



Memorandum

Date: July 18, 2018
To: Transportation Authority Citizen Advisory Committee
From: Eric Cordoba – Deputy Director for Capital Projects
Subject: July 25, 2018 Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting: Progress Report for Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project

RECOMMENDATION ☒ **Information** ☐ **Action**

None. This is an information item.

SUMMARY

This is the monthly progress report on The Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project requested by the 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 \$189.5 million. The BRT project is part of an overall larger Van Ness Improvement Project, totaling \$316.4 million, which combines the BRT project with several parallel infrastructure upgrade projects including installation of new overhead trolley contacts, traffic signal replacements, sewer and water improvements, and streetlights. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is leading the construction phase. Utility construction is the current critical work activity. The project is approximately 26% complete. The original late 2019 BRT service start date has now been pushed to early 2021 due primarily to the extent of utility conflicts being encountered. Beginning in July, the project team expanded the construction work zone to safely accommodate additional trenching and restriped Van Ness Avenue between Sutter Street and Mission Street in order to shift southbound traffic from the west side of Van Ness Avenue to the median. The expansion also eliminated northbound Van Ness Avenue left turn at Hayes Street on July 6, 2018. Construction message signs have been placed in strategic locations to redirect traffic where necessary and to inform drivers of these changes.

- ☐ Fund Allocation
- ☐ Fund Programming
- ☐ Policy/Legislation
- ☐ Plan/Study
- ☒ Capital Project Oversight/Delivery
- ☐ Budget/Finance
- ☐ Contract/Agreement
- ☐ Other:

DISCUSSION

Background.

The Van Ness Avenue BRT aims to 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 (FTA) Small Starts program project.

The construction of the core Van Ness Avenue BRT project, that includes pavement resurfacing, curb ramp upgrades and sidewalk bulb outs, is combined with several parallel city-sponsored projects for cost, construction duration and neighborhood convenience. 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. Walsh Construction is the prime contractor for Van Ness Improvement Project.

Status and Key Activities.

Within the last month, traffic circulation along Van Ness Avenue has shifted to accompany construction zones expansion to the south from Grove Street to Mission Street. On Friday, July 6, construction crew removed the left turn on northbound Van Ness Avenue at Hayes Street. The removal of the left turn occurred on the weekend to limit traffic impact. A week later in the early morning hours of July 12, construction crew shifted traffic between McAllister Street and Mission Street by diverting southbound Van Ness Avenue traffic to the median. In the previous months, construction crew used the median as an equipment laydown area but later repaved the median in preparation of the southbound traffic shift. This change allowed construction crew to expand the construction zone along the west side of Van Ness Avenue. Temporary bus stop platforms have also been installed. Construction zone on the east side of northbound Van Ness Avenue will eventually expand from Lombard Street to Sutter Street. For safety purposes, chain link fencing and temporary concrete barriers surround the work zones to separate the zones from vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Channelizer traffic cones, variable message signs, and traffic striping are used to direct traffic. The project team continues to maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction on weekdays. When construction of the Van Ness Avenue BRT is complete, drivers will not be allowed to make left turns from Van Ness Avenue except northbound at Lombard Street and southbound at Broadway.

Ranger Pipeline continues to install water and sewer pipes along the construction zones. Ranger Pipeline is installing sewer and water main between Pacific Ave and Lombard Street and have removed permitted sidewalk tree stumps. The construction crew has also started potholing between Bay Street and North Point Street. Ranger Pipeline is preparing to expand the work zone between Washington Street and Sutter Street on the east side of Van Ness Avenue for sewer work. On the west side of Van Ness Avenue, construction crew is now installing the joint-utility duct bank between Eddy Street and O'Farrell Street.

Ranger Pipeline is also connecting existing sewer lines under multiple streets that cross Van Ness Avenue to the new sewer line being built. This work can be disruptive to traffic since it occurs at intersections. Work is often performed at night but may also occur during daytime. For nighttime work, the contractor is required to follow a referral process with Public Works and the referrals have been limited to two months at a time due to noise impact.

Project Schedule and Budget.

The project is approximately 27% complete, compared to 26% complete reported last month to the CAC. The original late 2019 BRT service start date has now been pushed to early 2021 due primarily to the extent of utility conflicts being encountered including abandoned utilities which may require hand excavation. Project delay claims filed by the contractor total more than \$20 million dollars and are being processed in accordance with the construction contract provisions.

Current Issues and Risks.

The project is currently more than a year behind schedule primarily due to the extent of utility conflicts encountered in the field. SFMTA and San Francisco Public Utility Commission staff are working with Walsh Construction and Ranger Pipeline to accelerate utility work where possible. Construction zone expansion will help accelerate the project in the long run with the use of daytime equipment that is more productive but noisier, instead of slower nighttime noise dampening equipment and electric hand tools. The construction zones south of McAllister Street are a little wider than their counterparts to the north which will allow for more efficient use of equipment. Construction at this location is expected to accelerate measurably, but the construction zone from Sutter Street to Mission Street may also have a negative effect on businesses along the west side of Van Ness Avenue by reducing parking and pedestrian traffic. For weekend construction, the project team is coordinating with Caltrans to limit traffic to one lane in each direction to accelerate the schedule and improve safety for workers. The project team is also considering relining sewer line connections instead of installing new sewer lines to accelerate the schedule.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None. This is an information item.

CAC POSITION

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			
	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 (CMGC) Process																																				
5. Construction																																				
6. Revenue Operations Begin																																				
* Conceptual Engineering and Environmental Studies began in 2007																																				
Key: <div>Currently Scheduled</div> <div>Late Start since last report</div> <div>Late Finish since last report</div>																																				

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