

Notes from the SFMTA Large Vehicle Safety Working Group Meeting

Union Square Conference Room, 1 South Van Ness Avenue

Thursday, November 17, 2016 – 10:30 am -10:00 pm

1. Introductions

- 13 participants

2. Van Ness Avenue BRT Project Presentation

SFMTA staff gave a presentation on the Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project which began construction several weeks ago. The presentation provided an overview of what changes will be made to Van Ness Avenue as result of this project including underground water and sewer system upgrades, new left hand turn restrictions, creation of a new median with street trees, transit only lanes, and station platforms. A full description of the project as well as construction updates can be found on the project website at <http://www.sfcta.org/van-ness-avenue-bus-rapid-transit-home>.

One question that was raised was around safety and transit riders jaywalking in order to access the boarding islands which will be located in the middle of the street rather than at the curb. In order to prevent this behavior and force riders to use crosswalks to access the boarding islands, railings will be placed along the backside of the boarding islands. The railings will be high enough to make it difficult to climb over them and the spacing of the railings will be close enough together that it will not be possible to squeeze through them.

Several participants noted concerns about the type of trees that would be planted in the median and ensuring that there would be enough clearance such that their vehicles would not hit the trees. SFMTA staff stated that the trees selected were picked to ensure that tree branches would not interfere with the overhead Muni bus lines and that mature trees would be planted, thus they should not interfere with large vehicle operations.

3. Curb Management Study Presentation and Discussion

SFMTA staff gave a presentation on the agency's Curb Management Study which is in the early planning stages. The presentation focused on the following topics:

1. Implementation: This included looking at internal processes as well as inter-agency processes for the approval of color curbs, environmental review, and other planning processes that guide the provision of curbside space. Enforcement and taxis/accessible services were also considered.
2. Policy: Policy section included considerations of the SF transportation code, policies for complete streets, environmental review standards and long-range planning. How can policy and the transportation code better support shifting and existing curbside demand in the city?

3. Communications: Communications considered both strategies with external stakeholders and inter-agency methods for distributing information and providing opportunities for engagement.

Feedback

Summarized below is the feedback on the presentation from participants.

- Implementation
 - There is a lack of enforcement of many traffic violations. New tools to manage curbside space and signs are not useful if they are not enforced.
 - Many major commercial streets do not have alleys or other ways to access businesses for loading other than curbside space.
 - SF previously had enforcement details dedicated to streets with high double parking. These were effective in addressing the problem.
- Policy
 - Commercial curbside loading zones seem to be less prevalent in the city overall.
 - Commercial curbside loading zones are not adequate in relationship to new development.
 - Loading zones are often shrunken to preserve the number of existing parking spots. This should not be continued.
 - Curbside loading design: spaces should be longer, at corners to accommodate large vehicles.
 - Time restrictions could be useful to relieve congestion. This could be done at metered parking zones so the space could transition from loading zones to public parking. Doing so could improve curbside loading conditions while also preserving parking.
 - Off-street parking: delivery companies will use off-street parking, but it is highly dependent on the type of delivery.
 - If streets have transit facilities and/or bicycle facilities, the provision of adequate curbside loading should be prioritized to help reduce conflict due to delivery vehicles.
 - Statistics on ped/bike fatalities in which double parking was involved would be useful for further discussion and work.
 - Delivery management plans could be useful to require from major retailers in SF.
- Communications
 - Major retailers should be identified to continue conversation.

4. **LVWG Driver Survey**

The group discussed the usefulness, potential questions and logistics of performing a driver survey. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from drivers of large vehicles on the challenges they face operating on San Francisco streets and gather suggestions on areas where there could be improvement (physical infrastructure, signage, policy, etc.)

Draft questions formulated by SFMTA and Eric Sauer (CTA) are shown in regular text and new questions and ideas from the meeting are italicized:

Draft Questions

1. In what area(s) of the City do you typically drive?
2. What type of vehicle do you typically operate? Bobtail? Truck and trailer? Other?
3. What hours do you typically work?
4. What challenges do you face while driving in San Francisco? (Roadway conditions, access issues, traffic/congestion, conflicts with other roadway users, traffic calming, etc.)
5. What challenges do you face with loading/unloading? (Unable to find loading zones, loading zones not large enough, lack of availability – occupied by other vehicles, etc.)
6. Have you faced new or increased challenges in the last two years? Do they seem to have come from a certain source?
7. Is routing to your pickup and delivery location difficult, if so why? Is SFMTA updating its truck route network map?
8. What suggestions do you have for the SFMTA on how driving conditions could be improved in San Francisco?
9. What suggestions do you have for the SFMTA on how loading/unloading conditions could be improved in San Francisco?
10. *Do you have a good understanding of bike and pedestrian concerns? Were the education videos effective?*

Timeline

The proposed timeline for distributing the survey is early 2017 and the survey would be open for approximately a month

Distribution Strategy

1. What companies/organizations should participate?
2. What is the best method for distribution?
 - i. Online survey
 - ii. Paper survey
 - iii. Both
 - iv. *Email*
 - v. *Physically give to drivers*
 - vi. *Media*
 - vii. *Business reply postage*
 - viii. *Social Media*
3. Who should this survey be distributed to?
 - i. Members of CTA
 - ii. Other Transportation Organizations
 - iii. California Delivery Association
 - iv. *Stores*
 - v. *Merchant Associations*
 - vi. *Supervisors (Board of Supervisors)*

- vii. Passenger large vehicle operators*
- viii. Construction vehicle operators*

5. Next Steps

- The next Large Vehicle Working Group meeting will be held in the spring of 2017. A meeting date and time will be sent out at least one month in advance.
- MTA staff will discuss the driver survey with Eric Sauer before next meeting and will discuss with larger group at next meeting in 2017.

