

From: Board.Secretary
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2017 12:46 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: VTA Information: Ridership Memo for December 2016
Importance: High

VTA Board of Directors:

Attached is a memorandum from Chief Operating Officer Inez Evans regarding VTA ridership for December 2016.

Thank you.

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TO: VTA Board of Directors

THROUGH: Nuria I. Fernandez
General Manager

FROM: Inez Evans
Chief Operating Officer

DATE: Wednesday, February 1, 2017

SUBJECT: VTA Ridership for December 2016

December 2016 total monthly system ridership for bus and light rail was 3,029,837, a decrease of 9.6% over December 2015. December 2016 had 21 weekdays, one less than December 2015 (22 weekdays).

There were three Levi's events in December 2016 totaling 23,284 riders compared to 38,022 riders from three events in December 2015, a 39% decrease. Core bus routes showed a 6.0% decrease in average weekday bus ridership. The top 5 core routes and light rail stations that had the most declines on an average weekday are shown in the table below:

Average Weekday:

Route	December-2016	December-2015	Difference	Percent Change
66	5,219	5,848	(629)	-10.8%
77	1,943	2,553	(610)	-23.9%
23	6,720	7,297	(577)	-7.9%
22	11,505	12,050	(545)	-4.5%
522	5,406	5,877	(471)	-8.0%
Totals	30,793	33,625	(2,832)	-8.4%

Station	December-2016	December-2015	Difference	Percent Change
SANTA CLARA STATION	1,733	2,131	(398)	-18.7%
GREAT MALL STATION	1,119	1,352	(233)	-17.2%
CIVIC CENTER STATION	1,017	1,215	(198)	-16.3%
TASMAN STATION	1,702	1,892	(190)	-10.0%
GISH STATION	629	811	(182)	-22.4%
Totals	6,200	7,401	(1,201)	-16.2%



December 2016 total monthly ridership showed a 6.0% decrease over November 2016. Ridership change from November to December typically averages -6.0%. December 2016 had one less weekday contributing to the overall decrease.

The ridership data is in trend with fare revenues.

Ridership	December-2016	December-2015	Percent Change	November-2016	Percent Change
Bus	2,323,152	2,501,469	-7.1%	2,512,191	-7.5%
Light Rail	706,685	850,304	-16.9%	766,068	-7.8%
System	3,029,837	3,351,773	-9.6%	3,278,259	-7.6%

From: Board.Secretary
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 1:08 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: VTA Daily News Coverage - Feb 9, 2017



VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, February 9, 2017

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[Caltrain challenges GOP call to block grant for electrification project](#)

Progressive Railroading

[Caltrain](#) is working with the San Francisco Bay Area's congressional delegation and local employers to oppose calls to block federal funding for the railroad's electrification project.

The project, which calls for electrifying Caltrain's corridor from San Francisco to San Jose, Calif., hinges on the execution of a nearly \$650 million grant, Caltrain Executive Director Jim Hartnett said in a statement.

Republican lawmakers representing California in Congress late last month asked President Donald Trump's administration to block the grant for the program, which would lay the foundation for eventual high-speed rail service between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

"Ballot measures have been passed, funding agreements have been signed, legislation has been approved, lawsuits have been won and contracts have been awarded," Hartnett said.

Caltrain has been planning for the electrification project since the 1990s, before voters in 2008 approved the first sale of bonds for the high-speed rail project.

In addition, the railroad [in July 2016](#) approved \$1.25 billion in electrification-related contracts, including one for the design and manufacture of high-performance electric trains.

The electrification project is expected to increase capacity and improve service for Caltrain, which is one of the United States' fastest growing commuter-rail corridors, according to Hartnett.

All 14 of California's GOP representatives signed a Jan. 24 letter to Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao requesting that the administration halt the almost \$650 million grant, [the Los Angeles Times reported](#). They also asked Chao to block the funds until there's an audit of the overall high-speed rail project's finances.

In the letter, the lawmakers expressed concern about the project's cost, along with its lack of private financing, the newspaper reported. The federal government has already provided more than \$3.5 billion for California's high-speed rail program, [according to The Hill](#).

"We think providing additional funding at this time ... would be an irresponsible use of taxpayer dollars," the legislators wrote in the letter, according to *The Hill*.

Approval for the grant could come as early as next week, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

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[Editorial: Kevin McCarthy should support grant for Caltrain electrification](#)

Mercury News

Editor's note: This updates a previous editorial with new information from House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and others.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Bakersfield is no fan of California's high-speed rail project. Neither are we.

But in a letter to new Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, McCarthy and the rest of California's GOP delegation indicated a \$650 million grant application for electrifying Caltrain would go to the High Speed Rail Authority, and he asked Chao to stop it.

That must not happen. McCarthy should take a closer look at the Caltrain project.

In fact the grant request is from the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, which owns and operates Caltrain. Electrification has been sought for decades to allow the commuter line to operate more, faster trains at lower cost while ending diesel pollution.

The High-Speed Rail Authority hopes to use Caltrain tracks if it gets that far north, but the electrification project stands alone. It is long overdue for the most popular commuter transit line in traffic-gridlocked Silicon Valley. The application has been highly rated by all the federal agencies through whose hoops it had to jump.

Carl Guardino, CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and a member of the state Transportation Commission, remains hopeful. Speeding up and cleaning up Caltrain is a critical component of transportation improvements that valley residents and industry badly need.

“Leader McCarthy’s support for Silicon Valley is strong and sincere,” Guardino said Tuesday evening. “There seems to be a misunderstanding about the stand-alone nature of an electrified Caltrain — completely independent of high-speed rail — that I believe we can clear up.”

Earlier Tuesday, McCarthy issued a statement explaining his problem with the grant: The state’s contribution to the project came from high-speed rail bond revenue approved by voters. But the Legislature directed the expenditure and took care to separate the Caltrain project from high-speed rail.

A judge has ruled that it’s entirely separate. The project’s EIR does not include high speed rail’s use of the tracks, so it does not improve high-speed rail’s legal standing.

U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, has fought for years for this federal grant to leverage regional, state and local tax dollars for electrification. She and the rest of the Bay Area congressional delegation are appealing to Chao.

The secretary, with barely time to settle into the job, is on the spot. Failing to sign off on the grant by March 1 will kill it. She seems to be the least controversial, most widely respected cabinet appointees in the new administration, and this could be the first test of her independence and judgment.

But we hope not. Closer examination by McCarthy should resolve the matter.

Cost estimates for high speed rail have grown explosively. Like McCarthy, we long ago said the project was out of control, badly managed and ought to be stopped.

But we have the utmost confidence that popular Caltrain service is an excellent investment. We hope McCarthy, upon closer examination, agrees.

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[Where to Put the Downtown San Jose BART Station: Go West](#)

Laura Tolkoff

SPUR San Jose

Missed FROM JANUARY 26, 2017

For decades, Santa Clara County residents have dreamed of extending BART to meet Caltrain in the South Bay, creating a rail connection between the downtowns of the Bay Area’s biggest cities. Now that Santa Clara County voters passed the Measure B transportation bond in November, that dream is getting closer to reality.

In the next few months, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) will work with its partners to refine the BART Silicon Valley project — making big decisions about where and how BART will come to San Jose and Santa Clara. San Jose will have stations at Alum Rock, Diridon and downtown. One of the big decisions is where, precisely, the downtown station should be located. The choice has been narrowed down to Santa Clara between Market Street and 4th Street (the “downtown west” option) or Santa Clara between 5th Street and 7th Street (the “downtown east” option).

So which one is better and why does it matter?

Two Proposed BART Station Locations for Downtown San Jose

This map shows all proposed entrances for downtown San Jose's two possible BART station locations: "downtown west" (blue dots) and "downtown east" (red dots). The west option is near to the First and Second Street transit malls, which offer connections to regional buses and light rail (dashed gray line). It's also two blocks closer to Diridon Station (black square). Source: SPUR

We think about BART as a 100-year investment. It has to be built to last, it has to be built in the right place, and it has to be surrounded by the right kind of growth (compact, walkable and mostly jobs). Luckily, we have 40 years of lessons learned from BART stations in San Francisco and the East Bay to draw on. For BART Silicon Valley to be successful, the downtown San Jose station location should be the one that will draw the most riders. SPUR strongly supports the "downtown west" option as the best choice for downtown San Jose.

A key purpose of extending BART to downtown San Jose is to reduce congestion by giving commuters an alternative way to get to their jobs. This is now more critical than ever. In California and the Bay Area, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation have far surpassed emissions from any other source. Our region's economy continues to grow, and our housing shortage has pushed people farther and farther away from their jobs. Commuting is a daily crisis for many commuters, affecting the amount of time spent with families, worsening public health and lowering productivity. Encouraging people to use transit matters if we are to grow our region's economy, and protect our environment and quality of life.

To meet these goals and make sure BART Silicon Valley is a success, we need a downtown station that will draw the highest number of riders. We believe the west option will deliver that.

Why the West Option Is the Better Choice:

1. It has more people within walking distance — all of whom are potential riders. A big reason people don't take transit today is that they can't get to it easily — their jobs or homes are too far away. The advantage of having lots of people within walking distance is that all of them are potential riders.

The number of planned jobs near the west option far outpaces the planned jobs and housing close to the downtown east option. In anticipation of BART, San Jose is planning to increase the amount of jobs and housing around potential station locations. San Jose is planning to add 58,500 new jobs and 14,360 new housing units in downtown, but only 795 jobs and 850 housing units in the East Santa Clara Urban Village (between North 7th and North 17th streets).

Although the downtown east option would be closer to San Jose State University's large student population, new development opportunities near the east option are limited. More parcels near the west option are zoned as "Downtown Core" — a designation that allows higher density, more compact development — than parcels near the east option. The potential for growth near the downtown east option is also constrained by the availability and size of development sites, its distance from San Jose's existing high-rise district and its proximity to low-density residential neighborhoods.

2. It offers the best potential for new jobs and for commercial development. Transit and jobs have a mutually supportive relationship. Areas that are transit-rich are more attractive to employers, and transit that is located in jobs-rich areas enjoys more success (more riders and lower public subsidy). For example, a recent study found that two-thirds of all BART trips start or end at just four stations on Market Street in San Francisco — all of which are surrounded by a high concentration of jobs.

When BART is extended to downtown (and later, Diridon Station), downtown will be a highly transit-accessible employment location. This presents a significant opportunity for San Jose to position itself as an employment destination for residents of the East Bay, as well as for San Jose residents to access jobs and activities throughout the BART network.

An analysis completed by Strategic Economics for the City of San Jose found that improved transit access helps attract office tenants. Buildings located less than a half-mile from transit have higher occupancy rates than those farther away. Since most of downtown's existing commercial buildings are located within half a mile of the downtown west station (and many of them are not fully occupied), we would expect higher occupancy rates there in the future.

Occupancy rates in commercial buildings within a half mile of BART are higher on average than in those located farther away from BART. Source: Strategic Economics

The same study also observed that commercial developers typically prefer to build on large parcels. In the analysis, the city found that the area west of North 4th Street contains a much larger number of parcels over 1 acre than the area to the east of North 4th Street. Therefore, the downtown west station location is more favorable for filling up existing commercial buildings and supporting new commercial development.

Finally, companies like to cluster near other companies. That explains why most job growth takes place near existing job concentrations (either in a traditional central business district or in an office park). Because the downtown west option is closer to existing jobs (and near many large parcels for new commercial development), the downtown west option is more likely to catalyze job growth than the downtown east option.

3. It will be more likely to generate a lot of riders at all times of day and on weekends. Running trains costs money, and it costs more money when people aren't buying tickets and filling seats. Today, VTA's farebox recovery ratio — the percentage of operating expenses covered by passenger fares — is hovering at about 10 percent. Reducing subsidies will mean reducing the number of empty seats throughout the day. It will be easier to fill seats if the downtown BART stop is in a place that is within walking distance of lots of different, round-the-clock activities. The downtown west location has a greater concentration of destinations that attract people day and night on both weekdays and weekends, such as the San Jose Convention Center, San Pedro Square Market, the San Jose Museum of Art and others.

One argument for the downtown east option is its proximity to San Jose State University. The university is a valued downtown anchor, and many of its students also ride transit. The distance between the two options is about 0.2 miles, or a five-minute walk. For workers, those extra five minutes can make the difference between riding transit and not. Several studies have shown that people aren't willing to walk very far from their office to transit (or vice versa), so putting BART close to where jobs are likely to grow is essential for capturing potential riders. For students, this extra five-minute walk will be an inconvenience, but students are still likely to take transit instead of driving, even if the station is a little bit farther away from their destination. Consider the fact that lots of UC Berkeley students trek the 0.8 miles between the downtown Berkeley BART station and the campus. We think that the opportunity to capture new riders by locating the downtown station to the west is greater than potential losses in student ridership.

4. It offers closer and more direct connections to buses and light rail than the downtown east options and would expand the usefulness of BART. The downtown west option provides quick, easy connections to light rail and buses at the First Street and Second Street transit malls. People could take light rail or buses to get to and from BART instead of driving to BART stations (which would also help to reduce the need for parking near stations). The availability of these transit connections makes BART more useful to people in San Jose and Santa Clara County who are already served by VTA's light rail network.

Comparing East and West Options for Downtown San Jose BART

The west option for downtown San Jose BART outperforms the east option when it comes to the factors that get more people on transit and, in turn, make BART successful in its economic development, environmental and placemaking goals. Source: SPUR.

In the long run, building BART is about more than creating a "ring around the Bay." It is about creating a useful, reliable and seamless system that connects the downtowns of our three largest cities. San Jose's "downtown west" station option will do that by catalyzing new job growth in downtown, generating lots of riders, and offering simple and quick connections to other transportation services.

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[BART: should it remove some seats to add standing room?](#)

Erin Baldassari

East Bay Times

Faced with crushing commutes during the peak hours, BART is hoping to add some breathing room by removing a row of seats on roughly a third of its train cars.

The nearly \$1.7 million effort would remove a row of seven seats on its "B" cars, which tend to be placed in the middle of the train, where crowds are the heaviest, said Paul Oversier, BART's assistant general manager of operations. The agency has seen a slight decrease in the total number of passengers riding BART, especially during off-peak hours and on weekends, but Oversier said the number of riders during the rush hour has held relatively steady. Removing one seat frees up space for about three people to stand, Oversier said.

"For some people, it's not a matter of whether they get a seat or not," Oversier said. "It's a matter of whether they get on the train or not."

The agency is starting to see more trains filled to the brim, leaving people at stations. That's been the norm at San Francisco's Montgomery and Embarcadero stations, but now, trains are beginning to pass up passengers in the East Bay, mostly at the West Oakland and downtown Oakland BART stations. Increasingly that is also happening at MacArthur and Fruitvale, said Aaron Weinstein, BART's chief marketing officer.

"We're seeing that zone of pass-ups beginning to expand," he said.

BART tested three different configurations of train cars before deciding to pursue the No. 1 configuration, which maintains a single row of seats along one side of the train. (Image courtesy BART.) BART tested three different layouts to provide more standing room in cars by removing some seats. The agency decided to pursue the No. 1 configuration, which maintains a single row of seats along one side of the train. (Image courtesy BART)

The modifications follow a pilot program by the agency last year to test three different configurations on 60 train cars. A subsequent passenger survey showed a slight preference for cars where one row of seats were removed from the center of the train car. Roughly 6,000 people completed the survey, Weinstein said, and 54 percent said the modification made conditions “better” than a typical car, and 46 percent saying it was “about the same” or “worse.”

BART staff estimated it could add capacity for more than 10,000 riders in the morning and evening commute, resulting in an additional \$9.62 million in fare revenue. It plans to remove the seats on 380 of its 669 cars, offering short-term relief before BART’s new fleet begins its roll out later this year. Those cars also have fewer seats than BART’s current fleet and they have three doors to allow people to enter and exit the trains more efficiently, Oversier said.

But some BART board members balked at the plan when staff introduced it in December, requesting a better analysis of the revenue that would be generated from the change, along with a clearer breakdown of the funding sources to pay for the project.

BART Director Joel Keller blasted staff at the December meeting for bringing the item as an informational report, rather than as a request for the board’s approval. He said the agency should have asked the board before making such a drastic change and challenged the survey’s results, which did not specify where commuters were boarding the trains or how long they would have to stand.

“I’m disturbed you don’t even know where these people live, and I can’t believe you didn’t ask,” Keller said. “This is terribly disappointing on so many levels. We’ve never had a public hearing where we said we are going to do this.”

Other board members lauded the move, saying their constituents were tired of getting passed up at stations or squeezing into overcrowded trains. The agency plans to only remove seats on roughly a third of its train cars, in part out of deference to customers who condemned the change, said David Hardt, BART’s chief mechanical officer.

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[State transportation secretary prioritizes high-speed rail, Caltrain for federal help](#)

Jody Meacham

Silicon Valley Business Journal

The head of California’s State Transportation Agency said Wednesday he will push hard to get federal funding for the state’s high-speed rail project and Caltrain electrification along the Peninsula as part of the Trump administration’s infrastructure push.

The state's 14 Republicans in Congress recently wrote to new federal transportation Sec. Elaine Chao, asking her to block a \$647 million grant for Caltrain's electrification because it might benefit high-speed rail.

"With respect to high-speed rail, we know it has a long history of contentious opinion about it," said Brian Kelly, CalSTA secretary. "But the fact of the matter is we think it's a vitally important project for the state. I think it's the most transformative project in my 23 years of working in transportation policy in California, and we're going to continue to work hard to get it completed. Both of them."

Kelly's comments came in response to a question from the Silicon Valley Business Journal on a conference call with state transportation and water policy heads regarding a request from the Trump administration for each state's most important infrastructure projects. The administration made the request through the National Governor's Association as part of its promise to use infrastructure projects as job creation programs.

"We are going to continue to outline those projects as high, high priority," Kelly said.

California's list included 51 projects, 25 of them transportation projects, valued at more than \$100 billion.

Caltrain's grant would help fund an electrification project worth \$1.98 billion. The state's request for high-speed rail is for \$2.9 billion to extend the initial operating segment to include San Francisco to San Jose and then on to Bakersfield, a segment worth twice as much in passengers and revenue as the San Jose to near-Bakersfield segment that is scheduled to open in 2025.

The list also includes the federal match to extend BART beneath downtown San Jose and on to Santa Clara. Local funds were approved in November as part of Measure B.

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[State transportation package could be finalized by April](#)

Todd Hansen

Fairfield Daily Republic

California may be just two months away from having a multibillion-dollar comprehensive statewide transportation package all wrapped up.

Gov. Jerry Brown announced Wednesday that he expects negotiations to be completed and a deal reached by April 6.

However, there is still a significant \$1.8 billion gap between the governor's proposal and the \$6 billion legislation authored by Assemblyman Jim Frazier, D-Oakley, and Sen. Jim Beall, D-San Jose.

If Frazier's bill were to pass as it stands, Solano County and its cities would expect to receive a combined \$12.5 million annually, the assemblyman's office reported.

The governor's announcement comes one day after the Solano County supervisors endorsed Frazier's and Beall's proposals.

Paul Yoder, who lobbies for the county in Sacramento, said the amount set aside for local roadways in the Frazier and Beall legislation is about twice that being offered by the governor.

All three plans would do away with the annual Board of Equalization calculation for the gasoline excise tax, which was supposed to mirror what the former sales tax would have generated had it been in place. That calculated tax was in addition to a base 18-cent sales tax per gallon.

But that revenue has consistently declined since 2010 and the excise tax is more limited in its revenue uses.

So Frazier and Beall have proposed to set the excise tax at 17 cents per gallon. They also propose to increase the base sales tax by 12 cents over three years, ultimately bringing that to 30 cents per gallon. The legislators report that the two sources would generate \$2.9 billion annually, according to information provided to the Board of Supervisors.

The governor's plan does not increase the base sales tax, but does offer a set excise tax of 21.5 cents per gallon – again without the annual Board of Equalization calculation. He estimates \$1.1 billion would be generated annually, according to the county information.

Frazier's plan would also add 20 cents per gallon on diesel fuel (\$600 million annually), and increase the incremental sales tax on diesel fuel, up to 5.25 percent (\$300 million annually). It would add \$38 to the vehicle registration fee (\$1.3 billion annually) and sets a \$165 zero-emission vehicle fee (\$21 million annually).

The plan also shifts 15 percent of cap-and-trade revenue (\$300 million annually) and phases in over five years a restored truck weight fee, which would generate about \$500 million in the fifth year, according to the information provided to the Board of Supervisors.

Beall's proposal essentially mirrors that of Frazier's plan.

Brown's plan adds 11 cents per gallon on diesel fuel (\$425 million annually), has a \$65 road improvement charge (\$2.1 billion annually) and earmarks \$400 million in cap-and-trade revenues.

The plans list where the funds would be distributed, and each is different – sometimes significantly – from the others.

One item in both the legislative packages would earmark \$200 million annually to counties with voter-approved transportation taxes or fees. Solano County would not share in those funds since voters rejected Measure H in June. The proposed half-cent sales tax increase was expected to generate \$168.5 million over five years.

The proposals also require the state Department of Transportation to find between \$70 million (Frazier and Beall) and \$100 million (Brown) in savings, adds accountability and performance standards and streamlines the required environmental reviews on what are described as "minor projects" with a safety net mitigation program.

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[Menlo Park: Plan to separate rail from roads hits snag](#)

Kevin Kelly

Mercury News

A plan to separate trains from roadways in downtown Menlo Park hit a roadblock this week.

The City Council at its Tuesday meeting was expected to narrow possibilities for separating the rail line at downtown intersections, but took no action because too many unanswered questions were raised.

The council was asked to choose one of two alternatives for separations at up to two additional intersections beyond Ravenswood, and to indicate its preferred train station layout. In addition, it was asked to identify where a third possible track should be positioned to someday carry high-speed trains.

But council members expressed concerns over how much each of the three possible alternatives would cost; how traffic would be impacted by construction work that could last up to four years; whether the third track would need to extend all the way along the city to qualify for a county grant; and what the impacts will be to private properties. They said the answers given by staff and transit representatives weren't good enough.

"It's going to be a snug fit down there in some of these areas (that are) going to cost a lot ... and we're not sure we're going to get any of that money," Councilman Rich Cline said.

Noting low attendance at the meeting, Ray Mueller questioned whether staff had done enough community outreach. He said residents of the Felton Gables and Linfield Oaks neighborhoods, in particular, have been vocal about noise and sight-line concerns.

"This is not a case of apathy to the issue," Mueller said. "If I live in Felton, did the city consider the fact that they chose a configuration that lifts the train up right at my property line so I'm looking at a train every day?"

Staff said it sent an email blast to between 100 and 150 residents who left their information during two workshops on the project last year, but added it was concerned about the cost of distributing mailers to the 5,000 addresses in the project area.

Mueller also said he wanted staff to explore an idea recently floated by former mayor Mickie Winkler to install elevated railways that wouldn't require tunneling or berms and instead would contain openings to deter what some residents fear will be a wall running through the middle of the city.

"The reason this is desired is this might be cheaper than the others," Mueller said. According to staff, one grade separation at a similar project in Burlingame is expected to cost \$250 million.

All three possible options the council reviewed include a grade separation at Ravenswood, where a driver was killed when her car was struck by a train in early 2015 after becoming lodged on the tracks in

backed-up traffic. The incident reinvigorated the grade-separation effort that began in 2002 and brought a promise of \$750,000 in county Measure A funds in 2013.

Alternative A, which would have the least impact on private properties and leave railroad tracks where they are, includes separation only at Ravenswood. The roadway and sidewalks would be lowered by 22 feet, with access to Alma Street from Ravenswood eliminated.

Alternative B includes separation at Ravenswood and Oak Grove Avenue; the tracks would be elevated 14 feet at Ravenswood and 8 feet at Oak Grove, with the road lowered 8 feet at Ravenswood and 15 feet at Oak Grove. This option limits access along Oak Grove and raises tracks 17 feet higher than the current elevation next to the Menlo Park Library and Arrillaga Family Gymnasium.

Alternative C, which would have the most impact on properties, includes separation at Ravenswood, Oak Grove and Glenwood Avenue, with tracks elevated 10 feet at Ravenswood and Oak Grove and 15 feet at Glenwood. Ravenswood would be lowered 12 feet, Oak Grove 11 feet and Glenwood 5 feet. This option would likely be the most expensive.

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[California projects on table for possible Trump infrastructure package](#)

Jim Miller

Sacramento Bee

The Brown administration has presented a list of 51 road, water, energy and other projects as candidates for any public works package crafted by the Trump White House and Congress.

The list, sent Tuesday to the National Governors Association to present to the Trump administration, totals more than \$100 billion, state officials said. Included projects could make quick use of any federal money and generate jobs across the state, officials said.

“We have big needs, ready to go,” Transportation Agency Secretary Brian P. Kelly said Wednesday.

CALIFORNIA’S LIST OF PROJECTS FOR INCLUSION IN A POSSIBLE FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE INCLUDES 25 TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS; 14 PROJECTS DEALING WITH WATER STORAGE, FLOOR PROTECTION OR ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION; NINE PROJECTS DEALING WITH EMERGENCY RESPONSE, MILITARY OR VETERANS; AND THREE ENERGY-RELATED PROJECTS.

Still, state officials acknowledged that it remains unclear what process the Trump administration will use to develop its own list. Trump has promised to spend \$1 trillion on an infrastructure package to produce jobs and revitalize aging public works, but no details have emerged.

Sacramento-area projects on the list include raising Folsom Dam, expanding HOV lanes on Interstate 5 between Sacramento and Elk Grove, building a streetcar system in Sacramento, and rehabilitating and improving levees along the Sacramento River. Some projects already have secured funding, such as fare and toll revenue for some of the 25 transportation projects on the list.

In Tuesday's letter to the governors association, Nancy McFadden, Brown's executive secretary, noted that "California is doing its part" by trying to pass a state transportation funding package. Brown's January budget called for a \$42 billion, 10-year plan, while the leaders of transportation panels in the Legislature have put forward bills that would generate \$6 billion annually, with all of them financed in part by new taxes and fees.

The proposals focus money on maintenance and rehabilitation, not new construction, with money also targeted at goods movement and transit. Any deal must happen by April 6, when lawmakers leave for spring recess, under a deadline recently agreed to by Brown, Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de León, D-Los Angeles, and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, D-Paramount.

"There's a collective sense of urgency now," Kelly said.

From: Board.Secretary
Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 3:34 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: 2/10/17 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Friday, February 10, 2017

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Milpitas: Major thoroughfare partially reopens after months-long closure

Ian Bauer

Milpitas Post

South Milpitas Boulevard near Montague Expressway was reopened to motorists over the weekend as part of ongoing roadway improvements in the area related to the coming Bay Area Rapid Transit line.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority had closed South Milpitas Boulevard near Gibraltar Drive last year to allow for work along the roadway that leads to Montague Expressway.

The improvements, according to VTA, are being put in place to ensure accessibility to the future Milpitas BART Station and area developments, alleviate traffic concerns in the surrounding area and prepare against potential flooding from Berryessa Creek.

“South Milpitas Boulevard was closed to allow for the relocation and modification of underground utilities and for the roadway to be raised several feet to guard against future flooding,” Stacey Ross, a VTA spokeswoman, told the Post via email.

She noted the Montague Expressway/South Milpitas Boulevard Improvement Project is a partnership between VTA, Santa Clara County, Santa Clara Valley Water District and the City of Milpitas to alleviate future traffic demands and meet future flood control needs.

Ross added South Milpitas Boulevard was reopened on Sunday.

“While additional work will be necessary, it was important to the city of Milpitas that the roadway be partially reopened to the public (sooner) rather than later,” Ross said.

VTA says the intersection of South Milpitas Boulevard and Montague Expressway will see new traffic configuration at the intersection will be as follows:

Three through lanes on Montague Expressway in each direction will remain open.

One right-turn lane from westbound Montague Expressway to northbound South Milpitas Boulevard will be open.

One right-turn lane from southbound South Milpitas Boulevard to westbound Montague Expressway will be open.

There will be no left turn access from South Milpitas Boulevard going eastbound on Montague Expressway.

According to Ross, the original closure schedule was delayed due to weather and other conditions out of the project’s control. Per city requirements, the traffic shifts needed to be performed over the weekend to avoid negative impacts to commuter traffic.

“Saturday and Sunday morning were dry enough for the paving and striping needed to reopen the road,” Ross said.

She noted South Milpitas Boulevard is currently opened to one lane in each direction until later this year when it will be fully reopened to the public at the completion of the project.

“While this project is not solely a VTA project, it will provide bus access through the VTA BART Milpitas Station on the newly extended South Milpitas Boulevard which will connect to Capitol Avenue,” Ross said.

She said the estimated \$20 million and is currently still under budget and on schedule.

“The project — including major roadwork — is on schedule for completion the end of this year,” Ross said.

The Milpitas BART Station is scheduled to open for service this fall.

For more information and an overview of the planned work for the Montague Expressway/South Milpitas Boulevard Improvement Project, visit vta.org/bart/montaguemilpitas.

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[Silicon Valley tech leaders: Caltrain cut would cost region 10,000 jobs](#)

Silicon Valley Business Journal

Silicon Valley tech leaders are speaking out against the possible loss of federal funding for Caltrain upgrades, claiming that the move by Republicans could cost the Bay Area 9,600 jobs, impact 60,000 commuters per day and cost the region's economy many millions of dollars.

"Why would one want to damage an aspect of America's economy that not only produces innovation and job creation, but is incredibly valuable from the perspective of GDP?" Silicon Valley Leadership Group CEO and President Carl Guardino told Politico.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Rep. Jeff Denham are leading the efforts to oppose more than \$600 million in federal funding. California's 14 Republicans in Congress recently wrote to new federal Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao asking her to block the grant for Caltrain's electrification because it might also benefit the state's controversial multibillion-dollar high-speed rail project.

Caltrain's grant would help fund an electrification project worth \$1.98 billion. The state's request for high-speed rail is for \$2.9 billion to extend the initial operating segment to include San Francisco to San Jose and then on to Bakersfield, a segment worth twice as much in passengers and revenue as the San Jose to near-Bakersfield segment that is scheduled to open in 2025.

"With respect to high-speed rail, we know it has a long history of contentious opinion about it," Brian Kelly, head of California's State Transportation Agency, told the Silicon Valley Business Journal earlier this week. "But the fact of the matter is we think it's a vitally important project for the state. I think it's the most transformative project in my 23 years of working in transportation policy in California, and we're going to continue to work hard to get it completed. Both of them."

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[Silicon Valley Outrage over Caltrain](#)

Carla Marinucci

Politico

FEUDING OVER CALTRAIN -- With President Donald Trump threatening to punish "out of control" California, Silicon Valley business leaders are worried the tech capital may take a major hit if Republicans de-fund a key infrastructure project in one of the nation's busiest commuter corridors. Such a move, they say, could cost 10,000 jobs, affect 60,000 commuters a day, and deal a multi-million dollar blow to the economy. House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Bakersfield and Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Atwater, have taken the lead in objecting to \$600 million in federal funding to finish electrification of the popular Caltrain rail line that stretches from San Jose to San Francisco, home to thousands of workers at tech giants including Google, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

-- McCarthy's objection is rooted in the project's funding, which is linked to funding for California's controversial High Speed Rail project, which he has vehemently opposed. McCarthy and Denham outlined their objections in a letter to newly confirmed Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, who will make a final determination on the project after a congressional review period ends on Feb. 17. Story by POLITICO's Carla Marinucci.

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[Rebound anticipated for Silicon Valley commercial real estate](#)

George Avalos
Bay Area News Group

Santa Clara County's commercial real estate market suffered a slump in 2016 compared to the white-hot year of 2015, but the sector should bounce back this year, according to a new forecast.

"After the biggest year on record in 2015 for office activity, we sort of had nowhere to go but down," said Jeff Fredericks, executive managing director of the San Jose office of Colliers International, a commercial realty brokerage that issued the new report on Tuesday. "We predicted that office activity would come down to earth, and so it did."

The Colliers report, a centerpiece of the company's annual gathering in downtown San Jose, is one of the closely watched forecasts regarding the health of the commercial real estate market in the Bay Area.

During 2016, tenants completed new leases filling a total of 8 million square feet of offices in Silicon Valley, which was down about 22 percent from the 10.3 million square feet of offices filled during 2015, according to the Colliers report.

"The slowdown really started in the fourth quarter of 2015," Fredericks said.

But better times are ahead for the South Bay office market, Colliers predicted.

Companies are expected to complete new leases filling 13.5 million square feet of office space in Santa Clara County this year.

After taking into account the effects of spaces that are vacated or subleased, tenants are expected to absorb a net of 6 million square feet of space.

"That would blow the doors off" the 2015 net absorption of 4.6 million square feet of office space, Fredericks said. "It's probably going to be a record year" in 2017, he added.

The report did point, however, to a troubling trend of rising sublease space that is appearing as tenants vacate offices that they had already rented.

At the end of 2016, Santa Clara County had 2.6 million square feet of office space available for sublease — double the 1.3 million square feet that were available at the outset of 2016, Colliers reported.

Sublease space represented 29.8 percent of the office space available at the end of 2016, a huge jump from the 19 percent figure at the beginning of 2016.

Among the positive developments anticipated for this year: Apple is expected to occupy 3.9 million square feet of office space this year, including the 3.1 million square feet at the company's new campus in Cupertino. Palo Alto Networks is expected to occupy 950,000 square feet in Santa Clara. And, Fredericks added, six other companies have laid plans to occupy an additional 1.2 million square feet of offices in the South Bay.

At present, about 11.8 million square feet of office buildings are completed shells or are scheduled for completion in 2017 in Santa Clara County. Companies have agreed to rent or buy 6.1 million square feet,

or slightly over half of that total. That's well ahead of the 1.3 million square feet of space that, at the beginning of 2016, had commitments for occupancy.

But in a sign of a possible bubble for commercial real estate — and overbuilding — about 5.7 million square feet of Santa Clara County office buildings that are completed shells or are under construction are not leased and have no commitments from occupants. A year ago, that uncommitted figure was 1.7 million square feet.

"There are cracks in the armor," Fredericks said. "But it is still a fundamentally strong commercial real estate market in Silicon Valley."

The predicted upswing in commercial real estate in the South Bay comes with a backdrop of a robust economy in California, said Christopher Thornberg, principal economist with Beacon Economics, who spoke at the event.

"California is on fire," Thornberg said. "California is still leading the charge, despite all of our business unfriendliness."

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[BART to consider 'Sanctuary in Transit' policy](#)

Erin Baldassari

Mercury News

Following the lead of several Bay Area cities, BART's governing board is mulling the idea of establishing a "Sanctuary in Transit" policy that would direct BART police to limit enforcement of federal immigration laws.

Directors Nick Josefowitz and Lateefah Simon on Thursday asked staff to look into ways the transit agency could craft policies that would ensure BART police only book suspects into county jails that have sanctuary policies in place, and limit the information officers share either directly or indirectly with the federal government that may lead to the "indiscriminate enforcement of federal immigration laws."

There are over 500,000 undocumented immigrants living in the Bay Area, many of whom ride BART everyday, Josefowitz said.

"When local law enforcement focuses on keeping communities safe, rather than becoming entangled in federal immigration enforcement efforts, communities are safer," he said.

BART: should it remove some seats to add standing room?

Simon shared a story of a constituent who was caught evading a fare at BART. The rider wanted to pay the fine, she said, but because his visa ran out, he was scared of calling any attention to his immigration status.

"If our system can mirror some of the best cities who are standing up to hate and xenophobia and homophobia, then we want to be on the right side of history," she said.

Late last month, the mayors of Oakland, San Jose and San Francisco vowed to work together to challenge President Trump's executive order stripping sanctuary cities of federal grants. Several days later, San Francisco became the first city in the country to sue Trump over the order, calling it unconstitutional.

It's unclear how BART's policy would impact its ability to seek federal grants from the administration, which has proposed a \$1 trillion transportation infrastructure spending package, though details on the plan remain sparse.

Several people who spoke at the meeting Thursday criticized BART's existing policies that address suspects' immigration status and asked the agency to better clarify the rules. BART police are not allowed to stop people solely to determine their immigration status but they are directed to "assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws."

"If a specific request is made by (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) or any other federal agency, this department will provide available support services, such as traffic control or peacekeeping efforts, during the federal operation," according to BART police policies. "Members of this department should not participate in such federal operations as part of any detention team unless it is in direct response to a request for assistance on a temporary basis or for officer safety."

In practice, Acting Police Chief Jeff Jennings said the department rarely interacts with federal agents. Over the past five years, Jennings said officers had 43 interactions with people who presented only an immigration card as their form of identification.

"We did not contact ICE, and we did not transport them anywhere" on behalf of a federal agency, he said. "No one has been calling ICE since I've been here, and that's four years."

Nearly a dozen people spoke during the public comment portion of the meeting, all of them in support of the idea. John Arantes, the president of the SEIU Local 1021, which represents BART employees, took a moment to collect himself after tearing up at the microphone. He recalled living in San Diego and watching police board trolleys to round up people suspected of living there illegally.

"They would start searching everyone's papers and putting them, like pieces of meat, into vans and take them to be deported," Arantes said. "This is freaking unacceptable, and we cannot stand for that kind of behavior."

The board did not act on the proposal, but scheduled it for discussion at a March 14 meeting of the Operations and Safety Committee.

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[Los Gatos en route on bicycle, pedestrian plan](#)

Judy Peterson

Bay Area News Group

The town's goal to become more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly is on track as the Los Gatos Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission last week endorsed a proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan now under way.

The plan includes observations from volunteers when they hit the streets Sept. 14 and 17 to count the number of people biking and walking at nine key intersections. At that time, they recorded 2,451 bikers and 6,701 pedestrians.

Planners gave commissioners an overview of the 110-page plan Feb. 2. "It's not a fixed document. We can modify it if we missed something," project manager Bob Kass said.

The plan will be costly to implement and could take as much as 20 years to build out. But once approved, the town will be positioned to receive grants and Measure B funds to help pay for specific projects, Kass said.

More than 950 community survey responses factored into the plan's development.

"One of the findings in terms of bicycles is there are big gaps in the network," consultant Mike Nilsson said. "In terms of trails, we noticed a lack of access to Los Gatos Creek Trail."

"Based on the findings, we found counts for bicyclists were highest on the trail, Los Gatos Boulevard and around the schools," he said.

Students accounted for half of the bicyclists and pedestrians counted, Nilsson said.

The plan seeks to integrate town-wide and Safe Routes to School goals. Safe Routes developed an extensive list of road and sidewalk improvements it endorses to improve student safety. For example, one priority project would enhance the existing bike lanes on Los Gatos Boulevard from Highway 9 to Pleasant and Jackson streets.

Proponents expect it to improve safety for students biking to Los Gatos High School.

A high school bike lane project is already in the works: Town engineer Lisa Petersen said tentative plans call for adding bike lanes on Main Street in front of the high school during spring break.

Saratoga's Marshall Lane Elementary School also came up during the commission's review. "I would like to see Marshall Lane somehow counted and the intersections around there included," Rinconada resident Nick Radov said.

Former Commissioner Maria Ristow weighed in saying a lot of people won't bike in Los Gatos because they think it's too dangerous.

Ristow also called for bicycle racks to be put in "highly visible locations" around town and to be a condition of approval for new commercial developments. "How can we tell people to ride their bikes if there are no bike racks?" Ristow asked.

Commission Chairman Jeff Loughridge thinks Winchester Boulevard needs a "road diet" to slow down traffic and improve safety—relieving cut-through traffic could be a side benefit.

Commissioners also asked planners to add cost figures for Class IV bike lanes to the plan. Class IV lanes put some kind of paint or physical barrier between vehicles and pedestrians.

The town's transportation and parking, and planning commissions will have an opportunity to weigh in on the plan before it goes to the town council for final approval, which could happen as early as March 7.

Visit losgatosca.gov/documentcenter/view/18818 to view the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

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From: Board.Secretary

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 4:02 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors

Subject: From VTA: Ambassador Street Teams for VTA's Transit Service Redesign Draft Plan

VTA Board of Directors:

Below is a link to an article on VTA's multi-lingual ambassador street teams, making the rounds at select transit locations to provide customer service and educate riders about VTA's Transit Service Redesign Draft Plan.

<http://www.vta.org/News-and-Media/Connect-with-VTA/VTAs-New-Street-Team-Members-Want-to-Talk-to-You#.WJ4Dv28rKpo>

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



From: Board.Secretary

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 5:36 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors

Subject: VTA Correspondence: Support Letter for AB 1 (Frazier); Comments on Next Network and BART Silicon Valley Phase II

VTA Board of Directors:

We are forwarding you the following:

From	Topic
VTA	Letter of Support for AB 1 (Frazier)
Members of the Public	Comments regarding Next Network
Member of the Public	Comments regarding BART Silicon Valley Phase II

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



February 3, 2017

The Honorable Jim Frazier, Chairperson
Assembly Transportation Committee
State Capitol, Room 3091
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairperson Frazier:

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) supports AB 1, your comprehensive and well-thought-out measure that would raise new revenues to address various transportation funding needs, as well as to put in place a number of important transportation policy reforms.

As you know, there has been considerable discussion about transportation funding ever since the Governor highlighted in his FY 2016 budget that California has a shortfall of \$59 billion for maintenance and rehabilitation work on the state highway system over the next 10 years. For local streets and roads, the gap over the same period has been estimated at \$78 billion. Without immediate legislative action to address these funding shortfalls, pavement conditions will deteriorate at a faster rate, resulting in increased costs to the state and cities/counties, as well as impacts to public safety and California's economic competitiveness.

Similarly, public transit is facing significant funding shortfalls. According to a needs assessment commissioned by the California Transit Association, the state's public transit systems face a \$72 billion funding gap over the next 10 years, \$39 billion of which relates to deferred maintenance and vehicle/facility rehabilitation. Left unaddressed, these shortfalls will degrade the quality, frequency and reliability of public transit service, depressing ridership and limiting access for people who rely on our bus and rail systems for their mobility needs.

VTA believes AB 1 is an important piece of legislation for the following reasons. First, it would generate new revenues through a variety of sources to:

- Begin closing the funding gaps for state highway and local roadway maintenance and rehabilitation.
- Improve mobility in key goods movement corridors.
- Provide additional investments in public transit.
- Supplement existing resources for active transportation.

Second, AB 1 tackles a number of lingering challenges that have been plaguing transportation funding for years. Specifically, the bill would:

- Fix the volatility of the variable gasoline excise tax, which, in recent years, has resulted

The Honorable Jim Frazier
Support for AB 1
February 3, 2017
Page Two

in large decreases in funding for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), and local streets/roads.

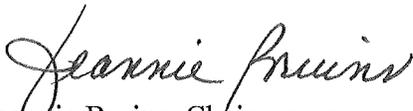
- End the erosion of purchasing power of both the gasoline and diesel excise taxes by indexing them to the Consumer Price Index.
- Ensure the repayment of all outstanding loans owed by the General Fund to various transportation accounts over the next two years.
- Gradually end the diversion of a portion of annual vehicle weight fee revenues to the General Fund, thereby recapturing these dollars for transportation purposes.

Finally, AB 1 includes several key policy reforms, such as:

- Creating an Office of the Transportation Inspector General to ensure that state agencies are expending transportation funds efficiently, effectively and in compliance with the law.
- Re-establishing the California Transportation Commission (CTC) as an independent entity within state government.
- Extending and broadening a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption in current law for certain types of roadway projects occurring within existing rights-of-way.
- Establishing an Advance Mitigation Program to improve the success and effectiveness of actions implemented to mitigate the environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

AB 1 is an extremely important bill for California's transportation infrastructure. We commend you for your leadership, and look forward to working with you to ensure the passage of this essential measure.

Sincerely,



Jeannie Bruins, Chairperson
Board of Directors
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Feb. 2nd, 2017

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Xueqing Zhu. I am an American citizen. I live at 1223 Bruce bridge St. CA. 95704. For all these years I have been Bus 45 or Bus 37 to go to place I needed to go. And I am very grateful for your service. But now you propose to discontinue the service of all the bus stops near my home. That would be a disaster to me. You see I am 90 years old. I have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, osteoporosis, spine fracture and lymphoma. If you cancel those bus stops near my home, I would have to walk to Winchester Transit Center to take a bus if I want to go to hospital or some places. That would be too far for me to walk and I can never make it. I really don't know what to do. Please don't take away the only means of public transportation I depend on. Please continue the service of the existing bus stops near my home. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Xueqing Zhu

From: Jackie Hamburg
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 11:41 AM
To: Board.Secretary
Subject: Current Discussions about Bus Lines

I am a senior living at Moldaw Residences on the corner of Charleston and San Antonio in Palo Alto.

I am very concerned that proposed cuts in major bus lines, i.e., #32 and #35, will have a negative impact on my fellow residents. Many of us don't drive, so there is a high level of dependence on the public bus system.

Not only is it critical to maintain current service levels and routes, it is important that bus stops be very close to Moldaw. Walking is a problem, and using walkers has its own set of mobility challenges.

Thank you for considering my input as you deliberate these issues.

Sincerely,

Jackie Hamburg
Palo Alto, CA

From: Crystal Bothelio
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 5:02 PM
To: Board.Secretary
Cc: James Lindsay; Cherbone, John
Subject: Letter for Saratoga Mayor Emily Lo - VTA Next Network

Hello,

Please see the attached letter from Mayor Emily Lo to the VTA Board regarding a requested change to the proposed Next Network Plan.

Sincerely,
Crystal Bothelio
City Clerk | Assistant to the City Manager
City of Saratoga | City Manager's Office
13777 Fruitvale Avenue | Saratoga, CA 95070

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COUNCIL MEMBERS:

*Mary-Lynne Bernald
Manny Cappello
Rishi Kumar
Emily Lo
Howard Miller*

February 9, 2017

Chairperson Jeannie Bruins & Board of Directors
Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
3331 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95134

Subject: Next Network Plan - Requested Bus Route Change

Dear Chairperson Bruins and VTA Board of Directors,

Earlier this month, the Saratoga City Council received a presentation on VTA's efforts to make a comprehensive update to its transit service in an effort to provide connectivity to BART while also increasing ridership and cost-effectiveness through the Next Network Plan. As the Board progresses on this significant update to our County's transportation network, I and the rest of the Saratoga City Council respectfully request one small change that will have a very large impact on our community.

While the City supports the goal of increasing connectivity, ridership, and cost effectiveness, it is vitally important to us that our downtown commercial district continue to be served by VTA. We believe that VTA can meet the goals of the Next Network Plan while maintaining a connection to downtown Saratoga by extending the proposed 55 bus line up Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road to Saratoga Village and then to the West Valley College Transit Center at 30 minute intervals, which is a critical interval for connectivity to the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station.

This small modification will mean VTA riders will continue to have access to our downtown and it will maintain a convenient link between Saratoga, including the West Valley College Transit Center, and the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station.

Sincerely,

Emily Lo, Mayor
City of Saratoga

-----Original Message-----

From: BART Customer Service [mailto:webcustomerservices@bart.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 9:55 AM

To: tjbussesf

Cc: BoardofDirectors; Board.Secretary

Subject: RE: Case 00198207: BART technology exhibit

Hello Thomas:

Thank you for sharing this idea. We have copied your email to the BART Board and the Secretary for the VTA Board.

We are sharing your contact info as well:

Customer: Thomas Busse

Regards,

Samson Wong
BART Customer Service

cc: BART Board of Directors, VTA Board of Directors

=====
Case 00198207: BART technology exhibit

I wish to suggest to the BART Board and the Board of VTA, as BART Silicon Valley Phase II enters the environmental and engineering stage, that BART consider integrating a permanent museum display in one of the downtown San Jose stations of BART's engineering and technology, perhaps in coordination with the San Jose Children's museum, the Computer history museum, or the Oakland Museum of California.

In the middle of Silicon Valley, this would create public technology space and be a bit of a tourist draw in its own right.

As you plan major repairs, it would mean saving for museum purposes parts of the space-age mainframe control computer and examples of major components of its rolling stock which were engineering breakthroughs of its time such as the ball joints on each truck's transoms, the rubber bag air supports, and the nickel-plated axels.

As a tourist magnet, an exhibit such as a large model train installation of the Bart system and SF Bay showing complexity of junctions such as the Oakland Wye, the location of the Transbay Tube, and BART's environmental mitigation measures as well as other large public works projects often hidden from public sight such as the SFPUC's South Bay Aqueduct would draw people to the system in its own right. This type of stumble-upon educational and public relations effort could yield better pride in our locally-funded and locally-built system.

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