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**

## 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.

VAN NESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

SUMMER 2019 | ISSUE 11

# Shedding Light on Van Ness Avenue

*By Kate McCarthy*

Many people are surprised to learn that the overhaul of Van Ness Avenue underway is replacing every major utility from sidewalk to sidewalk ten feet below the ground to 30 feet above ground. This includes replacing the trolley-light poles and traffic signals that light the way along Van Ness Avenue from North Point to Mission streets.

The trolley-light poles being installed on Van Ness include a pole foundation, a pole with two sets of lamps and fixtures to illuminate both the roadway and sidewalk, as well as the overhead contact systems that powers Muni's zero-emissions electric trolley bus fleet. New trolley-light poles will be installed in phases through the duration of Van Ness Improvement Project construction (see project schedule p. 3).

The lamps and fixtures will ensure quality lighting for people traveling on Van Ness Avenue, particularly for people walking, due to the additional fixtures over the sidewalk. The new roadway streetlamps will meet Caltran's standards for highway lighting.

When construction is complete, the primary poles installed throughout the corridor will have a spiral fixture that pays homage to the original trolley poles and street lamps installed along Van Ness Avenue in 1914. These poles were installed on Van Ness Avenue to support its first streetcar, also powered by overhead wires, to serve as transportation between Civic Center and the Panama Pacific Exposition. The poles initially did not include lighting fixtures, but pairs of electric streetlights were added in time for the Exposition's opening.

The trolley-light poles were moved to their current locations in 1936, when Van Ness Avenue was widened for the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge. At that time, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission replaced the pairs of electric streetlights with a single tear-drop luminaire and a spiraling bracket that are now being replaced.

When the streetcar tracks were removed from Van Ness Avenue in 1950, the concrete poles were retained and incorporated into Muni's Overhead Contact System.

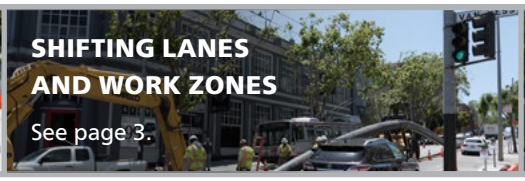
As specific poles were identified as structurally failing in recent years, they were, and continue to be replaced.

The Van Ness Improvement Project extends through the Civic Center Historic District, a federal landmark historic district, from Golden Gate Avenue to Fell Street. As a result, trolley-light poles for the project were initially designed with a more streamlined, modern look to meet standards established by the Secretary of Interior.

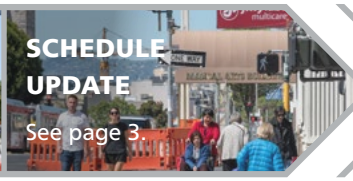
After the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution in September 2016 urging the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to make all efforts to preserve the historic character of Van Ness through replication of the existing streetlamps, the poles outside the Civic Center Historic District were designed to include a spiral bracket and tear-drop luminaires. The trolley-light poles originally planned for the project are being installed in the Civic Center Historic District.

*SEE LIGHTING, PAGE 2*


**YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED**
See page 2.



**SHIFTING LANES AND WORK ZONES**
See page 3.



**SCHEDULE UPDATE**
See page 3.


*FROM PAGE 1*

## Lighting the Way on Van Ness

In addition to lighting, the trolley-light poles are also essential to providing support and tension for Muni's Overhead Contact System. "Trolley" refers to the trolley poles on the roof of the bus that are used to transmit the electricity from the overhead wires to vehicle motors. This system provides almost entirely pollution-free electric power from the city's hydroelectric Hetch Hetchy Water and Power System to Muni's rubber-tired electric trolley bus fleet.

The Van Ness Improvement Project is the first major overhaul of the Overhead Contact System on Van Ness Avenue. Procured by the SFMTA to operate on Muni's 49 Van Ness/Mission as a part of the Van Ness Improvement Project, trolley buses are energy efficient, quieter and less polluting. Trolley buses operate better on hills, requiring less maintenance and are longer lasting than motor buses.

When construction of the Van Ness Improvement Project is complete, things will be looking a lot brighter on Van Ness, with new streetlamps and a new Overhead Contact System, ready to provide the next generation of Muni service on San Francisco's first Bus Rapid Transit.

**You Asked!**

*Why is there construction equipment staged along Van Ness Avenue?*

Staging materials on Van Ness Avenue ensures the materials and equipment necessary are available when the workers need them to perform their work. Having materials stored as close as possible to the site of the work makes the most efficient use of project resources. This reduces possible travel delays. If you have concerns about the tidiness of the staging at a certain construction zone you are encouraged to report it to VanNessBRT@SFMTA.com or 415-646-2310.


*Dan Hart is a Senior Project Manager with the Walsh Group. He has worked in construction for transportation projects in the San Francisco Bay area for 30 years. Some of those projects include the San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge Project as well as Caltrain projects in the cities of Belmont and San Carlos. He joined the Van Ness Improvement Project team in April 2018.*

# Muni Bus Ads Promote Businesses on Van Ness

*By Estefani Morales-Zanoletti*


To promote visiting the many business located on Van Ness Avenue during construction, a new advertising campaign has been launched on Muni buses.

These advertisements, called Car Cards, are installed on the interior of Muni buses and are viewed by approximately 700,000 daily riders. The campaign has an annual value of $76,500. Each quarter, in collaboration with the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee, a theme is selected to promote local businesses on the Van Ness corridor.

The campaign was launched this summer, celebrating San Francisco Pride and can be seen on buses serving the Van Ness Improvement Project corridor.

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

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 Switch on Van Ness Avenue


*By Estefani Morales-Zanoletti*

The utility work on Van Ness Avenue is halfway complete. Traffic lanes on Van Ness Avenue were shifted to newly constructed lanes beginning on June 19. These traffic lane shifts were needed to create new work zones for the second half of utility work to continue on the opposite side of the street. This work includes replacing the 1800s-era water and sewer systems beneath Van Ness, reducing their vulnerability to damage from earthquakes and minimizing potential service outages, overhauling portions of the emergency firefighting water system and installing new street and sidewalk lighting and landscaping.

For safety, fencing is being installed around the work zones with construction mesh. Signs, barriers and other measures are also being used to safely reroute people walking along the corridor around construction sites. Access to businesses and buildings is being maintained.

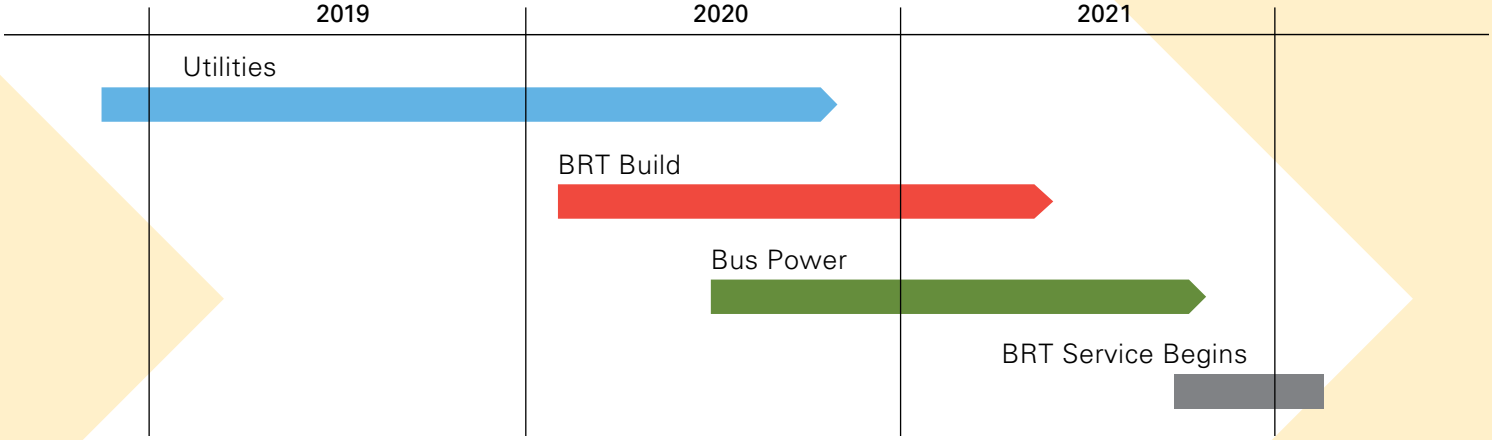
Where construction zones are established, meters are being removed, loading zones and blue zones for parking with a valid disabled permit are being relocated. A map of specific locations of relocated colored curb zones can be found on the agency's website, SFMTA.com/VanNess.

Temporary bus stops continue to be used to direct Muni and Golden Gate Transit customers to their stops. New Golden Gate Transit signage are being used to make shared Muni and Golden Gate Transit stops more easily visible along the corridor.

The second half of the utility work is being done at an accelerated pace due to procedural changes and increases in staff capacity. Utility work is expected to continue into early 2020.

## Project Schedule

Originally planned to open in 2019, delays have set back the projected opening to mid-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.*