

THIS PRINT COVERS CALENDAR ITEM NO. : 10.3

**SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY**

DIVISION: Sustainable Streets

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Approving permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modifications associated with the Commuter Shuttle Program.

SUMMARY:

- The SFMTA Board of Directors has authority to adopt changes to parking and traffic regulations.
- On March 1, 2016, the SFMTA Board adopted revisions to the Commuter Shuttle Program which permits eligible commuter shuttle operators to use a designated network of stops in San Francisco. The current Commuter Shuttle Program went into effect on April 1, 2016 and will expire on March 31, 2017.
- The current Commuter Shuttle Program was established after an 18-month pilot program that evaluated a regulatory framework for commuter shuttles in San Francisco. The current Program includes a number of changes, including a requirement that shuttles over 35 feet in length travel only on Caltrans-designated arterial streets.
- The requested change would establish a tow-away no parking, permitted commuter shuttle bus zone, 6 am to 10 am, Monday through Friday on the west side of San Jose Avenue, from 23 feet to 130 feet south of Valley Street.
- The San Francisco Planning Department has determined that the Commuter Shuttle Program is exempt from environmental review.

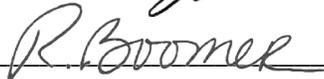
ENCLOSURES:

1. SFMTAB Resolution
2. Map of proposed commuter shuttle zone change

APPROVALS:

DATE

DIRECTOR  8/30/16

SECRETARY  8/30/16

ASSIGNED SFMTAB CALENDAR DATE: September 6, 2016

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PURPOSE

Approve permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modifications to support the Commuter Shuttle Program.

GOAL

This action supports the following SFMTA Strategic Plan Goal and Objectives:

Goal 1: Create a safer transportation experience for everyone

Objective 1.3: Improve the safety of the transportation system.

Goal 2: Make transit, walking, bicycling, taxi, ridesharing and carsharing the preferred means of travel

Objective 2.3: Increase use of all non-private auto modes

DESCRIPTION

Commuter Shuttle Program Overview

On March 1, 2016, the SFMTA Board approved revisions to the Commuter Shuttle Program which permits eligible commuter shuttle operators to use a designated network of stops including both designated Muni stops and a number of permitted commuter shuttle-only loading zones in San Francisco. The current Commuter Shuttle Program went into effect on April 1, 2016 and will expire on March 31, 2017.

The SFMTA conducted an 18-month pilot from August 2014 through January 2016 to evaluate a regulatory framework in which eligible commuter shuttle operators that pay a fee and comply with permit terms are permitted to stop in designated shared Muni zones and shuttle-only loading zones. The new Commuter Shuttle Program expanded on the Pilot and will inform any future changes in commuter shuttle regulation.

The 2016-2017 program includes the following characteristics:

- A network of up to 125 shuttle stop locations, including shared Muni zones and shuttle-only loading zones
- Large shuttles over 35 feet in length may travel and load only on the arterial network as designated by the California Department of Transportation
- Shuttle service providers apply for a permit to use network, and pay a permit fee based on the number of stops made at authorized locations, with the permit fee covering the SFMTA's costs for administering and enforcing the program
- Permittees are responsible for ensuring that their operators comply with agreed-upon operating guidelines

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- Shuttles must display permit placards on four sides of vehicle and display a “how is my driving?” sticker
- The program is enforced by SFMTA Parking Control Officers and Muni Inspectors, including a dedicated team of Parking Control Officers focused solely on commuter shuttles
- Permittees are required to share data on operations with the SFMTA, following specifications established by the SFMTA
- Permittees must submit a Service Disruption Prevention Plan with their permit application

The Commuter Shuttle Program includes clear and enforceable guidelines for shuttle loading and unloading which lead to increased safety when shuttles interact with other road users, reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and associated emissions reduction and lessening of congestion, as well as minimal impact on Muni service.

San Jose Avenue and Valley Street Location

There is currently a commuter shuttle stop located on San Jose Avenue at Dolores Street. At this location there is a pedestrian refuge island where riders wait for and board the commuter shuttle buses. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is currently conducting a repaving project along San Jose Avenue and Dolores Street which will include some safety upgrades in that corridor. As part of this project, the pedestrian refuge island will be widened into the parking lane, thereby eliminating the space where commuter shuttles pull in to the curb to pick up passengers.

In order to replace the stop at San Jose Avenue and Dolores Street, the SFMTA is proposing to create a shuttle only zone at San Jose Avenue south of Valley Street. The shuttle only zone on the west side of San Jose Avenue would be in effect during the morning peak period. The zone would restrict parking at four residential parking permit spaces during the morning peak period. The proposed location on San Jose Avenue south of Valley Street has just one tree with branches extending over the roadway, which DPW plans to trim. The majority of the proposed zone fronts on a private garden and does not block any private driveways. The northbound commuter shuttle stop on San Jose Avenue south of 29th Street would remain. The attached map shows the location of the existing stop at San Jose Avenue and Dolores Street, the proposed stop at San Jose Avenue south of Valley Street, and the northbound commuter shuttle stop on San Jose Avenue south of 29th Street which would remain. In addition, the map highlights those streets which are part of the arterial network.

The proposed items were presented at a duly noticed public hearing on August 5, 2016.

These changes require SFMTA Board approval:

- A. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY NO PARKING, PERMITTED COMMUTER SHUTTLE BUS ZONE, 6 AM TO 10 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – San Jose Avenue, west side, from 23 feet to 130 feet south of Valley Street (restricts parking at 4 RPP parking spaces)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This item was discussed at the August 5, 2016 engineering public hearing. One member of the public expressed concern regarding the location of the stop, specifically the loss of parking spaces and the potential for increased conflicts between vehicles and vehicles and pedestrians. In addition, several members of the public who were not able to attend the hearing submitted letters noting their concerns over increased noise, conflicts between commuter shuttle buses and other vehicles and pedestrians, double parking, and loss of residential parking permit parking spaces. Public notices were posted on light posts with information about the proposed change and hearing on July 26, 2016. Postcards with further details about the proposed change and hearing were mailed to all addresses nearby the proposed stop location.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The SFMTA carefully considered a number of potential locations before proposing the creation of this new commuter shuttle zone. Alternatives were evaluated based on a number of criteria, with the highest priority being the safety of people walking, biking and driving in the area. Specific factors include, among others:

- Adjacency to an intersection – shuttle zones located at the “near-side” of an intersection can obstruct right-turning drivers’ view of pedestrians in a crosswalk
- Curb access – tree limbs or extending over the roadway or zones located in the middle of a block can prevent shuttles from pulling all the way to the curb, leading to blocked travel lanes
- Driveways and parking – the SFMTA works to minimize shuttle zones’ impact on driveways and on neighborhood parking supply
- Reduction of conflicts between Muni buses and commuter shuttle vehicles
- Minimizing impacts to street trees

Specific alternatives considered include the following locations:

- San Jose Avenue and 29th Street, southwest corner: During the Shuttle Program Pilot, a temporary shuttle zone was established at this location. Staff found that shuttles were not able to pull into the curb due to several ornamental trees extending over the roadway, resulting in the shuttles blocking the bike lane and travel lane. In addition, the entire frontage of this zone is residential.
- San Jose Avenue and 29th Street, northwest corner: A zone at this location would be at the “near-side” of the intersection. A shuttle stopped at a near-side zone can block a turning driver’s view of people walking in the crosswalk. In addition, a zone at this location could eliminate a green zone used for loading by an adjacent business.
- San Jose Avenue and Valley Street, northwest corner: A zone at this location would pose the same “near-side” issues detailed above, and would result in at least two blocked driveways.
- San Jose Avenue and Day Street, northwest corner: A zone at this location would pose the same “near-side” issues detailed above. In addition, several ornamental trees extend over the roadway at this location.

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- San Jose Avenue and Day Street, southwest corner: A zone at this location would block at least two driveways, and a tree at the corner has large limbs extending over the roadway which would inhibit shuttles from pulling into the curb.
- San Jose Avenue and 30th Street, northwest corner: There is a curb bulb at this corner, and a zone at this location would block at least three driveways.
- San Jose Avenue and 30th Street, southwest corner: Shuttles stopping at this location may interfere with J-Church vehicles turning from 30th Street onto San Jose Avenue. In addition, several trees have branches extending over the roadway.

FUNDING IMPACT

All costs associated with the Commuter Shuttle Program are recovered through the Designated Stop Use and Permit Fee.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

On October 22, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined (Case Number 2015-007975ENV) that the Commuter Shuttle Program is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301 and Section 15308.

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

OTHER APPROVALS RECEIVED OR STILL REQUIRED

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this calendar item.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the SFMTA Board of Directors approve the proposed permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modification, to remain in effect for the duration of Commuter Shuttle Program.

SAN FRANCISCO
MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION No. _____

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has identified a need for parking modifications in support of the Commuter Shuttle Pilot program as follows:

- A. ESTABLISH – TOW-AWAY NO PARKING, PERMITTED COMMUTER SHUTTLE BUS ZONE, 6 AM TO 10 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY – San Jose Avenue, west side, from 23 feet to 130 feet south of Valley Street (restricts parking at 4 RPP parking spaces)

WHEREAS, On October 22, 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department determined (Case Number 2015- 007975ENV) that these traffic and parking modifications are categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301 and Section 15308; and,

WHEREAS, The Planning Department’s determination is on file with the Secretary to the SFMTA Board of Directors; and,

WHEREAS, The Commuter Shuttle Program established by the SFMTA Board of Directors calls for the creation of a network of designated stops, composed of shared existing Muni zones, and to include extensions of existing Muni zones and permitted commuter shuttle only loading zones as needed; and,

WHEREAS, The public has been notified about the proposed parking modifications and has been given the opportunity to comment on those modifications through the public hearing process; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors approves the permitted commuter shuttle bus zone modification listed as A above, to remain in effect for the duration of Commuter Shuttle Program.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors at its meeting of September 6, 2016.

Secretary to the Board of Directors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency