



## Green Infrastructure Coming to Van Ness

By Estefani Morales-Zanoletti



Construction work in front of City Hall is underway and with it comes an exciting addition to the project: green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is a storm water management tool that slows down and cleans stormwater preventing it from overwhelming city sewer systems.

Rain gardens are a type of green infrastructure that are being installed on the Van Ness Avenue side of City Hall to capture storm water runoff from city streets, sidewalks and other urban landscape. Rain gardens include special plants and soils specifically engineered to capture and infiltrate stormwater runoff.

The plants and soil within these rain gardens will absorb the runoff storm water, reducing the amount of water that drains into the city's sewer system.

Similar rain gardens have been used throughout the City, including along Cesar Chavez Street, the Wiggle Corridor and Holloway Avenue. These green infrastructure features not only help to absorb excess storm water, but also beautify streets, improves street conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, reduces urban heat, improves air quality and reduces wastewater treatment costs.

The rain gardens on Van Ness Avenue are part of San Francisco's Civic Center Sustainable Utilities District Plan. The Civic Center Sustainable Utilities District district covers approximately 62 acres and is bounded by Van Ness Street to the west, Golden Gate Avenue and McAllister Street to the north, Hayes Street to the south and Market Street to the east.

The plan outlines a vision for infrastructure changes that continue reducing the District's impact on the natural

*SEE RAIN GARDENS, PAGE 2*

**BUSINESSES BLOSSOM  
DURING CONSTRUCTION**

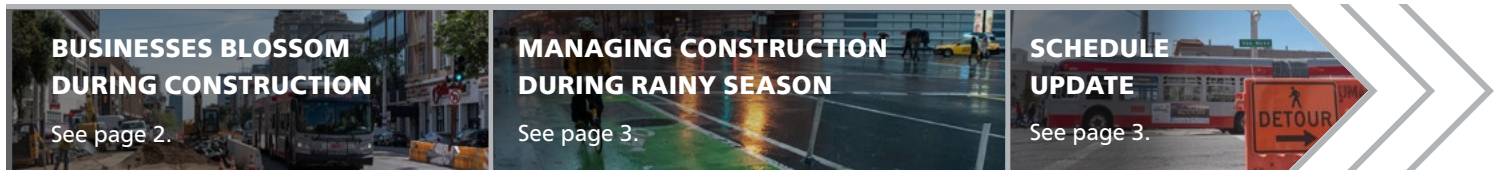
See page 2.

**MANAGING CONSTRUCTION  
DURING RAINY SEASON**

See page 3.

**SCHEDULE  
UPDATE**

See page 3.





# Business is Blossoming on Van Ness



In spite of many of the challenges construction brings to corridor businesses, some Van Ness merchants are making changes so that they will flourish once construction is complete, expected mid-2021 (see schedule p.3).

Helmand Palace, known for its modern interpretation of traditional Halal Afghani and Middle Eastern dishes, has recently reopened after undergoing renovations. This San Francisco gem located at 2424 Van Ness Avenue near Green Street has been sharing the culture and food of Afghanistan since 1971.

Another Van Ness institution, Route 101, known for its classic green sign at 1332 Van Ness Avenue, has reopened under new ownership. A charming hangout favored by locals, patrons can enjoy a drink there while playing pool and pinball once again.

And Matterhorn Restaurant and Bakery, a 25-year old fondue institution has reopened with new ownership and a new interior design to melt its customers with homemade bread, two classic cheese fondue choices and three raclette options. Guests can even enjoy their meal from the comfort of a real gondola.

Many other businesses are also taking the opportunity to work with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) for technical assistance to ready their business for the end of construction of the Van Ness Improvement Project. To get this process started for your business, please contact Jada Jackson with OEWD at [Jada.Jackson@sfgov.org](mailto:Jada.Jackson@sfgov.org) or 415.554.6477.

RAIN GARDENS FROM PAGE 1

## Van Ness Rain Gardens are Coming

environment by further minimizing water and energy consumption while utilizing local and renewable resources. While ambitious, it would serve as both a model of district sustainability in a dense urban setting and as a center of civic life that is resilient to catastrophic events such as earthquakes. The plan will be realized through projects like the Van Ness Improvement Project.

For more information about the Civic Center Sustainable Utility District Plan, please contact [aroche@sfgwater.org](mailto:aroche@sfgwater.org).

## You Asked!

## Why do bus stops change frequently on Van Ness?

Bus stops on Van Ness Avenue and nearby side streets are constantly relocating to accommodate construction for the Van Ness Improvement Project. As construction moves up and down the corridor, the bus stops often have to change to allow the necessary work to be performed at their existing locations. Our team's priority is to ensure the safety of construction crews as well as the safety of Muni and Golden Gate Transit customers who use the bus stops on and around Van Ness Avenue during construction. Customers are advised to be observant temporary signage directing them to the nearest relocated stop. To find up-to-date information about relocated Muni bus stops, you can also visit [SFMTA.com/TempStops](http://SFMTA.com/TempStops).



*Eunice Lee, Assistant Project Manager with Walsh Construction, has worked on various heavy civil construction projects in California since 2010. She joined the Van Ness Improvement Project in September 2018 and is responsible for traffic control plan management and coordination with SFMTA and subcontractors.*

VAN NESS

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

NEWSLETTER IS PRODUCED BY  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency  
One South Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94103

415.646.2310  
[VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com](mailto:VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com)

This civic improvement project on Van Ness Avenue from Aquatic Park to Mission Street provides transportation upgrades, including San Francisco's first Bus Rapid Transit system, a globally proven solution to improve transit service and address traffic congestion; utility maintenance, including street repaving, sewer, water and emergency firefighting water system replacement; and civic improvements, including streetlight replacement, new sidewalk lighting, landscaping and rain gardens.

All images by SFMTA unless otherwise noted.

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# Managing Construction During the Rainy Season



The city faces various challenges when wet weather sweeps through, and the Van Ness corridor is no exception. Work including concrete pouring and pavement installation cannot be done during the rain, which can often result in cancelled work. Additionally, activities such as sewer, water and duct bank work is difficult to accomplish depending on the amount of rain during the time of construction work.

Flooding often presents other issues along the corridor. Some flooding prevention methods employed by the construction

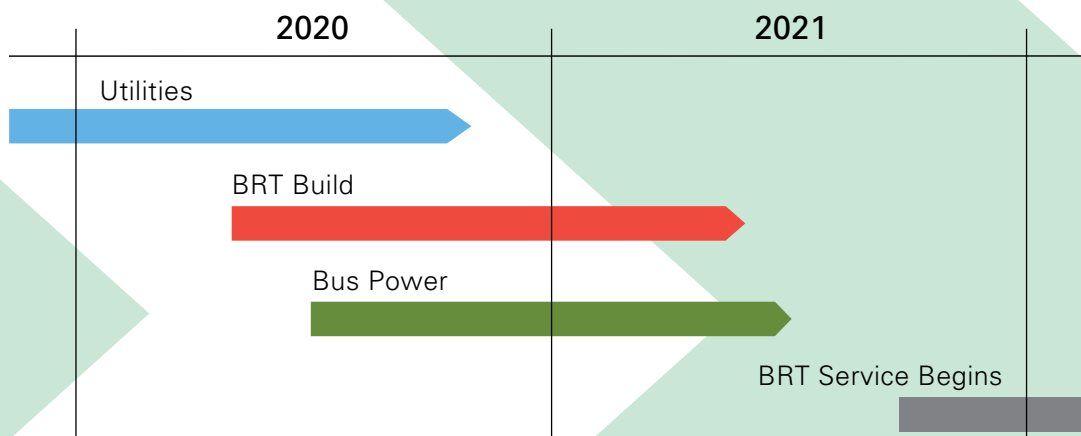
crews during this time of year include:

- Ensuring catch basins are clean and free of debris
- Keeping materials and debris out of the gutter
- Monitoring the corridor during the rain

In the case that a catch basin does not drain, it is typically due to blockage from leaves or garbage. To report a clogged catch basin on Van Ness during rain, please contact the Van Ness Improvement Project team at [VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com](mailto:VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com) or 415.624.2310.

## Project Schedule

Originally planned to open in 2019, delays have set back the projected opening of Bus Rapid Transit service on Van Ness Avenue to late-2021. Project staff continues to implement tactics to reduce the project's delay with consideration for San Francisco residents and businesses.



*The Van Ness Improvement Project schedule above shows each phase of construction: Utilities include installing an electrical duct bank and replacing underground sewer and water systems, as well as a segment of the emergency firefighting water system to ensure reliable operation, new street and sidewalk lighting, sidewalk and roadway restoration; BRT Build includes building red center-running Bus Rapid Transit lanes, station platforms and medians; Bus Power includes building new sidewalk extensions, installing new overhead bus-power wires, painting crosswalks and training operators. Project staff is working to reduce delays in the schedule.*





### Community Drop-In Office Hours

**Tuesdays, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**Fridays, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**(Excluding holidays)**

**180 Redwood Street, Suite 300  
(near Van Ness and Golden Gate)**

Have a question about construction or the Van Ness Improvement Project? Stop by our Community Drop-In Office Hours at our Field Office to get assistance from project staff.

To find out more and sign up for updates about the Van Ness Improvement Project, go to [SFMTA.com/VanNess](http://SFMTA.com/VanNess)

For questions or comments, contact us at [VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com](mailto:VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com) or 415.646.2310.

如有疑問或需要免費語言協助，請發電子郵件至 [VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com](mailto:VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com) 或致電415.646.2310。

Si tiene preguntas o para servicio gratis para el idioma, póngase en contacto con [VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com](mailto:VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com) o 415.646.2310.

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