



South Van Ness Avenue Quick-Build Project – Virtual Engineering Public Hearing

Comments and Questions Received and SFMTA Staff Responses

Date Updated: October 27, 2021 11:59 PM

Response ID	Date Submitted	Comments or Questions:	SFMTA Staff Response:
127	Oct 23, 2021 8:55:18 am	I am drive on South Van Ness pretty regularly. Current conditions are not safe - encouraging speeding and requiring constant lane shifts to get around double-parked vehicles and left-turning vehicles. This project would make conditions safer.	Comment noted.
129	Oct 23, 2021 5:43:15 pm	If you make the center a devoted left turn lane, please ensure there is appropriate enforcement to prohibit trucks double parking. This is a common occurrence on Valencia Street. I foresee the same problems just moving to the left turn lane, and construction and vehicular traffic using it as a parking opportunity mid block. Can you add a raised median so this behavior is prevented?	The center left-turn lane is not intended to be a loading or parking area. The SFMTA is working with the San Francisco Fire Department to identify a solution that deters drivers from using the center-left turn lane to park/load, so emergency vehicles are able to access the lane at all times. Raised elements or medians are not currently being considered along the corridor as emergency vehicle access needs to be maintained. However, there is the potential for future improvements if supported by data collected following implementation and if supported by the San Francisco Fire Department. We are working with businesses to discuss their loading needs and some additional loading spaces could be installed along South Van Ness to reduce double parking during a second phase of legislation for the project. The lane widths proposed also allow vehicles to more easily maneuver around double parked vehicles.
130	Oct 24, 2021 3:31:49 pm	I support safety of pedestrians, but this proposal appears to have a major impact on drivers who depend on South VN for commuting. Please explain the expected impact on drivers through increased traffic with this proposal. Valencia and Van Ness are very difficult to drive on compared to South VN (much slower) and push drivers to other, parallel roads - will that not happen here? Given that 50% of collisions are reported to come from speeding, red light violations, and left-turns, why is there no comment on increasing support for law enforcement to mitigate these violators? Only a fraction of South VN drivers are reckless drivers and responsible for these accidents, so why are all drivers being punished?	Based on traffic volume data collected along South Van Ness Avenue and subsequent traffic modeling, we do not anticipate the travel time to significantly increase as a result of the proposed design. The project will have an evaluation period following implementation and travel times and changes in delay will be monitored. If significant delay is observed during evaluation, then further design modifications will be considered. Project evaluation will include volume counts on streets parallel to South Van Ness in the Mission neighborhood to determine if any spillover is being caused by the project. Although enforcement is one tool used by the city of San Francisco to address speeding and traffic violations, a lack of resources precludes the ability to enforce traffic laws at all times along South Van Ness Avenue. Engineering solutions such as modifying signal timing or traffic striping are able to facilitate less speeding and reduce the likelihood of red light violations and left turn collisions without the need for law enforcement.
131	Oct 25, 2021 1:01:52 pm	There are very few efficient north-south routes across San Francisco, and we need to make sure Muni buses don't get even slower. As a pedestrian and cyclist, I already avoid SVN, so I would much prefer to see it optimized further for automobiles, keeping them off of other bike/ped-friendly streets like Folsom or Valencia. I would absolutely support concrete barrier between the north and southbound lanes, and no-left-turn-except-Muni signs on most or all of the intersections.	This project is addressing the urgent need for driver and pedestrian safety along South Van Ness Avenue. Muni routes along South Van Ness Avenue only run on the three southernmost blocks of the project area and no significant impact to Muni travel times is anticipated as a result of the proposed changes. Raised elements or medians are not currently being considered along the corridor as emergency vehicle access needs to be maintained. This project will have an evaluation period following implementation and if design modifications are supported by data collection and the SF Fire Department, they will be considered.
133	Oct 25, 2021 2:30:37 pm	I strongly support removing a traffic lane and giving pedestrians additional crossing time. I want to see added painted safety zones to narrow the crossing distance at intersections. I also want travel lanes to be narrowed, especially at the intersections where most crashes happen.	The project proposal includes updating the pedestrian crossing time to a rate of 3.0 feet per second corridor-wide, which is slower than the U.S. standard. There are a number of existing painted safety zones along South Van Ness Avenue at select intersections where higher turn volumes occur, which will be maintained. However, the main effect of painted safety zones are to slow right-turning vehicles, and do not effectively reduce the width pedestrians must cross. Right turning collisions are not currently an issue per the crash patterns observed along South Van Ness Avenue, but we will continue to monitor turns during the evaluation period and consider additional painted safety zones or other measures as needed. The proposed lane widths are not anticipated to encourage further speeding, and have already been narrowed based on community feedback received after the initial project plans were shared. Traffic speeds will be monitored during the project's evaluation period and further modifications could be considered if a need is demonstrated.

134	Oct 25, 2021 3:11:03 pm	This project claims to be "a SFMTA effort to implement bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements" but it maintains 100% of existing space for exclusive use of private cars, privileging them over every other form of transportation. Pedestrian crossings remain exactly as wide as before with no refuge. Bikes and scooters remain de facto banned from this road and the adjacent Mission St. There will be no public transit on South Van Ness. The changes in this project are welcome, they will reduce collisions, and I'm delighted to see that they will happen this year. But this is a car project in a "transit first" city, not a bicycle and pedestrian project.	The SFMTA is no longer installing class II (unprotected) bike lanes on city streets. Signal separation at intersections would be needed to install a fully protected bike lane, which is a major capital improvement that would take years to fund, design and construct. Sidewalk bulbouts to reduce crossing distances at intersections are also a major capital improvement that require funding beyond the capabilities of this project's budget to implement. Quick-Build projects use low-cost, easily implementable materials that can be installed in a relatively quick timeframe. In addition, South Van Ness Avenue is not currently part of San Francisco's Bike Network (https://www.sfmta.com/maps/san-francisco-bike-network-map), but there are many streets running parallel to South Van Ness in the Mission that have established bicycle infrastructure. We encourage cyclists to utilize existing infrastructure. This project is addressing the urgent need for driver and pedestrian safety along South Van Ness Avenue, where crash data shows high injury rates for these groups. Raised elements or medians are not currently being considered along the corridor as emergency vehicle access needs to be maintained, and implementing a median with just paint provides little protection for pedestrians. However, there is the potential for future improvements if supported by data collected from the evaluation period following implementation and if supported by the San Francisco Fire Department.
137	Oct 25, 2021 6:09:18 pm	Please please please put in a bike lane. Bike lanes are known to make streets safer and reduce car speeding.	South Van Ness Avenue is not currently part of San Francisco's Bike Network (https://www.sfmta.com/maps/san-francisco-bike-network-map), but there are many streets running parallel to South Van Ness in the Mission that have established bicycle infrastructure. We encourage cyclists to utilize existing infrastructure. This project is addressing the urgent need for driver and pedestrian safety along South Van Ness Avenue, where crash data shows high injury rates for these groups. The proposed lane reduction is also anticipated to reduce vehicle speeding and thus make the street safer for all road users.
141	Oct 25, 2021 9:11:16 pm	Good project. Should have bike lanes instead of center turn lane.	South Van Ness Avenue is not currently part of San Francisco's Bike Network (https://www.sfmta.com/maps/san-francisco-bike-network-map), but there are many streets running parallel to South Van Ness in the Mission that have established bicycle infrastructure. We encourage cyclists to utilize existing infrastructure. This project is addressing the urgent need for driver and pedestrian safety along South Van Ness Avenue, where crash data shows high injury rates for these groups.
142	Oct 26, 2021 2:20:11 pm	Love the idea of making Van Ness safer for drivers and pedestrians! I live around the corner and walk my preschooler along Van Ness every day as well as driving on it. There is so much traffic with the double lane roads and it's so hard to safely drive around stopped cars or cars turning.	Noted. We are working with businesses to discuss their loading needs and some additional loading spaces could be installed along South Van Ness to reduce double parking during a second phase of legislation for the project. Proposed lane widths will allow vehicles to more easily maneuver around double parked vehicles.
143	Oct 26, 2021 4:24:19 pm	I'm very much in support of this quick-build plan as presented. I have had many incidents of near collisions with vehicles while in a car, on a bike, and as a pedestrian. I do not feel safe crossing South Van Ness because we are not safe—it's like crossing a highway where I don't belong. I strongly support this project as do many of my neighbors.	Noted.
144	Oct 27, 2021 10:00:42 pm	I've lived on SVN since 2015 and really appreciate that SFMTA is tackling SVN's myriad issues. While you addressed double parking as an issue you didn't provide a solution, or perhaps I missed it in the presentation. Many commercial vehicles feel comfortable parking in center lanes, when not traffic lanes, will there be any education provided to commercial and non-commercial drivers to utilize that lane for that use and not block traffic lanes?	SFMTA project staff are working with businesses to discuss their loading needs and some additional loading spaces could be installed along South Van Ness to reduce double parking during a second phase of legislation for the project. Proposed lane widths will allow vehicles to more easily maneuver around double parked vehicles. SFMTA is working with the San Francisco Fire Department to identify a solution that deters drivers from using the center-left turn lane to park/load, so emergency vehicles are able to access the lane at all times.
146	Oct 27, 2021 11:12:19 pm	have you considered making the cross streets (17th-23rd) one way streets? that would help traffic flow tremendously since cars making turns on those streets always hold up traffic.	Thank you for your suggestion. The focus of this quick-build project is along South Van Ness Avenue, and there are no plans currently to convert the cross streets to one way streets. However, volume counts will be collected on parallel streets to South Van Ness including both before and after project implementation to determine if there is spillover or issues with traffic flow as a result of the project, and further modifications will be considered if there is a need.