



Memorandum

DATE: November 26, 2013

TO: Authority Board: Commissioners Avalos (Chair), Wiener (Vice Chair), Breed, Campos, Chiu, Cohen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Tang and Yee

FROM: Michael Schwartz – Senior Transportation Planner
Bob Masys – Administrative Engineer

THROUGH: Tilly Chang – Executive Director *TC*

SUBJECT: November 2013 Monthly Progress Report for the Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project

Summary

Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project proposes a package of transit improvements along a 2-mile corridor of Van Ness Avenue between Mission and Lombard Streets. The Transportation Authority is the project lead through the end of environmental review. In September, 2013, the Transportation Authority Board certified the Environmental Impact Report and approved the project. The project anticipates a Federal Transit Administration Record of Decision in December, thereby completing the federal portion of the environmental review process.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is leading preliminary (30%) engineering, and anticipates completing a Draft Conceptual Engineering Report (CER) by the end of 2013 with a Final CER by May 2014. Final Design is anticipated to be completed by the middle of 2015, with construction starting in early 2016 and revenue operations to begin in early 2018.

In November, the SFMTA continued to work on preliminary (30%) engineering. The team is focusing on key station and landscaping features, overhead contact system (OCS) replacement, and other technical needs that will contribute to the Conceptual Engineering Report (CER). The team met with the San Francisco Arts Commission's (SFAC) Civic Design Review Committee as well as staff from the Lighthouse for the Blind on station design, layout, and landscaping.

There continue to be challenges related to station design, including the ability to comply with the outdoor advertising contract with Clear Channel Communications and the platform height with respect to achieving near level boarding.

BACKGROUND

Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project proposes a package of transit improvements along a 2-mile corridor of Van Ness Avenue between Mission and Lombard Streets. Key features include: dedicated bus lanes, level or near level boarding, consolidated transit stops, high quality stations, transit signal priority, elimination of most left turn opportunities for mixed traffic, and pedestrian safety enhancements. Van Ness Avenue BRT is a signature project in the Prop K Expenditure Plan, a regional priority through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Resolution 3434, and a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts candidate project.

STATUS AND KEY ACTIVITIES

In November, the SFMTA continued to work on preliminary (30%) engineering. The team is focusing on key traffic, station, and landscaping features; coordinating utility work; overhead contact system (OCS) replacement; and other technical needs that will comprise the Conceptual Engineering Report (CER). The team met with the San Francisco Arts Commission's (SFAC) Civic Design Review Committee as well as staff from the Lighthouse for the Blind on station design, layout, and landscaping. Artist Jorge Pardo (<http://www.jorgepardosculpture.com/>) was selected to create the public art for the project. The team will engage SFMTA's on-call consultant to provide additional expertise on construction sequencing and scheduling.

Current Issues and Risks: The project team continues discussions on station design with the SFAC Civic Design Review Committee. The current issue is finding a design that does not increase the maintenance burden on the SFMTA or violate the provisions of the existing outdoor advertising contract with Clear Channel Communications, while also providing the high quality station that is intrinsic to the BRT's success. The team will meet with the Civic Design Review Committee in December to discuss various design concepts. Deferral of these design details until after the CER phase could result in an inaccurate CER cost estimate and project delay.

The project team performed a bus docking field test and found challenges to maintaining a consistent level boarding between the platform and the vehicle floor. In cases where the bus is level with or lower than the platform height due to heavy passenger loads or normal suspension variances, it would not be possible to deploy the wheelchair ramp if it were needed. Additionally, changes to the bus wheel design in newly procured vehicles have resulted in greater than expected horizontal gaps to the platform. The team is looking at lowering the height of the platform to 6 to 8 inches (close to standard curb heights).. The team is seeking to avoid solutions that would increase the maintenance burden on SFMTA or require changes to the motor and trolley coach fleets. Inability to achieve level or near-level boarding would result in longer dwell times for passenger loading, putting the BRT performance at risk.

Agreements and Approvals: Due to the temporary shutdown of the federal government, the FTA has not issued a Record of Decision (ROD) on the project. The team anticipates issuance of the ROD in the next few weeks.

The project team is negotiating a maintenance agreement with Caltrans, the final attachment needed for approval of the Project Study Report/Project Report, thereby closing the planning phase of work with Caltrans. The agreement is currently in review by the Caltrans legal department.

The SFMTA and SFPUC have a tentative agreement on cost sharing for sewer replacement work to be coordinated with the Van Ness Avenue BRT Project.

Funding: Appendix 1 shows the project funding plan. The project will use a mix of Prop K, FTA Small Starts, and other local funds. With approval of the Five Year Prioritization Program Amendment for the Bus Rapid Transit/Transit Preferential Streets/Muni Metro Network Expenditure Plan Category (EP 1) anticipated in early 2014, the project will be fully funded.

Outreach: Project staff met with staff from Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired to discuss continued consultation on incorporating project features that are intuitive for all users of the BRT and enhance wayfinding for blind and low vision transit riders.

The environmental review phase Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) held its final meeting in September. The project anticipates forming a new CAC for design and construction in early 2014.

Next Steps/Upcoming Key Milestones: The team anticipates an FTA ROD in within the next month. The Draft CER is anticipated to be completed in December. The Final CER will be approved in May 2014.

PROJECT SCHEDULE AND BUDGET:

Figure 1 shows the project schedule. The current phase of work continues to be on schedule, with an anticipated completion of 30% design by May 2014. Final Design would be completed by mid-2015 with Construction beginning in early 2016. Revenue service is anticipated to begin in early 2018.

Table 1 shows the budget for the project by phase as well as expenditures to date. The cost for the current CER phase is \$7.6M, and the total cost for the project is \$125.6M.

Figure 1: Van Ness Avenue BRT Project Schedule

Activities	2013				2014				2015				2016				2017				2018	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
1. Conceptual Engineering + Environmental Studies ¹	■	■	■	■																		
2. Preliminary Engineering (CER)		■	■	■	■	■	■	■														
3. Final Design							■	■	■	■	■	■										
4. Advertise + Award Contract											■	■										
5. Construction													■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
6. Testing/Startup																				■	■	■
7. Revenue Operations Begin																						

1. Conceptual Engineering and Environmental Studies began in 2007

Table 1: Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Budget and Expenditures to Date

Project Name(in \$ millions)	Budget (\$ millions)	Estimate at Completion (\$ millions)	Expended to Date (\$ millions)	% Complete
Conceptual Engineering + Environmental Studies	\$7.6	\$7.4	\$7.2	97%
Preliminary Engineering (CER)	\$7.6	\$7.6	\$2.9	40%
Final Design (PS+E)	\$8.0	\$8.0	\$0	0%
Construction (Including Testing/Startup)	\$102.6	\$102.6	\$0	0%
Total	\$125.6	\$125.6	\$10.1	10%

Attachments (1)

- 1. Funding Plan

cc: E. Reiskin, T. Papandreou, V. Harris, J. Haley, P. Gabancho – SFMTA
 TC, MEL, CF, AL, ES, STR, MS, RAM – Chron, File: Van Ness BRT

**Attachment 1: Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit Funding Plan
Updated: September 2013**

Note: Funding plan revisions are in process, pending the Prop K Five Year Prioritization Programs update, anticipated to be adopted by the Transportation Authority Board in early 2014.

Source	Type	Status	Project Phases ¹			Total by Status	TOTAL
			ENV, CER/PE	PS&E	CON		
5309 Small Starts ²	Federal	Allocated	\$7,818,310	\$6,371,063	\$810,627	\$15,000,000	\$75,000,000
		Programmed			\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	
		Planned			\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	
SHOPP ³	State	Allocated				\$0	\$8,435,862
		Programmed				\$0	
		Planned			\$8,435,862	\$8,435,862	
PPM Funds ⁴	Local	Allocated	\$197,907			\$197,907	\$197,907
		Programmed				\$0	
		Planned				\$0	
AB 664 Funds ⁵	Local	Allocated	\$196,777			\$196,777	\$196,777
		Programmed				\$0	
		Planned				\$0	
Prop K ⁶	Local	Allocated	\$6,977,180			\$6,977,180	\$20,938,900
		Programmed		\$1,594,280	\$12,367,440	\$13,961,720	
		Planned				\$0	
California Pacific Medical Center Contribution ⁷	Local	Allocated				\$0	\$2,500,000
		Programmed				\$0	
		Planned			\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	
TBD ⁸	TBD	Allocated				\$0	\$18,363,554
		Programmed				\$0	
		Planned			\$18,363,554	\$18,363,554	
Totals		Allocated	\$15,190,174	\$6,371,063	\$810,627	\$22,371,864	\$125,633,000
		Programmed	\$0	\$1,594,280	\$42,367,440	\$43,961,720	
		Planned	\$0	\$0	\$59,299,416	\$59,299,416	
			\$15,190,174	\$7,965,343	\$102,477,483	\$125,633,000	

¹ Acronyms used for project phases include: ENV - Environmental Documentation, CER/PE - Conceptual Engineering Report/Preliminary Engineering (30% Design), PS&E - Plans, Specifications & Estimates or Final Design, CON - Construction. The construction phase includes the incremental cost for procuring new BRT vehicles for the project.

² Small Starts Funds: \$15 million allocated in FY 2010/11 and \$30 million programmed from FY 2011/12.

³ State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) funding amount will be determined by Caltrans through a Project Report scheduled to be completed in Fall, 2013.

⁴ PPM: Planning, Programming and Monitoring funds

⁵ AB 664: Bridge tolls collected on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay, Dumbarton, and San Mateo-Hayward Bridges to further the development of public transportation near these toll bridges.

⁶ Prop K amount includes \$411,070 in Authority operating funds in Fiscal Years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

⁷ The anticipated source of this contribution is the California Pacific Medical Center. The development agreement was approved by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors through Ordinance 138-13 on July 11, 2013.

⁸ Funding sources under consideration to fill the \$18.4 million funding gap include: Prop K, Lifeline, OneBayArea Grant Program - Cycle 2, Prop AA, SHOPP, SFMTA Revenue Bonds and Transportation Fund for Clean Air. There may also be future funding opportunities related to MAP-21 (including TIGER) and Central Freeway Parcel Revenues (\$12.7 million is dedicated for Van Ness Avenue State of Good Repair improvements. The project team is still determining how much of this funding could be used for the BRT project or other ancillary projects.).