

NEWS RELEASE

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BUSINESS LEADERS DELIVER POSITION PAPER ON S.F. PARKING CRISIS TO MAYOR BROWN AND OTHERS

Coalition Seeks to Compensate for the City's Diminishing Parking Capacity

San Francisco – San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Department of Parking & Traffic Director Stuart Sunshine, San Francisco Director of Planning Gerald Green and others today were formally presented with a 14-point plan for solving San Francisco's parking crisis. The 14-point plan is the principal component of a position paper drafted by a coalition of local business organizations seeking immediate action to offset the drastically declining rate of – and increasing demand for – available parking in San Francisco.

"Lack of parking is an issue that has reached crisis proportions," said Mark Mosher, executive director of the Committee on Jobs. "Local residents and daily shoppers and visitors venturing to the City – to say nothing of employees required to commute by car to San Francisco – are being held hostage by an extremely frustrating situation that demands greater attention."

The position paper strongly urges that elected officials, administrators and civil servants who hold the responsibility collaborate to develop a coherent, straightforward and well-designed and -managed plan for relieving San Francisco's severe parking shortage. From the vantage point of the coalition, there is a distinct lack of communication between City departments, which has forestalled any meaningful progress in addressing San Francisco's parking shortage. For the coalition's part, key components of the 14-point plan recommend private sector involvement in the process.

Current estimates by the City's own Department of Parking & Traffic (DPT) and Planning Department report that public and private development will result in San Francisco losing between 4,000 and 6,000 parking spaces in the next five years. In addition, CALTRANS has stated that, as a result of the Bay Bridge retrofit, another 4,500 commuter-parking spaces under and along the elevated span of Interstate 80 will be eliminated for a period of at least six years.

The difficulties caused by the loss of roughly 10,000 parking spaces are compounded because, since the City's Transit First Policy was adopted, several projects / developments have been permitted for construction without any requirement to build adequate parking either on site or nearby.

As a practical first step toward solving the City's parking woes, the position paper advocates devising a sensible parking plan for San Francisco's South of Market (SOMA) District and what it refers to as the New Territories (extending from PacBell Park to 3Com Park and including the City's Eastern Waterfront, Potrero and Hunters Point districts). The intent is to enable the City's most explosive growth areas to develop in a thoughtful, well-formulated manner while providing a viable means of relief to local residents and to visitors, shoppers and employees required to commute by car to the City's primary business, shopping and entertainment (by allocating parking in reasonably close proximity to those areas).

"Every successful business district in the City has had parking resources provided by the City and County of San Francisco," said Marc Intermaggio, executive vice president of the Building Owners and Managers Association of San Francisco. "SOMA and the New Territories should receive their fair share of support (from the City)."

The coalition is comprised of the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) of San Francisco (www.bomasf.org), the Committee on Jobs, the Downtown Association of San Francisco and the Market Street Association (www.citysearch.com/sfo/marketstreet).

The coalition recognizes the need to address such issues as traffic management and the dependability and convenience of San Francisco's mass transit system. However, it believes that without adequate parking to support overall growth, the long-term viability of San Francisco's now strong economy is threatened.

"We want to work together to quickly allocate parking before those adversely affected choose to go elsewhere," said Intermaggio. "Put simply, we want to break the gridlock that has prohibited the City from developing new and replacement parking."

"San Francisco is a regional hotbed of business and tourism," said Carolyn Diamond, executive director of the Market Street Association. "However, it's become increasingly frustrating for residents, daily shoppers and visitors and local businesses to deal with the present situation."