

# Improving West Side Transit Access Strategic Analysis Report (SAR)

## Scope of Work Adopted January 27, 2015

### I. Background

- A. About SARs:** This is a standard section included in all Strategic Analysis Reports (SARs). It describes the SAR development and review process and the role of the document in facilitating policy-level decision-making.
- B. History/Context:** Equity Analysis conducted for the San Francisco Transportation Plan (SFTP) identified geographic disparities in transit access in the city's outlying neighborhoods including the west side. As a result of this and other factors, a disproportionate share of west side residents drive alone to work and for shopping and errands. The Sunset District Blueprint, completed in 2014, identified concerns with unreliable or infrequent transit service as a top community concern.

Major strides are being made to improve the quality of transit services serving the west side through the Muni Forward project. Muni Forward will result in frequency, speed and/or reliability improvements to eight transit lines (L-Taraval; N-Judah; 16X-Noriega Express; 18-46th Avenue; 28/28L-19th Avenue; 29-Sunset; 48-Quintara; and the 71L-Haight Noriega). Other studies such as the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) upcoming Bay Area Core Capacity Transit Study offers an opportunity to study M-Oceanview improvements and regional express bus services for the west side, to destinations within San Francisco or across the bay to Oakland. Finally, the successful piloting of bike-sharing, citywide focus on improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and proliferation of new shared-use and privately provided mobility options on the west side present opportunities for improving transit access.

To inform these ongoing studies and trends, the West Side needs a vision for what it would take, beyond what is already planned, to create the kind of high-quality transportation offerings that would reduce reliance on private vehicles and shift additional trips to transit.

**C. Purpose of the SAR:**

This SAR will build on work prepared for the Sunset Blueprint, Muni Forward, SFTP and other efforts, to examine high-level options for improving transit access to the west side, focusing on one or more specific travel markets and groups of travelers, which will be identified through analysis.

**D. Review of Other Studies and Documents:** Several relevant documents will be reviewed as part of this SAR. They include:

- The **Sunset District Blueprint**, which identified key transit hubs within the district that need improvement. These include stops on the N Judah (where Judah intersects La Playa and 46<sup>th</sup>); the L Taraval (at Wawona and 46<sup>th</sup>, Tarval and 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Taraval and 46<sup>th</sup>), and several others along the 28L, 29

Sunset, and 71 Haight. The Blueprint also notes several pedestrian and bicycle safety concerns that may present barriers to transit access.

- The **Muni Forward project**, which includes conceptual plans for transit upgrades on key transit lines throughout the city, including the N Judah, L Tarval, and others in the district. Any specific improvements already planned for major transit hubs will be inventoried. Boardings by west side transit stops will also be reviewed to ensure focus on the most used stops.
- The **San Francisco Transportation Plan (SFTP)**, which identified a geographic disparity around transit reliability and access to regional services for neighborhoods like the west side of the city. Since the study was published, issues around turnbacks have abated and the SFMTA successfully introduced popular new services like the NX express bus.
- **SPUR's Ocean Beach Master Plan**, a comprehensive vision to address sea level rise, protect infrastructure, restore coastal ecosystems and improve public access, will be reviewed, along with any relevant follow-on studies.
- Professor Susan Shaheen's **Shared Use Mobility Summit White Paper**, which documented the policy issues and opportunities for shared use mobility discussed at a summit held in San Francisco in October 2013.

## II. Strategic Analysis

**A. Existing Conditions:** This section will summarize existing travel data and collect new data, e.g. through focus groups and interviews, to better understand west side travel markets, particularly automobile trips, in an effort to improve the competitiveness of transit and alternative modes. It will examine the following questions:

- a. What are the top travel markets to and from the west side? This analysis will examine the major origins of destinations of west side residents and identify top destinations for different types of trips. For example, the analysis could identify downtown and the south bay as top destinations for commuters. The analysis will also identify the current mode choices of travelers in these markets (e.g. what share of travelers are using transit versus driving alone, walking, or bicycling). One or more top travel markets will be identified as a focus for the remainder of the SAR. For example, options for focused travel markets could include student trips to major educational institutions; commuter trips downtown; or commuter trips to south bay.
- b. What options do travelers in the selected markets currently have for completing their trip, and how competitive are these options with the private automobile? The SAR will also take a special look at the rise of shared mobility services and how these are changing travel habits.
- c. What plans are already in place to improve the quality of alternatives to the automobile in the selected market(s), through projects such as Muni Forward, regional transit improvements, major bicycle network improvements, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and other freeway management treatments, fare policies, or other relevant options? Are these improvements expected to

be sufficient to result in a significant reduction of reliance on private automobiles for this trip?

**C. Strategic Issues and Opportunities:** This section would identify new opportunities for improving alternative mode access for one or more specific travel markets and groups of travelers in the short and medium-terms. It will examine:

- a. What additional specific strategies could the city pursue to raise the attractiveness of transit in the selected markets, beyond those that are already planned?
- b. What types of projects would best achieve this, by addressing the gaps or enhancing existing offerings, in the short- and medium terms?
- c. What are potential new policies or roles should be considered along with these projects, for the public and/or private sectors?

### **III. Next Steps/Recommendations**

The SAR will develop a set of recommendations for follow-on work to advance one or more specific project concepts, including likely order-of-magnitude cost and level of effort, responsible agencies, and possible funding sources for implementation.

### **IV. Bibliography**

This section will identify the bibliography as well as individuals and organizations consulted in the process of developing the SAR.