

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 2:05 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: January 22-23, 2018 Media Clips



***VTA Daily News Coverage for Monday, January 22 –
Tuesday, January 23, 2018***

1. [Editorial: VTA and BART should commit to single tunnel in downtown San Jose \(Mercury News, East Bay Times\)](#)
2. [Immigrant Relations Office Launches Campaign To Promote Resources \(San Francisco Chronicle/Bay City News\)](#)
3. [Immigrant relations office launches campaign to promote resources in Santa Clara Co. \(KTVU Ch. 2\)](#)
4. [Immigration Campaign on Buses \(ABC7 News\)](#)
5. [New BART Train Cars \(KTVU Ch. 2\)](#)
6. [As bridge toll hike vote looms, commuters reach for the brakes \(sf.curbed.com\)](#)
7. [Gas Tax repeal headed for ballot as money about to flow for road repairs \(San Diego Tribune\)](#)
8. [Rival Bids To Overturn California Gas Tax Join Forces \(Capital Public Radio\)](#)
9. [9 U.S. transportation projects to watch in 2018 \(Curbed.com\) \(BART SV not mentioned\)](#)

Editorial: VTA and BART should commit to single tunnel in downtown San Jose (Mercury News, East Bay Times)

In the 46 years since its first train rolled, BART has been a pioneer of technical innovation.

It had the first automatic train control system when it opened. It had the first automatic fare vending. The Transbay Tube was the first submerged tube for transit.

As the line extends from Berryessa through downtown San Jose, BART should embrace another first in the nation: A single-bore tunnel, with trains entering stations one above the other instead of side by side under Santa Clara Street.

The Valley Transportation Authority is all in. So is the city of San Jose — its professional staff as well as Mayor Sam Liccardo and the city council.

But to qualify for federal funding, BART has to agree. While the VTA will build the tunnel, as it did the tracks to Berryessa, and will pay maintenance and operating costs, BART employees will operate the line. And BART is dubious of the single tunnel. It's more comfortable to keep it the same as the rest of the system.

We're confident BART's staff and board will rise to the occasion. This is the future of tunneling technology, and BART, for all its flaws in maintenance and other areas, has not shied away from innovation.

The large, single bore will go deeper than side-by-side tunnels, avoiding utilities. The technology has been used for years for water delivery and such, but only recently has it been scaled to handle transit. It might be less expensive. It will definitely take less time to build.

The main plus for San Jose is that the deeper single tunnel would avoid massive disruption of downtown during five years of construction — no small advantage for a blighted urban core just now catching a wave of market demand.

The old cut-and-cover construction for stations would mean having three blocks of the city's main east-west street, Santa Clara, from Market to Third, fully ripped up for the greater part of five years. The single-tunnel stations are smaller. Vents and such would have to be installed, but it would be no different from routine utility repairs in the street.

BART dismisses the five-year disruption as short-term. But that's like insisting on using a big incision to remove your gall bladder instead of having laparoscopic surgery. You can survive both, but why opt for more pain?

BART's concerns include safety of evacuation in case of a disaster, but VTA engineers are confident these can be answered. The other major concern is that the system would require more training for operators. No question there, but that shouldn't be an impediment to better technology.

Barcelona is the world pioneer for single-tunnel systems. It works great. And it's safe. Other American cities are looking at single-bore for future construction, after years of "big dig" projects going bad. BART surely will look at it for its next transbay tube.

It can go first in Silicon Valley, where the world looks to innovation.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[Immigrant Relations Office Launches Campaign To Promote Resources \(San Francisco Chronicle/Bay City News\)](#)

The County of Santa Clara's Office of Immigrant Relations launched a coordinated media campaign this morning to emphasize the county's support and resources for immigrants living in the county.

County officials gathered with the consuls general from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua in front of a Valley Transportation Authority bus with one of the campaign ads to make remarks on how and why the campaign was created.

The campaign, advertised with posters that read, "One county, one future," is designed to focus on "the value of differences in the community," County Executive Jeffrey Smith **said**.

The campaign will primarily highlight public health and social services, though the county offers many more resources available to the immigrant community, according to Smith.

This campaign comes in the wake of recent U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids in four Bay Area counties on Jan. 10, when 21 people were arrested and ordered to appear in immigration court. The event was a follow-up operation that stemmed from a 2013 investigation, according to a statement from ICE.

County Office of Immigrant Relations Director Maria Love also said that the county works to make sure that immigrants arrested by ICE have access to legal defense, including through a \$3.5 million investment in community organizations that offer free legal services.

The Rapid Response Network of Santa Clara County and the County Office of Immigration Relations have been working together, Love said. The RRN has a 24/7 hotline with attorneys standing by in the event that someone wants to report a raid happening or has had a family member picked up by ICE during a raid.

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office had two representatives present in solidarity. Smith said that they are "liberal" and honor the sanctuary county rules, meaning that they do not report undocumented immigrants to ICE and keep their information confidential. They will not be following federal threats or ICE threats in the effort to deport undocumented residents, Smith said.

Smith described Love, an immigrant from El Salvador, as "the mastermind of the campaign." Love said that the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors tasked her department with creating the campaign. According to Smith, about 100 county employees worked on it.

Love said that her department talked to immigrants that live in Santa Clara County to determine what messages were most important.

Love said that the campaign's objective is for the community to know that no matter what happens at the federal level, the county will support both documented and undocumented immigrants by giving them the resources that they need.

"Our immigrants are good people, the vast majority of them work hard, are documented and contribute significantly to our community," Smith said. "The people who are not documented are only undocumented because we have a very abhorrent and very ineffective immigration policy nationwide."

Deputy county executive David Campos highlighted that several employees who worked on the campaign are "Dreamers themselves," individuals who entered the country as minors and were largely raised in the U.S.

Santa Clara County Chief Operating Officer Miguel Marquez echoed Smith's statement, telling his own sibling's stories of success as "one of the true stories of immigrants."

Marquez spoke of the two nationwide injunctions against President Trump's executive orders, one that protects sanctuary jurisdictions nationwide and one that allows "Dreamers" to renew their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status that allowed them to reside in the United States.

According to Marquez, county officials are doing all they can for each resident of the county, but especially for those foreign-born residents that make up more than 70 percent of the Silicon Valley workforce.

All of the consul generals spoke in accord with county officials and the significance of the campaign in helping the immigrant community.

"We are all people, no matter our color, no matter our race and no matter our immigration status," said Consul General of El Salvador Ana Valenzuela.

Consul General of Guatemala Patricia Lavagnino called the campaign "brave."

"This is a campaign to say, 'You are not you, and we are not we. We are all. Immigrants are all,'" Lavagnino said.

The campaign has a budget of about \$40,000, and can be expanded as needed, according to Smith.

"Our major issue is trying to get the message out to our clients," Smith said. "We are here to provide services for people who are typically underserved."

The campaign ads will be posted at buses and bus stops with the reasoning that the targeted community needs those transportation services to get to the community resources the county can provide.

They will also be in government buildings and advertised in a mail campaign, Smith said.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[Immigrant relations office launches campaign to promote resources in Santa Clara Co. \(KTVU Ch. 2\)](#)

The County of Santa Clara's Office of Immigrant Relations launched a coordinated media campaign this morning to emphasize the county's support and resources for immigrants living in the county.

County officials gathered with the consuls general from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua in front of a Valley Transportation Authority bus with one of the campaign ads to make remarks on how and why the campaign was created.

The campaign, advertised with posters that read, "One county, one future," is designed to focus on "the value of differences in the community," County Executive Jeffrey Smith said.

The campaign will primarily highlight public health and social services, though the county offers many more resources available to the immigrant community, according to Smith.

This campaign comes in the wake of recent U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids in four Bay Area counties on Jan. 10, when 21 people were arrested and ordered to appear in immigration court. The event was a follow-up operation that stemmed from a 2013 investigation, according to a statement from ICE.

County Office of Immigrant Relations Director Maria Love also said that the county works to make sure that immigrants arrested by ICE have access to legal defense, including through a \$3.5 million investment in community organizations that offer free legal services.

The Rapid Response Network of Santa Clara County and the County Office of Immigration Relations have been working together, Love said. The RRN has a 24/7 hotline with attorneys standing by in the event that someone wants to report a raid happening or has had a family member picked up by ICE during a raid.

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office had two representatives present in solidarity. Smith said that they are "liberal" and honor the sanctuary county rules, meaning that they do not report undocumented immigrants to ICE and keep their information confidential. They will not be following federal threats or ICE threats in the effort to deport undocumented residents, Smith said.

Smith described Love, an immigrant from El Salvador, as "the mastermind of the campaign." Love said that the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors tasked her department with creating the campaign. According to Smith, about 100 county employees worked on it.

Love said that her department talked to immigrants that live in Santa Clara County to determine what messages were most important.

Love said that the campaign's objective is for the community to know that no matter what happens at the federal level, the county will support both documented and undocumented immigrants by giving them the resources that they need.

"Our immigrants are good people, the vast majority of them work hard, are documented and contribute significantly to our community," Smith said. "The people who are not documented are only undocumented because we have a very abhorrent and very ineffective immigration policy nationwide."

Deputy county executive David Campos highlighted that several employees who worked on the campaign are "Dreamers themselves," individuals who entered the country as minors and were largely raised in the U.S.

Santa Clara County Chief Operating Officer Miguel Marquez echoed Smith's statement, telling his own sibling's stories of success as "one of the true stories of immigrants."

Marquez spoke of the two nationwide injunctions against President Trump's executive orders, one that protects sanctuary jurisdictions nationwide and one that allows "Dreamers" to renew their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status that allowed them to reside in the United States.

According to Marquez, county officials are doing all they can for each resident of the county, but especially for those foreign-born residents that make up more than 70 percent of the Silicon Valley workforce.

All of the consul generals spoke in accord with county officials and the significance of the campaign in helping the immigrant community.

"We are all people, no matter our color, no matter our race and no matter our immigration status," said Consul General of El Salvador Ana Valenzuela.

Consul General of Guatemala Patricia Lavagnino called the campaign "brave."

"This is a campaign to say, 'You are not you, and we are not we. We are all. Immigrants are all,'" Lavagnino said.

The campaign has a budget of about \$40,000, and can be expanded as needed, according to Smith.

"Our major issue is trying to get the message out to our clients," Smith said. "We are here to provide services for people who are typically underserved."

The campaign ads will be posted at buses and bus stops with the reasoning that the targeted community needs those transportation services to get to the community resources the county can provide.

They will also be in government buildings and advertised in a mail campaign, Smith said.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[Immigration Campaign on Buses \(ABC7 News\)](#)

(Link to video)

[New BART Train Cars \(KTVU Ch. 2\)](#)

(Link to video)

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[As bridge toll hike vote looms, commuters reach for the brakes \(sf.curbed.com\)](#)

On January 24, the [Bay Area Toll Authority](#) (BATA)—a 21-member body with authority over seven key Bay Area bridge crossings, including the Bay Bridge but not the Golden Gate Bridge—will vote on whether or not to support \$3 toll hikes to raise money for transit funding, leaving some commuters already grinding their gears.

The BATA vote comes after the lower toll Oversight Committee voted unanimously in favor of the proposal, which would push tolls up gradually, implementing the final price of \$9 for the Bay Bridge and \$8 for half a dozen other regional bridges by 2025.

But voters would [get the final say](#) on the matter via a ballot measure (Regional Measure 3) in the June election.

San Jose State Senator Jim Beall masterminded the transit plan, which, in part, could raise more than \$4.5 billion annually in transit funds:

Regional Measure 3 gives voters the opportunity to determine whether they want to invest in a comprehensive regional plan to cut commute times. If passed, RM3 projects will also create jobs in transit and construction, increase transit ridership, provide matching funds for state and federal grants, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all with the goal of reducing congestion.

Beall's bill [passed the State Senate](#) on a 27-13 vote in October. Governor Jerry Brown signed it shortly thereafter. If BATA buoys Beall's ambitions, the last obstacle will be the voters themselves.

However, commuter Rebecca Gerber [started a petition](#) protesting the potential price hike this week, netting over 20,000 signatures in three days (although fewer than 5,200 of the signers are actually from California).

“As housing costs skyrocket across the Bay Area, many people are being forced to move to more affordable areas and accept longer commutes to work,” writes Gerber. “These toll hikes [...] would make driving unaffordable too.”

“I don’t believe BART or the South Bay should receive funds from our bridges,” one signature reads, [echoing comments](#) from Concord Assemblymember Tim Grayson, who opposed the Beall bill in the legislature for (in his view) enriching some commuters’ infrastructure at the expense of others’.

(Grayson failed to block the toll plan in the assembly, which passed it 43-31.)

“When these bridges were built, the tolls were supposed to end when the construction cost was paid off,” another signer complains, adding “I learned this from my mother decades ago.”

Despite petitioner’s gripes, they may have an uphill battle; [SF Weekly reports](#) that in a 2017 poll, 60 percent of likely voters said they’d approve the toll hike once they found out which projects the money would finance, including finally extending BART to San Jose.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[Gas Tax repeal headed for ballot as money about to flow for road repairs \(San Diego Tribune\)](#)

People rolled through Rock Auto in El Cajon in droves this month to sign a petition to overturn Gov. Jerry Brown’s so-called gas tax. Volunteers wielding clipboards in red t-shirts reading “Stop the Gas Tax” harvested names from drivers eager to support the cause.

“You have to stop by if you haven’t signed yet and be part of this citizens’ rebellion against Sacramento mismanagement, high taxes, waste, thuggery, fraud and abuse,” Carl DeMaio boomed over a microphone, broadcasting live from the scene on radio station KOGO 600-AM.

For months, the former San Diego City Council member turned conservative talk radio host has held such signature drives all over Southern California. And people have responded enthusiastically, such as longtime Chula Vista resident Mimi January.

“It’s ridiculous,” said the 74-year-old from the window of her vehicle at the event in El Cajon. “Once again, the Democrat Party doesn’t understand that we’re sick of it. We’re sick and tired of being taxed to death.”

Supporters of Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act, have celebrated the legislation as a huge win for the state.

The increase in fuel and vehicle registration fees is projected to raise roughly \$5.4 billion a year for everything from highways to roads to bridges to public transit to sidewalks and gutters.

“This is a real and focused investment in our transportation and roadway infrastructure locally and across the state, for the first time in decades,” said Sen. [Toni Atkins](#), D-San Diego, who replaces Kevin de León in March as state Senate President Pro Tem. “Residents will soon see real, tangible benefits from their investment.”

As millions of dollars from the tax increases are set to start pouring into city and county coffers at the end of January, DeMaio has nearly gathered the 585,407 signatures needed to qualify the initiative for the November ballot.

If successful, the measure would roll back the hike on fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees, as well as require a public vote for any such future increase.

“We do need to fix the roads,” he told the San Diego Union-Tribune at the signature drive, “which is why I’m wondering why the politicians keep diverting the money away from road projects. If they wanted to fix the roads, they wouldn’t be stealing the existing gas tax.”

The idea that elected officials in Sacramento have misappropriated money from fuel taxes has become the primary rallying cry of opponents of the tax increases, including El Cajon Mayor Bill Wells.

“It’s a misnomer to believe that the state of California is going to funnel this money back into fixing roads,” Wells said at the event. “They don’t have a good track record of doing such a thing. I honestly believe this money is just going to be sucked into the black hole of the California pension system.”

So what’s the legislature’s track record on siphoning money away from road and highway projects?

It’s true that elected officials in Sacramento diverted money from several transportation accounts in the early 2000s. However, most of the money has since been paid back.

Under governors Gray Davis, a Democrat, and Arnold Schwarzenegger, a Republican, the state borrowed revenue from transportation accounts to patch holes in the general fund budget following the dot-com crash.

Roughly \$3.39 billion between 2001 and 2005 was borrowed from transportation accounts predominantly for highways and roads that were funded by fuel taxes, according to the California Department of Transportation.

All but \$706 million has been repaid, and officials have said that no transportation projects were significantly delayed, under the terms of the borrowing. Under SB 1, the remainder of the diverted money is required to be reimbursed from the state’s general fund within the next three years.

“There certainly were loans that were made, but they were repaid,” said Mitchell Weiss, chief deputy director with the California Transportation Commission. “Every city and county is going to see this in improvement in their roads. The scope of this pales in comparison to any small amount of diversion that occurred.”

Separately, about \$1.5 billion in weigh-in fees paid by truckers that go to the State Highway Account have been used to pay debt service on transportation bonds.

If the diversions were so insignificant, why then does California have a \$137-billion backlog in transportation maintenance?

Experts have said the shortfall is largely due to more fuel efficient vehicles and the existing tax not keeping pace with inflation. The state excise tax on a gallon of gasoline was last raised in 1994.

Voters are traditionally reluctant to embrace tax increases for infrastructure upkeep, as opposed to new capital projects, said Brian Taylor, professor of urban planning and director of the Institute for Transportation at the University of California Los Angeles.

“One of the things to understand about maintenance is that for very little money, a road can last a long time,” he said, but if you put it off for years that road starts to crack, water seeps in and undermines it. Then you have to spend at least 10 times as much to dig it all up and rebuild it.

“So keeping up with maintenance is an incredible way to save money,” he added, “but trying to tell a voter we want to raise your taxes so we can save you a lot of money in the long run is a really complicated idea to explain.”

So where is the money going?

Roughly half of the revenue from the increased gas taxes and vehicle registration fees, about \$26 billion in the next decade, would go to transportation infrastructure maintained by the state. That includes about \$1.8 billion a year for the highway system.

The other half of the money would be spent largely at the discretion of local municipalities on a variety of projects, predominantly related to road maintenance but also improvements to transit, bike and pedestrian infrastructure. About \$1.5 billion annually is projected for repairs to local streets and roads.

The state is also planning to roll out annually about \$25 million for freeway patrols for stranded motorists on the most heavily congested freeways, \$25 million in local planning grants and \$5 million in workforce training.

With the taxes and fee hikes, Californians will pay an extra \$10 a month on average, according to the state Department of Transportation. A legislative analysis found that drivers currently spend roughly \$700 a year fixing their cars due to poor roads.

Road Repair and Accountability Act by the numbers

- Gasoline tax increase: 12 cents per gallon*
- Total state excise tax on gasoline: 41.7 cents a gallon
- Diesel tax increase: 20 cents per gallon*
- Total state excise tax on diesel: 36 cents a gallon

- Transportation improvement fee: \$25 to \$175 a year, depending on the value of a vehicle**
- Road Improvement Fee on Zero Emission Vehicles: \$100 a year***

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[Rival Bids To Overturn California Gas Tax Join Forces](#) (Capital Public Radio)

The effort to overturn the fuel tax and vehicle fee increases in California's new transportation funding law appears to be gaining momentum.

The author of one proposed ballot measure is now backing a rival initiative that could be headed for the November election.

The first measure was authored by Orange County Assemblyman and Republican gubernatorial candidate Travis Allen. It would have repealed the transportation funding law – [SB 1](#) – word for word.

But it's been held up in a [legal battle over how voters would see it described on the ballot](#). Democratic Attorney General Xavier Becerra assigned it what Allen calls an unfair title and summary.

So Allen is now endorsing a different initiative backed by his GOP rival in the governor's race, San Diego businessman John Cox – who gleefully jabbed Allen in a recent debate on KPCC.

"Travis, welcome to the fight on getting rid of the gas tax!" Cox said. "Glad to have you on board, finally!"

Cox has joined the campaign for the second ballot measure and, as Allen was quick to point out a moment later in the debate, chipped in some money in exchange for being named campaign chairman.

"I'd like to say thank you very much to John Cox for writing a \$250,000 check to buy his way into the repeal the gas tax," Allen quipped.

Political shots aside, the second initiative does have some momentum. The campaign says it's gathered more than two-thirds of the 585,407 signatures needed to qualify.

[The measure](#) would require voter approval for any gas tax or vehicle fee increases.

"And then it applies that constitutional mandate retroactively to January 1st of 2017, effectively repealing this particular gas tax and requiring that any increase in those taxes go back to the

voters,” says Jon Coupal with the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, one of the initiative’s other backers.

But if the measure qualifies for the November ballot, it’s expected to face [strong opposition](#) – including from Gov. Jerry Brown, who said he thinks it can be beaten.

“If it does pass, it’ll be a decade at least before anyone thinks of providing the necessary money for roads and bridges,” Brown said as he presented his budget proposal earlier this month.

Backers of the second initiative have until mid-May to turn in their voter signatures, but they’ll likely do so earlier to ensure the signatures are verified in time for the measure to make the November ballot.

[\(Back to Top\)](#)

[9 U.S. transportation projects to watch in 2018 \(Curbed.com\) \(BART SV not mentioned\)](#)

2017 was a big year in transportation. Cities paved the way for [electric vehicles](#), embraced [alternative means of transit](#), and even launched [autonomous buses](#). At the same time, we discovered that U.S. kids are dying from [traffic fatalities](#) unnecessarily, watched a [major highway collapse](#), and learned more about why some cities are [dangerous for pedestrians](#).

What do we have to look forward to in 2018? The debut of more large transportation projects across the United States. From streetcars to transit hubs, cities are doubling down on trying to solve their transportation woes with new or expanded systems. To see just how widespread the upgrades will be, we’ve rounded up the most important projects scheduled to go live this year.

It’s worth noting that a few of these projects actually made a [similar list](#) we published last year. As any city manager will tell you, construction delays can wreak havoc on project timelines, but hopefully this will be the year that long-awaited projects like Denver’s G Line and Charlotte’s Blue Line finally open.

This list also deliberately leaves off the wide array of projects currently under construction but not slated to finish in 2018. The extensive light rail expansions in [Seattle](#) and [Los Angeles](#), [Boston’s Green Line](#) project, and [Washington, D.C.’s Purple Line](#) will all be included in future editions once openings are scheduled.

New streetcars in El Paso, Texas; Milwaukee; Oklahoma City; and St. Louis

Streetcars in [@AutoAlleyOKC](#) ? You know it! We're excited to be a part of this dynamic district!
[#ComingRailSoon](#) [#SeeOKC](#)

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

It's a big year ahead for streetcars in the U.S., with no fewer than four cities planning to open new lines. In El Paso, testing is underway on a [4.8-mile, 27-stop system](#) that will return vintage streetcars to the streets for the first time since 1974. Likewise, in Milwaukee, construction is almost finished on [2.3 miles of a phased streetcar expansion](#). Both systems should welcome riders by the end of the year.

In Oklahoma City, a [\\$130 million, 2.3-mile streetcar](#) will link important districts in downtown. A long-delayed—and [financially troubled](#)—new system in St. Louis, called the [Loop Trolley](#), could also open in 2018 if project managers can keep up the momentum.

Los Angeles: [A major thoroughfare gets a pedestrian-friendly makeover](#)

A rendering of the new Figueroa Corridor. *Courtesy of [MyFigueroa](#)*

[Almost a decade in the making](#), LA's highly anticipated bike- and pedestrian-friendly street improvements, known as [MyFigueroa](#), will finally open in spring 2018. Construction continued this past year to transform a 4-mile stretch of Figueroa Street between Seventh Street in Downtown's Financial District and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Exposition Park, with two offshoots along the way.

According to [Curbed LA](#), the makeover will include a protected bike lane, bike signals, a dedicated lane for express buses, bus platforms, and wider sidewalks designed for sitting and strolling. A similar makeover will add protected bike paths and other safety improvements to [Main and Spring streets](#).

Elsewhere in LA, keep an eye on the Purple Line extension and the Regional Connector still making progress underground, and get ready for the [Crenshaw/LAX train line](#) to debut in 2019.

Charlotte, North Carolina: [Light rail expansion](#)

The Blue Line light rail in Charlotte, North Carolina. *Courtesy of [Transportation.gov](#)*

Originally [slated](#) for an August 2017 opening, Charlotte's \$1.1 billion light rail extension will [now open](#) for passengers in March 2018. The Blue Line Extension will nearly double the size of the one-line system, adding 9.3 miles and 11 stations.

The expansion also includes 3,100 parking spaces and four park-and-ride facilities, transforming the commute from downtown to the University of North Carolina Charlotte campus into a pleasant 45-minute ride.

New York: [A new bridge over the Hudson](#)

The old and new Tappan Zee bridges western towers on a sunny day in the Hudson River. *Evan El-Amin/Shutterstock*

Located north of Manhattan near Tarrytown, New York, the replacement of the old Tappan Zee Bridge with the \$4 billion Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge is currently one of the largest public infrastructure projects under construction in the United States.

Work on the 3.1-mile bridge began in 2013, and the first new span started carrying eight lanes of two-way traffic in October 2017. The second Westchester-bound span should be finished this summer, as crews continue to slowly [dismantle](#) the old Tappan Zee Bridge.

When completed, the bridge will have eight traffic lanes, four breakdown and emergency lanes, and space for express buses, a bicycle path, and a pedestrian path with viewing areas.

San Francisco: [The Grand Central Station of the West](#)

The Salesforce Transit Center under construction in 2017. *Photo by [Patricia Chang](#) for [Curbed SF](#)*

The new [Salesforce Transit Center](#) in San Francisco isn't just a bus and train station, but a neighborhood hub that wants to serve as a centerpiece for the city. Sometimes called the "Grand Central Station of the West," it will boast a 5.4-acre park on the roof of the bus and rail station that's sure to become a focal point downtown.

The station is expected to [open later this year](#)—exactly when remains up in the air—but eventually Salesforce Transit Center will serve as a hub for all of the region's transportation agencies, accommodating more than 100,000 passengers each weekday.

Another project to watch—even though it's not slated to open until 2019—is the [Central Subway project](#) through Chinatown. And outside of the city, look for a 2018 opening of the 10-mile, \$2.3 billion [BART to Berryessa](#) (the first of a Silicon Valley extension of the regional BART system) and the 10-mile [eBART expansion](#) between Pittsburg/Bay Point and the city of Antioch.

Denver: New [commuter rail](#) to the suburbs

Testing of commuter rail trains resumes today along the forthcoming G Line between Union Station and Wheat Ridge. Train horns will be sounding. Please stay alert when in the area of these trains. Details at <http://bit.ly/2BVxwiA>

When will the long-delayed [G Line](#) open? That's the hot question around Denver, which has waited since the planned opening of 2016 for the 11-mile line to connect downtown's Union Station with the northwestern suburbs of Arvada and Wheat Ridge. The eight-station project has been stalled several times thanks to timing issues at crossing gates along the B line to Westminster and the recently opened Colorado A Line to the airport.

But 2018 could be the year for the G Line, as a judge recently gave approval for [testing to resume](#) on the problematic signaling systems. And the delayed light rail isn't slowing Denver down; Curbed just recently named the Mile High City one of our [nine real estate markets to watch](#).

Fort Worth, Texas: [A rail line to the airport](#)

A rendering of the new commuter-rail trains planned for Fort Worth. *Courtesy of [TEXRail](#)*

Scheduled to open in December 2018, North Texas's new [TEXRail](#) is a 27-mile commuter rail line that will extend from downtown Fort Worth to Grapevine and the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. The \$1 billion project will include eight stations, but it's facing a lot of [remaining construction](#) before it can open.

Still, whenever it's completed, this line will be a game changer for those wanting to avoid the traffic-plagued drive to the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

Connecticut: [High-speed rail from New Haven to Springfield](#)

New Meriden Station construction photos are available on the Program website! Visit <http://www.nhhsrail.com/gallery> to view the latest photos!

The new [CTrail Hartford Line](#), a \$750 million project, is working to expand rail service between New Haven, Connecticut, and Springfield, Massachusetts. The project is adding 27 miles of additional double track, five new interlockings, new crossings, and new stations at Wallingford, Meriden, and Berlin.

Overall, the goal is to connect Connecticut passengers with the existing Metro-North commuter rail and Amtrak Acela services on the New Haven Line to New York and on the Northeast Corridor to New London and Boston. Service is expected to begin in May 2018.

Investment in bus rapid transit across the U.S.

Concept art for Richmond's new Bus Rapid Transit. *Courtesy of [GRTC Transit System](#)*

While new rail lines or trolley systems make for great headlines, the national expansion of bus rapid transit (BRT) programs can't be overlooked.

In their purest form, BRT systems aim to have the capacity and speed of a metro or subway line with the lower costs of a bus system. That means dedicated bus lanes to avoid traffic jams, off-board fare collections, and level station platforms with multiple bus doors to reduce delays.

In 2018, you can expect to see the opening of several new BRT systems. In Boston, dedicated BRT service [will connect Chelsea with the Seaport District](#), while in San Diego, construction is underway on a [\\$128 million, 26-mile BRT system](#). Other potential 2018 BRT openings include systems in [Chicago](#); [Columbus, Ohio](#); [El Paso, Texas](#); [Fresno, California](#); [Grand Rapids, Michigan](#); [Richmond, Virginia](#); and the [Salt Lake](#) region.

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 3:13 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: January 24, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Wednesday, January 24, 2018

1. [Now in voters' hands: Proposed \\$3 toll hike moves to the ballot box \(Mercury News\)](#)
2. [VTA fund freeze not stalling projects - yet \(Los Altos Town Crier\)](#)
3. [Regional Measure 3 set for a vote, aims to relieve traffic gridlock \(The Richmond Standard\)](#)
4. [Vote to increase tolls on Bay Area bridges by \\$3 happening today \(ABC7 News\)](#)
5. [2 new BART railcars already sidelined for maintenance \(San Francisco Chronicle\)](#)
6. [Bi-partisan call for California high-speed rail audit underscores depth of project's troubles \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

Now in voters' hands: Proposed \$3 toll hike moves to the ballot box (Mercury News)

Voters will now be able to decide which is worse: unrelenting traffic or paying up to \$9 to cross a bridge in the bay.

The Bay Area Toll Authority on Wednesday voted unanimously to place a \$3 toll hike on the June 5 ballot in all nine counties. If voters opt for the increase, the tolls on all seven state-owned bridges, which does not include the Golden Gate, would be raised \$1 on Jan. 1, 2019, with subsequent \$1 increases in 2022 and 2025. That would bring tolls to \$8 on every bridge but the Bay Bridge, where tolls would rise to \$9 during peak commute hours.

The bill includes a 50 percent discount for drivers who cross more than one bridge in a day, and it requires the toll authority to establish an independent oversight committee. Once approved, the toll authority can index the tolls to inflation without having to come back to voters.

The toll hikes are expected to generate roughly \$4.45 billion over 25 years to help complete [35 specific projects](#) across the Bay Area. That includes money to help BART buy more train cars so the agency can increase capacity by running longer trains, extend Caltrain into downtown San Francisco, bring BART to San Jose's Diridon Station, add express lanes on major freeways, improve ferry service and fund pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure near transit stops, [among others](#).

Though the project doesn't fund everything Bay Area residents might hope for or want, it will move a number of needed projects closer to the finish line, said Joël Ramos, the regional planning director at TransForm, a transportation and social justice advocacy organization. Money from the toll increases will help upgrade the Clipper card system and potentially allow Bay Area transit agencies to offer income-based fare discounts, he said.

"It doesn't make our wildest transportation dreams come true for all the Bay Area," Ramos said, "but, it certainly touches on enough of them to get us excited."

But not everyone was in support of the project. David Schonbrunn of the transportation policy advocacy group, Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund (Transdef), urged the authority not to give any more funding or power to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which is in charge of distributing money collected from tolls.

He blasted the commission for what he called decades of policy failures that has led to more congestion on Bay Area roadways than ever before and claimed fewer people now take transit. In 1970, when the [commission was established](#), 11.3 percent of residents rode transit as their primary mode of commuting. In 2015, the last year for which data was available, [12 percent rode transit](#), according to the MTC.

"This is not an agency the public should be giving more money to," Schonbrunn said. "We will turn (Regional Measure 3) into a referendum on the job MTC is doing."

Earlier polls have shown support for the proposal. [A poll](#) conducted in July at the behest of the Bay Area Council and Silicon Valley Leadership Group, along with the transportation policy think-tank, SPUR, found 56 percent of the roughly 9,000 respondents said they would "probably" or "definitely" vote yes, compared to 43 percent who said they would "probably" or "definitely" vote no.

A [later poll](#) by the consulting firm EMC Research found similar results, with 54 percent of the more than 4,100 likely voters saying they would support the toll increases. However, that number increased significantly when respondents were asked about specific projects.

Surprisingly, here was no significant difference in support for the measure among respondents who said they pay a bridge toll nearly every day and those who said they rarely do.

[Back to Top](#)

[VTA fund freeze not stalling projects - yet](#) (Los Altos Town Crier)

A lawsuit holding money from the Measure B transportation bond in escrow continues to wind its way toward appeals court, more than six months after a judge's initial ruling found the bond measure valid.

The local projects awaiting its funding, however, are largely progressing through preliminary planning phases funded by other sources.

The Valley Transportation Authority's 30-year, half-cent countywide sales tax aims to improve transit, highways, expressways and transportation options. Voters approved an estimated \$6.3 billion in funds for the Santa Clara County transportation projects in 2016 by a margin of 72 percent.

A Saratoga resident filed suit last January to block the measure, arguing that its language was unacceptably vague.

A Superior Court judge sided with the VTA in July, but the case headed to appeal in August, where it remains in a queue. Sales-tax income that has been accruing since last year sits frozen pending that appeal.

"Unfortunately, the status of the lawsuit has not changed since September, and the approximate time frame is six to 12 months for it to be resolved in appeals court," said Brandi Childress, VTA public affairs manager. "There is not much that can be done with respect to moving the process forward."

"We cannot spend one penny of that money – it has to all go into escrow," explained Jeannie Bruins, the Los Altos City Councilwoman who serves on the VTA Board of Directors. But local projects set to ultimately benefit from those funds are all on planning timelines as long, or longer, than the anticipated appeals process.

Los Altos has already committed \$400,000 in design-phase funding to one high-profile project, working with Santa Clara County to amend the traffic that snarls Foothill Expressway between San Antonio Road and El Monte Avenue, and beyond, during the daily commute.

Adding an accessory lane on Foothill between San Antonio and El Monte would allow commuters heading toward Interstate 280 to proceed to their right turn without first merging into other traffic, easing flow for everyone involved.

At El Monte, the intersection's design also may receive revision to improve safety for pedestrians who currently must traverse multiple crosswalks to cross a single leg of the intersection due to a "pork chop" design. Lanes of traffic on El Monte from Cuesta Drive to Foothill, another notorious chokepoint, also may receive revision.

"There is no impact (on project progress) at this point in time unless we get to a design and we are shovel-ready before the appeals court has ruled," Bruins said, noting that the two may occur in close conjunction. "I believe the county was trying to do something by the summer."

GRADING CALTRAIN

The Caltrain grading project set to claim some Measure B funding has not proceeded anywhere close to the point where it will need the resources frozen in escrow. Individual cities are still studying how, and whether, to change their train-track crossings.

Many intersections in Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale feature Caltrain crossings “at grade,” where cars, pedestrians and bikes directly traverse the tracks.

“You don’t want the train track to be a roller coaster. There is a coordinating, planning phase that has to take place first,” Bruins explained. “That can be done without Measure B dollars – we have a little bit of latitude.”

The Mountain View City Council and city staff are studying closing car traffic at the Castro Street crossing and installing a pedestrian and bicycle undercrossing.

ROADS THROUGHOUT TOWN

Pothole repair stands as the only project immediately frozen by the Measure B lawsuit. The hundreds of thousands of dollars per year Los Altos anticipated for pavement improvements remain in escrow. The city’s Public Works Department master plan includes contingency plans to maintain roadway conditions, Bruins said, meaning that while the city can’t move ahead aggressively, it also hasn’t been dramatically set back.

STATE ROUTE 85

Because congestion on State Route 85 causes drivers to pop off onto Los Altos’ surface streets, the city has a vested interest in ongoing projects set to ultimately draw on Measure B money.

An ongoing study initiated by the VTA with pre-Measure B money is looking into adding another lane of traffic, and converting both it and the current HOV lane into express lanes. Other approaches to gridlock on 85 range from dedicated bus lanes to transit additions along the 85 corridor, Bruins said.

Noise abatement on 85 between I-280 and Highway 101 also would affect local households – another upcoming study will test different pavement treatments intended to reduce traffic sounds.

In addition to \$350 million earmarked for 85 improvements, Measure B included funding for a substantial BART expansion (\$1.5 billion), bicycle and pedestrian programs (\$250 million) and other countywide transit and roadway programs.

[Back to Top](#)

[Regional Measure 3 set for a vote, aims to relieve traffic gridlock \(The Richmond Standard\)](#)

Traffic congestion [rose by 80 percent](#) in the Bay Area since 2010, with westbound Interstate 80 between Hercules and San Francisco consistently ranking among the top three for hair-pulling gridlock.

As the booming Bay Area's population continues to rise, prompting construction of additional housing, the region's top urban planners are backing a proposal to gradually increase bridge tolls in order to realize long-needed traffic relief projects totaling about \$4.5 billion, including in the East Bay.

On Wednesday, the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) is set to vote on whether to place Regional Measure 3 on the June 2018 ballot. The measure would increase the tolls on seven bridges, excluding the Golden Gate Bridge, by \$3 gradually by 2025, in order to fund a specific list of congestion-relief projects.

The \$4.5 billion raised would fund transit infrastructure projects Bay Area-wide: Well over \$1 billion will be used toward improving highway infrastructure, focusing on rebuilding and improving the most heavily trafficked corridors and adding amenities such as paid express lanes on congested routes including Interstate 80 in Contra Costa County. Funds would also be used to improve truck access on Interstate 80 and Interstate 580 to reduce congestion caused by the large vehicles.

RM3 would also fund improvements to the westbound approach to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge and the I-580/Richmond Parkway interchange; add ferries for the under-construction Richmond Ferry terminal; set aside \$500 million for a fleet of next generation BART cars, and another \$50 million to begin looking at a second BART transbay crossing. About \$90 million would be spent on Capital Corridor passenger rail improvements aimed at reducing travel times and adding service frequencies.

The list of transit projects that would be funded by RM3 can be found [here](#).

RM3 has received support from the region's urban planning organizations: The Bay Area Council, Silicon Valley Leadership Group and San Francisco Bay Area Planning Urban Research (SPUR). The trio has formed a coalition to promote the measure.

"Bay Area commuters battling record traffic are desperate for big investments in our transportation system that will bring meaningful relief," said Jim Wunderman, president and CEO of the Bay Area Council. "Regional Measure 3 will invest \$4.5 billion to clear highway bottlenecks, expand and modernize BART, bus and ferry transit services, and dramatically improve connections between buses, trains and bikes."

[Back to Top](#)

[Vote to increase tolls on Bay Area bridges by \\$3 happening today \(ABC7 News\)](#)

The toll at the Bay Bridge could go up to \$9. Today, a vote will take place to put a measure on the June ballot that would raise the tolls on Bay Area bridges.

Earlier this month, the Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee voted in favor of the toll hike measure. But in order for it to go to voters, the Toll Authority Board needs to approve it. That decision is expected today.

If approved, tolls would increase by \$3 over a six year period. The first \$1 increase would take place next year. The next \$1 increase takes place in 2022, and another in 2025. The money raised would be used to fund highway projects across all nine Bay Area counties.

It also would go to funding transit including helping BART buy hundreds of rail cars to keep up with increasing ridership. The measure would affect the Bay Area's seven state owned bridges. The tolls at the Golden Gate Bridge would not be impacted because it is governed by a different authority.

[2 new BART railcars already sidelined for maintenance](#) (San Francisco Chronicle)

Two of [BART's new railcars](#) have been sidelined for maintenance in the first few days of service, transit officials said.

Ten new railcars, strung together into a single train, were approved to run last week by California's Public Utilities Commission after months of delays, glitches and [a failed inspection in November](#). The cars rolled out Jan. 19.

According to [report](#) by NBC Bay Area, one of the cars braked unexpectedly that night while running on the Richmond line, causing the train to stop.

BART spokeswoman Alicia Trost declined to identify why the two cars went in for repairs, but she said they're "in maintenance for different reasons." One car went in for service Friday and the other was taken in over the weekend, she said.

BART took one of its 10 new cars out of service Monday, just three days after debuting the new train, KTVU has confirmed. The new 10-car train will now operate as a 9-car train until further notice, according to a spokesperson. This comes after yea

Trost added that the maintenance was routine and nothing to cause concern.

"This is not unexpected," Trost said in a statement. "We had projected that about seven out of the 10 new cars would be available for passenger service on any given day for the initial period of passenger service due to several factors.

“Our train operators and technicians face a learning curve in terms of how to deal with minor maintenance issues. Bringing a car into the yard for detailed analysis after an issue occurs serves the long-term goal of having a safe and reliable new fleet.”

Some of the new cars are already due for preventative maintenance, such as lubrication and the changing of filters, because they’ve already logged more than 75,000 miles of testing during the many months when BART was preparing to launch the cars, Trost said.

“Bottom line: we are confident the fact that two cars are undergoing maintenance today does not extrapolate into a larger, systemic problem,” she said.

[Back to Top](#)

[Bi-partisan call for California high-speed rail audit underscores depth of project's troubles \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: VTA Board Secretary

Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 4:59 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors; VTA Advisory Committee Members

Subject: VTA News: VTA Gets FTA Approval to Extend Project Development Phase for BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension



Contact: Brandi
Childress

January 24, 2018

VTA Gets FTA Approval to Extend Project Development Phase for BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension

San Jose, Calif. – Today, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) received confirmation from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that a three-month extension has been granted to complete the project development phase of the Federal New Starts funding program for the six-mile BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension, from March to June 2018.

The request was made so that VTA could refine design considerations for the two different tunneling methods (single and twin-bore) being considered for the 5-mile subway construction into downtown San Jose.

“This nod from FTA affirms the importance of spending additional time to fully examine new innovations in the construction industry that can help us build a project that is safe and minimizes construction impacts to downtown San Jose residents and businesses,” says Sam Liccardo, VTA Board Chair and Mayor of San Jose.

A number of activities must be completed during the project development phase to refine a cost estimate and financial plan for the project by June 2018. This includes: clearly defining the project scope; identifying a funding plan which is necessary for the project to be included in the regional long-range transportation plan; and completing the environmental review process.

VTA is close to completing these requirements and is working alongside BART to select the tunnel option that meets both the needs of the operator (BART) and expectations of community stakeholders:

- The final state and federal environmental documents are being prepared for public circulation.
- Technical forums are being held between VTA and BART on the single and twin-bore design.
- The VTA Board of Directors is scheduled to approve the project with the final recommended project description in April 2018, with an anticipated Record of Decision from FTA following in early June 2018.

Phase II of VTA's BART Silicon Valley Project consists of four stations and a 5-mile tunnel through downtown San Jose, completing the 16-mile extension and vital transit solution to highly congested and constrained I-880 and I-680 corridors.

About VTA

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is an independent special district that provides sustainable, accessible, community-focused transportation options that are innovative, environmentally responsible, and promote the vitality of our region. VTA is responsible for bus, light rail and paratransit operations and also serves as the county's congestion management agency.

Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2018 5:09 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: January 25, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, January 25, 2018

1. [FTA Extension on BART \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)
2. [FTA delays deadline for BART Silicon Valley project \(Progressive Railroading\)](#)
3. [Project development extended for BART Silicon Valley extension \(RT&S\)](#)
4. [Feds give VTA and BART more time to resolve San Jose tunnel differences \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

[FTA Extension on BART \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)

[Link to video](#)

[Link to Video](#)

[Back to Top](#)

[FTA delays deadline for BART Silicon Valley project \(Progressive Railroading\)](#)

The [Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority](#) (VTA) received approval from the [Federal Transit Administration](#) (FTA) to extend the New Starts project development phase for the 6-mile [Bay Area Rapid Transit](#) extension to Silicon Valley.

The deadline to complete the phase has been moved from March to June. VTA made the request so it could refine design considerations for two tunneling methods for the 5-mile segment into downtown San Jose, California, agency officials said in a press release.

As part of the project development phase, VTA must define the project scope, identify a funding plan and complete the environmental review process. VTA also must refine a cost estimate and financial plan for the project.

The agency is "close" to wrapping up those requirements and is working with BART to

determine whether to use a single- or twin-bore tunnel design, VTA officials said. The FTA is expected to issue a record of decision on the project in early June.

"This nod from FTA affirms the importance of spending additional time to fully examine new innovations in the construction industry that can help us build a project that is safe and minimizes construction impacts to downtown San Jose residents and businesses," said VTA Chair and San Jose Mayor [Sam Liccardo](#) in a press release.

VTA and BART [in October 2017](#) kicked off a peer review of single- and twin-bore tunnel methods.

The 6-mile line into downtown San Jose marks the second phase of BART's 16-mile Silicon Valley Extension, which is being managed by VTA in cooperation with BART.

[Back to Top](#)

[Project development extended for BART Silicon Valley extension \(RT&S\)](#)

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has granted The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (SCVTA) a three-month extension to complete the Federal New Starts funding program's project development phase.

The extension applies to the six-mile BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension, from March to June 2018, SCVTA has announced.

SCVTA said it made the request to allow for time to refine design considerations for the two different tunneling methods—single and twin-bore—which were being considered for the five-mile subway construction project which reaches into downtown San Jose, Calif.

"This nod from FTA affirms the importance of spending additional time to fully examine new innovations in the construction industry that can help us build a project that is safe and minimizes construction impacts to downtown San Jose residents and businesses," said Sam Liccardo, SCVTA Board chair and mayor of San Jose.

The transportation authority said several activities must take place during the project development phase to establish a cost estimate and financial plan for the project by June 2018.

The work ahead entails defining the project scope; identifying a funding plan, which is required to allow the project to be included in the regional long-range transportation plan; and completing the environmental review process, officials said.

SCVTA said it has nearly completed the requirements and is collaborating with Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) to identify the tunnel option that meets the needs of both BART as the operator and the expectations of community stakeholders.

Currently, the final state and federal environmental documents are being prepared for public circulation, SCVTA said, adding that technical forums are also being held between SCVTA and BART on the single and twin-bore design.

SCVTA's Board of Directors is also set to approve the project with the final recommended project description in April 2018, with an anticipated Record of Decision from FTA expected to follow in June 2018.

Phase II of SCVTA's BART Silicon Valley Project consists of four stations and a five-mile tunnel that will travel through downtown San Jose, completing the 16-mile, officials said.

[Back to Top](#)

[Feds give VTA and BART more time to resolve San Jose tunnel differences \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

The Federal Transit Administration has granted the [Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority](#) a three-month extension to file environmental work for the BART subway in downtown San Jose.

The filing is now due in June for the project, which is planned to begin carrying passengers in 2026.

The VTA [asked for the extension last month](#) in hopes of coming to an agreement with BART over the tunneling method to be used for the subway, an issue that has pitted the two transit agencies against each other for months.

“This nod from FTA affirms the importance of spending additional time to fully examine new innovations in the construction industry that can help us build a project that is safe and minimizes construction impacts to downtown San Jose residents and businesses,” San Jose Mayor [Sam Liccardo](#), who also chairs the VTA board, said in a press release.

This is a rendering of the single-bore tunneling option that VTA may use for the San Jose BART extension. It shows how the two lines are stacked within a single 45-foot diameter tube allowing room within the tube for a station.

VTA and the city on one hand and BART on the other are torn over whether to use a single or a double-bore tunnel to construct the subway in San Jose. VTA and the city's preference is for the single-bore tunnel method, which can be constructed with minimal impact to Santa Clara Street, beneath which it will run, and downtown San Jose businesses. BART prefers the twin-bore subways it uses elsewhere in its system because it's familiar with that method's operational and safety peculiarities.

The VTA board is scheduled to decide on the tunnel design in April.

[Back to Top](#)

Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 3:49 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: January 26, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Friday, January 26, 2018

1. [VTA sets sights on three affordable housing projects in San Jose \(Mercury News\)](#)
2. [Development extended for BART Silicon Valley project \(Railway Age\)](#)
3. [Why this Silicon Valley Democrat wants to audit California high-speed rail and what he thinks it will find \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

Transit Oriented Joint Development (NBC Bay Area)

(Link to Video)

VTA sets sights on three affordable housing projects in San Jose (Mercury News)

Three plots of land owned by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority in San Jose are being eyed for potential mixed-use development.

The sites are:

- A triangular 5.5-acre park-and-ride lot along Highway 87 and Curtner Avenue near the Curtner light rail station.
- A 3.89-acre parking lot at Chynoweth and Pearl avenues near the Ohlone/Chynoweth train stop.
- A 7.59-acre park-and-ride lot along Blossom Hill Road at Canoas Creek, in south San Jose.

Although all three sites currently are considered underutilized, VTA officials say they could be revitalized as transit-friendly communities with affordable housing options.

No developers have proposed any projects yet and details on how many apartments or townhouses will be built are unknown. The Curtner site can accommodate up to 333 housing units and 18,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space while the Chynoweth property can take almost 180 homes and 2,500 square feet for retail use at ground level, according to documents on VTA's website.

Under the city's affordable housing policy adopted nearly two years ago, at least 20 percent of each site's housing stock would have to be priced within reach of households earning 60 percent or below of the area's average median income.

At several public meetings held in recent weeks to gauge reactions from the site's neighbors, many people said they were concerned about whether enough parking spaces would be available for transit riders if the existing lots are developed.

Ron Golem, the VTA's real estate and joint development deputy director, said in an interview the agency is considering a number of ideas such as diverting parking for shuttle bus commuters to "underutilized station parking lots" and using shared parking. Paid parking could also be an option, but VTA will see whether it can shift the parking demand to other locations.

It could be "easily three years between now and when actual construction might start happening" at any of the sites, Golem said. The next step will be for the VTA Board of Directors to authorize agency staff to request proposals from developers.

There is no set timeline at the moment, but Golem said "the earliest we might have a developer in hand is...probably late this year."

[Back to Top](#)

[Development extended for BART Silicon Valley project \(Railway Age\)](#)

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has granted The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (SCVTA) a three-month extension to complete the Federal New Starts funding program's project development phase.

The extension applies to the six-mile BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension, from March to June 2018, SCVTA has announced.

The authority said it made the request to allow for time to refine design considerations for the two different tunneling methods—single and twin-bore—which were being considered for the five-mile subway construction project which reaches into downtown San Jose, Calif.

"This nod from FTA affirms the importance of spending additional time to fully examine new innovations in the construction industry that can help us build a project that is safe and minimizes construction impacts to downtown San Jose residents and businesses," said Sam Liccardo, SCVTA Board chair and mayor of San Jose.

The transportation authority said several activities must take place during the project development phase to establish a cost estimate and financial plan for the project by June 2018.

The work ahead entails defining the project scope; identifying a funding plan, which is required to allow the project to be included in the regional long-range transportation plan; and completing the environmental review process, officials said.

The authority said it has nearly completed the requirements and is collaborating with Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) to identify the tunnel option that meets the needs of both BART as the operator and the expectations of community stakeholders.

Currently, the final state and federal environmental documents are being prepared for public circulation, SCVTA said, adding that technical forums are also being held between SCVTA and BART on the single and twin-bore design.

The authority's Board of Directors is also set to approve the project with the final recommended project description in April 2018, with an anticipated Record of Decision from FTA expected to follow in June 2018.

Phase II of SCVTA's BART Silicon Valley Project consists of four stations and a five-mile tunnel that will travel through downtown San Jose, completing the 16-mile, officials said.

[Back to Top](#)

[Why this Silicon Valley Democrat wants to audit California high-speed rail and what he thinks it will find \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

Sen. [Jim Beall](#)'s signature may be on the same [letter asking for an audit](#) of California's high-speed project as [Assemblymember Jim Patterson](#), but he made it clear in an interview with the Business Journal that he doesn't share his Republican colleague's distaste for the railroad.

Beall, a Campbell Democrat and chair of the Senate's transportation committee, spoke to the Business Journal on Wednesday about his request for an audit. What follows is a transcript of that conversation, edited for length and clarity.

Why did you sign onto a letter with Jim Patterson, a Republican critic of high-speed rail, who wrote a letter last fall asking for an audit but was turned down?

The letter was written by me, so I'm not signing onto someone else's request. They're signing onto mine.

You wrote the letter a few days before it was announced [there was a big increase in the cost estimate for construction in the San Joaquin Valley](#). Did you know about that in advance?

I did not have any inkling. Nobody gave me any information. But I've been working on the letter since late last year.

Why?

The thing that started my thinking about it was the fact that [former high-speed rail CEO] [Jeff Morales](#) left.

The last several months that started me thinking about was there's going to be a new executive director, so we needed to have a fresh set of eyes on the project. We just finished SB 1 [the 2017 measure Beall successfully sponsored to raise the gas tax to pay for road repairs and other transportation improvements] where we have an oversight inspector general, we have the state transportation commission doing more oversight.

It's way beyond what we've had in the past. Let's look at high-speed rail in the same way. We ought to have an ongoing set of eyes looking at it beyond the high-speed rail peer-review group. The system needs to have more scrutiny and more new ideas to expedite the project and complete the project and control the costs of the project.

Do you think your call for an audit, coupled with the cost increase, has reinforced a common perception that this project has already run off the rails?

That would be the exact opposite of what I hope happens. The audit process we have in California is not a political "gotcha" process. I have established audit programs at the county and at the city and I do not subscribe to the type of audits where you just play gotcha.

Audits are for some result — efficiencies, better government, better results — and that's what I look for in this case.

Why do you think the cost estimate in the San Joaquin Valley was so low?

In certain right of way acquisitions there's been a lot of political gamesmanship and legislation trying to increase the cost of the project. Part of the value increase has been because of purposeful delaying of the project to increase the price of the property. That's part of the numbers we see here. ... There's certain people that should bear some finger pointing, I'd say.

The auditor is going to be fair and point the finger at them. And they're going to say, here's what happened. These guys did all these tactics and had their lawyers and delayed the project. They held out long; they refused to negotiate the property acquisition. And I want to know about it. I want to know if that game's being played. ... We can give you names after the audit's done. We'll know exactly what's going on.

[Back to Top](#)

Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: VTA Board Secretary

Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 4:47 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors

Subject: VTA Correspondence: El Camino Real Rapid Transit PAB Goals/Tasks Completed; Posting of Caltrain Modernization Meeting Agendas

VTA Board of Directors:

We are forwarding you the following:

From	Topic
Jeannie Bruins, Chairperson El Camino Real Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board	El Camino Real Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board Goals/Tasks Completed
Roland Lebrun	Posting of Caltrain Modernization Meeting Agendas

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 N. First Street
San Jose, CA 95134
408.321.5680
board.secretary@vta.org



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the El Camino Real Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board
FROM: El Camino Real Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board Chair Jeannie Bruins
DATE: January 18, 2018
SUBJECT: El Camino Real Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board Goals/Tasks Completed

As Chair of the El Camino Real Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board (PAB) I want to express my appreciation and gratitude to you, the hard working PAB members, for your years of dedicated effort on behalf of transportation in our region.

At our last meeting the PAB requested that I, along with VTA Staff, present our proposed Pilot Project to cities along the El Camino corridor to gauge their support. Presentations to Mountain View, Los Altos and Sunnyvale have been completed. As a result of these meetings we have determined that implementation of the proposed pilot project is not feasible.

As you will recall in October 2015, the PAB decided to explore other project alternatives that were less infrastructure-intensive and did not include dedicated bus-only lanes. The PAB developed a new Right Lane street configuration concept wherein the right-most through-lane on each side of the street would be restricted to transit, high-occupancy vehicles (HOV), motorcycles and vehicles entering or exiting El Camino Real via right turn during weekday peak periods. The PAB recommended this concept be tested through the implementation of a pilot project. To ensure the validity of the pilot cities along the corridor needed to support the project and agree to enforce the HOV lane.

In April 2016, VTA Staff and I presented to the City of Mountain View at a study session. The council expressed support for improving transit on El Camino Real, but not by reducing lanes for automobiles. They would not support a pilot project in their jurisdiction. We presented to the City of Los Altos on December 12, 2017 and the City of Sunnyvale on December 19, 2017. The outcomes of both presentations were similar to those expressed by Mountain View. In addition, the city of Sunnyvale submitted a letter expressing that "Sunnyvale does not have a positive perspective on the El Camino Real BRT HOV type Pilot or the previously discussed dedicated lane" (see attached letter).

Without the support of these cities the pilot is not deemed feasible. The pilot along with the alternatives analyzed in the EIR are not compatible with city preferences, therefore the recommendation from the PAB to VTA's Board of Directors will be to not select a preferred alternative to move into the design and engineering project phase. With this the work plan of the committee is completed and there is no need for further meetings.

I am pleased to say that VTA is still interested, as are several of the cities, in supporting public transit improvements and continuing to improve the El Camino Real corridor. VTA plans to continue to work on traffic signal prioritization efforts in the various cities as well as improvements to bus shelters in the future.

On behalf of my fellow Board Members I wish to thank you for your time and effort on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeannie Bruins". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jeannie Bruins
Chairperson
El Camino Real Rapid Transit PAB



456 West Olive Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707

408-730-7473
TDD/TYY 408-730-7501
sunnyvale.ca.gov

December 22, 2017

SCVTA RECEIVED

Jeannie Bruins, Chairperson
Board of Directors
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
3331 N. First Street
San Jose, CA 95134

'18JAN3PM12:05

BOARD SECRETARY

RE: El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Glenn Hendricks
Mayor

Chairperson Bruins,

Gustav Larsson
Vice Mayor

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your presentation to the Sunnyvale City Council on December 19, 2017, and providing an update on VTA's activities as it relates to the El Camino Real BRT. The presentation contained thorough information of the proposed option: HOV type dedicated right hand lane.

Jim Griffith
Councilmember

Larry Klein
Councilmember

Nancy Smith
Councilmember

Upon consideration, the City has the following concerns:

Russ Melton
Councilmember

- Sunnyvale is for improvements to public transit along El Camino Real, but BRT in either form of lanes (Dedicated or HOV Type) is not a viable option for Sunnyvale. An HOV type solution comes with all the same issues as a dedicated lane, and it is unclear if they will yield the same driver behavior changes
- This is based on the Sunnyvale Council's previous vote officially opposing dedicated BRT lanes
- The high cost and difficulty to enforce a Part-time HOV type solution.
- The significant number of driveway access along El Camino
- Timing and length of a pilot and concerns with its ability to gather results
- The impact of diversion traffic to other streets

Michael S. Goldman
Councilmember

Given this, Sunnyvale does not have a positive perspective on the El Camino Real BRT HOV type Pilot or the previously discussed dedicated lane.

I want to reiterate Sunnyvale's support for Public Transit improvements on El Camino that increase ridership, improve travel time and improve the overall experience. These improvements could be, but not limited to:

- Signal prioritization
- Kiosks for tickets
- Bus shelter improvements
- Wi-Fi at bus stops

Once again, thank you for keeping Sunnyvale informed of pertinent VTA activities. We look forward to working with our agency partners. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Glenn Hendricks
Mayor

cc: Sunnyvale City Council
Kent Steffens, City Manager

From: Roland Lebrun
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2018 11:57 AM
To: calmod@caltrain.com; Caltrain Modernization; Tripousis, Ben@HSR
Cc: Caltrain Board; Caltrain CAC Secretary; Caltrain BAC; CHSRA Board; VTA Board Secretary; SFCTA Board Secretary
Subject: Calmod 1/25 meeting agenda

Dear Calmod & Mr. Tripousis,

Further to mail email of 11/29 (below), kindly be reminded of Government Code Section 54954.2 and comply at your earliest convenience:

54954.2.

(a) (1) **At least 72 hours before a regular meeting**, the legislative body of the local agency, or its designee, shall post an agenda containing a brief general description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting, including items to be discussed in closed session. A brief general description of an item generally need not exceed 20 words. The agenda shall specify the time and location of the regular meeting and **shall be posted in a location that is freely accessible to members of the public and on the local agency's Internet Web site**, if the local agency has one.

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=54954.2.](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=54954.2)

CC:
Caltrain Board of Directors
VTA Board of Directors
SFCTA Board of Directors
CHSRA Board of Directors
SFCTA CAC
Caltrain CAC
Caltrain BAC

From: Roland Lebrun
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:57 PM
To: calmod@caltrain.com; Caltrain Modernization
Cc: Tripousis, Ben@HSR
Subject: Re: Calmod 11/30 meeting

Dear Calmod,

Kindly be advised of Government Code Section 54954.2 and comply at your earliest convenience:

54954.2.

(a) (1) **At least 72 hours before a regular meeting**, the legislative body of the local agency, or its designee, shall post an agenda containing a brief general

description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting, including items to be discussed in closed session. A brief general description of an item generally need not exceed 20 words. The agenda shall specify the time and location of the regular meeting and **shall be posted in a location that is freely accessible to members of the public and on the local agency's Internet Web site**, if the local agency has one.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=54954.2.

[Law section - leginfo.legislature.ca.gov](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov)

leginfo.legislature.ca.gov

54954.2. (a) (1) At least 72 hours before a regular meeting, the legislative body of the local agency, or its designee, shall post an agenda containing a brief ...

From: Roland Lebrun
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 5:39 AM
To: calmod@caltrain.com; Caltrain Modernization
Subject: Calmod 11/30 meeting

Dear Calmod,

Please post tomorrow's agenda at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

Roland Lebrun.

From: VTA Board Secretary

Sent: Friday, January 26, 2018 5:25 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors

Subject: VTA Information: February 1, 2018, VTA Board of Directors Regular Meeting Agenda

VTA Board of Directors:

You may now access the **VTA Board of Directors Regular Meeting Agenda Packet** scheduled for February 1, 2018, on our website [here](#).

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street, Building B
San Jose, CA 95134-1927
Phone [408-321-5680](tel:408-321-5680)



Conserve paper. Think before you print.