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Memorandum

Date: September 19, 2017

To: Transportation Authority Board

From: Eric Cordoba – Deputy Director for Capital Projects

Subject: 10/17/17 Board Meeting: Progress Report for Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project

RECOMMENDATION ☒ Information ☐ Action

None. This is an information item.

SUMMARY

The Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project comprises a package of transit 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 core BRT project is $189.5 million. It is part of a larger, unified Transit Improvement Project totaling $316.4 million which combines several parallel projects such as new overhead trolley contacts, signal replacements, sewer and water improvements, and streetlights. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is using the Construction Manager-General Contractor (CMGC) project delivery method, and the project is currently in the roadway reconstruction and utility upgrade construction phase.

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

DISCUSSION

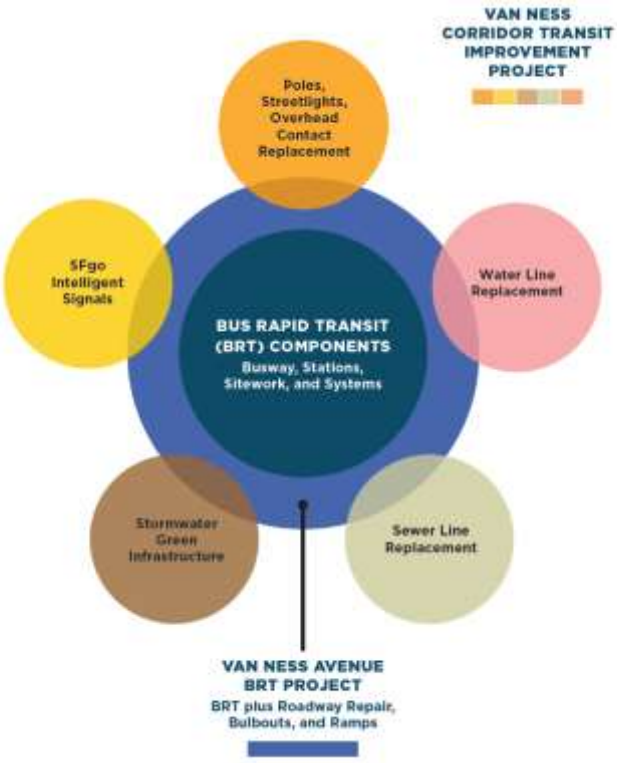
Background.

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 project is a partnership between the Transportation Authority, which led the environmental review, and the SFMTA, which is leading the construction phase and will be responsible for operation of the facilities. The SFMTA engineering team is working closely with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) on utility upgrade issues, and is also using its on-call consultant HNTB for some specialized tasks.

The construction of the core Van Ness Avenue BRT project has been combined with several parallel City sponsored projects to lower overall cost and construction duration in comparison to building the projects separately. These parallel projects, which have largely independent funding, include: installing new overhead trolley contacts, streetlights, and poles replacement; SFgo traffic signal replacement;

sewer line replacement; water line replacement; and stormwater "green infrastructure" installation. Pavement resurfacing, curb ramp upgrades, and sidewalk bulb outs are part of the core BRT project.

Figure 1: Relationship of Van Ness BRT and Van Ness Transit Improvement Project



Status and Key Activities.

Van Ness Avenue BRT Project recently completed the initial roadway preparation phase of construction in June 2017. This phase involved construction in the median of Van Ness Avenue to prepare the roadway for the utilities and BRT build out phases. Activities in this phase included the removal of trees and shrubs along the median. Trees designated to be kept by the project were not removed and are now protected by fences. The old median was removed and temporarily repaved before the construction of permanent BRT lanes. The Overhead Contact System (OCS) was also removed and traffic signals in the median were relocated.

Construction on the utility phase began in August 2017. This phase will replace a utility duct bank, water main, and sewer pipelines underneath Van Ness Avenue. Parts of the emergency Auxiliary Water Supply System (AWSS) will also be replaced. To accomplish these objectives, Van Ness will be divided into two active construction areas for utility replacement: Lombard to Sutter and Sutter to Mission. Utility replacement will start on the east side of Van Ness at Lombard and the west side at Sutter. Both construction areas will expand in a southerly direction until they reach the end of the segment. Then, construction will move back to the top of each segment and begin on the opposite side. Currently, blue curb parking and loading zones have been temporarily relocated. Parking will still be available on the opposite side of the street. The southbound bus stop at McAllister has also been temporarily relocated.

Utility work also includes replacement of street lights. The historic spiral light pole replica will be installed outside of the Civic Center Historic District. However, modern light poles will be used in the Historic District to meet Secretary of Interior Standards. Utility work is expected to last two years until August 2019. The BRT buildout will begin next year starting in April 2018 and is anticipated to continue for two years until spring of 2020.

Construction activities shifting from the median to the side of Van Ness Avenue will be directly adjacent to businesses and residents. Businesses and residents are concerned with the required temporary traffic relocation, noise, and parking removal. The project team is proactively reaching out to businesses and residents and addressing their concerns. Outreach includes emailing weekly construction forecast and hosting a monthly business advisory committee and citizen advisory committee meetings. As construction approaches any given block, the project team and the contractor (Walsh Construction) will help business and residents of that block adapt to construction activities. Signage has been installed along Van Ness Avenue to inform drivers and pedestrians of construction activities.

Current Issues and Risks.

The project team is in regular contact with Walsh Construction on risks encountered during construction. The top risks are delays caused by a wet rain season earlier this year, the rebidding of the water and sewer scopes of work, and the dual permitting process combining the City and Caltrans. The total delay currently is estimated at 179 calendar days. The project team is working with Walsh on a recovery schedule by streamlining the approval process for traffic control plans with Caltrans, and working closely with SFPUC to expedite water and sewer replacement. Other strategies to accelerate the schedule are also under consideration.

Construction cost for the project has trended upward due to a tight construction labor market and design changes. These changes may lead to potential claims. The construction bid by Ranger Pipelines for the water and sewer scope of work came in at $39 million. Walsh Construction negotiated the bid down to $30 million, which is still $11 million higher than the original project estimate of $19 million. However, SFMTA should only be responsible for the original $19 million due to the negotiated guaranteed maximum price of the CMGC method. Other changes included the addition of streetlight poles for $6.5 million and possible sidewalk repavement and ADA upgrades of $1.25 million.

Project Schedule and Budget.

The project schedule and budget have been updated to reflect the changes and delays in construction. Both schedule and budget also include contingencies recommended by the risk management report. The current schedule is included as Attachment 1. Under current assumptions, revenue service will start in summer of 2020.

Attachment 2 shows the estimated budget for the project by phase as well as expenditures to date for the Core BRT project. All of the construction funds have been previously allocated or programmed to the project.

Transportation Goals.

Upon completion of the project, Van Ness Avenue BRT aims to improve travel time by 32%, increase reliability up to 50%, increase boarding up to 35%, and reduce daily route operating cost by up to 30%. These goals will lead to long term benefits for businesses and residents along Van Ness Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None. This is an information item.

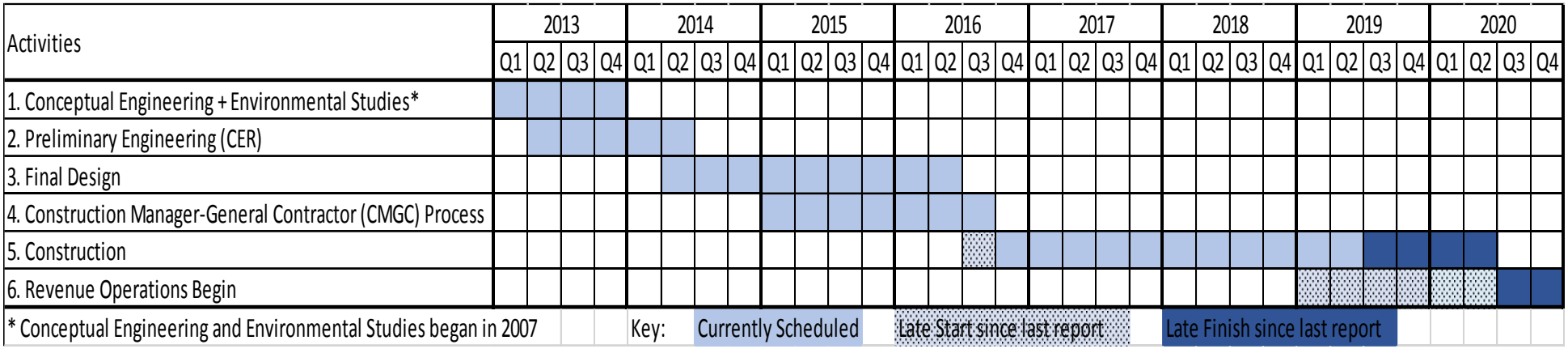
CAC POSITION

None. This is an information item.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Attachment 1 – Project Schedule

Attachment 1: Van Ness Avenue BRT Project Schedule



Attachment 2: Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Budget and Expenditures to Date

Phase Name	Budget *($ millions)*	Estimate at Completion *($ millions)*	Expended to Date *($ millions)*[1]	% Complete
Conceptual Engineering + Environmental Studies	$ 7.44	$ 7.44	$ 7.44	100%
Preliminary Engineering (CER)	$ 6.77	$ 6.77	$ 6.77	100%
Final Design (PS+E)	$ 12.58	$ 12.58	$ 12.58	100%
Construction (Including Testing/Startup) Contingency)	$ 158.74	$ 158.74	$ 26.61	17%
Procurement (Contribution to Vehicles)	$ 3.98	$ 3.98	$ 0.00	0%
Total	**$ 189.50**	**$ 189.50**	**$ 53.4**	**28%**

[1]As of August 2017.