

Resolution No. 004-00-COE

April 14, 2000

[Municipal Railway - Alternative Fuels]

RECOGNIZING THE RECENT ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS BY THE CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD REQUIRING TRANSIT AGENCIES TO REPLACE AND RETROFIT THEIR EXISTING FLEETS WITH BUSES POWERED BY ALTERNATIVE FUELS OR CLEANER DIESEL TECHNOLOGY AND URGING THE SAN FRANCISCO MUNICIPAL RAILWAY, SERVING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, TO ADOPT THE ALTERNATIVE FUEL PATH OF THE CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD TRANSIT RULE WITH A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TIMELY COMPLIANCE WITH THE NEW REGULATIONS.

WHEREAS, air and water pollution represent significant environmental problems for the State of California and the City and County of San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, diesel particulate matter was declared to be a Toxic Air Contaminant by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and diesel exhaust has been listed as a known Carcinogen under California's Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act (Prop 65) since 1990; and

WHEREAS, 22 OF 65 public transit districts in California have been successful in incorporating natural gas fueled buses into their transit systems; and

WHEREAS, the use of natural gas in transit has shown measurable reductions of over 50% less Nitrogen Oxide (NO_x), an ozone precursor, and over 90% less particulate matter (PM), a toxic air contaminant (TAC), when compared to today's diesel technology; and

WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco is committed to reducing its air emissions and contribution to global warming; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on the Environment, the City and County of San Francisco and the City of Oakland passed resolutions calling for the elimination of dioxin pollution in the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, diesel combustion emits dioxin in addition to over 40 other chemicals listed by California and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as toxic air contaminants, probably human carcinogens, known human carcinogens, reproductive toxicants or endocrine disrupters; and

WHEREAS, particulate matter from transit buses is a health risk, with particular concern to asthma and other health conditions, for drivers, passengers and residents of San Francisco, especially in densely populated urban corridors; and

WHEREAS, on July 10th, 1999 the EPA redesignated the San Francisco Bay Area from maintenance to non-attainment for the Federal one-hour ozone standard; and

WHEREAS, the California Air Resources Board recently adopted a set of regulations to further reduce air pollution from the most populated areas of the State, and

WHEREAS, these regulations will move forward in several steps over the next ten years, requiring cleaner engines, cleaner diesel fuel, and retrofit to reduce exhaust emissions in older diesel buses; and

WHEREAS, the new mandates also encourages transit agencies to incorporate low-emission alternative fuels such as compressed or liquefied natural gas, fuel cells, electricity or other advanced technology; and

WHEREAS, alternative fueled transit buses are eligible for Federal, State and local funding sources and will not adversely affect transit service; and

WHEREAS, our Nation's dependence on foreign oil supplies has exceeded 60% with the transportation sector 97% dependent on petroleum and this market's price volatility impacts San Francisco economics, our nations trade imbalance, as well as overall National Energy Security; and

WHEREAS, alternatives such as natural gas, propane and ethanol protect municipalities from future price spikes in addition to offering superior emissions performance; and

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Municipal Railway is California's 3rd largest public transit district and serves California's 2nd largest metropolitan area, and is therefore ideally positioned to lead all Bay Area transit districts toward cleaner technologies in order to protect public health and improve quality of life; and

WHEREAS, by adopting cleaner alternatives to diesel, such as natural gas and fuel cell buses, the San Francisco Municipal Railway can begin replacement of its existing fleet of 455 diesel buses; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the San Francisco Municipal Railway to complete its pending alternative fuel pilot project as required by the Healthy Air and Smog Reduction Ordinance in order to inform any future purchases of transit buses; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the San Francisco Municipal Railway to adopt the alternative fuel path of California Air Resources Board Transit Rule with a strategic plan for timely compliance with the new regulations; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment urges the San Francisco Municipal Railway to adopt a policy of no new diesel buses and that future purchases shall only be alternative fuel.

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Commission on the Environment at its special regular meeting on April 24, 2000.

Sraddha Mehta
Commission Secretary

VOTE:

Ayes: *Commissioners Bradford-Bell, Evans, Hayes, Shah, Bingham and Chang.*
Noes: *None.*
Absent: *Commissioner Werbe.*