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13 March, 2016

William Werner
Chairman Sausalito Planning Commission
City of Sausalito
420 Litho Street
Sausalito, CA 94965

Via email attachment

Dear Chairman Werner, I am writing to you today regarding concerns related to ferry services in Sausalito. These concerns relate to the overall level of ferry services provided to bike visitors in Sausalito, which in-turn dramatically impacts the city of Sausalito and its citizens. In as much as the ferry district has positioned the proposed new landing as an upgrade to ferry services for Sausalito, a review of current service levels, and ***opportunities for immediate improvement***, seems in order. The related issues include the following:

1. During the warm weather months Sausalito experiences high volumes of bike visitors daily as you know, with volumes often well-exceeding 3,000 bikes per day.
2. Most visitors who cross the Golden Gate bridge and come to Sausalito wish to take a ferry back to San Francisco from where their bikes were rented.
3. Based upon Ambassador-collected data during the 2015 season, the ~10 ferries/day that depart Sausalito between the hours of 1pm and 7pm (peak volume hours) leave half-empty in terms of bikes. This roughly equates to 75 bikes taken per ferry, versus a capacity of ~150 bikes. Based upon these numbers, 75 bike visitors/ferry, or ~750 bike visitors/day are left behind and/or delayed in Sausalito. These bike visitors queue in our streets and sidewalks, jam our parks and add materially to the daily overcrowding and congestion in the downtown.
4. The ferry companies explain their level of service for bike visitors by stating that they must maintain their posted schedules, and bike visitors take longer to board than pedestrians.
5. Based upon [video posted by the PBAC](#) it is clear that a central reason that the bike visitors take a long time to board is that no one provides assistance to these visitor during the boarding/parking process. More specifically, while many bike visitors could quickly and efficiently board the ferry with their bikes, the line to board is single file and therefore moves at the pace of the slowest bike visitor.

6. The substandard level of bike visitors services by the ferry companies results in real costs and hardships for Sausalito citizens and bike visitors alike including:
 - a. Need to use valuable Sausalito city waterfront real estate for ferry bike queuing (~600 sq ft.)
 - b. Fees for Ambassadors and related resources to manage crowds of bike visitors who are unable to leave Sausalito.
 - c. Overcrowded Sausalito sidewalks, streets and parks
 - d. Visitor time spent in long lines; often in the hot sun for hours awaiting a ferry.
 - e. \$20/bike and up for those who decide to take a cab back from Sausalito to San Francisco as opposed to waiting hours for a ferry.
 - i. There is of course a reason that dozens of cabs with bike racks line up on Anchor street daily in the warm weather months.
7. It is worth noting that while a new ferry landing built at some point in the future might help bike visitor boarding on the margins, the primary immediate opportunity for improvement is to provide assistance to bike visitors in a fashion similar to the assistance provided by Sausalito Bike Ambassadors on Tracy Way to wit; ***proactive hands-on help for those bike visitors who need it to keep the lines moving.***

Based upon these observations and issues we respectfully request that:

1. Representatives from the Golden Gate Ferry District be advised by the Planning Commission that their current level of service to Sausalito is substandard as relates to bike boarding, thereby causing substantial hardship and costs for Sausalito citizens and bike visitors alike.
2. Representatives from the Golden Gate Ferry District be asked to provide without delay ***their specific plans*** to improve 2016 ferry bike boarding services.
 - a. Their plans should include a minimum service guarantee of average bikes boarded per ferry during peak hours of >85% capacity or 125 bikes/ferry
3. To the extent that a written agreement is created or amended between the city and the ferry companies, the agreement include performance guarantees related to bike visitor boarding with recourse, including the ability for the city to bring in additional ferry service(s) if/when ferry companies' service levels fall below agreed-upon levels.

It would seem that these requests are reasonable, practical and likely overdue. It is also worth noting that the ferry companies would generate more revenue if they improved their efficiencies and took more bike visitor passengers. Hopefully we can turn the current lose-lose (citizens and bike visitors) into a win-win (ferry companies and everyone involved).

Thanks for your consideration, and best regards,



Edward Fotsch, MD