Transit Effectiveness Project: Travel Time Reduction Proposal
Corridor: N Judah (Carl/Cole to Judah/La Playa) and Nx Express Bus

Transit Effectiveness Project

The Transit Effectiveness Project is an on-going program that aims to improve service reliability, reduce travel time on transit, and improve customer experiences and service efficiency. As part of the Muni Rapid vision, and in conjunction with other on-going SFMTA programs, the TEP will be the blueprint for making Muni a great transportation choice for our residents and visitors.

Environmental Impact Report

The TEP proposes to restructure routes, change service levels and make roadway and bus stop changes to improve travel time and reliability. A notice of preparation was issued on November 9, 2011 and is available on the Planning Department's website at http://tepeir.sfplanning.org. Scoping meetings were held on December 6 and December 7, 2011. Next steps for the TEP EIR are an anticipated publication of an Initial Study in summer 2012.

Corridor Overview

Muni's N Judah rail line carries more than 40,000 daily customers on an average weekday. Approximately 20,000 of these customers board at stops located within the proposed travel time reduction project study area, located along 3.4 miles between Carl and Cole and Judah and Great Highway. Within the study area, the N Judah operates at an average speed of 8 miles per hour during peak periods. There are 21 transit stops in each direction. The average transit stop spacing between Carl and Cole and Judah and Great Highway is 850 feet, with stops located at every two to three intersections.

The main causes of delay to the N Judah include long passenger boarding and alighting times, a high number of stop signs along the route and areas of closely spaced transit stops.

Travel Time Reduction Proposal Overview

In order to reduce transit travel times and improve reliability, the SFMTA proposes a toolkit of measures within the study area. These treatments would benefit the N Judah and the Nx Judah Express Bus.

- **Replacing all-way STOP-controlled intersections with traffic signals or traffic calming measures at eight intersections.** Currently the N Judah is delayed by having to come to a complete stop at multiple intersections with stop signs. These stop signs could be replaced with traffic signals equipped with transit signal priority. This would reduce delay at intersections because the signals could be programmed to hold green lights for approaching trains. Alternatively, traffic calming measures such as corner bulbs, raised crosswalks, and sidewalk extensions could be installed to provide improved pedestrian safety by reducing the roadway crossing distance, making pedestrians waiting to cross the street more visible to approaching motorists and reducing the speed of motorists turning from cross streets. Traffic calming measures would have a similar effect of reducing intersection delays for trains, by eliminating the need for the train to come to a complete stop.

- **Optimizing transit stop locations at four intersections.** Relocating transit stops from the near-side to the far-side of intersections at existing traffic signals would allow streetcars to take advantage of planned transit signal priority improvements. At all-way STOP-controlled intersections, transit stops would be relocated from the far-side of the intersection to the near-side, eliminating the need for streetcars to stop once for the STOP sign and again for customers to board the train. One of the relocated transit stops at Sunset and Judah would require new

boarding islands and extend into the intersections of 36th Avenue and 37th Avenue. The boarding island would block through traffic and drivers would only be allowed to turn right at these intersections.

- **Increasing transit stop spacing from two to three blocks to three to four blocks.** Currently the N Judah stops every two to three blocks within the study area. This proposal moves toward a three to four block spacing for most stops. By stopping fewer times, the train takes less time to move through the corridor.

- **Adding transit bulbs at six intersections.** Transit bulbs are sidewalk extensions alongside transit stops that allow passengers to get on and off without having to walk between parked cars and cross a lane of traffic. Transit bulbs enhance the ability of streetcars to take advantage of all-door boarding. Transit bulbs provide space for transit shelters and other customer amenities. Transit bulbs also improve pedestrian safety by reducing the roadway crossing distance, making pedestrians waiting to cross the street more visible to approaching motorists, and reducing the speed of motorists turning from cross streets.

- **Extending boarding islands at 13 intersections.** Boarding islands are dedicated waiting spaces for customers located between travel lanes. Extending existing boarding islands would cover the full length of two-car trains and allow for passengers to be picked up and dropped off without having to walk between parked cars and cross a lane of traffic when the train arrives.

Summary

Together, the proposed changes are anticipated to reduce the travel time of the N Judah rail service within the study area about 10 minutes (19% reduction), resulting in an average operating speed of 9.5 miles per hour and improving service reliability. The travel time savings would also reduce operating costs on the line and allow for service to be cost effectively increased.

Next Steps and More Information

At a series of community workshops and online at www.sfmta.com/tep, the SFMTA will present proposals for eight heavily-used Rapid bus routes and rail lines, including the N Judah, to improve reliability and travel time for transit customers. These workshops will provide an opportunity to hear more about the Rapid corridor proposals, discuss proposal elements, give feedback to Muni staff, and learn more about programs to help improve Muni.

To learn more about the workshops or to view the proposals online, visit the SFMTA website at www.sfmta.com/tep To comment, call 311, visit www.sf311.org, or send a tweet to @MuniRapid.

These proposals represent the first step towards reducing delays on Muni and community feedback is vital to helping shape the final proposals.