



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

General Plan Referral

Date: October 19, 2012

Case No. Case No. 2012.0613R
SFMTA MUNI Operator Restroom Facilities

Block/Lot No.: 1298 Potrero Avenue 4265/007
1451 Hampshire St 4276/014
74101 Ortega Street 2086/001
1601 Hudson Avenue 5260/001
1398 Fitzgerald St 4912/006
682 32nd Ave 1574/001
Additional – see attachment

Project Sponsor: Drew Howard
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Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, **in conformity** with the General Plan.

Recommended By: 
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Planning Department has received a General Plan Referral application for a Major Encroachment Permit for installation of restroom facilities proposed to be installed in public rights-of-way including sidewalk areas. The restroom facilities would solely be used by MUNI operators and would not be available to the public.

The SF Municipal Transportation Agency provides various types of restroom facilities, including providing restrooms in bus yards, in permanent structures, in privately owned and licensed facilities, and

temporarily in portable restroom facilities. However, out of more than 140 bus line terminals in the city, 43 have no bathroom facilities and 14 have only temporary portable toilets. Drivers along unserviced lines are forced to search for facilities or pull into a Muni bus yard, causing service delays. The SFMTA proposes to provide restroom facilities for bus operators at the terminus of numerous lines in order to minimize gaps between available restroom facilities for the comfort and safety of bus operators.

SFMTA has identified five specific route locations where it proposes to install the initial set of prefabricated restroom facilities (Attachment 1). They also propose to locate up to 30 additional facilities throughout the City, at the terminals of numerous SFMTA transit lines. While the precise location of these is still being determined, the nearest intersection is listed in the attached list (Attachment 2). These will be located following the guidelines of "Exhibit B Surface-Mounted Facility Placement Guidelines" of Order No. 175,566 "Regulations for Issuing Excavation Permits for the Installation of Surface-Mounted Facilities in the Public Rights-Of-Way" (Attachment 3).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposed sidewalk bulbouts and MUNI operator restroom facilities would be installed in public rights-of-way along 5 identified routes, described below and further detailed in Attachment 1; and at 30 other locations.

	<u>MUNI Line</u>	<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Block/Lot</u>
1.	33 Stanyan	1298 Potrero Avenue 1451 Hampshire St	On 25 th St, east of Potrero Ave On Hampshire, north of Cesar Chavez	4265/007 4276/014
2.	71 Noriega	4101 Ortega Street	On Ortega, west of 48 th Ave.	2086/001
3.	54 Felton	1601 Hudson Avenue	On Hudson, west of Newhall St.	5260/001
4.	29 Sunset	1398 Fitzgerald St	On island at Fitzgerald & Third St.	4912/006
5.	38 Geary	682 32 nd Ave	On SFUSD property fronting Geary	1574/001

The prefabricated metal units are approximately 12' long x 8' wide x 10' tall, and would be installed within or adjacent to the public sidewalk. Where they conflict with the official sidewalk width, they would be installed in conjunction with planted sidewalk bulb-outs utilizing portions of adjacent parking lanes. The project would result in loss of a limited number of on-street parking spaces in locations where a planted bulb-out is included. All the units will be constructed so that if the terminal is moved, the unit can be disconnected from the utilities and moved as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Planning Department's Environmental Planning Section has determined that the proposed project is categorically exempt (Class 3) from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Provision of restroom facilities for MUNI coach drivers along service routes would address a necessary public health and safety issue, and reduce delays by bus operators seeking to find and use available

restrooms not designated for their use. Provision of such facilities is clearly in support of the City's Transit First Policy and other General Plan policies regarding transit.

The General Plan and the Better Streets Plan both support the relationship between active building frontages, such as those containing commercial, residential or other entries, and the pedestrian realm. The identified route locations for the initial set of prefabricated restroom facilities are sited in relatively unobtrusive locations, and are not directly enfronted by residential or active neighborhood commercial uses. The 30 additional facilities should be similarly sited away from active frontages.

The Better Streets Plan includes dimensions and guidelines for each sidewalk zone, including the throughway zone intended for accessible pedestrian travel. While accessibility regulations require a clear path of travel of minimum 4 feet in width, the Better Streets Plan aims to improve on this minimum and states that all street types other than alleys should maintain 6 feet of clear path of travel in order to provide sufficient space for pedestrian movement. Alleys and neighborhood residential streets with very low pedestrian volumes may maintain a minimum 4 feet clear path of travel. The identified route locations for the initial set of prefabricated restroom facilities meet these directives, and the 30 additional facilities should be sited to similarly maintain the required width for travel.

The Better Streets Plan calls for a clear, accessible path of travel, free from barriers and obstructions, on all streets to increase usability for all, including people with disabilities, seniors, children, and parents with strollers. Restrooms located under this program should be sited to maintain a linear path of travel along the sidewalk, and place obstructions outside of the path of travel to avoid impeding pedestrian flow. To meet this directive, the project sponsor has indicated one of the proposed sitings, Block 2086 Lot 2001 will be moved to the proposed curb line, to retain a consistent path of travel from the existing sidewalk along Ortega Street. The remaining identified route locations meet this directives, and the 30 additional facilities should be sited to similarly maintain a linear path of travel wherever possible.

Placing the facilities away from active frontages, while maintaining a clear and direct path of travel, will ensure consistency with the Better Streets Plan and the General Plan. The 5 selected locations are on balance, **in-conformity** with the below Objectives and Policies of the General Plan: The remaining 30 sites have been identified by the nearest cross street, but a precise location (block/lot) has not yet been determined. These locations are in conformance with the General Plan provided their ultimate location does not conflict with residential or commercial frontages, institutional entrances or entrances to public space; and provides sufficient space for pedestrian movement. Please note that, in order to adhere to the consistency findings of this Referral, *the specific siting of each future restroom must be located away from any active frontages, and must enable a minimum width of 6'feet on most streets.*

Any additional locations other than those covered by this Referral would be subject to additional General Plan review.

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

POLICY 11.2

Continue to favor investment in transit infrastructure and services over investment in highway development and other facilities that accommodate the automobile.

Every decision to direct expenditures toward improving congestion and parking conditions should first consider the improvement of transit operations.

POLICY 11.3

Encourage development that efficiently coordinates land use with transit service, requiring that developers address transit concerns as well as mitigate traffic problems.

OBJECTIVE 18

ESTABLISH A STREET HIERARCHY SYSTEM IN WHICH THE FUNCTION AND DESIGN OF EACH STREET ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE CHARACTER AND USE OF ADJACENT LAND.

POLICY 20.5

Place and maintain all sidewalk elements, including passenger shelters, benches, trees, newsracks, kiosks, toilets, and utilities at appropriate transit stops according to established guidelines.

POLICY 21.10

Ensure passenger and operator safety in the design and operation of transit vehicles and station facilities.

POLICY 23.1

Provide sufficient pedestrian movement space with a minimum of pedestrian congestion in accordance with a pedestrian street classification system.

POLICY 23.3

Maintain a strong presumption against reducing sidewalk widths, eliminating crosswalks and forcing indirect crossings to accommodate automobile traffic.

POLICY 23.5

Establish and enforce a set of sidewalk zones that provides guidance for the location of all pedestrian and streetscape elements, maintains sufficient unobstructed width for passage of people, strollers and wheelchairs, consolidates raised elements in distinct areas to activate the pedestrian environment, and allows sufficient access to buildings, vehicles, and streetscape amenities.

POLICY 23.9

Implement the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the city's curb ramp program to improve pedestrian access for all people.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

OBJECTIVE 1:

EMPHASIS OF THE CHARACTERISTIC PATTERN WHICH GIVES TO THE CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AN IMAGE, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, AND A MEANS OF ORIENTATION.

POLICY 1.1

Recognize and protect major views in the city, with particular attention to those of open space and water.

POLICY 1.10

Indicate the purposes of streets by adopting and implementing the Better Streets Plan, which identifies a hierarchy of street types and appropriate streetscape elements for each street type.

PROPOSITION M FINDINGS – Planning Code Section 101.1

Planning Code Section 101.1 establishes Eight Priority Policies and requires review of discretionary approvals and permits for consistency with said policies. The Project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies as set forth in Planning Code Section 101.1 for the following reasons:

Eight Priority Policies Findings

The subject project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced.

The Project would have no adverse effect on neighborhood serving retail uses or opportunities for employment in or ownership of such businesses.

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhood.

The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's housing stock. The project would construct sidewalk bulb-outs on which it would install prefabricated restrooms for use by MUNI operators. In some locations these would replace "port-a-potties" provided for MUNI operator use. When specific sites are considered, the Department may make recommendations provision of street trees to screen the installations, public art or other elements to improve neighborhood character.

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced.

The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing.

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.

The Project would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI's transit service, overburdening the streets or altering current neighborhood parking. The project would provide restroom facilities at six MUNI line terminals, providing infrastructure necessary for MUNI operators.

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for residential employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.

The Project would not affect the existing economic base.

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.

The Project would not adversely affect achieving the greatest possible preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake. The prefabricated restroom units would meet standards for similar structures, as required.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.

The project does not involve any historic buildings. Installations should be sited adjacent to landmarks or historic buildings.

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development.

The project is limited to installation of six (6) prefabricated restroom facilities on sidewalk bulb-outs. The structures, limited to 8' x 12' and 10 feet tall, would not limit park access to sunlight. Should MUNI operator restroom facilities be proposed to be installed in or adjacent to property under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Commission, SFMTA should request review and approval of installation at these locations.

RECOMMENDATION:	Finding the Project, on balance, in-conformity with the General Plan
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Attachments:

- Attachment 1- Initial Identified Locations
- Attachment 2 - 30 Additional Facilities Locations
- Attachment 3- "Exhibit B Surface-Mounted Facility Placement Guidelines" of Order No. 175,566 "Regulations for Issuing Excavation Permits for the Installation of Surface-Mounted Facilities in the Public Rights-Of-Way"