

CHAPTER 5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

5.1 Overview

The Geary corridor's six miles feature a very diverse mix of communities from Ocean Beach in the west to the Financial District and South of Market neighborhood in the east. In between, the Geary corridor passes through neighborhoods historically associated with Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and African-American communities. The Geary corridor also passes through some of the City's major civic spaces, cultural districts, and business centers.

With such length and diversity, the proposed Geary bus rapid transit (BRT) project (the Project) is responsible to a large and complex constituency. For over eight years, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) and San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) have conducted a multi-faceted community engagement process regarding the project alternatives. This chapter summarizes the agencies' efforts to engage the public in the development of alternatives, the screening of alternatives, and the environmental review process. The Draft EIS/EIR Chapter 8 described public outreach prior to release of that document which is summarized here; this chapter also includes descriptions of public participation during and after the Draft EIS/EIR circulation period, as well as an explanation of planned outreach to coincide with release of the Final EIR. While not required by CEQA, this discussion is included in this Final EIR for informational purposes.

5.2 Interagency Consultation

Given the complex nature of the Project and the need for informed technical input during all phases of design and implementation, as well as to comply with the requirements of both NEPA and CEQA, SFCTA engaged with responsible public agencies on the scope of the environmental review as well as on the feasibility of various alternatives. These efforts included close coordination between SFCTA and SFMTA, consultation with other local agencies on an individual basis, through an inter-agency Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and at the City's regular Directors Working Group (DWG) meetings, and consultation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). These efforts were described in further detail in Chapter 8 of the Draft EIS/EIR (Public Participation).

5.3 Community Involvement

Community involvement in the earliest stages of development of the Project has a long history, beginning with outreach around the 2003 Proposition K Expenditure Plan reauthorization and adoption of the 2004 Countywide Transportation Plan. During the preparation of the Geary BRT *Feasibility Study* (ultimately adopted by the SFCTA Board in 2007), SFCTA conducted extensive outreach. The details of prior outreach are described in the Geary BRT *Feasibility Study* final report, available at:

http://www.sfcta.org/sites/default/files/content/Planning/GearyCorridorBusRapidTransit/Geary_FS_low-res.pdf.

This section describes community involvement activities accompanying the environmental review phase, which began in 2008. Reaching and meaningfully engaging the diverse groups along the Geary corridor in the development of alternatives and environmental review requires a multi-faceted outreach effort utilizing different communication tools and in several different languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Filipino, and Vietnamese. The project team has conducted multiple rounds of outreach as the design of prospective alternatives underwent refinement in response to community input. Community outreach efforts will continue throughout the environmental review process. Detailed project information, including fact sheets, progress reports, project schedule, etc. will remain available on SFCTA's project website at www.gearybrt.org.

5.3.1 Scoping Phase

The scoping process included outreach that sought to raise awareness of the Project and gather input on actions, alternatives, and critical issues to be analyzed in the environmental review process. The Notice of Preparation (NOP) was sent to the State Clearinghouse and to local, regional, and State agencies on November 20, 2008. FTA published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on November 24, 2008. Draft EIS/EIR Appendix B includes the NOP and NOI.

The public notice effort included advertisements in local newspapers; a mailing to more than 23,000 residential and commercial occupants of buildings along the Geary corridor, as well as to the outreach database of interested parties developed during the *Feasibility Study*; online announcements on SFCTA and SFMTA web sites; and an announcement poster at bus stops along the Geary corridor.

Scoping meetings were held in December 2008 in the Outer Richmond at the Jackie Chan Activity Center, and in the Tenderloin at the Tenderloin Community School. In July 2009, the project team hosted another community meeting in the Richmond neighborhood as part of the scoping process.

The project team also used their agencies' respective social media platforms to announce these and subsequent meetings. SFCTA also issued press releases as a means of partnering with the local media to raise awareness of the project and to communicate opportunities to provide input.

The results of the scoping process and lists of comments received are summarized in the *Draft Scoping Summary Report*, which is available on SFCTA's website at:

http://www.sfcta.org/sites/default/files/content/Planning/gearybrtenvironmental/documents/GBRT_DraftScopingReport_20090223.pdf.

5.3.2 Community Meetings on Project Alternatives

After the scoping process concluded, SFCTA convened multiple rounds of general community meetings in part to obtain community input on development of project alternatives. SFCTA noticed these meetings on multiple platforms to encourage broad community participation. These notifications included announcements on the project website, emails to project contacts, displays inside SFMTA buses, bus shelter ads, flyers distributed to local gathering places, and newspaper advertisements in the *Examiner* and *Sing Tao Daily*. Briefings with and announcements to key

stakeholder groups were also used to inform the attendees of upcoming community meetings. In communities with high numbers of non-English speakers, information was provided in multiple languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Filipino, and Vietnamese on the bus cards, shelter ads, and emails.

A round of outreach on the Project was held in 2012. Meetings focused on several key aspects, including overall project purpose, progress to date, proposed alternatives, and considerations for complex areas such as the Masonic Tunnel and the Fillmore underpass/Japan Center. Public comments elicited at these meetings helped SFCTA better understand the advantages and costs of different options in these areas. Meetings were held on the following dates and at the following places:

- June 25, 2012
Richmond Recreation Center, 251 18th Avenue
- June 26, 2012
Japanese Cultural and Community Center, 1840 Sutter Street
- June 27, 2012
The Event Center at Saint Mary's Cathedral, 1111 Gough Street

In late 2013 and early 2014, SFCTA convened an additional round of community meetings conducted in an open house format. These meetings focused on proposed alternatives including such detail as stop spacing, and potential parking/traffic changes associated with the various alternatives. SFCTA described the potential benefits and concerns of the various alternatives and sought further community feedback in order to identify any other issues of concern.

- December 9, 2013
Richmond Recreation Center, 251 18th Avenue
- December 17, 2013
SF Main Library, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin Street
- January 30, 2014
Japanese Cultural and Community Center, 1840 Sutter Street

5.3.3 Citizens Advisory Committee

To provide a sustained forum for public input with the ability to focus on key aspects of the Project in greater detail, SFCTA formed a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) of 13 members living or working on or near the Geary corridor. The CAC has held noticed and open-to-the-public meetings on approximately a quarterly basis, totaling 31 from July 2008 through September 2016.

The CAC was involved in Project development and design discussions and in previewing and providing recommendations about materials in advance of their provision to the general public. The CAC also assisted with publicizing community meetings, including participating in the distribution of flyers along the Geary corridor. In addition to its ongoing input on Project development, the CAC will make a recommendation to the SFCTA Board before the Board considers actions to certify the EIR and select the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Upcoming meeting information, as well as previous meeting agendas, minutes, and other information about the CAC can be found at:

<http://www.sfcta.org/geary-corridor-bus-rapid-transit-citizens-advisory-committee>.

5.3.4 Meetings with Local Groups and Organizations

The project team convened meetings and/or briefings with over 65 local community, neighborhood, business, advocacy, and interest groups over the course of Project development and environmental review process. SFCTA and SFMTA's involvement with many of these groups is ongoing and is expected to continue through the final phases of the environmental review process and detailed design phase. The meetings to date have varied in character, including both small-group discussions and large-group presentations addressing multiple stakeholder groups.

- AfroSolo
- Alamo Square Neighborhood Association
- Alliance for a Better District 6
- Chinatown Community Development Center (including Japantown, Richmond, and Tenderloin facilities)
- Clement Street Merchants
- Central City SRO (Single Room Occupancy) Collaborative
- Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt Democratic Club
- Fillmore/Lower Fillmore Neighborhood Association
- First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco
- Friends of the Urban Forest
- George Washington High School Parent Teacher Student Association
- Greater Geary Merchants and Property Owners Association
- Holy Virgin Cathedral
- Institute on Aging
- Interfaith Council
- Japantown Organizing Committee
- Japantown Taskforce
- Kaiser Permanente
- Kimochi
- La Voz Latina
- LightHouse for the Blind
- Lower Polk Neighborhood Association
- Lower Fillmore Merchants Association
- Mo' Magic
- Nihonmachi Little Friends
- Pacific Heights Residents Association
- Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee
- Planning Association of the Richmond (PAR)

- Richmond District Democratic Club
- Richmond District Neighborhood Center
- Richmond District Senior Center
- Richmond Village Beacon
- Rosa Parks Elementary School
- Roosevelt Middle School
- Russian American Community Services
- Saint Francis Square Cooperative
- Saint Mary's Cathedral
- Save Muni
- San Francisco Council of District Merchants
- San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR)
- San Francisco Unified School District
- San Francisco Youth Commission
- Senior and Disability Action Network
- Sequoias San Francisco
- SFMTA Community Advisory Committee
- Shell Car Wash, 3005 Geary Boulevard
- Sierra Club of San Francisco
- SF Bicycle Coalition
- SFMTA Citizen Advisory Committee
- SF Small Business Commission
- SF Transit Riders
- Spruce-Cook Block Merchants
- Tenderloin Community Benefit District
- Tenderloin Futures Collaborative
- TransForm
- Union Square Business Improvement District
- University of San Francisco Student Senate
- University of San Francisco Residence Hall Association
- Urban Forestry Council
- Walk San Francisco
- Yerba Buena Alliance

5.3.5 Corridor Surveys and Visualization Kiosks

In addition to the meetings with neighborhood groups, the project team conducted several surveys on the Geary corridor. A 2013 visitor intercept survey reached nearly 600 travelers in the corridor and obtained information on their travel behavior and perspectives on Geary transportation needs and the BRT Project. Also in 2013, a door-to-door survey of over 500 local

merchants along the Geary corridor obtained responses from over 200 businesses, capturing their perspectives on transportation needs along Geary. From October to December 2015, the project team placed two visualization kiosks on Geary Boulevard, one at Webster Street and one at 17th Avenue, allowing passers-by to view simulated images of the proposed improvements at those locations and complete a short survey to share their opinions on the Project. Over 6,400 people used the devices; of these, about 1,800 completed the survey.

5.3.6 Informational Materials

To facilitate public outreach, SFCTA developed an array of informational materials to foster understanding of the Project's purpose and potential alternatives.

In 2008, SFCTA first developed and distributed a four-page fact sheet to provide a Project overview. The fact sheet also included detailed information on specific issues of community concern on which SFCTA sought focused input to help shape Project alternatives. SFCTA updated and distributed the fact sheet regularly through the course of project development, most recently in November 2016. Iterations of the fact sheet were translated from English into several languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Filipino, and Vietnamese. The current project fact sheet is available for download at www.gearybrt.org.

5.3.7 Cultural Resources Community Consultation

As part of the Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report (HRIER) and the Archaeological Survey Report, local historic preservation groups, as well as Native American tribes, groups, and individuals, were contacted and were provided the opportunity to review these reports and provide input. Please see Section 4.5 for additional information on this outreach.

5.3.8 Outreach during the Draft EIS/EIR Circulation and Public Comment Period

SFCTA distributed the Draft EIS/EIR on October 2, 2015, in accordance with both CEQA and NEPA, to applicable federal, state, and local agencies, elected officials, neighborhood groups, and other interested parties who had expressed interest in the proposed project and those who requested a copy of the Draft EIS/EIR. It was made available for a 59-day public review period to solicit public comment from agencies, organizations, and individuals. An electronic version of the Draft EIS/EIR was posted to the project website at www.gearybrt.org; paper copies were made available at SFCTA (1455 Market St.), the SFMTA (1 S. Van Ness Ave.), the SF Planning Information Center (1660 Mission St.), the SF Main Library (100 Larkin St.), the Anza Branch Library (550 37th Ave.), the Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch Library (351 9th Ave.), and the Western Addition Branch Library (1550 Scott St.) throughout the duration of the public comment period. CD copies of the Draft EIS/EIR were made available upon request through the SFCTA at no cost to the public and paper copies could be purchased at the cost of printing.

SFCTA invited comments to be submitted in writing via mail or email throughout the public comment period, or provided at the public comment meeting orally or in writing. A total of 299 comment communications (e.g. letters, emails, oral comment transcripts) were submitted. These included six communications from agencies, 13 communications from organizations, and 280 separate communications from 244 individuals. All comments received during the public

comment period, as well as those received before December 10, 2015, are included in **Appendix B** of this Final EIR along with written responses to each of these comments. The topics most commonly raised in the comments received are reflected in the list of Master Responses provided in **Appendix B, Table B.2-1**.

5.3.8.1 DOCUMENT RELEASE NOTIFICATION

Notification of the availability of the Draft EIS/EIR and the associated public comment meeting was provided in a variety of mediums, formats, and languages, including the following:

- 1) A multi-lingual (English, Spanish, Filipino and Chinese) mailer was mailed to over 20,000 residents and owners along the length of the corridor, stakeholder groups and past meeting attendees.
- 2) The Project website was updated the week prior to release of the Draft EIS/EIR announcing the upcoming public comment period. Information was provided in English, Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, Russian, Japanese, Vietnamese and Korean.
- 3) Multi-lingual bus shelter ads were posted along the Geary corridor in English, Spanish, Chinese and Filipino, announcing the availability of the Draft EIS/EIR for public review and comment. The same ad was also posted inside buses in the space behind the driver's seat.
- 4) A multi-lingual email was sent on October 5, 2015 in English, Spanish, Chinese and Filipino to over 1,000 people by SFCTA and SFMTA. Additional communications were sent on the following dates: October 30, 2015 and November 12, 2015 via SFCTA's and SFMTA's Twitter and Facebook pages announcing the public comment meeting and the extension of the public comment period.
- 5) The Notice of Availability/Notice of Completion of the Draft EIS/EIR was published in the following publications: San Francisco *Examiner*, *Richmond Review*, *The New Fillmore*, *Western Edition*, *Central City Extra*, *Kstati*, *Nichi Bei Weekly*.
- 6) Facebook ads were posted to announce the public comment meeting targeting people using the application near the Geary corridor.
- 7) A Project Fact Sheet was housed on the Project website (gearybrt.org) available for the public to download. It was also provided at all community meetings and briefings, and available at the public comment meeting held on November 5, 2015. Fact sheet inserts describing the public comment period and meeting were available in Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, Russian, Japanese, Vietnamese and Korean.
- 8) A SFMTA Blog post was published on October 20, 2015 that described the environmental process, including the purpose of the public comment period and public comment meeting.
- 9) SFCTA and SFMTA contacted over 80 local stakeholder organizations and met with those groups that requested a meeting with the project team prior to or during the public comment period for the Draft EIS/EIR. These meetings occurred in October and November 2015 and provided project updates, including information about the Draft EIS/EIR and the public comment meeting.
- 10) Information about the release of the Draft EIS/EIR and public comment meeting were provided to the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) at the October 7, 2015 meeting.
- 11) A press release announcing the availability of the Draft EIS/EIR was distributed to local media outlets on Thursday October 1, 2015.

5.3.8.2 PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING

SFCTA held a public comment meeting in an open house format on November 5, 2015 at St. Mary's Cathedral, 1111 Gough Street. The purpose of the meeting was to encourage the public to

provide oral comments at the meeting and submit written comments. The public had an opportunity to discuss issues and questions with subject experts including engineers and planners on the project team. There was a 30-minute formal presentation given during the meeting, and over two hours were devoted to an open house Q/A session with the project team to provide open dialogue between the public and staff. Comment cards were available for participants to submit written comments at the meeting, and court reporters were present to record and transcribe all oral comments on the Draft EIS/EIR. Approximately 160 people attended the meeting.

During the formal presentation at the meeting, some previously submitted written comments and sign-in sheets were stolen from the sign-in table. As soon as staff were made aware, a staff member publicly announced the incident to all community members in attendance and encouraged those who had previously submitted comments to resubmit and sign in again. As a result of the incident and subsequent public comments requesting an extension of the public comment period, SFCTA extended the public comment period an additional 14 days, from its originally scheduled November 16, 2015 end date to November 30, 2015. SFCTA notified the public of the incident and extended comment period with an email to the 750 subscribers to the project email list; newspaper advertisements in the San Francisco *Examiner*, *Western Edition*, *Kstati*, and *Nichi Bei Weekly*; an SFMTA blog post; and social media posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor. Several comments that were stolen from the meeting, possibly representing all of the stolen comments, as well as stolen meeting sign-in sheets were later returned anonymously to SFCTA by mail. The recovered comments are included in Final EIR **Appendix B** together with all other comments received.

5.3.9 Outreach following the Draft EIS/EIR Circulation Period

Following the end of the public comment period on November 30, 2015, the project team contacted some of the neighborhood groups, advocacy organizations, residences, and merchants who submitted comments in order to better understand their concerns, develop responses to comments addressing those concerns, and refine design to better fit the key needs of communities along the corridor. The project team also received additional meeting requests from stakeholder groups who did not submit comments during the public comment period.

Since the release of the Draft EIS/EIR, the project team has convened a total of more than 60 meetings with over 30 stakeholder groups. At several of the meetings, additional concerns outside of those articulated during the comment period were voiced and documented. In addition, meeting attendees made recommendations of additional community groups, advocacy organizations, and institutions the project team should engage with to collect additional public input on project proposals.

All of the stakeholder groups the project team met with since the release of the Draft EIR/EIS are discussed in Section 5.4 below. The project team met with several groups multiple times to address key issues raised.

In addition to stakeholder meetings, the project team tabled at community events and updated the Geary BRT CAC quarterly (four times since the release of the Draft EIS/EIR) on outreach efforts, community concerns and design refinements.

5.4 Community Input Received after the Draft EIS/EIR Circulation Period

Since the close of the public comment period of the Draft EIS/EIR on November 29, 2015, the project team has continued to receive public input. In some cases, members of the public have provided input as part of the ongoing outreach processes described in Section 5.3.9 above, while in other cases the project team has received written communications including letters and emails.

Communications received after December 10, 2015 are not considered formal comments on the Draft EIS/EIR and not included in this Final EIR. However, the project team has continued an open dialogue with members of the public and worked to respond to these additional communications, including answering questions and addressing concerns where possible, outside and in addition to the formal Response to Comments process. Agency staff responded to some of these communications in writing, particularly if a member of the public had a specific question or concern about the Project. In other instances, staff met with the member(s) of the public who submitted a communication in order to provide additional project information, answer questions, and discuss specific issues.

None of the communications received after the close of the comment period contain new information revealing new or more severe significant environmental impacts that would result from the Project, identify feasible project alternatives or mitigation measures substantially different from those identified in the Draft EIS/EIR, or point to substantial flaws in the Draft EIS/EIR.

5.4.1 Responses to Key Issues Raised

This section provides a summary of the primary concerns members of the public raised in communications received between December 10, 2015 and September 9, 2016 and how the project team has addressed them. The project team met with members of the public regarding a number of specific issues in order to better understand the concerns raised and work to address them if possible. Several of these, including the Richmond stakeholder concerns, red transit-only lane concerns, Spruce Street bus stop, and Webster and Steiner bridge issue were initially raised in comments on the Draft EIS/EIR.

Issues regarding the Laguna stop (Section 5.4.1.3 below) and Holy Virgin Cathedral (Section 5.4.16 below) were raised by these stakeholders after the conclusion of the public comment period on the Draft EIS/EIR.

5.4.1.1 RICHMOND STAKEHOLDER CONCERNS: PROJECT BENEFITS AND IMPACTS

A group of Geary merchants, representatives of PAR, and other Richmond District residents presented the project team with a document of community “narratives” detailing several community concerns. They are concerned that the travel time benefits of the Hybrid Alternative/SRA within the Richmond District are not worth the estimated cost of construction of the Project, and that construction and traffic impacts will negatively impact the community. In addition, the group does not support the removal of trees in the Richmond District or full-time transit-only lanes. The group also voiced concerns regarding the project public outreach and environmental review processes.

In response, the project team provided detailed presentations on the following subjects: Geary corridor existing and future bus travel times, parking impacts, application of red color treatment on transit-only lanes, construction outreach and mitigation strategies, and research on the economic effects of BRT.

5.4.1.2 RED TRANSIT-ONLY LANES

Owners of the Shell Car Wash at 3005 Geary Boulevard, in addition to several other Geary merchants in the Richmond, have articulated concerns with the SFMTA's use of red color treatment on transit-only lanes (see comments I-216 and I-217 in **Appendix B** of the Final EIR). These concerns are related to the effectiveness of the treatment, legality of its application, access to adjacent driveways, and driver confusion. Several businesses between Spruce and Blake Streets signed a petition illustrating their opposition to red transit-only lanes on Geary Boulevard.

The project team provided the owners of the Shell Car Wash with details regarding the status of the SFMTA's permission to experiment with red color treatment, driveway access, and the effectiveness of red color treatment across key transit and safety performance metrics. In addition, the project team met with the owners to discuss the bus-only lane striping in front of their establishment. The layout of the Hybrid Alternative/SRA has been clarified to reflect *dashed* red bus-only lanes in front of their driveway and approaching the adjacent Cook Street intersection. See Final EIR **Appendix B**, response to comment I-217.3.1.

5.4.1.3 LAGUNA STREET BUS STOP

Members of the Japantown Taskforce and residents at the Sequoias senior living facility who live near Geary/Laguna expressed concerns regarding the Hybrid Alternative/SRA's proposal to have the Laguna bus stop serve only Local buses, as compared to serving both Local and Rapid buses today, and submitted several hundred petition signatures against this change after the close of the public comment period on the Draft EIS/EIR. This concern was raised and the petition was submitted after the comment period, during discussions with the Japantown taskforce regarding the Webster and Steiner overcrossings.

After meeting with area stakeholders to understand their concerns, the project team analyzed the implications of maintaining a Rapid stop for key project performance metrics (transit travel time, reliability, and pedestrian safety). Findings were documented in a memo.¹ The project team recommends keeping Laguna as a Local-only bus stop as proposed in the Draft EIS/EIR, and will continue to dialogue with stakeholders to ensure the roll-out of this service change happens with adequate communication so that riders can more readily understand the new service pattern, particularly vulnerable populations such as seniors.

5.4.1.4 WEBSTER AND STEINER STREET PEDESTRIAN OVERCROSSINGS

The proposed removal of the pedestrian overcrossing at Webster Street was the concern raised by the largest number of public comments on the Draft EIS/EIR, including a petition with more than 700 signatures (Comment O-6.3). Members of the Japantown and Western Addition communities were particularly concerned about the need for groups of children to cross Geary

¹ See memo *Analysis of Geary Corridor Stop Options at Laguna Street* from Wahid Amiri and Colin Dentel-Post to Ed Reiskin and Tilly Chang dated September 14, 2016.

Boulevard, and felt that new surface crossings would be inadequate for this purpose. A small number of stakeholders also expressed concerns about removing the pedestrian overcrossing at Steiner Street.

The project team held a series of meetings with neighborhood schools and the Japantown Task Force to understand their concerns, develop potential design solutions, and share analysis results. The team also consulted the San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks, which operates recreation facilities at Steiner Street (the Hamilton Recreation Center and the Raymond Kimbell Playground). The Department of Recreation and Parks supports removal of the Steiner Street bridge. The project team considered the implications of retaining each bridge (including transit travel time, reliability, traffic circulation, ADA access, and pedestrian safety) and documented the results of a bus travel time analysis in a technical memo.² As a result of this outreach and analysis, the project team modified the Hybrid Alternative/SRA to retain the pedestrian bridge at Webster Street. The Hybrid Alternative/SRA still includes removal of the Steiner Street bridge. For more information about project changes, see Final EIR **Chapter 2** and Master Response 1b within Final EIR **Appendix B**.

5.4.1.5 SPRUCE STREET BUS STOP

Merchants on Geary in the block between Spruce and Cook Streets submitted several comments on the Draft EIS/EIR expressing concerns with the project proposal to construct full-block bus bulbs on both sides of Geary Boulevard, removing all parking and loading adjacent to their businesses. See Final EIR **Appendix B**, comments I-33, I-36, I-111, I-120, I-121, I-130, I-136, I-137, I-197, I-200, I-205, I-216, I-217, and I-225 for examples of such comments and written responses to each of these comments. They also provided a petition opposing the construction of the bulb and removal of parking. The stop at Spruce is currently a combined local, Rapid, and express stop. The Hybrid Alternative/SRA as articulated in the Draft EIS/EIR proposed a BRT stop, but would also serve local and express buses. The full block bulbs on each side of the street were proposed to accommodate three articulated buses.

The project team met several times with merchants on this block and conducted a survey of adjacent blocks to determine if the bulbs could be relocated nearby. However, because of design constraints and adjacent land uses, relocating the bulb was not a feasible solution. Given the low ridership of the stop relative to other Rapid stops in the corridor, the project team considered converting the stop to local-only and met with nearby stakeholder groups to solicit input on this idea. Nearby University of San Francisco student groups and staff were supportive of the overall Project, regardless of the proposed change in this area. Based on this evaluation of options and community input, SFCTA and SFMTA modified the Hybrid Alternative/SRA to convert the stop to local-only, maintain the existing bus zones as-is in lieu of constructing to bus bulbs, and preserve all on-street parking and loading between Spruce and Cook streets. See Final EIR **Chapter 2** for a further description of these changes to the Hybrid Alternative/SRA; see Final EIR **Appendix D** for revised plan drawings.

² See memo *Geary Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit: Japantown Bus Delay Analysis* from Daniel Mackowski to Wahid Amiri dated March 29, 2016.

5.4.1.6 HOLY VIRGIN CATHEDRAL CONCERNS: PARKING AND BUS LANE TRANSITION

The project team met several times with representatives of the Holy Virgin Cathedral (HVC), located on Geary Boulevard between 26th Avenue and 27th Avenues, who expressed concerns regarding parking and the bus lane transition from the center to the side of the street proposed to occur on this block. The project team will continue to engage with HVC to alleviate any concerns as necessary.

5.5 Current and Future Outreach Efforts

In advance of the Final EIR release, the project team launched a multi-channel, multi-lingual education campaign beginning in October 2016 outlining recent design refinements and details related to the environmental review process. The campaign includes website updates, social media, corridor-wide mailings, canvassing at bus stops, and Textizen updates. Textizen is a service that allows subscribers to opt in to receive project information via text.

In addition, the project team will provide notice of the Final EIR release and upcoming hearing dates in multiple languages and explain how to provide public feedback to the project decision-makers, the SFCTA Board and SFMTA Board. Advertisements will include newspaper ads, postcards at bus stops, information cards in bus shelters and on buses, and ads in local newspapers in accordance with Federal, state and local law.

The Final EIR will be available online at www.gearybrt.org, and the website will also provide information on how to view or obtain a hard copy.

Following review under NEPA and CEQA, if the Project is approved, the SFMTA will manage the Project's design and implementation and would also lead ongoing outreach efforts, including convening a new Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Business Advisory Committee (BAC).

The main project website would be hosted by the SFMTA at www.sfmta.com/gearybrt. The previous site (www.gearybrt.org) would still be live and updated periodically by SFCTA staff.