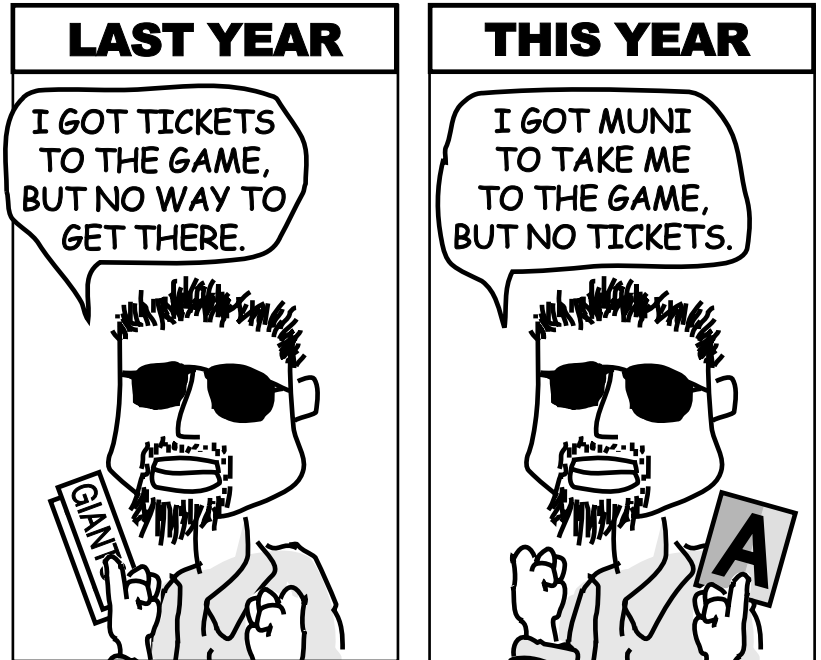


RESCUE MUNI *Transfer*

No. 12,
May 2000



PUNI ONLINE AT WWW.SFWEELY.COM. EMAIL PUNIDAN@YAHOO.COM FOR INFO ON THE NEW PUNI COMPILATION BOOK.



RESCUE MUNI

P.O. Box 190966
San Francisco, CA 94119-0966
415-273-1558 • www.rescuemuni.org

May 2000
Transfer

The Newsletter of
RESCUE MUNI

Steering Committee Digest
Muni's Proposed
Service Standards
Excom Candidates Needed
Elected MTA Board Amendment
Geary Light Rail / Stockton St

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May 2000

General Meeting
with 2000 Survey Results

May 23 (Tue), 6 p.m.
SPUR, 312 Sutter, #500

Steering Committee Digest

Howard Strassner reports on our governing body's decisions in February and March

In accordance with RESCUE MUNI Bylaws none of the following are RM policy (1 through 5) unless consented to by a majority of the RM Membership present at a General Membership Meeting. Endorsement of Ballot Initiatives requires a two-thirds vote.

1) We approved a draft letter to support **AB 1648** to require a review of the MTC by the University of California.

2) We discussed the **MTA appointments** at length and decided:

a) We will continue our opposition to all seven as being unqualified;

b) We will detail our reasons to oppose Flynn, Casey and Cisneros;

c) We will mention that other Parking and Traffic / Public Transportation Commissioners would be good replacements.

(Reporting only - obviously it is too late for any membership comments)

3) We voted to put a notice of the **ballot measure for an elected MTA Board** sponsored by the Committee to Adopt a Muni in this Transfer. Members to be given info on how to help gather signatures. (See page 6 of this Transfer for details.)

4) We heard a presentation on **Odyssey 20/20**, a campaign for improved public transit in California, and decided to sign on to the principles of "A Transportation Platform for all Californians". Odyssey is being seed funded by the California association of transit providers. Members can contact **Kristina Egan** for information at (916) 448-1687.

5) We voted to **oppose funding the Central Subway** and support instead funding **Geary LRT** first. (A copy of our letter to Muni Director Michael Burns and the MTA Board is included in this Transfer on page 7.)★

Transfer

the newsletter of RESCUE MUNI
May 2000 - No. 12

Editor: Eric Carlson

Designer: Andrew Sullivan

Artist: Dan Siegler

Contributing writers: Howard Strassner et al.

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RESCUE MUNI (Riders for an Efficient, Safe, Consistent, Utilized, and Expedient Muni), founded 1996, is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit transit riders' association.

Hot line: **415-273-1558**

www.rescuemuni.org
transitl@rescuemuni.org

Membership Form

We need YOU to help us Rescue Muni.

Join us by mailing this form to P.O. Box 190966, San Francisco, CA 94119-0966.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Muni lines you ride:

riders in your household:

I would like to volunteer! Y N

Membership category:

\$5 Student / Limited Income

\$15 Basic

\$40 Sustaining

\$100 Contributing

Other: \$_____

RESCUE MUNI may from time to time publish membership lists *with names only* (no phone numbers or addresses). May we publish your name only as a member? Y N

Signature:

Executive Committee

Chair: Vacant (Andrew Sullivan acting)

Vice-Chair: Richard Mlynarik

Membership Sec'y: Daniel Murphy

Recording Sec'y: Howard Strassner

Corresponding Sec'y: Eric Carlson

Treasurer: Joan Downey

Coordinators:

Charlotte Breckenridge, David Pilpel,

Andrew Sullivan

second Wed. of every month, 6 p.m., at SPUR, 312 Sutter, 5th floor (chair: Howard Strassner, 661-8786, ruthow@juno.com)

Steering Committee

Chair: Andrew Sullivan

Vice-Chair: Daniel Murphy

Charlotte Breckenridge, Eric Carlson,

Joan Downey, Richard Mlynarik, David

Pilpel, Howard Strassner

Other Committees/Initiatives

Future of Muni (co-chairs: Charlotte Breckenridge, 387-5386 and Eric Carlson, 863-5578, pontneuf@earthlink.net)

Membership (chair: Daniel Murphy, 665-4074, daniel@well.com)

Surveys (chair: Andrew Sullivan, 673-0626, andrew@sulli.org)

Any member may form a committee. If it meets at least four times per year, the committee may request appointment of a representative to the Steering Committee, the policy-making body of RESCUE MUNI.

Standing Committees

Muni Metro: addresses scheduling and reliability of Muni's light rail lines. Meets

RESCUE MUNI Calendar

And why is this not posted in every bus? *Outrageous, we say!*

date	item	location
4/25, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, 1 Goodlett (Polk) St. Room 400
5/2, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
5/10, 6 PM	RM Metro Committee	SPUR
5/15, 6 PM	RM Executive & Steering Committees	SPUR
5/16, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
5/23, 6 PM	RM General Membership Meeting • 2000 Riders' Survey Results • Guest Speaker TBA	SPUR, 312 Sutter
6/6, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
6/14, 6 PM	RM Metro Committee	SPUR
6/19, 6 PM	RM Executive & Steering Committees	SPUR
6/20, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
June TBA	General Membership Meeting & Elections	
7/1	Municipal Transportation Agency takes full effect	
July TBA	Municipal Transportation Agency Board (will probably be rescheduled due to 7/4 holiday)	City Hall, Rm. 400
7/12, 6 PM	RM Metro Committee	SPUR
7/17, 6 PM	RM Executive & Steering Committees	SPUR

Please check the web site or Hotline for announcements of special meetings and other events - there will be many more. If you'd like to sponsor an event, please let us know as well - call us or fill out the Volunteer Form on the web site.

Wait For The Bus In Style



Check out the RM web site for new **summer duds** from the Rescue Muni Fashion Committee, featuring PUNI by Dan Siegler.

Or try our ever-popular "Don't Be Late" **long-sleeve t-shirt**. Order now at www.rescuemuni.org.



From the Chair: Thanks, Ken Niemi!

In 1996, Muni service was dismal and getting worse, and San Francisco's leaders were doing little to nothing to improve service. Mayor Brown had promised to "fix Muni in 100 days" - but his appointee promptly reduced the accuracy of the schedule while riders were told to "live in the real world."

Into this mess stepped Rescue Muni founders **Ken Niemi** and **George Musser**. With a couple of letters to the editor, Rescue Muni was formed. Ken fired a shot across the bow of the establishment with his comments on the union contract allowing "miss-outs":

[F]or a contract to pay workers overtime for work they do not do and to allow workers to just not show up without notice to a time-critical position cannot be accepted as part of the real world. The package already offers one of the highest salary and benefit levels in the nation. ...Are [Muni employees] the best in the nation at answering questions on their system or connecting systems? ... Do they bother to keep the vents on high in tremendously overcrowded, steamy, smelly streetcars? ...Are they ready to work in teams with bonuses paid for actual performance?

George responded in kind, and the riders began to get organized.

As co-Founder of the organization, Ken has been instrumental in attracting members, lobbying City Hall, putting up literally thousands of posters, and helping to write and campaign for last fall's victorious Proposition E, which (though the work is far from done) is a critical step towards achievement of Ken's vision - making Muni accountable for providing good service, and rewarding employees who serve the public well.

Recently, Ken decided to resign from Rescue Muni's Steering Committee due to time constraints. All of us on the Committee would like to give him our heartfelt thanks for his vision, hard work and great organizing over the years. We couldn't have done it without you!

Andrew Sullivan
Chair, Steering Committee

Where's that Streetcar (or Bus)?

Get real-time **Muni Metro (surface) location** updates at:

www.nextbus.com/muni-metro

Underground streetcar locations can be seen at:

www.sfmunicentral.com

22-Fillmore locations (pilot project only) are at:

www.nextbus.com/muni

Bay Area transit **schedules** are available at:

www.transitinfo.org

Muni's Service Standards

Andrew Sullivan reports on Muni's proposed quality measures, which are being developed based on Proposition E.

Under last fall's Proposition E, the Municipal Railway is required to establish enforceable performance standards by July 1. This is one of the most important achievements of Muni Reform and a major improvement from the old days, when Muni had a very hard time even measuring its own performance.

Two basic performance standards are defined in Proposition E with specific numeric goals, **on-time performance** and **service delivery**. By July 1, 2004, Muni must meet at a minimum the following criteria:

- On-time Performance: **85%**
- Service Delivery: **98.5%**

In addition, Muni must meet internally developed criteria in a wide range of safety, reliability, and customer service categories.

In early April, Muni published a draft of the service standards that it plans to establish under Proposition E. Below is a short (incomplete) list of these standards; it includes about half of the full list required by Prop. E. Muni is currently taking public comment in preparation for formal adoption by July 1.

For a copy of the draft, or to submit comments, please contact Municipal Railway Chief Operating Officer **Lisa Mancini** at **415/554-4131**, or see www.rescuemuni.org. ★

standard	2001 metric	current status
System Reliability		
1. % vehicles running on time	65% (85% by 2004)	32% - 60% <i>depends on line</i>
2. % scheduled service hours delivered	96.5% (98.5% by 2004)	95.6%
3. Missed service	3.5%	4.4%
4. % vehicles passing stops full	5%	<i>not available</i>
5. Peak passenger load factors	85% of capacity	<i>not available</i>
6. Headways	Within 30%	<i>not available</i>
7. Vehicle availability	98.5%	97% - 100% <i>depends on line</i>
8. Unscheduled absences	5% reduction (managers, maint.) 10% reduction (operations)	
9. Miles between road calls	Increase over '00	<i>Below industry</i>
System Performance		
1. Passengers carried by mode	1.2% ridership increase	
2. Fare revenues by mode	1.2% revenue increase	
3. Hours and miles by mode	1.2% service hours/miles increase	
Customer Service		
1. Develop marketing plan		
2. Publish complete schedules	Revise all by 7/1/02 (Half in FY01)	
3. Complaints	Resolve 75% in 30 days	

planned for the Central Subway:

1) While waiting to board the 30 through the tunnel I looked back to see the great difficulty the bus had turning the **corner from Sutter to Stockton**. The problem is that this turn is designed for cars preparing to enter the garage. Also, it is probable that the northbound Muni has similar problems at every downtown corner caused by traffic. **Transit first design and priorities** (such as diamond lanes on Kearny and signal priority at Kearny and Sutter, and changes to the right turn at Sutter and Stockton) could help get the buses from Market to Stockton more quickly.

2) The bus moves smoothly northbound through the tunnel of course. Stockton is only one traffic lane northbound and the center street **bus bulbs** helps some after it comes out. The signal lights to permit side streets to cross Stockton slow the bus a lot. Priorities could help but they can't be absolute (today) because the side traffic moderate.

3) I walked and looked a while before turning back. The **sidewalks** on Stockton north of the tunnel **are much too narrow** to handle the pedestrian traffic. (If the sidewalk were wider, however, I wonder if the merchants would still take up more of the sidewalk.) I noticed two parking control vehicles stopped but didn't see any officers.

4) There are two traffic lanes **southbound** plus center of street bus bulbs so the buses seem to move better than northbound, though **signal priorities** would help some.

5) South of the tunnel where there is supposed to be a diamond lane movement was slow. **The diamond was occasionally blocked** and the lights were adverse.

Transit First Solutions:

North of the Tunnel: If one considers geography and topography and disregards politics the ideal is:

a) **Make the southbound right hand lane a 24/7 diamond lane** with exceptions for parkers and right turning cars and during east side delivery times.

b) **Establish signal priorities** north of the tunnel as follows: Northbound buses

get first priority except not two cycles in sequence. I might include Sacramento St and Clay even though they have buses except when a following bus is about to catch up. Southbound priorities should not interfere with Sacramento and Clay.

c) **Widen the sidewalks** by removing the parking lane on the east side of the street. Give most of extra width to the east side because the buses will be moving along side the curb. Deliveries will be a challenge in this case: all deliveries will have to be early in the morning or late at night and the buses will have to carefully pass the trucks in the wrong way lane. (This works very well in Zurich, Switzerland, where transit priority is implemented citywide. Note that during east side delivery times there can be no traffic in the second southbound lane.)

d) **Make the northbound lane a 24/7 diamond lane** with NO northbound auto traffic ever and truck traffic only during permitted times. Kearny should have plenty of capacity for the extra northbound traffic, but there will have to be some help for the remains of the 15 after the LRV gets built.

South of the Tunnel:

e) Make the right hand lane (just out board of the Hotel white zone) **24/7 transit priority** except for right turns and parkers. Much of this lane is curb side now. Enforce it Stockton to Market.

f) **Signal priorities are only possible on Post** because there is too much bus traffic on Sutter, Geary and O'Farrell.

g) For northbound traffic, **continuing the diamond lane across Market** to (and past) Sutter and adding transit priority at the Sutter/Kearny signal would help as well.

With solutions like these, it will be possible to significantly enhance transit service on this corridor without severely hindering auto traffic – after all, Kearny is the main auto artery in the neighborhood, not Stockton. They will require white paint, smart traffic signals, and lots of political will, but the resulting service improvements will be well worth it – and much cheaper than a subway. ★

of transit-only lanes. In contrast, a Geary line would be an excellent commuting alternative to several parallel lines (1-California, 2-Clement, 3 I-Balboa, and of course the 38 lines) and would therefore carry significantly more riders over significantly more miles than would the subway. [Note ridership data on previous page.]

We would also like to point out the existence of much lower-cost alternatives, such as the Bus Rapid Transit option also being evaluated by Santa Clara VTA and AC Transit for several high-capacity corridors. ... However, given the alternatives currently on the table, Rescue Muni encourages the Municipal Railway to **build Geary light rail first**.

We have already had one meeting with Muni staff discussing this issue. At this meeting we learned that Muni has already conducted basic studies of the Geary Corridor but that it has not completed an Environmental Impact Statement for this line.

Transit-First Stockton Street

Cheaper than the Central Subway, faster service. Howard Strassner explains how.

Muni is currently planning a **Central Subway** to run from the Caltrain Depot through Union Square to Chinatown. As noted elsewhere in this *Transfer*, it may make more sense to build a light rail line on the Geary corridor instead. But then how should service be improved from Caltrain to Chinatown? Transit priority lanes are an excellent way to improve bus service at very low cost.

Some history first: when the Embarcadero Freeway was torn down and it was agreed to use the Federal highway replacement money for the 'F' Line and the Embarcadero Roadway instead of a freeway, the City promised the Federal Government that it would improve traffic flow to and from Chinatown from Highway 101. In order to meet this promise, providing another traffic lane for automobiles, and also

Although Muni contends that the Central Subway is simply "Phase 2" of the Third Street plan, and this distinction was approved by the former Public Transportation Commission in early 1999, we do not agree with this

A good approach might therefore be to **develop a formal Geary LRT plan**, including options for an all-surface Geary light rail line (terminating at Transbay Terminal) that could be used before the Central Subway is built, while the Third Street light rail project is in progress. After this plan has been completed, the public would have a chance to choose which project should have the highest priority. ★

Rescue Muni is developing a comprehensive report on the Geary light rail project and other alternatives for the Geary corridor. To get involved, call Andrew Sullivan at 415-673-0626.

to speed Muni flow, the City decided to remove most of the parking on one side of Third and Fourth Streets. This solution, already in place on Third, provides a **24/7 diamond lane** for the many buses (and taxis) that travel these streets from Market to Townsend. This has speeded up Muni service through this area.

These changes took a lot of cooperation between Muni and DPT. This included: right turn lanes for cars; mid-street boarding islands for buses when required and some pedestrian safety improvements. Some more effort may be necessary for pedestrian safety at some intersections. DPT was able to replace most of the lost parking with nearby metered spaces to placate the merchants.

The following are my observations based on riding the 30 Stockton through the area

Excom Candidates Needed

Help us run the organization. Howard Strassner explains how.

The June General Membership Meeting will be our fourth annual election. There are openings for four regular candidates plus one more to fill a recent resignation. New candidates are required to start the process now! Our Bylaws state that only Standing Committees can nominate candidates. We currently have only one standing committee, **Metro**. Anyone who desires to take a more active role in RM is invited to come to the next **Metro Committee meeting, on May 10**, or to the next **Steering Committee meeting, on May 15**, and ask to be nominated or request nomination by email to ruthow@juno.com. Candidates should bring or email 100 word maximum resume defining the transit and work experiences that they will bring to RM. Resumes will later be published in the *Transfer*. Those requesting nomination via email must include their resume with their request which also must be submitted before May 8.

Note: This makes **late June** the earliest that we can have an election.

Excom member duties and responsibilities

Excom members may serve on the RM Steering Committee. (Currently all members do.) Their responsibilities

are as follows from the RM Bylaws:

The **Steering Committee** (Steercom) is responsible for the formulation and implementation of Rescue Muni policies to promote the Purposes. ...The Steercom shall annually elect their own officers. The Chair of the Steercom [currently Andrew Sullivan] shall be the Chief Spokesperson of Rescue Muni and shall select the official spokespersons for each policy area. Steercom endorsements of candidates for public office or ballot initiatives shall not be final until ratified at a General Membership meeting by a vote of no less than two thirds of the Members voting in accordance with VII - 3.

The Executive Committee (Excom) shall provide administrative leadership and establish Standing Rules, administrative structure and procedures for Rescue Muni in order to facilitate the Purposes. The Excom shall handle all administrative business within the approved budget limits. The Excom shall set annual and reduced level dues. The Excom shall collectively coordinate the efforts of Rescue Muni Committees to minimize conflict and ensure support of the Purposes. The Excom shall meet to plan the agenda for the Steercom. The Excom shall take no policy positions for Rescue Muni. The Excom shall set the agenda for General Membership Meetings.

All of this is usually accomplished by attendance at one long meeting per month plus sharing a part of the executive work load and helping to facilitate the formation of policy. ★

Muni is the in place to make friends: The San Francisco Ballet Newsletter reported that Principal Dancer, **Muriel Maffre** met her fiancée, **Randy** on the #3 Muni bus. They were both on a nearly empty late evening bus and started to speak French together. It seems that they had a friend in common and she found a way to offer him tickets to a performance by phone. After a long talk he came to the ballet, and "the rest is history!"

Elected Board Amendment

The following Charter Amendment has been filed for signature gathering. Rescue Muni has not taken a position on it at this time.

A Charter Amendment has been filed with the City Attorney's office to create an **elected, 11-member Board of Directors** for the Municipal Transportation Agency, which was created in March by last fall's Proposition E. (Rescue Muni was a co-author and lead sponsor of Prop. E.) This amendment, sponsored by the **Adopt a Muni Committee**, would replace the current system of appointment by the Mayor and confirmation by the Board of Supervisors with a new system of direct election from each Supervisorial district.

The Adopt a Muni Committee, led by Joseph Blue, was active in Rescue Muni's signature drive last summer. Mr. Blue and Co-Chairs John Farrell and Tom Chin introduced this charter amendment because they feel strongly that the current appointed board lacks sufficient representatives of the community, particularly of people active in promoting better Muni service. (They were active in opposing the board, as

were many Rescue Muni members.)

The following is the Title and Summary of the amendment prepared by the City Attorney's office:
ELECTED TRANSPORTATION AGENCY BOARD; CHARTER AMENDMENT

The Municipal Transportation Agency operates the City's public transit system. The Agency is run by a seven-member board of directors. The board members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Supervisors. At least four of the board members must be regular riders of the Municipal Railway. All the board members must ride the Municipal Railway on average once per week during their terms in office. No person may serve more than three terms as a board member.

This measure is a Charter amendment that would increase the size of the board to eleven members. Each board member would be a resident of and elected from one of the City's supervisorial districts. All eleven board members would be elected at the first general or special municipal or statewide election following the effective date of the measure, and every four years after that. No person could serve more than two successive terms as a board member.

All of the board members would have to be regular riders of the Municipal Railway and ride the Municipal Railway on the average twice a week during their terms. The measure would also add a requirement that board members have prior involvement as community members in issues related to public transportation.

Rescue Muni has not taken a position on this amendment, but the Steering Committee voted to distribute information about it to members via this Transfer. Members interested in signing or circulating this petition should contact **Joseph Blue** at **415-643-8926**. ★



Pick up a copy of **Puni: The Muni Comic Strip Compilation**. Two dozen of your favorite cartoons, plus character bios and bus lines. Send \$11 check or cash to:
Dan Siegler, P.O. Box 193556,
 SF, CA 94119

Light Rail: Build Geary First?

Andrew Sullivan comments on another light rail project that deserves priority.

As part of the "Four Corridor" plan adopted by the voters as part of the Proposition B sales tax some years ago, Muni has put together formal plans to construct a light rail line on **Third Street** (from Bayshore to Caltrain Depot) and a **Central Subway** from Caltrain Depot to Clay and Stockton.

While the Third Street portion of this project is funded at a cost of approximately \$500 million, the portion from Caltrain Depot across Market is not. (Approximately \$140 million is proposed in the Governor's recent transportation bond package.)

Based on Muni's early estimate that the Central Subway would cost at least \$500 million and could easily cost much more than that given recent extreme cost overruns in other subway construction projects (e.g. the Red Line in Los Angeles), Rescue Muni's Steering Committee voted to recommend that the **Geary Light Rail** program be

given a higher priority than the Central Subway.

The following is an excerpt from our letter to Director Michael Burns and some backup data showing the higher potential ridership (over many more miles) of the Geary corridor:

Dear Mr. Burns: We are very pleased to hear that the Municipal Railway is seriously considering applying for state and/or federal grants to fund additional expansion to Muni's light rail system. ... However, we would like to urge you to make the **Geary Boulevard Light Rail** project a higher priority than the Central Subway currently being considered. The Geary project has several important advantages over the proposed Central Subway:

- It would serve **many more riders over a much longer corridor at much lower cost**, due to its reliance on surface rail for most of the corridor;
- It would finally provide **sufficient transit capacity** to the perennially overcrowded Geary corridor, significantly speeding the commute of most 38-Geary riders; and

- It should be possible to **build this project** [on the surface] **sooner**, due to the long construction times required for subway construction.

While the Central Subway has some merit, its main purposes can be achieved with **current infrastructure at much lower cost**. [See recommendation by Howard Strassner on page 8.] Third Street Light Rail users will already have a rail connection to downtown via the Embarcadero line, and delays caused by traffic on the bus lines can be alleviated at a tiny fraction of the cost of a new subway with an expansion

Ridership Comparison

Current Lines Served By:

Central Subway		Geary Light Rail	
average daily boardings, including weekends			
9X	5,705	1	24,324
9AX	1,884	1AX	693
9BX	1,581	1BX	1,396
15	22,201	2	4,917
30	24,988	31	8,351
45	16,374	31AX	819
		31BX	676
		38	28,514
		38AX	824
		38BX	956
		38L	13,038
Total	72,733	Total	84,509

Source: Muni's 2000 Strategic Plan