

Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

San Francisco Environment Commission
Policy Committee

04.30.12



SFMTA | Municipal Transportation Agency

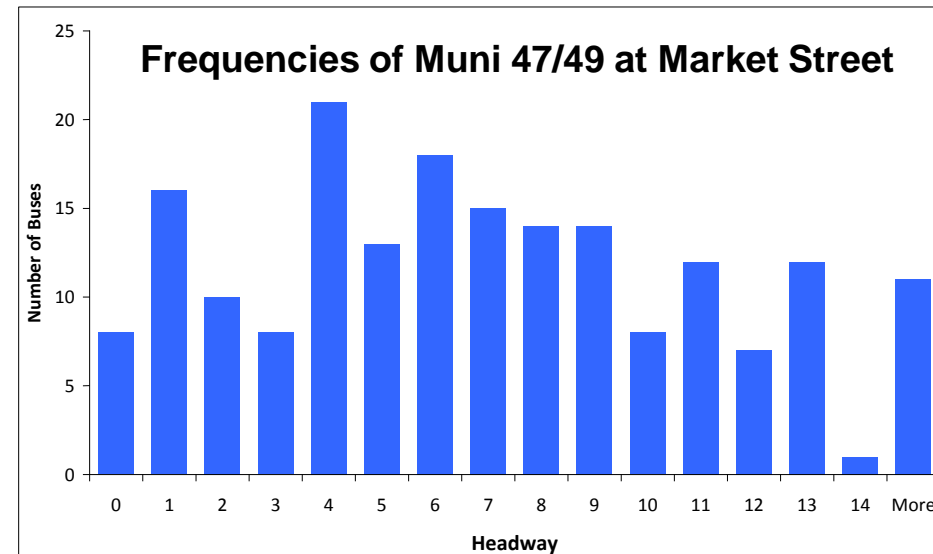
Van Ness Avenue BRT Project Background

- 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



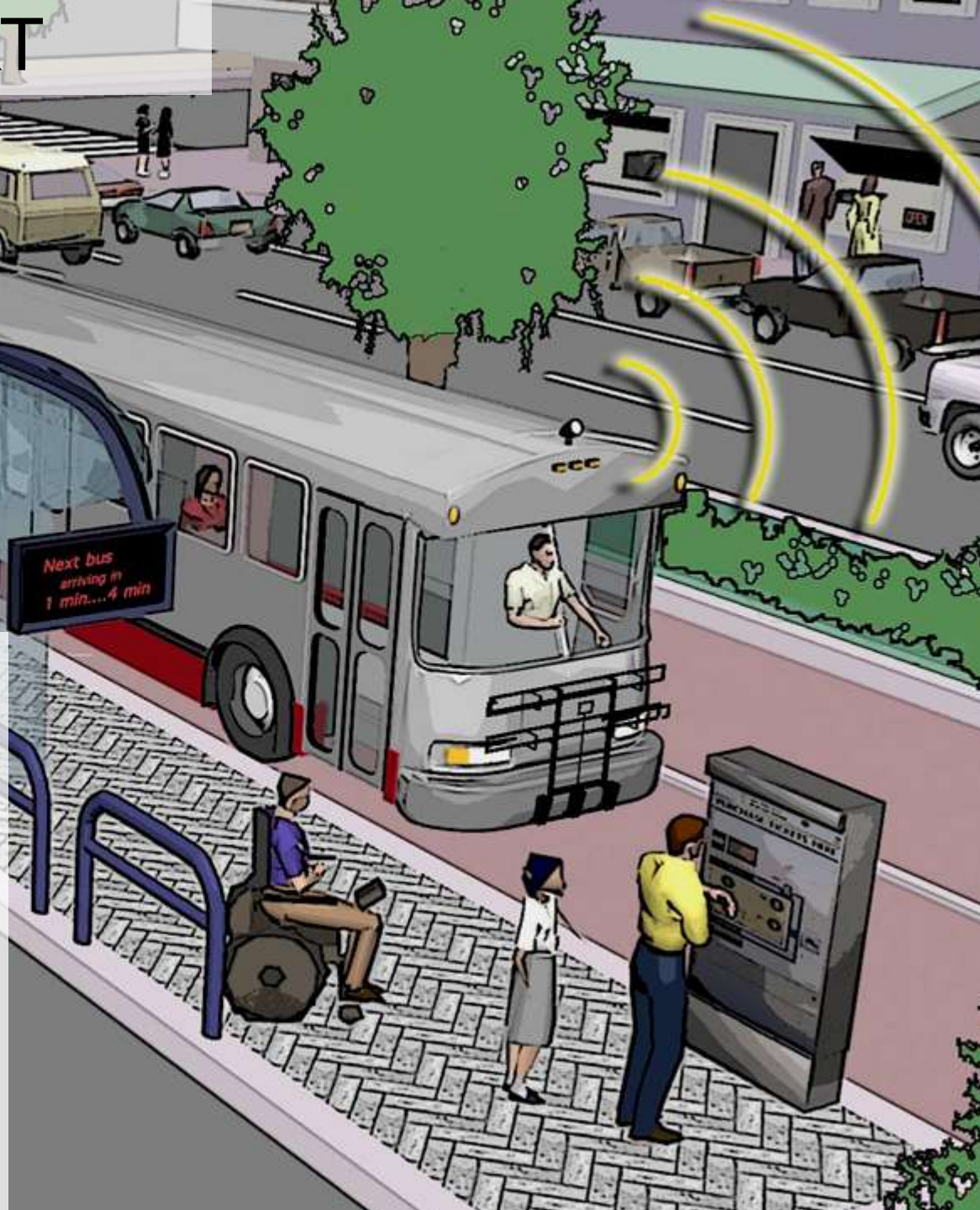
Project Purpose and Need

- 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



FULL-FEATURED BRT

- Dedicated transit lane
- Transit signal priority
- Low-floor, all-door boarding
- High-quality stops
- Real-time information
- Pedestrian amenities

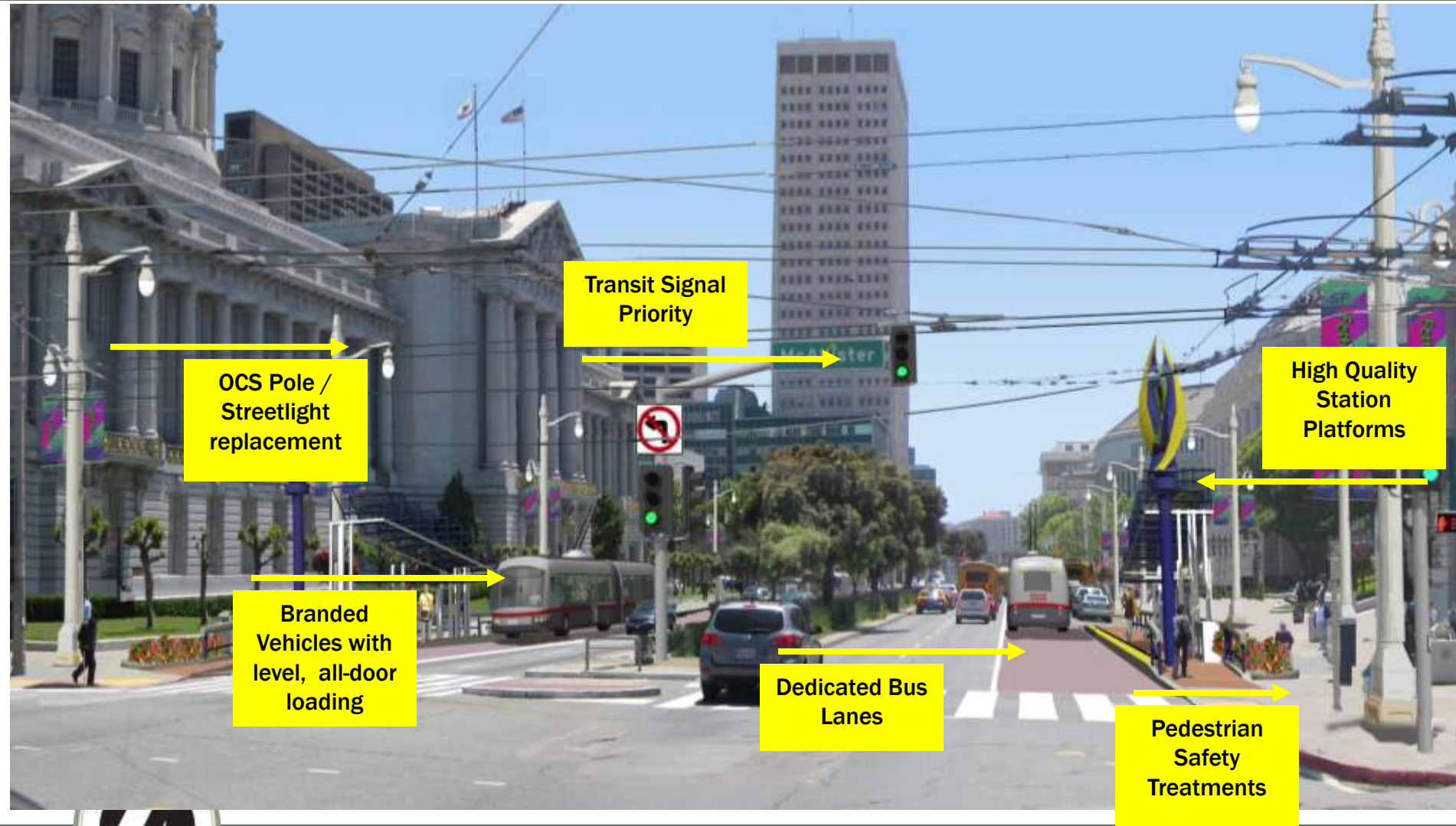


Alternatives Assessed in Draft EIS/EIR

- **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



Alternative 3 – Center BRT Lanes with Right Side Loading / Dual Medians

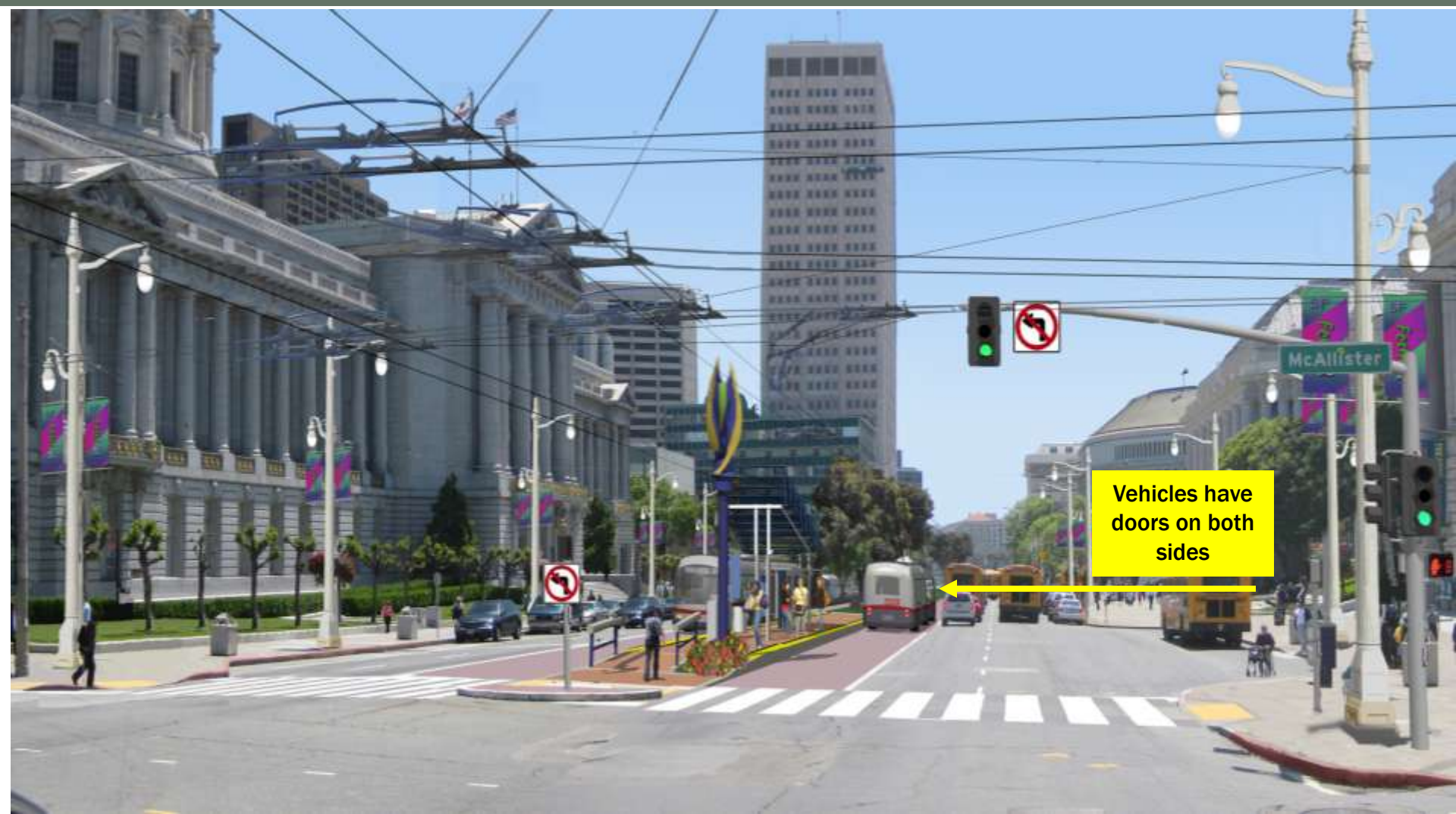


Fully Separated Bus Lanes

Median Reconfigured

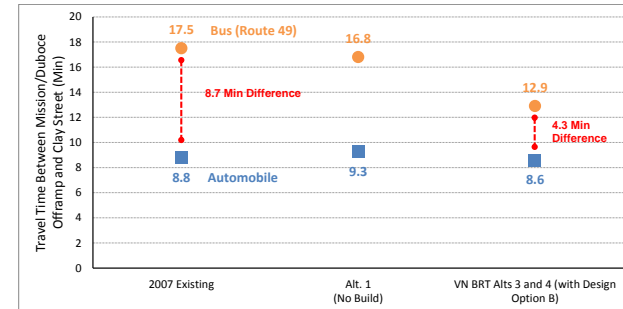


Alternative 4 – Center BRT Lanes with Left Side Loading / Center Median



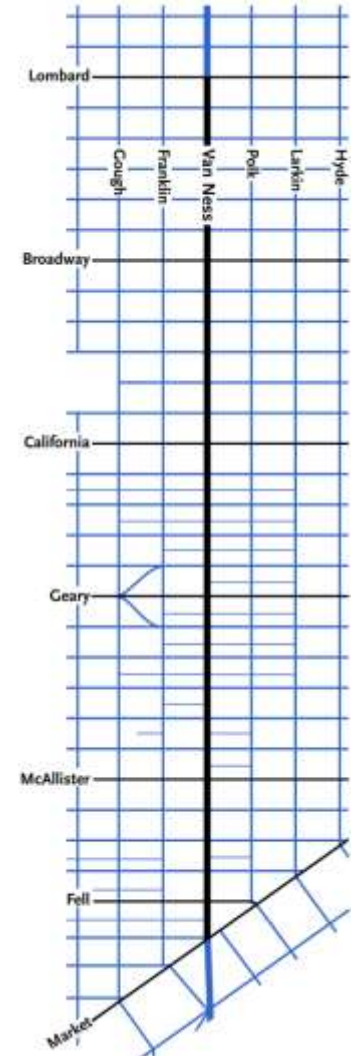
Findings: Van Ness Avenue BRT Benefits

- 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

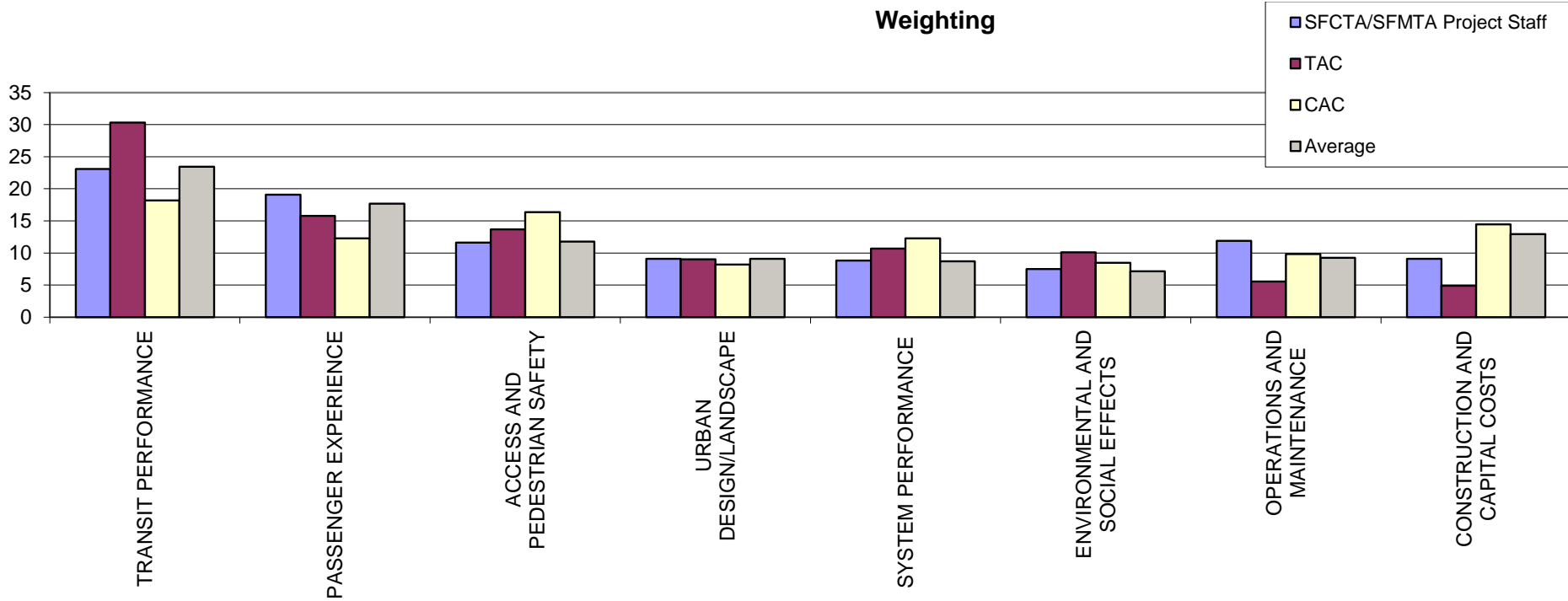


Alternatives Analysis in the EIS/EIR

- 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

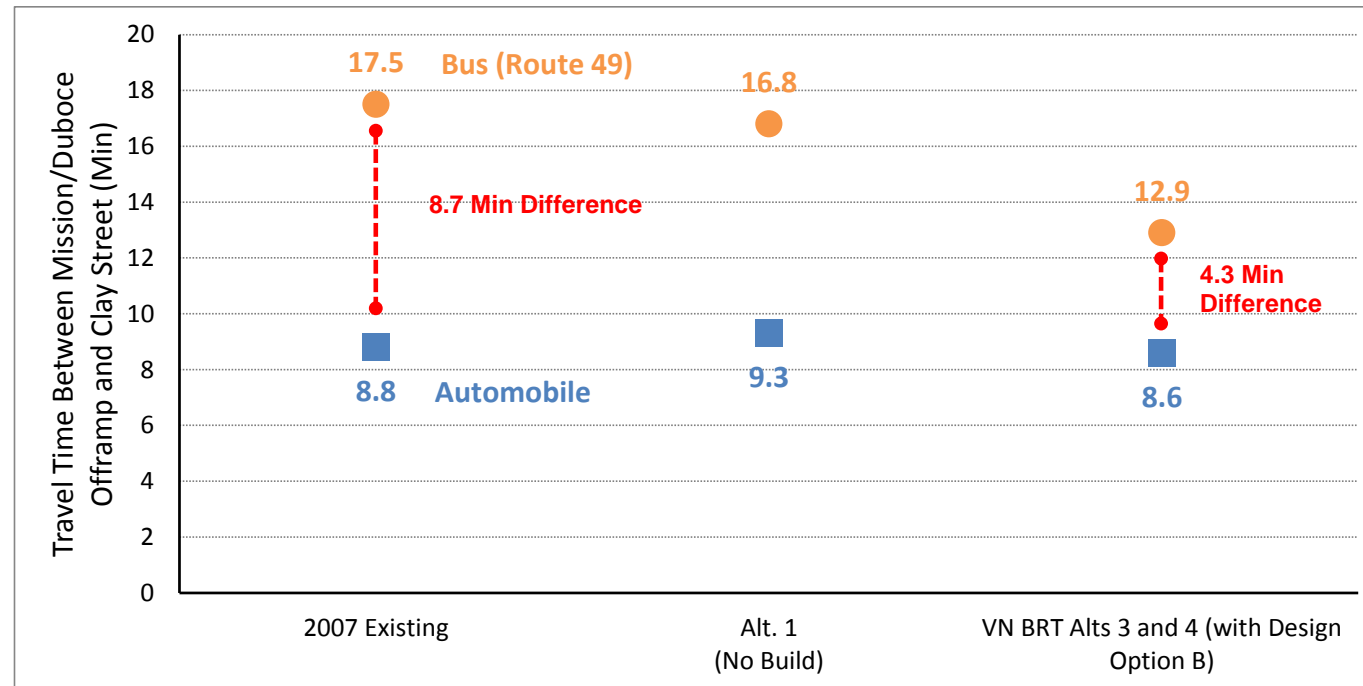


Stakeholders Prioritize Transit Performance



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



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LPA Recommendation: Center-Running BRT with Right Side Loading/Center Median and Limited Left Turns

● Benefits

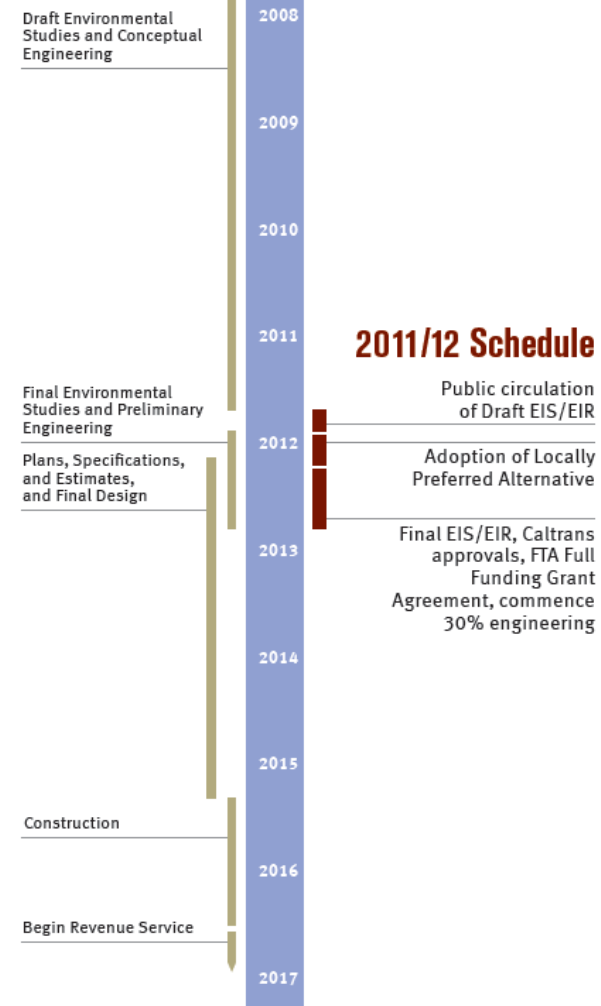
- Ranks first or second (or tied for first or second) on 8 out of 10 key evaluation criteria that differentiate the alternatives
 - Best travel time, reliability, ridership, etc.
- Ability to operate standard right door buses (trolley and mc)
- Operational flexibility (allows passing)
- Maintains majority 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

Project Schedule



Thank You!

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