

## What a re-leaf! Trees return to Van Ness

By Nehama Rogozen

In San Francisco, trees are often a hot-button issue. During the design phase of the project, the public “amp-leaf-ied” both excitement and concerns about location and species choice.

“O-pine-ions” by local residents, community groups and public officials ensured that as many trees as possible remained during construction, but unfortunately, several could “knot” remain due to construction conflicts, health issues or lifecycle limitations.

Residents will be “g-leaf-ful” to learn that several hundred new trees grown specifically for the Van Ness corridor will be planted before the end of the year. They consist of London Plane, Brisbane Box, Lemon-Scented Gum and Palm species. The trees are currently at nurseries in Colma and Linden, awaiting their turn to take root on Van Ness.

The beloved cork oak planted in the median at Van Ness and Jackson in 2006 to honor Rosa Parks was temporarily “tree-located” to a nursery while construction has been underway. Removal of the tree required a specialized piece of “indus-tree-al” equipment known as a tree transplanter, which surrounded the tree with several huge shovels to safely uproot it.

By planting the new trees in the wetter months, they will have a better chance of thriving. Most of them have been growing for 3 years and are around 36 feet tall; they will receive pruning and shaping “tree-tment”. With this care, and a hopefully wet winter, these trees will root “tree-mendously” into their new home and be part of the Van Ness corridor for generations of “pedes-tree-ans” to enjoy.

### SUPPORTING VAN NESS BUSINESSES

See page 2.

### TRAFFIC SWITCHES ON VAN NESS

See page 3.

### SCHEDULE UPDATE

See page 3.



# Supporting Van Ness businesses



Businesses throughout San Francisco have faced several challenges ever since March, when residents began sheltering in place. Businesses on Van Ness have also had to contend with the inconveniences of construction over the past several years. However, several impacted businesses on Van Ness are set to receive grants of \$5,000-\$10,000 as well as personalized business support, as the City works to help businesses survive.

The Directed Business Support Program, administered as a partnership between

the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) and the SFMTA, was first piloted with Central Subway. When construction on that project was delayed, the program was established to mitigate some of the effects on local businesses. Construction delays on Van Ness recently allowed the City to open the program to Van Ness businesses. Applications were due at the end of October, but more information can be found at [oewd.org/vanness](http://oewd.org/vanness).

## You Asked!

### *How do you communicate with the public about planned work?*

It's important that the public knows what is happening on Van Ness. We try to reach Van Ness residents, businesses and visitors in a number of ways to make sure that our message gets out. Depending on what we are trying to convey, that may be email, mail, door hangers, signage or social media. We understand that information is important to understanding what is happening outside your door.

With work plans shifting frequently, it can be difficult to get the word out quickly, so I work with a number of partners to make sure our information is accurate and gets to the right people. I touch base with the contractor at least twice a week, with the SFMTA construction management team almost every day and with the SFMTA Creative Services team multiple times a month. I also respond to questions from the public about scheduled work and any problems.



*Nehama Rogozen is a Public Relations Officer at the SFMTA, where she works on the Van Ness Improvement Project, as well as the agency's efforts to mitigate the effects of construction on businesses. Prior to joining the SFMTA, Nehama worked in economic justice efforts in California and around the world. She has served in both the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps.*

## 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.*

**311 Free language assistance** / 免費語言協助 / Ayuda gratis con el idioma / Бесплатная помощь переводчиков / Trợ giúp Thông dịch Miễn phí / Assistance linguistique gratuite / 無料の言語支援 / 무료 언어 지원 / Libreng tulong para sa wikang Filipino / การช่วยเหลือทาง ด้านภาษาโดยไม่เสียค่าใช้จ่าย / خط المساعدة المجاني على الرقم

# Traffic switches on Van Ness



Residents of Van Ness may have noticed switches in traffic patterns in September and November. This switch allowed crews to create a work zone in the middle of the roadway, and begin constructing the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system.

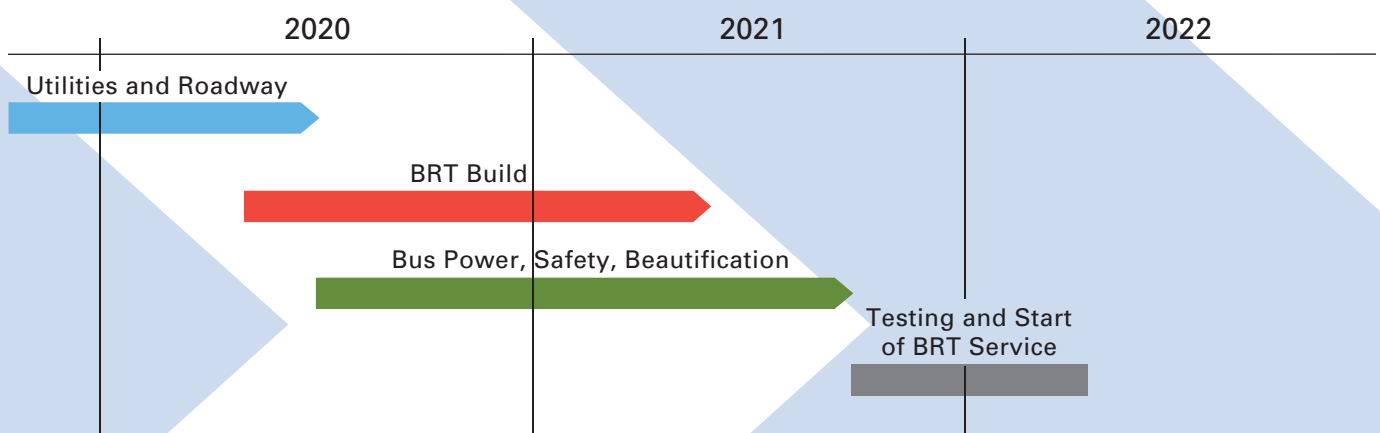
The work required removing old lane striping and replacing it with new striping, as well as moving all equipment into the

middle of the road. Barriers are set up around the work zone for pedestrian, vehicular and worker safety.

This work was done in sequenced sections to avoid inconvenience to residents and corridor travelers. As each sequence occurs and work moves to the middle, businesses and residents in those areas benefit from increased sidewalk access.

## Project schedule

At press time, construction on Van Ness Avenue is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021. With the shift from the utilities phase to the BRT buildout this summer, the project team has updated the graphic below to provide additional details about the remaining phases of construction.



*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.*





### Information Gladly Given

Van Ness Improvement Project staff may be contacted directly by calling 415.646.2310 or emailing [VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com](mailto:VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com). Due to the public health order, community drop-in office hours are temporarily suspended.

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.

**[SFMTA.com/VanNess](http://SFMTA.com/VanNess)**



MAINTAIN • RESTORE • MODERNIZE

