

File No. 201119

Committee Item No. \_\_\_\_\_

Board Item No. 25

# COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Board of Supervisors Meeting

Date: November 3, 2020

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Prepared by: Lisa Lew

Date: October 30, 2020

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1 [Preparation of Findings to Reverse the Statutory Exemption Determination - SFMTA -  
2 COVID-19 Muni Rail Service Adjustments and Associated Street and Parking Changes]

3 **Motion directing the Clerk of the Board to prepare findings reversing the determination**  
4 **by the Planning Department that the proposed San Francisco Municipal Transportation**  
5 **Agency's COVID-19 Muni Rail Service Adjustments and Associated Street and Parking**  
6 **Changes project is statutorily exempt from environmental review.**

7  
8 WHEREAS, On August 12, 2020, the Planning Department issued a statutory  
9 exemption determination for the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's (MTA's)  
10 COVID-19 Muni Rail Service Adjustments and Associated Street and Parking Changes  
11 (Project) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code,  
12 Sections 21,000 et seq.), the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Title 14,  
13 Sections 15,000 et seq.) and Chapter 31 of the City's Administrative Code; and

14 WHEREAS, The Planning Department found that the Project is exempt from CEQA per  
15 CEQA, Section 21080(b)(4) and the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15269(c), which exempt  
16 projects "specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency," as well as per the  
17 CEQA Guidelines, Section 15275, which exempts "a mass transit project" that would  
18 "institut[e] or increase ... passenger or commuter service on rail lines;" and

19 WHEREAS, CEQA defines an "emergency" as "a sudden, unexpected occurrence,  
20 involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate attention to prevent or mitigate  
21 loss of, or damage to, life, health, property, or essential public services;" and

22 WHEREAS, On February 25, 2020, Mayor London N. Breed issued a Proclamation  
23 Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency, finding that the COVID-19 pandemic posed a  
24 threat to the lives, property or welfare of the City and County and its residents; and

1           WHEREAS, On March 6, 2020, the San Francisco Health Officer declared a public  
2 health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently enacted Health Orders  
3 to protect the public health, including Health Order No. C19-07 (Stay Safer at Home), which  
4 requires individuals to maintain six feet of social distance from others not in their household;  
5 and

6           WHEREAS, In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and shortly after  
7 San Francisco's Stay Safer at Home order was issued in March, the MTA implemented its  
8 COVID-19 Muni Core Service Plan, which allowed it to operate limited transit services and to  
9 allocate resources to the locations where they were most needed; and

10           WHEREAS, On March 30, 2020, as part of that initial COVID-19 Muni Core Service  
11 Plan, Muni Metro light rail service was closed, in order to minimize risk to front-line staff and  
12 the community and redirect custodial resources to other facilities; and

13           WHEREAS, As conditions have evolved and transit trips are expected to increase, the  
14 MTA proposed to modify COVID-19 Muni Core Service by scheduling the return of a modified  
15 Muni Metro rail service on August 22, 2020; and

16           WHEREAS, The proposal would allow the MTA to implement surface rail service for  
17 Muni lines that typically operated in the subway pre COVID-19 (specifically, the N Judah, the  
18 TM Oceanview, the LK Taraval-Ingleside, the L Taraval, the J Church, and the S Shuttle  
19 lines), thus facilitating longer train cars and adequate social distancing on train cars; and

20           WHEREAS, Implementation of the Project would require temporary changes to Muni  
21 transit stops, on-street vehicle parking and loading spaces, and traffic restrictions, particularly  
22 at the West Portal Station Area and at the J Church Termination Area, between 15th Street  
23 and Duboce Avenue; and

24           WHEREAS, These changes to traffic, transit stops, and parking are designed to  
25 facilitate the Muni service changes proposed by the Project, as well as to enable adequate

1 social distancing at transit stops by providing more space for riders to wait for, board, and  
2 disembark the service routes; and

3 WHEREAS, Implementation of the Project would require temporary striping, signage on  
4 existing poles or moveable signage, installation of safe-hit posts or other moveable barriers on  
5 the ground, and the placement of wooden ADA platforms on the ground; no excavation would  
6 be required; and

7 WHEREAS, The Project is temporary in nature, and would expire 120 days of the  
8 repeal of the City's proclamation of the COVID-19 local public health emergency; and

9 WHEREAS, On August 19, 2020, the MTA Director of Transit approved the Project;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, On August 20, 2020, the Statutory Exemption determination was posted in  
12 the Planning Department's website, as required by Chapter 31 of the Administrative Code;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Two appeals were filed of the statutory exemption determination for the  
15 Project with the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors: the first one on September 14,  
16 2020, by Justin Zucker of Reuben, Junius & Rose, LLP on behalf of Safeway Inc., and the  
17 second one on September 21, 2020, by David Pilpel (collectively, Appellants); and

18 WHEREAS, By memoranda to the Clerk of the Board dated September 23 and 29,  
19 2020, the Planning Department's Environmental Review Officer determined that the appeals  
20 were timely filed; and

21 WHEREAS, On November 3, 2020, this Board held a duly noticed public hearing to  
22 consider the appeal of the exemption determination filed by Appellants; and

23 WHEREAS, In reviewing the appeal of the exemption determination, this Board  
24 reviewed and considered the exemption determination, the appeal letter, the responses to the  
25 appeal documents that the Planning Department prepared, the other written records before

1 the Board of Supervisors and all of the public testimony made in support of and opposed to  
2 the exemption determination appeal; and

3 WHEREAS, Following the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board of Supervisors  
4 conditionally reversed the exemption determination subject to the adoption of written findings  
5 of the Board in support of such determination based on the written record before the Board of  
6 Supervisors, as well as all of the testimony at the public hearing in support of and opposed to  
7 the appeal; and

8 WHEREAS, The written record and oral testimony in support of and opposed to the  
9 appeal and deliberation of the oral and written testimony at the public hearing before the  
10 Board of Supervisors by all parties and the public in support of and opposed to the appeal of  
11 the exemption determination is in the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors File No. 201116, and  
12 is incorporated in this Motion as though set forth in its entirety; now, therefore, be it

13 MOVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board to prepare the  
14 findings specifying the basis for its decision on the appeal of the exemption determination  
15 issued by the Planning Department for the Project.

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# Introduction Form

By a Member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor

Time stamp  
or meeting date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby submit the following item for introduction (select only one):

- 1. For reference to Committee. (An Ordinance, Resolution, Motion, or Charter Amendment)
- 2. Request for next printed agenda Without Reference to Committee.
- 3. Request for hearing on a subject matter at Committee.
- 4. Request for letter beginning "Supervisor  inquires"
- 5. City Attorney request.
- 6. Call File No.  from Committee.
- 7. Budget Analyst request (attach written motion).
- 8. Substitute Legislation File No.
- 9. Reactivate File No.
- 10. Question(s) submitted for Mayoral Appearance before the BOS on

Please check the appropriate boxes. The proposed legislation should be forwarded to the following:

- Small Business Commission       Youth Commission       Ethics Commission
- Planning Commission       Building Inspection Commission

**Note: For the Imperative Agenda (a resolution not on the printed agenda), use a Imperative Form.**

**Sponsor(s):**

**Subject:**

**The text is listed below or attached:**

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

For Clerk's Use Only: