San Francisco County Transportation Authority

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Memorandum

Date: August 31, 2018

To: Citizens Advisory Committee

From: Eric Cordoba – Deputy Director for Capital Projects

Subject: 09/05/2018 Citizens Advisory Commitee 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) and their contractor Walsh Construction are leading the construction phase effort. Utility construction is the current critical work activity. The project is approximately 27% complete. Utility upgrade efforts are continuing, the construction team shifted northbound traffic to the median between Washington and Sutter streets on August 23, 2018. This allows for new water and sewer upgrade work to proceed along the east side of Van Ness Avenue between those streets. BRT revenue operations are anticipated to start in early 2021.

☐ 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 to help achieve cost efficiencies and reduce neighborhood and traveler inconvenience associated with construction. 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.

Status and Key Activities.

The evening of August 23, 2018, the construction team performed a major traffic shift of northbound traffic to the median from Washington to Sutter streets in preparation for future water and sewer upgrades along the east side of Van Ness Avenue. Even with these changes, Van Ness Avenue continues to accommodate two lanes of northbound and southbound traffic along the corridor project limits. Temporary traffic control measures include channelizer traffic cones, variable message signs, and temporary restriping to direct traffic. Temporary bus stop platforms have also been installed as needed.

Ranger Pipeline (Ranger), Walsh's utility underground subcontractor completed the majority of the water and sewer pipeline installations on the east side of Van Ness Avenue between Union Street and Pacific Avenue and is scheduled to install new pipelines between Lombard and Union streets over the coming months. Ranger also removed sidewalk trees at Van Ness Avenue and Filbert Street as permitted. Critical potholing activities between Jackson and Post streets are complete in advance of upcoming water and sewer work for this area. On the west side of Van Ness Avenue, Ranger continued to install joint-utility duct bank and sewer pipelines between Golden Gate Avenue and Ellis Street. Construction crews also upgraded the Auxiliary Water Supply System between Eddy and Turk streets. As construction progresses southward, Ranger expanded the construction zone from McAllister Street to Mission Street. Ranger prepared this area for upcoming construction by potholing for underground utilities and staging equipment and pipes. Ranger also continues to connect 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.

At locations that Ranger has completed sewer and water installation such as between McAllister and Eddy streets, Bauman Landscape and Construction has started initial work to replace the sidewalk and repave the street. Bauman is also excavating the sidewalks for future installation of streetscapes and tree wells. Construction crews will also work on the overhead contact system and install new street lights in the near future after sidewalk replacement.

Project Schedule and Budget.

The project is approximately 27% complete, compared to 26% reported last month. As previously reported, the original late 2019 BRT service start date has been revised to early 2021 due primarily to the extent of utility conflicts being encountered. Major construction is still projected to finish at the end of 2020. 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 SFPUC staff are working with Walsh Construction and Ranger Pipeline to accelerate utility work where possible. The construction team is using ground penetrating radar equipment to help locate underground utilities. SFMTA is leading coordination efforts with other private development projects along the corridor in particular at the Mission and Van Ness Avenue intersection. They are in frequent contact with these developments on day-to-day basis. SFMTA is working with local businesses to maintain access to local business's during construction and keep them apprised of all construction activities.

Last month, we reported that the project team is also considering relining sewer line connections instead of installing new sewer lines to accelerate the schedule. The contractor has proposed slip-lining 15 brick sewers that cross Van Ness Avenue rather than install new sewer lines through cut and cover. The proposed sewer lines are being cleaned and survey to determine if they qualify for slip lining. Thus far, 4 intersections are already cleared to install slip lining and 2 of them have been completed. This approach can help with cost and schedule adherence.

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			
	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 (CMGC) 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: August 29, 2018