Van Ness Avenue
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Citizens Advisory Committee

05.01.12
Van Ness Avenue BRT Project Background

- Key north-south link in San Francisco’s Rapid Transit network
- Recommended for BRT service in the 2004 Countywide Transportation Plan; Prop K Expenditure Plan; SFMTA Transit Effectiveness Project
- Partnership with SFMTA
- Other collaborations: SFDPW, Planning, PUC, Golden Gate Transit, Caltrans
- Top rated FTA Small Starts Project for cost effectiveness; Regional MTC Small Starts Priority
Project Purpose and Need

- Improve transit reliability, speed, connectivity and comfort
  - Separate autos from transit
  - Reduce delays associated with loading and unloading, and traffic signals
- Improve pedestrian comfort, amenities, and safety
- Enhance urban design and identity of Van Ness Avenue
- Accommodate safe multimodal circulation and access within the corridor

![Frequencies of Muni 47/49 at Market Street]
Alternatives Assessed in Draft EIS/EIR

- Alternative 1 – No Build
- Alternative 2 – Side Lane
- Alternative 3 – Center Lane with Right Side Boarding/Dual Medians
- Alternative 4 – Center Lane with Left Side Loading/Center Median
- Design Option B for Alternatives 3 and 4 – Limited Left Turns
Alternative 2 – Side BRT Lanes

- OCS Pole / Streetlight replacement
- Branded Vehicles with level, all-door loading
- Dedicated Bus Lanes
- Transit Signal Priority
- High Quality Station Platforms
- Pedestrian Safety Treatments
Alternative 3 – Center BRT Lanes with Right Side Loading / Dual Medians
Alternative 4 – Center BRT Lanes with Left Side Loading / Center Median

Vehicles have doors on both sides
Findings: Van Ness Avenue BRT Benefits

- Improve transit travel times by up to 32%
- Improve transit reliability by up to 50%
- Increase transit boardings by up to 35%
- Maintain corridor person-throughput while increasing transit mode share
- Save up to 30% of daily route operating costs
- Improve multimodal safety, including for pedestrians
Findings: One Area with Significant and Unavoidable Impacts – Traffic Circulation

- **Existing Conditions/2015**
  - 3 intersections have auto delay impacts
  - No worse than 2015 No Build Alternative

- **Long term – 2035**
  - 6-8 intersections have auto delay impacts
  - Assumes significant background growth
Community and Stakeholder Meetings

Van Ness BRT Citizens Advisory Committee

Government Related Organizations
• Mayors Disability Council Physical Access Committee
• City Hall Preservation Advisory Committee
• Muni Accessibility Advisory Committee
• Urban Forestry Council

Regional Organizations:
• San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR)
• Sierra Club
• TransForm

Local Groups and Organizations:
• California Pacific Medical Center
• Cathedral Hill Neighbors Association
• Chinatown Community Development Center
• Civic Center Stakeholders Group (Opera House, Veteran’s Memorial Building, San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Ballet, and San Francisco Conservatory of Music)
• Cow Hollow Association
• Geary BRT Citizens Advisory Committee
• Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association
• Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan Organizing Committee
• Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
• Livable City
• Lower Polk Neighbors
• Middle Polk Neighborhood Association
• Mission Neighborhood Centers
• Pacific Heights Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons
• Rescue Muni
• Russian Hill Neighbors
• San Francisco Bicycle Coalition
• San Francisco Transit Riders Union
• SF Towers
• Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco
• Tenderloin Futures Collaborative
• Van Ness Corridor Association
• WalkSF
Alternatives Analysis in the EIS/EIR

- Alternatives performance outlined in Chapter 10 of EIS/EIR
- Indicators grouped into categories based on Project Purpose and Need as well as issues of importance to stakeholders and decision-makers
  - Transit Performance
  - Passenger Experience
  - Access and Pedestrian Safety
  - Urban Design/Landscape
  - System Performance
  - Environmental and Social Effects
  - Operations and Maintenance
  - Construction and Capital Costs
Center BRT Best Meets Project Purpose and Need

- Design Option B has nearly twice the travel time savings and reliability benefits as Side BRT (Alternative 2)
- Public comment on Draft EIS/EIR indicated preference for center running BRT (nearly 3:1 versus Side BRT)
Challenges with Center BRT alternatives

- **Alternative 3:**
  - May require wider lanes throughout corridor due to “head-on” configuration
  - Complete reconstruction of median
    - Removal of all existing trees
    - More significant utility considerations

- **Alternative 4**
  - Requires left-right door vehicles
    - No 5-door trolleycoach in existence in North America (procurement risk)
    - Higher spare ratio contributes to facilities challenges
    - Reduces operational flexibility
LPA Recommendation: Center-Running BRT with Right Side Loading/Center Median and Limited Left Turns

Graphic not to scale: for Planning Purposes Only
LPA Recommendation: Center-Running BRT with Right Side Loading/Center Median and Limited Left Turns

**Benefits**

- Ranks first or second (or tied for first or second) on 8 out of 10 key evaluation criteria that differentiate the alternatives
  - Best travel time, reliability, ridership, etc.
- Ability to operate standard right door buses (trolley and mc)
- Operational flexibility (allows passing)
- Maintains majority of center median
- Consistent design – good for pedestrian safety and accessibility
- Manageable cost and schedule
Next Steps

- Outreach to stakeholders
- Authority and SFMTA action on LPA recommendation
- Prepare Final EIS/EIR for September release
  - Incorporates LPA
- Certify Final EIS/EIR, obtain FTA approval by end of 2012
Thank You!

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