



**Van Ness BRT Community Advisory Committee**

Thursday, April 28, 2016

6:00-7:30 p.m.

One South Van Ness, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Civic Center Conference Room

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.
2. Public comment (see policy on reverse): Members of the public may address the Van Ness BRT Community Advisory Committee on matters that are within its jurisdiction and are not on today's calendar.
  - a. A member of the public was concerned about the sidewalk tree in front of his property on Van Ness. Project staff let the individual know that Public Works has a separate project that involves analyzing the condition of sidewalk trees on Van Ness Avenue. Staff said they could connect the individual with the appropriate contact at Public Works. The individual also had a concern that the Van Ness Improvement Project would impact his property line, but staff assured him this was not the case.
3. February 25, 2016 meeting minutes were approved by a voice vote.
4. Welcome and introductions.
  - a. Van Ness Improvement Project staff.
    - i. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
      1. Lulu Feliciano, Outreach Manager
      2. Kate McCarthy, Public Information Officer
      3. Sean Cronin, Public Relations Assistant
    - ii. Walsh Construction
      1. Lisa Toso, Project Manager
    - iii. San Francisco County Transportation Authority
      1. Bob Masys, Senior Engineer
  - b. Incumbent Van Ness BRT CAC Members.
    - i. Returning committee members introduced themselves and discussed reasons for joining the Community Advisory Committee.
  - c. New Van Ness BRT CAC Members.
    - i. New committee members introduced themselves and discussed motivations for applying.
  - d. Project staff and all Van Ness BRT CAC members did an ice breaker activity to encourage participation and bonding.
5. Van Ness Improvement Project overview.
  - a. History
    - i. Van Ness was originally surveyed as a north-south spine of San Francisco. It played host to early parade routes and was home to prominent families on the north end, and working class housing on the south end.
    - ii. Van Ness served as a firebreak during the 1906 fires after the earthquake. Mansions were dynamited to prevent fires from spreading to the western half of the city.
    - iii. After the 1906 earthquake, Van Ness became an important commercial center as businesses worked to rapidly rebuild. Soon, the street became the largest Auto Row in the west.
    - iv. When the Golden Gate Bridge was built, there was an increase in regional travel on the corridor. As a result, the center-running cable car lines were removed.

- b. Rapid transit was first identified and advocated for on Van Ness Avenue in 1995. In 2003, 75-percent of San Francisco voters echoed that need by approving Proposition K. This reserved funds for planning transit improvements and included Bus Rapid Transit on Van Ness.
- c. The Van Ness Improvement Project includes the City's first Bus Rapid Transit system, but also includes comprehensive utility and civic improvements.
  - i. BRT features include mountable physical separator for transit-only lanes, transit signal priority, and safety enhancements.
    - 1. Safety enhancements include curb extensions, Accessible Pedestrian Signals, pedestrian countdown signals, median refuges, and continental crosswalk striping.
  - ii. Public utilities were considered as part of the Van Ness Improvement Project.
    - 1. Most private utilities cross Van Ness because it is a Caltrans right-of-way.
    - 2. Combining this work allows for a single construction period.
  - iii. Parking will be removed only at locations where a BRT platform is built.
    - 1. Total loss of parking on Van Ness is approximately 23-percent.
  - iv. Bus stops will be consolidated on June 4.
    - 1. Located at key transfer points along the corridor during and after construction.
    - 2. Muni service standard is approximately 800 to 1,000 feet along streets with grades less than 10-percent.
    - 3. Will improve reliability and efficiency.
- 6. Van Ness BRT Community Advisory Committee overview.
  - a. Purpose of Committee.
    - i. Act as liaison between project staff and the community.
      - 1. Members are not expected to be project experts, but should feel comfortable disseminating project information and putting members of the community in touch with project staff.
    - ii. Provide recommendations and advice on ways City can support and work with community to improve construction conditions and be a good steward of the neighborhood.
  - b. Committee Logistics
    - i. Sign-in for each meeting
    - ii. Attendance
      - 1. Members are asked that they attend every meeting. If they must be absent, they must notify Sean Cronin ([sean.cronin@sfmta.com](mailto:sean.cronin@sfmta.com) or 415.646.2302) by noon the day of the meeting.
      - 2. Members should not miss more than two meetings per year.
    - iii. Committee website - <https://www.sfmta.com/about-sfmta/organization/committees/van-ness-brt-community-advisory-committee>
    - iv. Email list – Add [sfmta@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:sfmta@public.govdelivery.com) to email address book
    - v. Committee Chair– Nominations and election in May
    - vi. Ground rules for committee meetings will be established in May
- 7. SFMTA staff updates.
  - a. Tree permit update.
    - i. An Addendum to the EIS/EIR was drafted by the San Francisco County Transportation Authority and was issued March 4.
      - 1. Finalized counts for median and sidewalk trees impacted by the Van Ness Improvement Project. A separate Public Works project, the Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Project, will assess the remaining sidewalk trees not directly in conflict with Van Ness Improvement Project construction activities.
    - ii. Appeal of Tree Permit– Board of Appeals Hearing Wednesday, June 22, 5:00 p.m., City Hall Room 416.
  - b. Outreach update.
    - i. Outreach Calendar.

1. Attended Mission Sunday Streets on April 10 with a new 60-foot hybrid bus and scavenger hunt. Project information was on display and project staff was on hand to answer any questions.
2. Spring newsletter was mailed to 30,120 neighbors on the corridor. This is the first printed edition of the newsletter.
  - a. A digital version is posted on our project website and will be emailed to our subscribers.
3. An interactive text message survey campaign was launched April 25. Posters were hung at bus stop locations along the corridor to inform the public about the project. We will also gather contact information so that we can keep people informed as the project progresses.
  - a. The campaign will also be launched on Muni car cards in May.
4. Meet the Expert event Wednesday, May 4, 6:00 p.m., at Village Pizzeria.
  - a. Jay Simms from Walsh Construction will present the construction sequence and schedule. An informal Q&A session will follow.
  - b. Free to attend, but attendees are responsible and encouraged to purchase their own food and beverage.
- ii. Van Ness Improvement Project Overview Walking Tours: March 2, April 18, May 10.
  1. More than 70 people have officially attended the project walking tours. Several more members of the public joined throughout each walk.
  2. The next walking tour will be May 10, 6:00 p.m., and will cover the northern segment of Van Ness between Jackson and Lombard.
- iii. Input on Project Frequently Asked Questions.
  1. Project staff will collect frequently asked questions to be posted on the project website at the next meeting.
8. Van Ness Business Advisory Committee Report – April 21, 2016.
  - a. There was a lack of quorum for the March and April meetings of the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee.
  - b. April 21, there was an informal presentation from Jorge Rivas, Invest in Neighborhoods, to discuss services available to businesses through the City.
  - c. Project staff has reached out to committee members to address quorums.
9. Next Van Ness BRT CAC meetings.
  - a. May 19, 6:00-7:30 p.m. (Rescheduled to third Thursday for Memorial Day holiday.)
  - b. June 23, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
  - c. July 28, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Every agenda shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on items of interest to the public that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee.

Public comment will be taken for each agenda item after discussion of the item by the Van Ness BRT CAC.

Privilege of Floor and Public Participation. The privilege of the floor shall be granted to any member of the public or officers of the City and County of San Francisco, or their duly authorized representatives for the purpose of commenting on any question before the Committee. Each person wishing to speak on an item at a regular or special meeting shall be permitted to be heard once per item for up to three minutes. The presiding officer shall be the judge of the pertinence of such comments, and have the power to limit this privilege if in the presiding officer's opinion the comments are not pertinent to the question before the Committee or the comments are merely reiterative of points made by previous speakers.

Presentations. After a presentation, the Van Ness BRT CAC Chair will ask committee members if they have any questions and then will open the meeting to public comment. When members of the public ask a question of the presenter, presenters should not respond, nor engage in any conversation. First, the commenter should finish their commentary. After which, if the Van Ness BRT CAC Chair or any committee member wants the presenter to respond to that question, the presenter will then respond to the Committee and not to the public.