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Edward D. Reiskin, *Director of Transportation*

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Contact: Paul Rose

415.601.1637, cell

paul.rose@sfmta.com

****PRESS RELEASE****

Construction for Van Ness Improvement Project will Shift Traffic Lanes Next Thursday for Utility Work

Overall project on Van Ness will bring safety, utility and transportation upgrades to vital corridor

San Francisco—Starting Thursday, November 2, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which manages all surface transportation in the city including the Municipal Railway (Muni), will shift traffic lanes on Van Ness Avenue to begin replacing major utilities including water, sewer and emergency firefighting water systems as part of the Van Ness Improvement Project.

The project, a major overhaul of Van Ness between Lombard and Mission streets, will revitalize road and utility infrastructure, while making safety enhancements and transportation upgrades, including San Francisco's first Bus Rapid Transit system.

Beginning the morning of Thursday, November 2, southbound lanes on Van Ness will be shifted to the center of the roadway to make room for the first of two construction work areas on Van Ness Avenue. On Monday, November 13, the second of the two construction work areas will be created when northbound lanes on Van Ness Avenue are shifted.

Once the lanes shift, on some blocks of Van Ness Avenue, two lanes traveling in the same direction will separate to pass on either side of median islands where 12 trees are protected for construction.

Utility work zones will be located on the western side of Van Ness Avenue between Sutter and McAllister, and the eastern side of Van Ness Avenue between Jackson and Lombard. Along with the traffic lane shifts, parking will be temporarily eliminated in the two utility construction zones, preserving parking opposite the construction zone when possible. Each of the work areas will occupy one side of the street, approximately five feet from the building line on Van Ness to the center of the roadway. Sidewalk widths will be reduced to no less than five feet adjacent to the two construction zones, and access for people walking will be maintained on both sides of Van Ness Avenue.

In preparation for the upcoming traffic changes, blue zone parking for people with disabilities, loading zones and street furniture such as newspaper stands, bus shelters, bike racks and trashcans have been temporarily relocated.

At times this work will require reducing Van Ness Avenue to one lane in each direction, limiting work to nighttime hours. Construction teams will notify neighbors in advance of night work and will be taking measures to reduce nighttime noise.

Once the two construction work areas are established, crews will begin by replacing the 1800s-era water and sewer systems beneath Van Ness, reducing their vulnerability to damage from earthquakes and minimizing potential service outages. Portions of the emergency firefighting water system, which supplies more than 1,200 fire hydrants through San Francisco, will also be overhauled and new street and sidewalk lighting will also be installed. This intensive and disruptive phase of work is expected to continue through Winter 2019.

By the end of construction, projected in 2020, Van Ness Avenue will be a greener, safer, and more efficient street everyone can enjoy for years to come. The work will also provide a major overhaul of underground utilities that will allow for a more resilient infrastructure that can will keep the area running when we need it most. For more project details and to sign up for construction updates, please visit sfmta.com/vanness.

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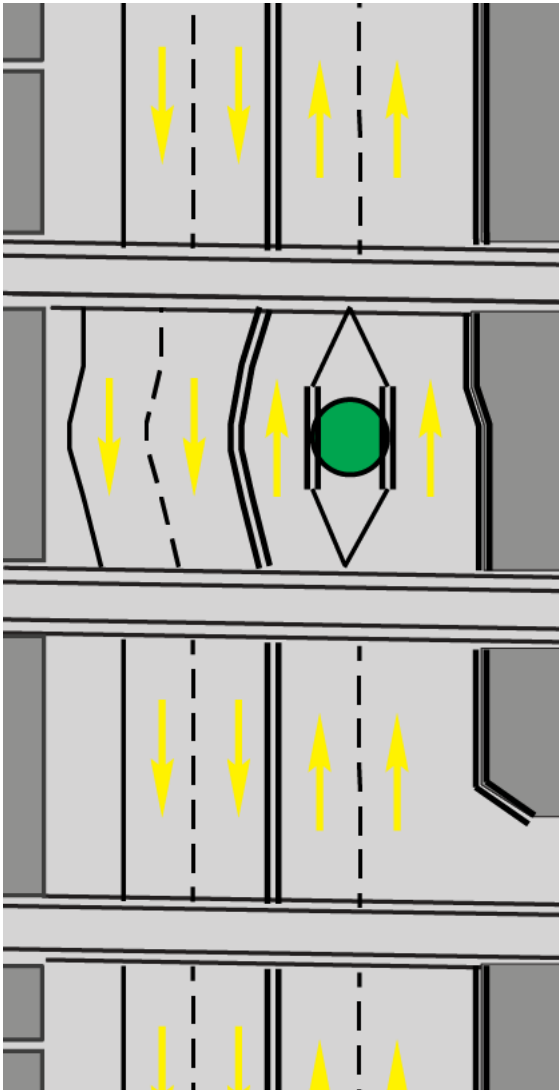
Media:

[Animation of construction sequence](#). Animation shows roadway configuration for three phases of construction. The traffic adjustments and utility work beginning Thursday, November 2 are shown beginning at 0:32 through 1:32.





Pictured above: Screen shot from construction sequence animation illustrating two lanes traveling in the same direction separating as they pass on either side of median islands where one of 12 trees are protected for construction. Arrows added for emphasis.



Pictured left: Diagram showing two lanes traveling in the same direction separating to pass one of 12 trees that are protected in medians for construction.

Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.

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