



Agenda Item No. (6)

To: Finance-Auditing Committee/Committee of the Whole  
Meeting of November 18, 2021

From: Ron Downing, Director of Planning  
James P. Swindler, Deputy General Manager, Ferry Division  
Joseph M. Wire, Auditor-Controller  
Denis J. Mulligan, General Manager

Subject: **APPROVE ACTIONS RELATIVE TO ADOPTION OF AN ANGEL ISLAND FERRY FARE AND AMEND THE MASTER ORDINANCE**

### **Recommendation**

The Finance-Auditing Committee recommends that the Board of Directors (Board) approve actions relative to adoption of a fare for Angel Island ferry service as follows:

1. Adopt an Angel Island ferry fare; and,
2. Amend the Master Ordinance accordingly.

This matter will be presented to the Board of Directors at its November 19, 2021, meeting for appropriate action.

### **Summary**

In December 2020, Blue & Gold Fleet (Blue & Gold) notified the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) of its intent to end its contract for ferry service between San Francisco and Angel Island. Blue & Gold's application with the California Public Utilities Commission to be relieved of its obligation to provide this service is still pending.

In anticipation that Blue & Gold will cease its operations in the near future, the Board of Directors (Board) of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District) voted on October 22, 2021, to establish a new Golden Gate Ferry route between San Francisco and Angel Island, to be initially implemented as a one-year demonstration project. An additional fundamental step for the San Francisco-Angel Island ferry service is to establish the fares for the demonstration service.

Board policy stipulates that establishing a new fare requires a public engagement process that includes a formal public hearing. On November 5, 2021, the District held a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed fares.

The Bay Area has an all-in-one transit card, called Clipper, used for contactless fare payments throughout the San Francisco Bay Area on all transit systems. The District will use the Clipper payment system to collect Angel Island fares, which includes the Clipper definitions for youths and seniors. Within Clipper, discounted fares for youths, seniors, Medicare recipients and persons with disabilities are paid with a Clipper Regional Transportation Connection (RTC) card. The Bay Area also has a discounted fare program for low income residents, providing a “means based” fare paid with a Clipper START card.

The District is initiating the service as a one-year demonstration project, which could begin as soon as late November 2021. The initial fare proposal was to set the single ride adult fare at \$14.00 plus half of the park entrance fee of \$3.00 for a total of \$15.50 each way. In response to public comments suggesting the proposed fare schedule was too high, staff proposes to modify its initial fare proposal to decrease the limited use single ride fare, the discounted fare for youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, and the Clipper START means based fare. The table below summarizes the proposed fares and the total amount to be paid by the customer:

Fare Category	One-Way Fare	Half of Park Entrance Fee Charged on Each One-Way Fare	Total Amount to Be Paid by Customer One-Way
Adult Single Ride (paid with a Clipper “Limited Use” paper ticket)	\$12.50	\$1.50	\$14.00
Adult Clipper (paid with a Clipper card or via the Clipper mobile phone app)	\$7.50	\$1.50	\$9.00
Youth/Senior/Persons with Disabilities (paid with a Clipper RTC card)	\$6.00	\$1.00	\$7.00
Adult Clipper START (paid with a Clipper START card)	\$5.50	\$1.50	\$7.00

The District will only collect the State Park Entrance Fee and remit it to the State Parks, and it will not be considered fare revenue. These proposed fares, if adopted, will be revisited during the course of the demonstration project.

**Public Involvement Process and Comments Received**

***Public Notification***

Outreach on the proposal to create the new San Francisco-Angel Island ferry service fare began after the Board authorization to hold a public hearing on October 22, 2021 and continued into early-November and prior to the public hearing on November 5, 2021.

Public notification activities included:

- A Notice of Public Hearing was posted to the District's website on October 23.
- Legal notices were published in the *Marin Independent Journal* on Sunday, October 24, and Saturday, October 30; and the *San Francisco Chronicle* on Saturday, October 23, and Saturday, October 30.
- Advertisement was placed in the October web edition of *La Voz*.
- Posters were placed onboard buses and ferries and at ferry terminals on Monday, November 1.
- Press releases were posted on the District's web site and sent to local media on Friday, October 29.
- Email blasts were sent to customers and community-based organizations on Friday, October 29, and were posted on Facebook and Twitter, respectfully, on Friday, October 29.
- Translation of materials in Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish were made available, per the District's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan.

### ***Public Comment Process***

Public comments on the proposal to create an Angel Island ferry fare could be submitted in several different ways:

1. Attend the public hearing;
2. Email [publichearing@goldengate.org](mailto:publichearing@goldengate.org); and/or,
3. Send written comments to the District Secretary.

The District's practice is to treat all comments equally without regard to the manner in which they are submitted or received. Therefore, individuals did not have to attend the public hearing to provide testimony if they commented through email or written forms. All comments received through the above methods were considered in the final recommendation so long as they were received by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 5, 2021.

### ***Comments Received***

The District received unique comments from fifteen individuals in response to the proposal as of 4:30 p.m., November 5, 2021. Fourteen comments were received through the public hearing email inbox and three were received at the November 5, 2021 public hearing. Of the three comments received at the public hearing, two individuals also submitted an email comment that was virtually identical to their comments at the public hearing, and as a result, those comments were only counted once. Staff responses to the comments received in opposition to the proposal and those neither in support of nor opposed to the proposal are shown in Appendix A.

### **Title VI Equity Analysis**

This proposal creates a new fare for the demonstration project. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title VI guidelines, and District policy, specifically address demonstration projects, and give transit agencies the latitude to introduce a demonstration project for up to one year before a Title VI Equity Analysis is required. One of the cornerstones of the Title VI Equity Analysis is that demographic data be used to demonstrate how the service would address the transportation

needs of disadvantaged communities. The demonstration period will allow the District to collect and analyze demographic data on the riders of the new service to fully inform the equity analysis.

**Fiscal Impact**

The pilot service is estimated to cost between \$920,000 - \$1 million annually. The primary costs of this additional service are principally in the categories of fuel, maintenance and other incidental costs such as landing fees. This cost will be partially offset by the fares collected from patrons travelling between San Francisco and Angel Island. Accordingly, the fiscal impact is tied to ridership. Detailed cost and revenue information will be provided along with the Title VI Equity Analysis and other information when the Board considers making this a permanent route at a future meeting.

Attachments:

Appendix A: Staff Responses to Public Comment

Appendix B: Amendment to Master Ordinance

## APPENDIX A

### Staff Responses to General Categories of Public Comment Received on Proposed Fares for Angel Island Ferry Services

#### Summary

The District received unique comments from 15 individuals in response to the proposal as of 4:30 p.m. on November 5, 2021. A total of 14 comments were received through the public hearing email inbox and three were received at the November 5, 2021, public hearing. Of the three comments received at the public hearing, two were from individuals who also submitted an email comment that was virtually identical to their comments at the public hearing, and as a result, those comments were only counted once.

Of the 15 comments received, two comments were in support of the proposal and eight were opposed to the proposed fares for a variety of reasons, some of which were based on incorrect information. Four comments were not specific to the fare proposal and one commenter requested additional information and did not offer comment on the fare proposal.

- Eight comments stated opposition to proposed fares increasing as perceived to be compared to the current Blue & Gold fare levels.

The four comments that were not specific to the fare proposal were:

- One expressed opposition to any change that would put a local ferry company such as Angel Island-Tiburon out of business.
- One comment stated that the fares should be self-sustaining and Golden Gate Bridge tolls should not subsidize a recreational ferry route.
- Two comments expressed that the District should focus on existing Golden Gate Ferry commute routes instead of expansion to Angel Island.

The following provides a summary of these comments, aggregated by main topic, with a staff response below each comment.

#### Comments on the Proposed Fares for New Angel Island Service

##### *Comments Made in Support of the Proposed Fares for New Angel Island Service*

The District received two comments in support of the proposed fares for new Angel Island service. These comments included specific conditions for support, as addressed below.

##### ***Comment – In support of the proposal with suggestions on subsidy levels for fares and level of discount between Clipper and Limited Use fares (One Comment)***

The proposal will utilize the existing Tiburon ferry route fares in order to expedite the start of service. The differential between Limited Use and Clipper fares will be reviewed after the project has been initiated and enough data is available for evaluation.

***Comment – In support of the proposal with a request that fares be affordable for various income levels (One Comment)***

A variety of fare levels are contained within the proposal, including a Clipper START means-based discount fare which is 50% of the full value cash fare (“Adult Single Ride”).

***Comments Made in Opposition to the Proposed Fares for New Angel Island Service***

The District received 12 comments in opposition to the proposal. Eight comments were specifically opposed to the proposed fare structure.

***Comment - Opposition to fares increasing when compared to the current Blue & Gold fare levels (Eight Comments)***

In response to public comment that the proposed fares are too high, staff has proposed lower fares for some categories as part of the final proposal.

A variety of fare categories are included in the proposal, depending on age, disability/Medicare status, and means-based Clipper START program qualification. For adults using a Clipper card, the total amount collected (including the park entrance fee) will drop from the current Blue & Gold price of \$19.50 to \$18.00 on Golden Gate Ferry. Persons ages 12-18 currently paying the Blue & Gold adult fare will be reclassified as youths on Golden Gate Ferry, resulting in a reduction in the round-trip fare from \$19.50 on Blue & Gold to \$14.00 on Golden Gate Ferry. The round-trip fare for people who qualify for the Clipper START means-based discount will be reduced from \$19.50 under Blue & Gold to \$14.00 under Golden Gate Ferry. All proposed fares will be evaluated during the course of the demonstration project to determine if additional adjustments are warranted.

***Comment - Focus on existing Golden Gate Ferry commute routes instead of expansion to Angel Island (Two Comments)***

These two comments were not specific to the proposed fares for Angel Island service, but felt that the District should be enhancing service on existing ferry routes before taking on new service. Currently Golden Gate Ferry commute route ridership is down 85% compared to pre-COVID-19 levels. As a result, the ferry system has been operating on a reduced schedule in order to curtail costs, operating at levels in proportion to the new lower demand levels. When there is an uptick in demand, service levels will be increased, as was done in September 2021 when extra regularly scheduled weekday morning Larkspur commute service was added.

***Comment - Opposition to any change that would put a local ferry company such as Angel Island-Tiburon out of business (One Comment)***

The Angel Island fare proposal does not involve a Tiburon to Angel Island route and the private operator will continue providing that service. There is no plan to take over that route nor to compete with it, as the proposed service will serve a different market by traveling between Angel Island and San Francisco.

***Comment - Fares should be self-sustaining and Golden Gate Bridge tolls should not subsidize a recreational ferry route (One Comment)***

The fare proposal utilizes the Tiburon to San Francisco fare structure to allow for faster implementation of the new service. However, the District plans to reassess those fares during the course of the demonstration project after sufficient data on the new Angel Island service.

***Comment Requesting More Information on the Proposed Fares***

The District received one comment requesting more information on the public comment period and how to comment. A response was sent to this individual.

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**APPENDIX B**

**GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2021-002**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MASTER ORDINANCE  
TO ESTABLISH FARES FOR GOLDEN GATE FERRY SERVICE BETWEEN THE  
SAN FRANCISCO FERRY TERMINAL AND ANGEL ISLAND**

November 19, 2021

THIS ORDINANCE is adopted with reference to the following facts and circumstances which are found and declared by the Board of Directors:

1. Blue & Gold Fleet currently provides ferry service between Pier 41 in San Francisco and Angel Island. In December of 2020, Blue & Gold Fleet notified the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation (Department of Parks and Recreation) of its intent to end its contract for ferry service between San Francisco and Angel Island. Blue & Gold Fleet applied to the California Public Utilities Commission to be relieved of its obligation to provide this service and its application is pending.

2. At the request of the State, and in order to ensure continued public ferry service to Angel Island from San Francisco, the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District) negotiated a joint exercise of powers agreement with the Department of Parks and Recreation whereby the District will provide ferry service between the San Francisco Ferry Terminal and the berthing facilities of the Department of Parks and Recreation on Angel Island. The District will also collect the Angel Island State Park fee from its passengers and remit the same to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

3. On October 22, 2021, the Board of Directors (Board) of the District authorized the General Manager to implement a new ferry route between the San Francisco Ferry Terminal and Angel Island, to be initially implemented as a one-year demonstration project (San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service).

4. The Bay Area has an all-in-one transit card, called Clipper, used for contactless fare payments throughout the San Francisco Bay Area on all transit systems. The District will use the Clipper payment system to collect Angel Island fares, which includes the Clipper definitions for youths and seniors. Within Clipper, discounted fares for youths, seniors, Medicare recipients and

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persons with disabilities are paid with a Clipper Regional Transportation Connection (RTC) card. The Bay Area also has a discounted fare program for low income residents, providing a “means based” fare paid with a Clipper START card. Within the Clipper system, a “single ride adult fare” on the District’s ferries is paid using a one-time Clipper “Limited Use” paper ticket.

5. Staff proposed the following fares for the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service:
  - \$14.00 each way for a single ride adult fare ;
  - \$7.50 each way for Clipper Card adult fare;
  - \$7.00 each way for youths, seniors, Medicare recipients, and people with disabilities . (50% of the adult single ride fare).

The proposed single ride fares are consistent with the current fares for the Tiburon ferry service. The District will also collect the State Park Fee and remit it to the Department of Parks and Recreation. Staff anticipates that the fare revenue will pay for a portion of the incremental cost associated with the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service.

6. On October 22, 2021, the Board authorized the setting of a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed fares for the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service. The public hearing was set for Friday, November 5 at 1:00 p.m. via teleconference. Outreach regarding the proposed fares began following the Board's authorization to set a public hearing and continued through early-November. Outreach activities included the following: 1) Publishing advertisements in local publications (*Marin Independent Journal, San Francisco Chronicle, and La Voz*); 2) Posting signs at the Ferry terminals advertising the Public Hearing; 3) Placing posters onboard Golden Gate Transit buses and ferries; 4) Sending press releases to local media and posting a press release to the District's web site; 5) Social media postings on Facebook and Twitter; and 6) Emails to customers and community based organizations. The District made available Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish translations of materials. Public comments regarding the proposed fares were received at the public hearing, by email to the District, and by written comments to the District Secretary.

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7. Legal notices of the Hearing were published to the District's website on October 23, 2021, in the *Marin Independent Journal* on Sunday, October 24, and Saturday, October 30, and in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on Saturday, October 23. A public hearing was held on November 5, 2021 to formally receive public comment on the proposed fares for the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service.

8. As of November 5, 2021, there were fifteen (15) unique comments received by the District. Of these, two commenters supported the proposed fares, eight (8) were opposed, four (4) comments received were not related to the proposal, and one person requested additional information and did not offer comment on the fare proposal. Members of the public voicing both support and opposition to the proposed fares, raised concerns regarding the high cost for certain fare categories. In particular, concerns were raised regarding the cost of the adult single ride fare (non-Clipper) and the fares for children ages 5-11. Staff reviewed and categorized all comments, and prepared written responses to comments in opposition and those neither in support of nor opposed to the proposed fares, which are included as an attachment to the staff report for the November 18, 2021 meeting of the Finance-Auditing Committee.

9. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title VI guidelines, and District policy, specifically address demonstration projects and allow the District to introduce a demonstration project for up to one year before a Title VI equity analysis must be completed. The demonstration period will allow the District to collect and analyze demographic data on the riders of the new service to fully inform its subsequent equity analysis, which must be completed before the Board may consider making the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service permanent or consider an extension of the demonstration period.

10. To respond to public comments regarding the cost of the proposed fares, staff has modified its initial fare proposal for the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service as follows:

- \$12.50 each way for a single ride adult fare;
- \$7.50 each way for Clipper Card adult fare;
- \$6.00 each way for youths, seniors, Medicare recipients, and people with disabilities;

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- \$5.50 each way for Clipper START.

In addition to the ferry fare, the District will also collect the State Park fee and remit it to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

11. On November 18, 2021, the Finance-Auditing Committee, after consideration of the modified proposed San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service fares, all public comments, and the staff analysis, has recommended that the District adopt the modified proposed fares as described above, effective upon commencement of the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service.

12. The Board has carefully considered the modified proposed San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service fares, considered all public comments, the General Manager’s report, and the recommendations of the Finance-Auditing Committee. The Board finds that the modified proposed San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service fares are consistent with the District’s mission and policy objectives and are needed to meet the District’s financial requirements. The fares are statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act as they are necessary to meet operating expenses, to purchase or lease supplies, equipment, or materials, to meet financial reserve needs and requirements, and obtain funds for capital projects necessary to maintain service within existing service areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section III, “Golden Gate Transit – Bus and Ferry Systems,” is amended to add a new subsection H, “San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service,” as follows:

H. SAN FRANCISCO-ANGEL ISLAND FERRY SERVICE

The District shall provide direct ferry service between the San Francisco Ferry Terminal and Angel Island at the fares set forth below. In addition to the ferry fares described below, the District will collect the applicable Angel Island California State Park fees and remit the same to the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation. As of the date of the ordinance enacting the Angel Island fare schedule, the applicable Angel Island California State Parks fees are \$3 for

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adults and \$2 for youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. The State Park fees are subject to modification by the State and are not within the scope of any ferry fares adopted by the Board.

<b>ANGEL ISLAND FARES - ONE WAY - WITHOUT ENTRANCE FEE</b>	
Adult Single Ride (ages 19-64)	\$12.50
Clipper Adult	\$7.50
Youth, Seniors, Disabled (with approved ID) or Medicare	\$6.00
Clipper START	\$5.50
Children (under age 5) limit 2 per full-fare adult	FREE

Section 2. The effective date of this Ordinance shall be upon the District's commencement of the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service.

Section 3. The Board finds that the San Francisco-Angel Island Ferry Service fares authorized by this Ordinance are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 21080(b)(8) of the Public Resources Code because the fares are for the purpose of: (a) meeting operating expenses, (b) purchasing or leasing supplies, equipment, or materials, (c) meeting financial reserve needs and requirements, and (d) obtaining funds for capital projects necessary to maintain service within existing service areas; and directs the General Manager to file a Notice of Exemption in the offices of the county clerk of San Francisco.

Section 4. If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect any other provisions or applications of the Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this Ordinance are severable.

ADOPTED this 19th day of November, 2021, by the following vote of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District Board of Directors;

**AYES ( ):**  
**NOES ( ):**  
**ABSENT ( ):**

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**Barbara L. Pahre**  
**President, Board of Directors**

**ATTEST:**

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**Amorette M. Ko-Wong**  
**Secretary of the District**

**DRAFT**