



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 9

DATE: September 17, 2021
TO: Transportation Authority Community Advisory Committee
FROM: Eric Cordoba - Deputy Director for Capital Projects
SUBJECT: 09/22/2021 Community Advisory Committee Meeting: Progress Report for Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project

<p>RECOMMENDATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Action</p> <p>None. This is an information item.</p> <p>SUMMARY</p> <p>This is the progress report on the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's (SFMTA's) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project requested by the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The project incorporates a package of transportation improvements along a 2-mile corridor of Van Ness Avenue, between Mission and Lombard streets, including dedicated bus lanes, consolidated transit stops, and pedestrian safety enhancements. The cost of the BRT project is \$185.5 million. The BRT project is part of an overall larger Van Ness Improvement Project, totaling \$309.3 million, which combines the BRT project with several parallel infrastructure upgrade projects. The project team completed the installation of red concrete for the center-running transit lanes and successfully completed improvements at Van Ness Avenue and Mission Street intersection after closing the intersection for five days in August. The project is approximately 83.0% complete compared to 69.1% reported in April. The project will reach substantial completion at the end of this year with BRT service date anticipated in first half 2022, delayed from the original late 2019 BRT service start date (Attachment 1) due to construction delays.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Programming <input type="checkbox"/> Policy/Legislation <input type="checkbox"/> Plan/Study <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capital Project Oversight/Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Budget/Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Contract/Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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BACKGROUND

The Van Ness Avenue BRT will bring to San Francisco its first BRT system to improve transit service and address traffic congestion on Van Ness Avenue, a major north-south arterial. The Van Ness Avenue BRT is a signature project in the Prop K Expenditure Plan, a regional priority through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Resolution 3434, and a Federal Transit Administration Small Starts program project.

The construction of the core Van Ness Avenue BRT project, which includes pavement resurfacing, curb ramp upgrades, and sidewalk bulb outs, is combined with several parallel city-sponsored projects. These parallel projects, which have independent funding, include installing new overhead trolley contacts, street lighting, and poles replacement; SFgo traffic signal replacement; sewer and water line replacement; and storm water "green infrastructure" installation.

DISCUSSION

Status and Key Activities. During the month of May 2021, the project team constructed center-running transit lanes between Jackson Street and Pacific Avenue, and between Greenwich and Lombard streets. The construction of the transit lanes required the demolition and reconstruction of the existing median. The new transit lanes are designed for a useful life of forty years. In June, the project team continued building out the transit lanes between Mission and Market streets. The project has now completed construction of the center-running red transit lanes, a significant milestone. Construction activities continue in the median as the project team transitions to working on boarding islands, irrigation, and landscape treatments.

Although the project team was able to fence off the median to build out the transit lanes, work at major street intersections required a different approach. In order to minimize construction impacts on residents, business, and commuters transiting through the South Van Ness Avenue and Mission Street intersection, the project team decided to strategically close the intersection for five days between Wednesday, August 5, and Monday, August 9, 2021. The closure allowed for work to be done during that period that would normally require two months to complete done in segments. The construction team demolished, graded, and paved the intersection and rewired overhead electrical cables. The entire intersection was successfully rebuilt with multiple construction crews to accelerate the roadway work. The project team conducted extensive outreach prior to the closure of the intersection to ensure that people who drive, bike, walk, or use transit in that area were aware of the closure and could plan ahead. Drivers responded accordingly and traffic in the area was low throughout the entire closure.

The project team has shifted focus to completing remaining above-ground work along the corridor. Bauman Landscape and Construction (Bauman) continued installing irrigation system and landscaping along center medians between Grove and McAllister streets and between Geary Boulevard and Post Street. Bauman started tree planting on the westside of Van Ness Avenue between Eddy and Vallejo streets, and on the eastside between Grove Street and Broadway. Bauman also started constructing bulb-outs between Golden Gate



Avenue and Post Street, and between Pine and Clay streets. Phoenix Electric (Phoenix) continued to install remaining streetlight poles, traffic signal poles, and foundations along Van Ness Avenue. Phoenix also worked on overhead contact system and streetlight installation between Union and Francisco streets.

Van Ness Avenue continues to accommodate two lanes of northbound and southbound traffic along the corridor project limits. Temporary bus stop platforms have also been installed on both sides of Van Ness Avenue as needed.

Civil Grand Jury Report. A Civil Grand Jury released a report in June 2021 that reviewed the history of the project and identified missed opportunities that led to project delays, including setbacks from water and sewer replacement due to subcontractor rebidding and unforeseen field changes. The report recommended methods for de-risking underground work on future city-led projects including expanded exploratory potholing, use of ground-penetrating radar and surface inspection. Recommendations also include improved as-built documentation, earlier engagement of the construction contractor in the design phase of the Construction Manager General Contractor (CMGC) process, and risk assessment improvements. SFMTA noted that several issues raised were identified in internal audits and will incorporate lessons learned into future capital projects delivery processes.

Public and Business Outreach. SFMTA project staff continues to host monthly Van Ness BRT Community Advisory Committee meetings to provide project updates and address issues businesses and residents are having on Van Ness Avenue. Technical advisory services are also provided to impacted businesses by the Office of Economic and Workforce Development's Open for Business program, including legal assistance services, financial assistance, training and technical assistance, and grant and loan programs.

Contract Modification. In August 2021, the SFMTA Board approved Contract Modification No. 13 with Walsh for direct costs related to various design changes in the amount of \$1,240,050, for a total project contract amount not to exceed \$221,747,266, with no time extension. This modification was covered by the project's contingency funds. The various design revisions were due to field conflicts, traffic signal layout modifications, additional red light cameras, foundation modifications to the San Francisco Art Commission artwork at O'Farrell Street and Geary Boulevard station, electrical cover plates for the boarding islands, and modifications to trolley switch installations at Union and Eddy street intersections.

Project Schedule, Budget and Funding Plan. The project is approximately 83.0% complete, compared to 69.1% complete reported in April to the CAC. The project will reach substantial completion at the end of this year with BRT service date anticipated in first half 2022, delayed from the original late 2019 BRT service start date (Attachment 1) due to construction delays. Walsh Construction expenditures to date totaled \$183.0 million out of the \$221.8 million contract amount for the Van Ness Ave Improvement Project. Construction soft costs, which include SFMTA and SFPW staff, consultant, and bus substitution costs, total \$51.3 million as of the beginning of July 2021 out of \$59.1 million budgeted. The overall project budget has increased to approximately \$345 million.

Current Issues and Risks. As noted above, the project is currently more than a year and a half behind schedule, primarily due to challenges securing a utility subcontractor and the extent



of utility conflicts encountered in the field. Unanticipated existing water and sewer pipe conditions required design changes, such as resequencing of construction, resizing of new pipes, or slip-lining existing sewer lines instead of installing new lines. With both the underground utility work and the pouring of red concrete transit lanes completed, the project is anticipated to meet the late 2021 substantial completion date. However, any additional unforeseen work or significant rain over the next 3 months may cause additional contract workdays. We also believe there is a risk of a final contractor claim as part of project closeout negotiations that would cause the project to exceed the existing project budget.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None. This is an information item.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

- Attachment 1 - Project Schedule



Attachment 1: Van Ness Avenue BRT Project Schedule

Activities	2013				2014				2015				2016				2017				2018				2019				2020				2021				2022			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
1. Conceptual Engineering + Environmental Studies*	■	■	■	■																																				
2. Preliminary Engineering (CER)	■	■	■	■																																				
3. Final Design					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																								
4. Construction Manager-General Contractor Process									■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
5. Construction													■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
6. Revenue Operations Begin																																					■	■	■	■
* Conceptual Engineering and Environmental Studies began in 2007				Key:				Currently Scheduled				Late Start since last report				Late Finish since last report																								

Date: July 1, 2021