



Taking It to the Street



Crews direct traffic while O'Farrell and Leavenworth got a safety overhaul with the installation of a new pedestrian bulb and countdown signal earlier this summer. It had been the last remaining intersection in the area without a pedestrian countdown.

The Geary Rapid Project recently passed the halfway mark and is expected to be completed on schedule in summer 2021. Another major milestone was met with the removal of the Steiner Street pedestrian bridge in May (see page 2). Over three-quarters of the 1.5 miles of new sewer mains and 2.9 miles of water pipelines are completed. And with construction of surface-level upgrades gearing up, the “fun” work—improvements that people can see and experience directly—is just beginning.

As San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) crews wrap up sewer and water main replacement along one section of Geary Boulevard west of Van Ness Avenue, a second contractor is on their heels installing pedestrian and bus bulbs. These sidewalk extensions will make intersection crossing distances shorter for people walking and improve the performance of 38 Geary buses. Crews are also getting started on the first stretches of new curb-to-curb roadway paving.

In addition to replacing water mains, San Francisco Public Works crews are making good progress on street-level improvements east of Van Ness. Bus pads are being installed at bus stops along O'Farrell and Geary streets. These strong concrete pads can withstand the weight of a bus and help keep the roadway in good health. Also on O'Farrell Street, pedestrian bulbs were recently completed at the intersections of Leavenworth, Hyde and Larkin streets, and a new, longer bus bulb was installed near Shannon Street.

STEINER BRIDGE REMOVAL

See page 2.

HISTORY UNEARTHED

See page 3.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

See page 3.

The New View at Geary and Steiner

By Amy Fowler



The pedestrian bridge at Geary Boulevard and Steiner Street was removed—mostly without a hitch—last Memorial Day weekend in preparation for safety improvements planned at street level starting this fall. Despite a minor snag at the beginning of the work, the 58-year-old overpass was safely taken down and the streets reopened a day ahead of schedule.

Crews initially had some difficulty dislodging the northern section of the bridge span—the first of three box-girders each weighing over 60,000 pounds. The bridge had been seismically retrofitted in 1996 including the addition of thick steel restraining pipes that proved stubborn. But with the help of a saw, a blowtorch and precision hydraulic hammering, they were able to cut through and lift the northern segment out to be processed off-site. Crews then switched tactics for the remainder of the work and demolished the bridge in place.

After utility upgrades are completed, Steiner will be transformed again with safety and accessibility improvements for people



See a time-lapse video of the bridge removal at [SFMTA.com/Steiner](https://www.sfmta.com/Steiner)

walking. New sidewalk extensions at intersection corners will help improve pedestrian visibility for drivers. Improved crosswalks with larger median refuges will be installed on both sides of the intersection, along with an upgraded traffic signal. And the bridge landing areas will be renovated with new amenities for the adjacent Hamilton Recreation Center and Raymond Kimbell Playground later this year.

The Geary Rapid Project, on Geary and O'Farrell between Stanyan and Market streets, aims to improve one of San Francisco's busiest corridors with much-needed safety improvements and more reliable bus service.

NEWSLETTER IS PRODUCED BY

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Do you own a business?

As part of SFMTA's business support program, Geary Rapid Project staff have been working with merchant groups along the corridor to develop custom marketing materials and signage that reflect the distinct character of each neighborhood. The Geary team is also coordinating with individual businesses to minimize disruption to loading zones and building access. Businesses that are impacted by construction can learn more by contacting us at 415.646.2300 or GearyRapid@SFMTA.com.

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Geary Rapid Project Unearths Cable Car History

By Mariana Maguire

San Francisco’s renowned history, streetscapes and culture attract visitors and new residents in droves. Our three remaining cable car lines dazzle tourists and transport commuters, and they hold the added distinction of being America’s only moving national monument. The city’s underground history is just as intriguing. Below the surface lie countless artifacts, encased in time, earth and concrete. It’s not uncommon to come across one of these treasures. Sometimes it only takes a few feet of digging.

In April 2020, Geary Rapid crews uncovered cable car tracks while excavating along O’Farrell at Shannon Street. Contractor Mitchell Engineering unearthed long-buried tracks from the former O’Farrell/Jones/Hyde line, the last cable car line built in San Francisco. They uncovered the four-foot-wide tracks encased in red concrete while preparing the area for an improved Geary Rapid Project bus bulb. The tracks were immediately photographed and documented for historical preservation.

Cable cars were invented right here in San Francisco and served as the first form of public transit in the city, making San Francisco an early adopter of mass public transit. At one time there were many cable car routes spanning the city, precursors to the major transit corridors we still use today. In 1889 the California Street Cable Railroad Company, which ran the California Street cable car line, proposed a new crosstown line on O’Farrell, Jones and Hyde. The popular 2.5-mile line went into service in 1891, running along O’Farrell Street from Market to Jones, then north to Pine, west to Hyde and turning north to end at Beach Street.

In 1952, California Cable became part of the Municipal Railway of San Francisco, but in 1954 the Board of Supervisors approved cutting the cable car system in half. The O’Farrell/Jones/Hyde line was discontinued, although some of it still survives today—in 1957 the northern Hyde Street segment was combined with Washington/Jackson to produce the current Powell/Hyde line.

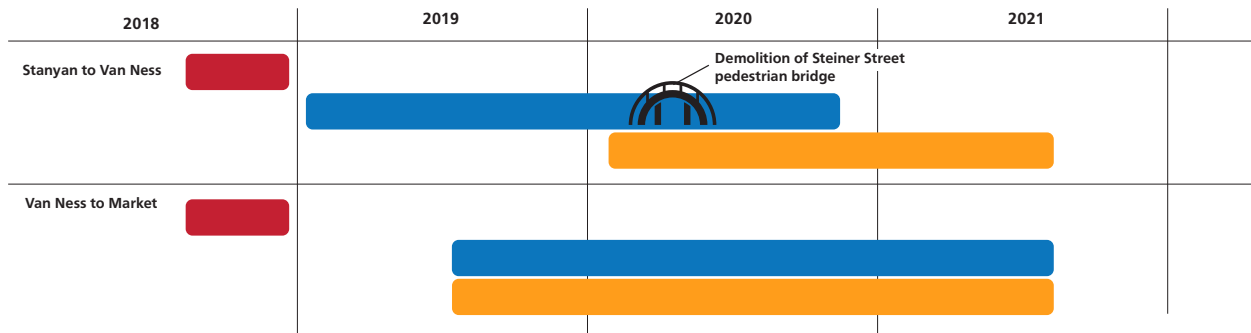


Cable car tracks from the former O’Farrell/Jones/Hyde line, abandoned in 1954.



Two Geary Street cable cars meet at Jones and Geary streets with O’Farrell/Jones/Hyde tracks in the crossing.

PROJECT SCHEDULE



Transit and safety treatments

- Bus-only lanes
- Pedestrian safety treatments
- Bus stop changes
- Roadway striping changes

Utility upgrades

- Water main replacement on Geary (Masonic to Market)
- Sewer main replacement (primarily Masonic to Van Ness)

- Fiber-optic cable conduits (Stanyan to Gough)

Major transit and safety improvements

- Bus bulbs
- Pedestrian bulbs
- Upgraded traffic signals
- Roadway repaving (Masonic to Van Ness)

Stay Informed

To find out more and sign up for Geary Rapid Project construction updates, go to [SFMTA.com/Geary](https://www.sfmta.com/Geary).

For questions or comments, please contact us at GearyRapid@SFMTA.com or **415.646.2300**.

如有疑問或需要免費語言協助，請發電子郵件至 GearyRapid@SFMTA.com 或致電**415.646.2300**。

Si tiene preguntas o para servicio gratis para el idioma, póngase en contacto con GearyRapid@SFMTA.com o **415.646.2300**.



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