



Hidden City: Utilities Under Van Ness

By Meghan Daniels

When the first miles of sewers were laid in San Francisco, people were flocking to the area to discover gold. At the time, less than 200,000 people lived in the City. Today, San Francisco has nearly 900,000 residents, almost 5,000 restaurants, hotels and new office skyscrapers. The utility upgrades along Van Ness are a part of the City's comprehensive approach to addressing aging infrastructure, seismic reliability and climate change. Making significant capital investments to upgrade our aging utilities systems is critical to ensure water, power and sewer services remain functioning without disruption to our growing neighborhoods.

We also recognize the need to minimize construction disruption to communities while making these improvements. The Van Ness Improvement Project is one of the largest interdepartmental

collaborations in the City with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, the SFPUC, to improve our utility systems while minimizing impacts through the "dig once" approach. Upgrading utilities now means the SFPUC won't need to come back later and prolong construction in the corridor.

"This approach also allows us to be proactive and repair these systems before they fail and pose a risk to public safety and require costly emergency repairs," said Manfred Wong, Senior Project Manager at the SFPUC.

The Van Ness Improvement Project construction team is currently working from Mission to Lombard streets to upgrade the emergency firefighting water system and install 11,000 feet of water lines and 20,200 feet of sewer lines outside the Bus Rapid Transit lanes

so that any future repairs will have minimal impact to traffic flow and transit reliability on Van Ness. Relocating these aging facilities will require minimal service disruption. Residents and property owners will be given 48-hour notice of any water service disruption as we transition service to the new water lines. Finally, new energy-efficient LED street lights will be installed along the corridor, increasing safety and visibility for everyone using Van Ness.

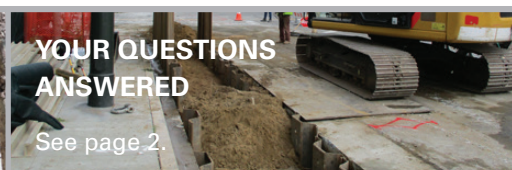
This utility work is expected to be complete by fall 2019. However, digging below ground can uncover some surprises that can impact the schedule. Unidentified abandoned utilities, artifacts and varying soil conditions are all factors that can affect the pace of construction. In order to maintain safe conditions for the crews, abandoned utilities, such as gas and water lines, have to be carefully

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SUPPORTING BUSINESS

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YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

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Own a small business? The City is here to help!

Did you know that over 95 percent of businesses in San Francisco are small businesses? These mom-and-pop shops are vital to the fabric of our city and make San Francisco an exciting place to live and visit. The City of San Francisco has two great resources that provide support for our small businesses, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development and the Small Business Assistance Center.

The Office of Economic and Workforce Development, also called OEWD, and our City partners offer extensive resources to assist small businesses as they start, stay and grow in San Francisco.

The Small Business Assistance Center is the one-stop-shop for small business support, including one-to-one case management, information on required licenses and permits, technical assistance, financing options and other resources to help you thrive.

For more information about resources the Office of Economic and Workforce Development offers, visit oewd.org/resources-businesses. Visit the Small Business Assistance Center at businessportal.sfgov.org or connect in person, weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at City Hall, Room 110. To schedule an appointment, contact 415-554-6134 or sbac@sfgov.org. All services are available in English, Chinese and Spanish.

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Hidden City: Utility work begins

excavated, which takes more time. Next, the type of utility is identified, and when possible, the utility owner is notified to resolve any conflicts with the new utility that is being installed.

To date, a number of unidentified utilities have been discovered while installing sewers along Van Ness. "We are testing new strategies to get ahead of potential conflicts, such as using technological tools to identify subsurface utilities," said Alondra Trevino, Assistant Engineer at the SFMTA.

When the construction is complete, the City looks forward to delivering utility services in a modern and reliable system that protects public health and the environment now and for generations to come.

You Asked!

Why is construction happening at night?

Van Ness Improvement Project staff are making every effort to schedule construction during the day. Van Ness Avenue is also U.S. Route 101 through San Francisco. When construction reduces the corridor to one lane of traffic in a direction, that work is required to occur during the night shift. Our team is working to minimize construction noise and disruption as much as possible by limiting night work. Stay up to date on when nighttime construction is scheduled by subscribing to text message or email construction updates at sfmta.com/vanness.



Dominic Fung, Project Manager with Walsh Construction Company, has worked on building public infrastructures in California for over 10 years. He joined the Van Ness Improvement Project in January and is responsible for coordinating subcontractors and support services, and relaying detailed look-ahead schedules to SFMTA.

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, and 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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VAN NESS

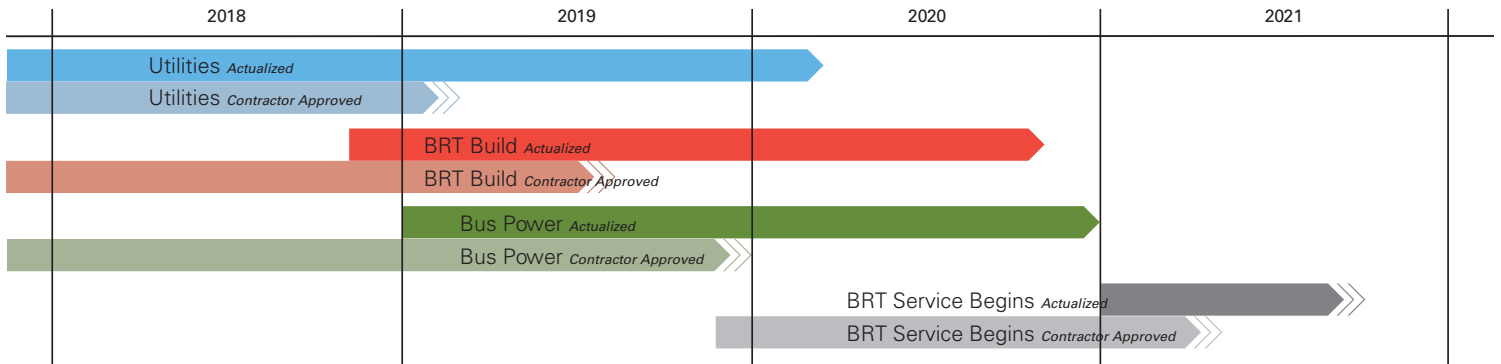
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT

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Project Schedule Update

Construction is 21 percent complete. The extent of utility conflicts is increasing the days of work necessary to complete this first phase of utility construction. Originally planned to open in 2019, these delays and others have set back the projected opening to late 2020. 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 with the darker current projected schedule above the lighter approved baseline schedule. Project staff is working to get the project back on schedule.

Utility Construction

Utility replacement, the first of three phases of construction, is underway and expected to last two years. During this phase, construction work will move south on one side of the street while preserving parking on the opposite side. Once the first side of the street is completed, parking will be restored and the utility work will begin on the opposite side.

Recent traffic lane shifts accommodate construction expanding south. For a more detailed look at how construction will progress, check out the videos and construction animation at sfmta.com/vanness.

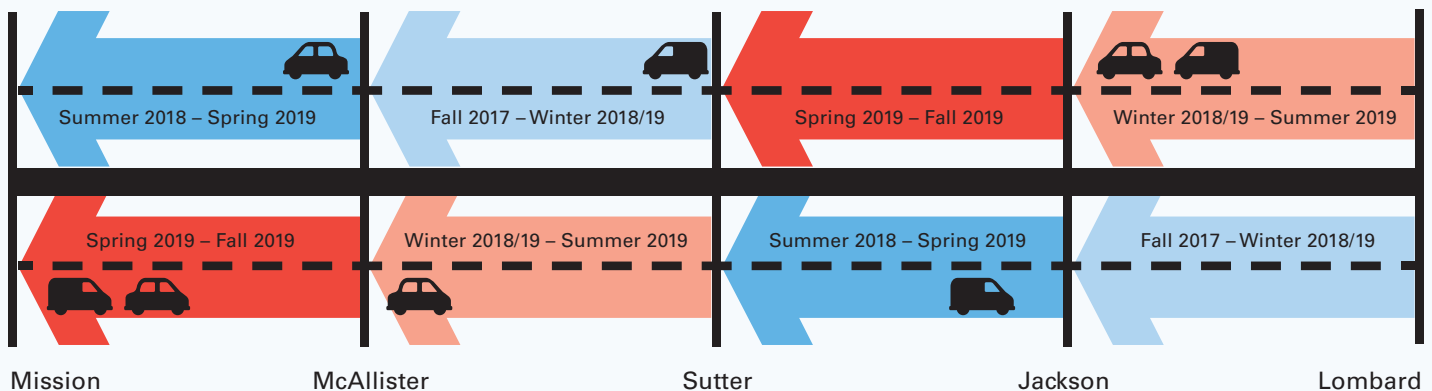
VAN NESS AVENUE UTILITY WORK SCHEDULE

UNDERWAY

- Dark Blue: Fall 2017 – Winter 2018/19
- Light Blue: Summer 2018 – Spring 2019

UPCOMING

- Light Orange: Winter 2018/19 – Summer 2019
- Dark Orange: Spring 2019 – Fall 2019



VAN NESS

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

MAINTAIN • RESTORE • MODERNIZE



Community Drop-In Office Hours

Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 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 Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00, or Friday mornings from 10:00 to noon.

To find out more and sign up for updates about the Van Ness Improvement Project, go to sfmta.com/vanness.

For questions or comments, contact us at 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 或致電415-646-2310。

Si tiene preguntas o para servicio gratis para el idioma, póngase en contacto con VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com o 415-646-2310.

SFMTA.com/VanNess