reports to the Community Congress, the Shuttle project team will present at the 6-month mark to Community Congress to determine what, if any, changes should be made to service operations. This may include changes to the service area parameters, external access site locations, hours of operation, or other operational updates, and will be voted on by the Community Congress advisory body. To support these efforts and to ensure that the community is aware of the shuttle and related performance updates, the project team will continue to work with community partners to plan and host outreach events that aim to educate and inform hard-to-reach populations within the community. Additionally, the project will identify opportunities to leverage project funds to support the completion of projects identified in the Bayview Community-Based Transportation Plan that can improve community connectivity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The team will also explore additional funding sources in addition to the CARB grant that could provide financial support to the Bayview Shuttle and allow operations to continue past the March 2026 pilot end date.

2. Administer Cycle 2 of Access for All Grants

All San Francisco Access for All grant recipients will launch their services in 2025. Two of the providers, Tower Mobility and Fog City Access, are already operating as of early 2025. These providers offer on-demand, wheelchair-accessible services primarily for the Richmond, Sunset, Lake Merced, Ingleside, Excelsior, and Portola neighborhoods. The third provider, Green Cab, will use Access for All funds to acquire and operate a citywide ramp taxi service.

These services aim to improve same-day, on-demand transportation options for wheelchair users. The recent Accessible Transportation Needs Survey results show that paratransit customers want more opportunities for same-day reservations and the ability to make multiple stops during a trip. By addressing these needs, we expect the CPUC-funded services to complement existing paratransit offerings. If demand shifts to the Access for All services, this could also help reduce the costs of the ADA paratransit program.

In 2025, the SFMTA will continue to serve as the Local Access Fund Administrator (LAFA) in San Francisco, overseeing performance and reporting for all Access for All providers. The SFMTA will collect, analyze, and evaluate each provider's performance based on metrics outlined in their contract agreements. This will allow us to assess their impact on the availability of on-demand, wheelchair-accessible transportation in the city. By reviewing operations throughout the year, we can refine performance standards and reporting protocols to ensure the program achieves its intended goals.

Additionally, in 2025, we will launch a new competitive process to distribute the available \$1.5 million in Access for All funds. Under new CPUC guidance, the SFMTA will have the option to enter into agreements with selected providers for up to five years. This change allows more time for monitoring and collaboration, ensuring services meet the needs of their clients. It will also provide an opportunity for SFMTA staff to develop long-term strategies for the Access for All program. The continuation of this program is dependent on legislative reauthorization, so SFMTA staff will support efforts to secure its continuation.