

## S.F. supervisor seeks to phase out fleet, use car sharing

By John Cote

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Mawuli Tugbenyoh, aide to Supervisor Malia Cohen, locates the car he checked out from San Francisco's fleet at City Hall. Photo: Lea Suzuki, The Chronicle [Buy this photo](#)



San Francisco's fleet of Toyota Priuses could be phased out by 2027 under Supervisor Mark Farrell's plan to reduce expenses. Photo: Lea Suzuki, The Chronicle [Buy this photo](#)

Those rows of white Toyota Priuses with San Francisco municipal logos on the side will be a thing of the past by 2027, with city workers instead using vehicles from car-sharing services like Zipcar or City CarShare.

At least that's the proposal being introduced Tuesday by Supervisor [Mark Farrell](#) that would phase out passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks in San Francisco's city fleet over the next 13 years and replace them with contracts with private car-sharing companies.

Farrell's legislation would not apply to police cars, fire trucks, [Department of Public Works](#) maintenance vehicles or other specialized equipment. It's geared toward what Farrell described as "nonessential" cars and trucks, although the legislation doesn't define what that is.

The proposal is largely about saving money.

Chicago pursued a similar path in 2011 and has saved about \$3 million over the past three years in vehicles not purchased, plus an additional \$30,000 a year in lower operational costs, said [Kevin Campbell](#), Chicago's manager of fleet services.

"We really save twice," Campbell said. "We save by not having to buy vehicles and by switching to a program that is more cost-effective."

Insurance, fuel, maintenance and capital costs for city vehicles in Chicago are typically \$1.59 per mile, Campbell said. Under that city's \$463,000 contract with Zipcar, total cost for one mile of travel averages \$1.35, he said.

#### **Immediate benefits expected**

Chicago isn't alone. In 2010, New York replaced 50 vehicles with contracts for 25 Zipcars and a projected savings of \$500,000 over four years.

"Anytime we have the opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint and save a significant amount of money, it's a win-win situation," Farrell said. "This was something we believe can be effectively implemented in the next 12 months and we can realize all the benefits in a very short time frame."

There are no projections yet on what the financial savings would be for San Francisco. Farrell's proposal would require a 25 percent reduction in the passenger and light-duty truck fleet by July 1, 2018. The city administrator would have to reduce the fleet every three years after until it is eliminated by July 2027.

Exactly how many vehicles would be phased out under Farrell's proposal is still being determined, City Fleet Manager [Tom Fung](#) said.

City officials would have to sort through 1,259 cars, 669 pickup trucks and 223 sport utility vehicles to determine which would be covered if Farrell's plan is approved by the [Board of Supervisors](#) and signed by Mayor [Ed Lee](#).

## **Anticipating resistance**

At least 438 of those cars are used by public safety agencies, including the police and sheriff's departments. Fung said the pool of vehicles that would need closer examination for eligibility is probably 1,200. Cars that are phased out would probably be sold at auction.

San Francisco's total fleet consists of 7,152 vehicles and pieces of equipment, ranging from police motorcycles to backhoes to trailer-mounted light towers. Chicago's total fleet, by comparison, is 7,854.

[Bill Barnes](#), a top aide to San Francisco City Administrator [Naomi Kelly](#), said it remains to be seen what vehicles would be involved.

"We understand the intent to be that nobody is going to be guaranteed a personally assigned vehicle just because they currently have one," Barnes said.

And that might result in some resistance.

"There's absolutely going to be pushback," said Campbell of Chicago. "We had pushback here. ... To be told your vehicle is no longer essential, I think some people are definitely going to fight that."

Chicago's program also appears less ambitious than San Francisco's.

Chicago has cut about 125 vehicles from its nonemergency, light-duty fleet of more than 1,000 vehicles, while Farrell is proposing gradually eliminating all of San Francisco's comparable fleet.