

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Monday, July 9, 2018 2:12 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: July 9, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Monday, July 9, 2018

1. [Light Rail vs Car \(multiple broadcast outlets\)](#)
2. [San Jose: Two people dead after light-rail train, car collide \(Mercury News\)](#)
3. [Service resumes after fatal accident on light rail line \(Bay City News/Mountain View Voice\)](#)

Light Rail vs Car (multiple broadcast outlets)

[NBC Bay Area](#)

[NBC Bay Area](#)

[ABC 7 News](#)

[ABC 7 News](#)

[KPIX Ch. 5](#)

[KTVU Ch. 2](#)

[Back To Top](#)

San Jose: Two people dead after light-rail train, car collide (Mercury News)

Police say railway safety arms were down and working

Two men were killed Sunday afternoon when a car drove around railway crossing arms and crashed into a light-rail train in San Jose, according to police.

The collision happened near Lincoln and Auzerais avenues around 12:34 p.m., along the northbound tracks, according to Brandi Childress, a spokeswoman for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, or VTA.

The train came off the tracks as a result of the collision, Childress said.

Security video from Hapa's Brewery captures collision of [#VTA](#) train and vehicle that SJPD says drove around crossing arms. [#SanJose](#)

San Jose police said the car, a gold Buick Regal, was traveling southbound on Lincoln Avenue and approaching the VTA train crossing on the 500 block of Lincoln Avenue south of Auzerais Avenue. The VTA railway crossing arms were down and functioning, but the man behind the wheel of the Buick drove around the crossing arms and was hit by the train, police said.

The driver and adult male passenger in the Buick were pronounced deceased at the scene, marking the city's 24th and 25th traffic-related fatalities of 2018. Monday morning, the Santa Clara County Coroner's Office were still withholding the names of the men.

Service along the Winchester/Mountain View light-rail line was suspended for several hours for the investigation into the crash and for repairs to the track and overhead wires, Childress said.

At 4:52 a.m. Monday, VTA reported crews made the necessary repairs overnight but trains would be operating through that area at 5 MPH, which could cause delays.

Approximately 20 passengers were on board the train and were evaluated after the collision. None of them was reported injured, Childress said.

The driver of the train was transported to a hospital for testing, which Childress said is standard in an incident like this.

San Jose police are leading the investigation into the collision, and the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office transit patrol unit as well as paramedics were at the scene Sunday afternoon, Childress said.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Detective Brian McMahon of the San Jose Police Department's Traffic Investigations Unit at 408-277-4654.

[Back To Top](#)

[Service resumes after fatal accident on light rail line](#) (Bay City News/Mountain View Voice)

VTA's Winchester-Mountain View line reopens Monday following double-fatality on Sunday

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority announced early this (Monday) morning that normal light-rail train operations will resume on the Winchester-Mountain View line today after a double-fatal train collision with a vehicle on the tracks Sunday required repairs to be made, transit officials said.

The transit agency announced the completed repairs at 5 a.m. Monday, July 9, and said trains would be running at a restricted 5 mph speed through the repair area today, which may cause delays. The crash damaged an overhead pole and wires that power the train, transit officials said.

VTA spokeswoman Brandi Childress said test trains have been running through the area overnight and this morning, but a time for when the speed limit would be lifted wasn't provided.

Childress said bus bridges are standing by, but said the agency is confident the repairs to the track are complete.

Two people died in the collision with the light-rail train Sunday afternoon after the car allegedly drove through the blocked crossing, San Jose police said.

Police responded to the crash at about 12:34 p.m. at Lincoln and Auzerais avenues in San Jose. According to police, a gold Buick Regal traveling south on Lincoln Avenue approached the train crossing at the 500 block of the street, according to police.

The railway crossing arms were down and functioning when the adult man driving the Buick navigated around the arms and was hit by the train, according to police.

The driver and his adult male passenger both died on the scene, police said. The train operator and the train's passengers were not injured.

The Santa Clara County coroner's office will release the name of the victims after informing their next of kin. Police said the fatal traffic collision is the city's 23rd this year, and the two deaths bring the number of traffic fatalities to 25.

The San Jose Police Department is in charge of the investigation. Anyone with information about the collision is asked to contact Detective Brian McMahon at (408) 277-4654.

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From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2018 3:29 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: July 10, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Tuesday, July 10, 2018

1. [Train vs. Car \(multiple broadcast outlets\)](#)
2. [Sharks BART lawsuit \(multiple broadcast outlets\)](#)
3. [Lawsuit targets toll authority over \\$3 bridge toll increase \(Mercury News\)](#)
4. [Sharks' parking concerns prompt second suit to halt BART subway \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)
5. [San Jose approves 1 million-square-foot office development near Diridon Station, future Google campus \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)
6. [Contractors, labor pour millions into campaign to save California gas tax hike for road repairs \(Los Angeles Times\)](#)
7. [Why Silicon Valley Doesn't Mind Rising Gas Prices](#)

Train vs. Car (multiple broadcast outlets)

[KTVU CH. 2](#)

[ABC 7 News](#)

[ABC 7 News](#)

[KPIX Ch. 5](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Sharks BART lawsuit (multiple broadcast outlets)

[ABC 7 News](#)

[NBC Bay Area](#)

[KTVU Ch. 2](#)

[KCBS Radio](#)

[Back to Top](#)

[San Jose police say car hit by train went around crossing arms](#) **(Mercury News)**

The car involved in a deadly collision with a light-rail train west of downtown San Jose on Sunday was driven around the crossing arms and onto the tracks seconds before being struck, according to police and security camera footage from a nearby business.

The driver of the gold Buick Regal and his adult male passenger were killed. As of Monday evening, the Santa Clara County Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office had not identified either one of them.

The collision occurred near Lincoln and Auzerais avenues, along the northbound tracks, about 12:35 p.m. Sunday, said Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority spokeswoman Brandi Childress.

San Jose police Sgt. Enrique Garcia said the crossing arms were down and working when the driver of the car traveling southbound on Lincoln went around them and was struck by the train.

Security camera footage from the nearby Hapa's Brewing Co. confirmed the police account.

"It doesn't appear that he even took into account that a train was coming," Garcia said.

While the exact speed of the train wasn't available Monday, the rail corridor has a limit of 55 miles per hour.

"It felt like a tin can was like just crunching it," said Jose Zarate, one of about 20 passengers onboard, in an interview with KGO-TV, this news organization's media partner.

"You see the walls coming down on you," he continued. "You don't know what to expect. I didn't know if it was a bomb. I didn't know what it was. I didn't know it was a car, until after."

The impact knocked the train off the tracks, but there were no immediate reports of any injuries to passengers.

Both occupants of the car were pronounced dead at the scene, marking the city's 24th and 25th traffic-related deaths of the year.

The train operator was taken to a hospital for testing, which Childress said is routine practice in such cases.

Service along the Winchester-Mountain View light-rail line was suspended several hours for an investigation into the collision and for repairs to the track and overhead wires.

Trains resumed running through the area shortly before 5 a.m. Monday, but at no more than 5 miles per hour.

The reduced speed limit will remain in place until additional repairs are done, said VTA spokeswoman Holly Perez, adding that riders could experience delays as a result.

The repairs, Perez added, might not be finished until the weekend.

Anyone with information about the collision can contact San Jose police Detective Brian McMahon at 408-277-4654.

[Sharks file federal suit over parking at BART station in San Jose](#)

The Sharks Sports & Entertainment company has filed a lawsuit in federal court over parking concerns at a planned BART station in downtown San Jose, even as it's involved in conversations to resolve the issue.

It's the [second suit](#) from the company over the project. The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is paying for and managing a 6-mile extension of BART from the Berryessa station through downtown San Jose and Santa Clara. It comes just two months after the VTA and BART both officially approved the project and as the VTA is seeking \$1.5 billion in federal funds to complete the \$4.6 billion extension.

The company filed the first suit against [the VTA in May](#) in Santa Clara County Superior Court, and the federal lawsuit filed Friday is the next step because the VTA is seeking environmental clearance and funding from federal authorities. The federal suit mirrors the earlier suit, said Sharks spokesman Jim Sparaco.

"While we support the extension of BART to San Jose, it needs to be done in the right way," Sparaco said in a statement. "We have filed these suits to protect one of San Jose's most valuable assets and to help ensure we maintain the safety and comfort of everyone who comes to SAP Center."

It was a move the city and the VTA expected, said San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, who also chairs the VTA's governing board.

The suit alleges the VTA failed to adequately plan for lost parking at the SAP Center, as well as construction impacts near the sports and concert venue, which annually draws some 1.5 million visitors, according to the Sharks. Sharks Sports & Entertainment manages the SAP arena and owns the Sharks hockey team.

In addition to VTA light rail and Caltrain service, Diridon Station is preparing to host BART and high-speed rail. The station sits directly across from the SAP along Santa Clara Avenue. Google also has targeted the area in its recent [real estate buying spree](#), indicating it planned to build a mix of offices and residences near the station.

But the VTA plan omitted a parking garage that had been present in earlier drafts of the station area plan, the Sharks organization said in court documents. Only 2 percent of SAP Center patrons use VTA light rail to attend events at the SAP arena and only 5 percent use Caltrain, Jeffrey Lawson of the Silicon Valley Law Group said [in a letter to the VTA](#) dated March 6, 2017.

“Past predictions of mass transit use for arena events have been grossly overestimated,” Lawson said. “There is no evidence in the record that BART would do any better.”

The VTA did not respond Monday to requests for comment about the federal suit. But, in its [formal response](#) to the Sharks’ comments, the VTA acknowledged earlier plans assumed the need for additional parking at the station, but an updated analysis using more recent data from the Association of Bay Area Governments demonstrated a large parking facility was no longer needed. The station is expected to function as a destination station in the morning commute direction, reducing the demand for parking at the station, it said.

“The BART users who elect to drive and park would need to use available public parking in the area or park at Santa Clara Station, which is one stop away,” the VTA said.

In the same report, the VTA also acknowledged construction near Diridon Station would pose “significant impacts on vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic,” but those impacts could be minimized by working with the Sharks and the city.

The Sharks and the VTA, along with representatives from the city, have been in talks since the Sharks filed its first suit in May, Sparaco said. He declined to comment on how often the three organizations have been meeting or how the conversations had been going, but Liccardo said he was optimistic the two sides could reach a mutually beneficial solution.

“I’m hopeful that if the parties continue working together, we can collaboratively reach an outcome that serves both the Sharks and the public,” he said. “Until then, VTA will continue to effectuate the voters’ will to bring BART to Downtown San Jose.”

[Back to Top](#)

[Lawsuit targets toll authority over \\$3 bridge toll increase](#) (Mercury News)

A taxpayers association, on behalf of three plaintiffs from Vallejo, Vacaville and Lodi, is challenging a recently approved \$3 bridge toll increase in state court — a move that could potentially delay or eliminate the measure.

The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association [filed the suit](#) Thursday in San Francisco Superior Court against the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA). It challenges the notion that Regional Measure 3, which [voters approved last month](#), is a “fee” requiring only a simple majority to pass, rather than a “tax,” which requires two-thirds voter approval.

The suit asks that the toll be invalidated.

The measure passed with 55 percent of the vote across all nine Bay Area counties, according to the most recent election results. It would increase bridge tolls by \$1 on Jan. 1, followed by subsequent \$1 increases in 2022 and 2025, raising an estimated \$5.4 billion over the next decade to [pay for nearly three-dozen transportation projects](#) in the Bay Area.

That’s not a fair increase for the drivers who will be footing the bill for public transit or bicycle and pedestrian projects, which together account for roughly two-thirds of the planned projects, said Timothy Bittle, a lawyer for the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association. There’s no evidence those projects will result in fewer car trips, he said. Randy Rentschler, a spokesman for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which oversees the toll authority, did not respond Monday to questions about how transit would improve traffic flow on the bridge.

“I don’t think all that money can be quantified as a traffic reduction expense,” Bittle said.

Prop 26, which voters approved in 2010, broadened the definition of a tax to include many payments previously considered to be fees, [according to the Legislative Analyst’s Office](#). Fees that benefit the public broadly — rather than providing services directly to the fee payer, such as garbage fees or state park entrance fees — would be considered a tax under Prop 26, the analyst’s office said.

So, while previous toll increases might have counted as a fee prior to Prop 26, Regional Measure 3 is a tax under the new law, Bittle argued. And, previous toll increases may have been more directly connected to bridge improvements and the highways connected to them than the most recent measure, he said.

“We didn’t have Prop 26 before,” he said. “And, this measure is almost entirely going to be spent on public transit that the toll payers aren’t using.”

Regional Measure 3 was written with guidance from the state’s Office of Legislative Counsel, as well as the commission’s outside law firm, Orrick, Rentschler said. He noted that the taxpayers association also supports the [repeal of SB1](#), the gas tax and registration fee increases the legislature approved last year.

“We oppose their path of obstruction as our highways and transit systems must be maintained and improved in order to support the Bay Area’s high wage economy that benefits Bay Area families,” Rentschler said. “We have every intention to follow through with the direction the legislature and the voters have provided to gain congestion relief so badly needed to maintain the quality of life so valued by residents.”

[Back to Top](#)

[Sharks' parking concerns prompt second suit to halt BART subway \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

The San Jose Sharks have filed a second lawsuit to block San Jose’s BART subway, this one in federal court asking that it prohibit the Federal Transit Administration from awarding a \$1.5 billion grant that’s the final unfunded portion of the \$4.7 billion project.

“While we support the extension of BART to San Jose, it needs to be done in the right way — for the good of all the residents of our city,” Sharks Co-President John Tortora said in an emailed statement. “We have filed these suits to protect one of San Jose’s most valuable assets and to help ensure that we maintain the safety and comfort of everyone who comes to SAP Center.”

It was similar to the [statement the team sent out in May](#) when it sued in Superior Court in Santa Clara County. That suit said that the Valley Transportation Authority had reneged on a plan to provide adequate parking for the SAP Center after the BART stop planned at Diridon Station was built and weren’t doing enough to mitigate impacts during the years the subway is scheduled to be under construction.

“We strongly support the BART project through downtown San Jose,” Tortora said then. “However, we don’t think the current plan addresses several important issues for SAP Center, including a promise to ensure adequate parking in the Diridon area and a safe and accessible environment for our customers during construction.”

Days before the first suit was filed the VTA and BART officially agreed on a single-bore tunnel design that will lessen surface disruption during the subway project.

But parking has long been a sore spot with the Sharks. It was an issue when the possibility of a new ballpark for the Oakland A’s at the opposite end of Diridon Station was still alive and it was a concern when the team renewed its management agreement of the city-owned SAP Center in 2015.

A year later the [Sharks sued the city over a planned Trammell Crow development](#) near Diridon and the SAP Center because it would have taken parking places.

“We anticipated the Sharks’ lawsuit against the FTA, challenging the environmental document under NEPA (the National Environmental Protection Act),” said Mayor Sam Liccardo, who is

chair of the VTA board. “We have had several meetings with the Sharks, and I’m hopeful that if the parties continue working together, we can collaboratively reach an outcome that serves both the Sharks and the public. Until then, VTA will continue to effectuate the voters’ will to bring BART to Downtown San Jose.”

[Back to Top](#)

[San Jose approves 1 million-square-foot office development near Diridon Station, future Google campus \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

One of the largest proposed projects in downtown San Jose has gotten its final approval from city officials. The entitlements come as the two Bay Area developers behind the project start branding the future corporate campus and prepare to dig in on construction.

San Francisco-based [TMG Partners](#) and San Jose-based Valley Oak Partners are slated to start construction next year on a three-building development that would add up to about 1 million square feet of new development at 440 West Julian St. It's a project they've newly named Platform 16, which they say they will open tenants sometime in 2021.

San Jose Mayor [Sam Liccardo](#) praised the investment by the two developers in a statement on Monday: “This planned development will help bring thousands of jobs into our city center with easy access to public transit,” he said, adding that the development also includes “a number of public space improvements that will help connect the Guadalupe River Park to Platform 16 and the rest of the Diridon Station area.”

Indeed, many developers in and around downtown San Jose are focusing in on the city’s largest transit hub, known as Diridon Station, because it sits smack-dab in the middle of where [Alphabet](#) Inc.-owned [Google](#) and its Texas-based development partner, Trammell Crow, have been eagerly scooping up real estate. The two giants are planning a potential mixed-use campus where up to 20,000 Google employees could eventually work among retail-lined streets bisected by an “eco-walk” and new residential units.

So far, thousands of new residential units and millions of square feet of office space has been proposed in the city's downtown and around the Diridon Station area.

“The area around Diridon Station is poised to become our megaregion’s next major innovation hub,” TMG Chairman and CEO [Michael Covarrubias](#) said in a statement Monday. “Platform 16 is well-aligned with the Diridon Station Area Plan’s bold framework to integrate open space, transportation, and development to meet the evolving needs of the region’s technology and business community and its employees.”

Michael Covarrubias is chairman and CEO of TMG Partners, one of the development firms behind a 1 million-square-foot office project in downtown San Jose that's received entitlements.

Last year, the San Jose City Council voted to approve a rezoning of TMG and Valley Oak's property from industrial to what the city calls "Transit Employment Center," zoning, which allows for office and higher-density development. Now that it is approved to move ahead, the three-building development would replace a slew of industrial structures and parking spaces on a nearly 5.5-acre site bounded by Autumn Parkway, North Autumn and West Julian streets.

When the project is complete, the property will instead be filled with a set of six-story, modular-looking office buildings, each with large windows and tan, wooden-looking finishes on the outside. Renderings show upper floor setbacks turned to patio space outfitted with plants and trees.

TMG and Valley Oak's current plans show the three buildings would vary vastly in size. The smallest would span 157,000 square feet, while the next-largest building would offer 367,000 square feet of office space. The largest office building would reach nearly 500,000 square feet. Floorplates in the development would range from 27,000 square feet to 90,000 square feet.

City plans show that the development group is looking to consolidate the more than two dozen parcels on the site into four — including one for each building. The site would also include four levels of underground parking with about 2,264 parking spots, which would come with its own condominium map, meaning the parking could be split up and sold separately, if desired down the road.

New York-based Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates is designing the project.

A source familiar with the plans said earlier this year that the group didn't yet have a general contractor locked in place, but plans submitted to the city in December name Milpitas-based [Devcon Construction Inc.](#) as the pre-construction contractor. Those plans also name San Francisco-based The Guzzardo Partnership as the landscape architect.

[Mark Schmidt](#), managing director at [CBRE](#) Group Inc., is marketing the project.

"Large technology companies today realize the importance of their space to attract talent and retain employees," Schmidt said in a statement Monday. "Platform 16's unique architecture, with its exceptionally tall ceiling heights, expansive floorplates, and multiple outdoor terraces, brings a level of design to San Jose not seen before, providing an opportunity for companies to create a workplace that sets them apart from the competition."

[Back to Top](#)

[Contractors, labor pour millions into campaign to save California gas tax hike for road repairs \(Los Angeles Times\)](#)

Construction crews conduct repairs in San Francisco last year. A measure to repeal a gas tax increase is on the November ballot. (Justin Sullivan / Getty Images)

In the two weeks since an initiative qualified [that would repeal an increase to the gas tax](#), construction companies, labor groups and civic organizations have poured \$3.7 million into a campaign against Proposition 6, campaign records show.

Although the total raised by supporters of the gas tax is \$11.8 million, backers of the repeal initiative on the November ballot say they have raised more than \$1 million in recent months, bringing their total haul to \$3.2 million.

“Unions and the highway construction industry have their own stake here, given the \$50-plus billion in road building and repair costs, and they are not about to roll over,” said Larry Gerston, professor emeritus of political science at San Jose State University. He said a reasonable expectation is that \$50 million to \$75 million will be raised for the Nov. 6 election “given the self-interest on both sides and the amount raised to date.”

The ballot measure [would repeal an increase in the state gas tax and vehicle fees](#) expected to raise more than \$5 billion annually for road and bridge repairs and improving mass transit.

In the days after the initiative qualified on June 25, the campaign against the repeal received \$1 million from a construction industry committee, the Southern California Partnership for Jobs, and \$250,000 each from the California American Council of Engineering Companies PAC, Operating Engineers Local 3, and the construction companies Teichert Inc. and Bay City Paving and Grading.

That campaign also received \$150,000 from the construction firm Myers and Sons, and \$100,000 from the Associated General Contractors PAC. The League of California Cities has put \$370,000 into the campaign, including contributions before the measure was officially qualified to be put before voters.

“I think the building trades and general contractors have a huge amount at stake, and will spend millions,” said Democratic political strategist Garry South, who noted that Gov. Jerry Brown, a major proponent of the gas tax, has \$14 million he could spend on the issue stored in his own campaign accounts.

On the other side, congressional Republicans are expected to write big checks, as they did for the campaign to qualify the initiative, in hopes of spurring more conservative voter turnout to affect congressional races also on the November ballot. At stake is which party will control the U.S. House.

At the same time, former San Diego City Councilman Carl DeMaio, who heads a committee to repeal the gas tax, said that panel has raised \$1.1 million from 25,000 donors, most giving \$100 or less.

"With the support of thousands of small donors we can make our voice heard in a political system too often dominated by big money from a handful of powerful special interests," DeMaio said in a statement.

[Back to Top](#)

[Why Silicon Valley Doesn't Mind Rising Gas Prices](#)

Gas prices have been [steadily climbing](#) since February 2016. In June, the average U.S. retail cost of a gallon of gasoline was \$2.97, up more than 20 percent from the same time last year. We're a few cents away from a national psychological milestone, \$3 a gallon. Meanwhile, the price of a barrel of crude oil recently hit \$72.94, up 62 percent in just one year. The Drudge Report, always with a finger on the pulse of America's anxieties, blared a warning about the soaring gas prices in its lead headline on Tuesday. And President Trump demanded that OPEC "REDUCE PRICING NOW" in a [tweet](#) the same day.

But companies like Facebook and Alphabet Inc. don't spend much time worrying about the cost of gasoline, so why am I musing about rising oil prices in a tech newsletter? With new investments all over the transportation industry, what happens in Silicon Valley is more connected to the Permian Basin than ever.

What's bad for the internal combustion engine-propelled vehicle owner could actually be good for tech, which has bet big on electrification. For Tesla, rising gas prices will be a welcome nugget of good news. The company has positioned itself as a full-service electric company with solar panels, batteries and, of course, all-electric cars. High prices at the pump should drive sales. However, the slowly rising price of oil hasn't been enough to insulate the company from questions this week over its Model 3 production and management turnover.

Increasing gas prices could also be good for electric scooter-sharing companies like Lime and Bird. Right now, scooter companies are actively trying to convince local regulators that scooters can replace car travel. That story gets more powerful as the price of gasoline climbs.

But gasoline prices will have perhaps the biggest effect on Uber and Lyft, though how they're impacted isn't obvious. Car owning-customers might turn to them instead of shelling out for gas. And by dint of their business models, ride-hailing companies are relatively insulated since drivers pay their own way, fuel and all.

Drivers are certainly feeling the pain, though. "It's been a pretty hot topic for drivers lately," said Harry Campbell, author of [The Rideshare Guide](#). "Generally it hurts Uber's reputation with drivers because drivers are the ones who have to shoulder 100 percent of those increased gas costs." Uber says it has increased prices in dozens of cities so far, partly in response to gas prices. And Lyft rolled out a program with Shell to offer Lyft drivers a discount on fuel. It's a small gesture toward ameliorating their rising expense.

But the companies aren't totally protected from rising prices. Theoretically, their marketplaces should adjust as they're constantly balancing supply and demand. If gas prices make driving less appealing, drivers should quit, pushing up income for those who remain. But even a self-correcting marketplace can shrink.

If fuel prices keep rising, car travel as a whole is at a disadvantage to more energy-efficient forms of transit like scooters, public transportation, and electric cars. Clearly, Uber and Lyft are aware of this fact. Uber purchased the electric bike company Jump Bikes, while Lyft just bought the bike-rental company Motivate. Both companies are exploring ways to encourage their drivers to buy electric cars while promising to integrate public transportation into their apps.

While much of the country stands to suffer from rising oil prices, Silicon Valley has positioned itself to cash in as it builds the city of tomorrow.

[Back to Top](#)

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1. [Lawsuit filed to stop Regional Measure 3 over technicality \(ABC 7 News\)](#)
2. [What happens to California road repairs if voters repeal the gas tax increase? \(Sacramento Bee\)](#)
3. [BART service cuts to affect early morning commuters \(San Francisco Examiner\)](#)

[Lawsuit filed to stop Regional Measure 3 over technicality \(ABC 7 News\)](#)

Regional measure three, known as RM3 would raise about \$5 billion to tackle Bay Area congestion.

The money would come from hiking bridge tolls three bucks phased in over the next few years.

The mayors of the three largest cities backed the measure, and 55 percent of the voters did too. Now, a lawsuit filed in state court by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association claims the toll hike is actually a tax, not a fee, and needed a two-thirds majority to pass.

The plaintiffs, three bay area commuters also point out that the bulk of the money generated would go to public transportation projects like ferries, and new BART cars.

Tim Bittle is a lawyer with the association. "None of the money is being spent on the bridges. Some is being spent on road improvements but they aren't even indirectly related to the bridges."

But backers say the mass transit improvements will take the load off the bridges. Nearly three dozen projects could now be stalled.

Randy Rentschler is with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which worked with the

state legislature to put RM3 on the ballot. Rentschler says, "This obstructionism is not going to be helpful to Bay area commuters or the Bay area economy."

The Bay Area Council which is comprised of 325 of the regions largest employers also hopes the lawsuit fails.

The head of the council Jim Wunderman says, "I think its unfortunate the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers chose to use against improving traffic congestion, instead they are suing to make it worse."

The first one dollar toll hike is slated for January.

[Back to Top](#)

[What happens to California road repairs if voters repeal the gas tax increase?](#) **(Sacramento Bee)**

A [November ballot measure](#) to repeal California's recent gas tax increase threatens road improvement and maintenance projects that receive funding through the tax.

The initiative, which requires voter approval for any new gas tax increase, is retroactive to the beginning of 2017, effectively stopping the new fees created when lawmakers passed Senate Bill 1 last year. State and local infrastructure projects would not receive funding beyond the current fiscal year.

The California Department of Transportation and local agencies say they would try to finish all active projects, but projects that haven't started construction would have to be canceled, downsized or delayed indefinitely.

"SB 1 has opened the door to allow a lot of the projects on the back burner to finally move forward," said Matt Robinson, spokesman for the Sacramento County Department of Transportation. "If that money runs out, those projects will be completed, but the ones after those will not be started quickly."

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Gov. Jerry Brown [lobbied the Legislature](#) for years to raise taxes to fix crumbling roads and bridges. Democratic lawmakers who passed the plan in 2017 argued that 23 years without a gas tax increase had created a \$130 billion backlog in needed repairs and improvements.

SB 1 increased the base excise tax on gasoline by 12 cents per gallon and the base excise tax for diesel fuel by 20 cents per gallon. It also created an annual vehicle registration fee, ranging

from \$25 to \$175, depending on the value of the car, and a fee for zero-emission vehicles beginning July 2020.

The plan is estimated to raise \$5.4 billion annually during the next decade to pay for state and local transportation projects.

The tax provided \$1.4 billion in new funding for the state in the 2017-18 fiscal year, and \$2.3 billion for the state in 2018-19, according to [the governor's budget](#). Local authorities, such as city and county transportation departments, received the same amount, because SB 1 divides the tax revenues equally between state and local transportation priorities.

Caltrans spokesman Matt Rocco said the state has used the majority of the money it received from SB 1 on highway maintenance. Caltrans has completed 17 projects statewide, he said, such as the completion of the new Midway Road bridge over I-80 between Sacramento and San Francisco.

"These projects are fixing roads that we use to take our kids to schools," he said. "We use these roads to get to work. We're already making an impact. We've got 17 projects and it may not sound like a lot, but for those who use the roads everyday, it's made a big difference."

More than 200 projects have been awarded to contractors or are in the design and planning phase, according to Rocco, and 56 others are currently under construction. By 2027, [CalTrans hopes to repair or replace](#) 17,000 miles of pavement and 7,700 signals, signs and sensors throughout the state.

If the repeal passes, Caltrans would lose about a third of its nearly \$14 billion budget. For its projects not to be canceled or delayed, Rocco said the department would have to find another source of funding.

Proponents of the initiative say the state already has enough money for road repairs.

Led by conservative politicians, the campaign argues that the tax increase is unnecessary and wasteful because the Legislature spends existing gas tax revenue inappropriately on public transportation programs or government salaries rather than directly on road construction.

"Other states have to deal with ice and sleet and snow, and they can maintain roads at a far lower tax burden," said Carl DeMaio, chairman of the coalition Reform California. "In California, politicians have stolen and diverted gas tax and put the money into everything but roads, and this is continuing under SB 1. (The repairs) should have been done using the existing gas tax."

In the Sacramento region, Caltrans' largest project is repaving and replacing 56 miles of pavement on U.S. Highway 50. The project will cost \$278 million. Other projects in the region total more than \$1.3 billion.

Sacramento County [received](#) \$7.3 million from SB 1 last year and is to receive \$21 million in current fiscal year. It has used the funds to begin [projects](#) such as traffic signal upgrades and pavement overlay. Cities in the region are to receive another \$18 million to [complete their local projects](#).

Robinson said Sacramento County similarly would have to delay or cancel projects if the repeal is approved by voters. The county would have to focus on a few projects and search for funding from other sources, such as federal grants, he said.

Because the department receives its funding all at once each year, active projects are already fully funded, regardless of how Californians vote in November.

Recent polling indicates that the repeal is likely to pass. A [USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times statewide poll](#) in May found that about half of registered voters supported a repeal of the higher taxes and fees and 38 percent of registered voters supported keeping the taxes.

California currently pays the second highest per gallon tax rate in the nation. The average retail price of gasoline per gallon in the Sacramento area was \$3.56 this month, according to the fuel price tracker [GasBuddy.com](#), almost a dollar more than the national average of \$2.86.

[Back to Top](#)

[BART service cuts to affect early morning commuters](#) (San Francisco Examiner)

Major service cuts are on the way for early morning BART riders, as the agency looks for more time to retrofit the underwater Transbay Tube for earthquake resiliency.

But before the 4 a.m. trains grind to a halt, the BART Board of Directors is set to hear two competing proposals to replace that early morning service with Transbay shuttle buses on Thursday.

The board is not set to vote on any plan yet, but the discussion will affect the commutes for the approximately 2,800 riders who commute by BART in its first hour of service. Overwhelmingly, those passengers are riding BART from the outer Bay Area to arrive in San Francisco, according to recent BART survey data.

Starting in February 2019, BART service will begin at 5 a.m., an hour later than usual, to allow construction crews more time to retrofit the three-and-a-half mile tube in the name of earthquake resiliency. Shaving time off morning service is expected to accelerate a three-and-a-half year earthquake retrofit project by 4 months and save the agency \$15 million, according to BART.

The Transbay Tube is structurally sound, but “in a very large and very rare earthquake event” the outer shell and concrete liner are predicted to crack, the agency said in public documents.

At Thursday's meeting, the BART planners will present the Board of Directors with two plans — essentially, one that provides less replacement bus service, and one that will create four additional express routes directly to San Francisco from the outer Bay Area via AC Transit. Those express routes will depart from Pittsburg/Baypoint, Pleasant Hill, Dublin/Pleasanton and Fremont BART stations.

Some activists and businesses are concerned early morning workers will get the short end of the stick.

"It feels like someone is looking for an excuse to cut off-peak rail service after it's already been declining from poor reliability," said Ellen Teapot, a transportation advocate with the group East Bay for Everyone. "Instead of handing out free tickets and running expensive peak-only express buses, the board should direct staff to keep using the bus bridge model that's already (worked), and create an all-day, every-day network of express buses that fills the gaps in BART's suburban network and adds capacity across the Bay."

Victoria Fierce, another advocate with East Bay for Everyone, worries that cutting BART service will push early morning BART riders "onto the highways" and back into cars.

In surveys of 1,180 early morning riders conducted by BART that will be presented for the first time to the board on Thursday, riders voiced approval for the more robust service network. About 33.9 percent of riders called the scaled back bus routes "excellent, good, or only fair," whereas 47.3 percent of riders felt the same way towards the option with more San Francisco express bus routes. About 60 percent of respondents were from minority groups, and about 17.7 percent were low income, according to BART.

About 64 percent of early morning BART riders exit at San Francisco stations, according to BART rider data, at Embarcadero, Montgomery, Powell and Civic Center stations.

The Hotel Council of San Francisco said hotel workers in The City count themselves among those early morning riders who depend on BART for work.

"It definitely is something that without a doubt will effect our employees," said Kelly Powers, associate director of the council. "We'll be looking at the solutions BART is bringing forth and encourage them to find ones that are as painless as possible, and economically viable, and comparable to the fees at BART."

Nick Josefowitz, a BART board member who is running for supervisor in San Francisco, said bus options for riders will be cheaper than BART — and in some cases, faster.

"This is actually really exciting," Josefowitz said. But the benefit to riders is only one half of the battle, he added, as construction crews will also benefit. "By opening later we go from an hour and a half [of maintenance work] to two and a half hours, which makes an enormous difference in how much work we can get done."

BART board member Lateefah Simon, whose district includes part of San Francisco, said the sacrifices may be difficult, but are necessary.

“What BART is committed to doing is to work with AC Transit and other services to get [riders] where they need to be,” Simon said. “In order for us to rehab the system we need more time.”

BART staff estimate they’ll present a final plan for early morning bus replacements in September.

[Back to Top](#)

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From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2018 12:21 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: July 12, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, July 12, 2018

1. [San Jose gateway village proposal adds housing units, expands offices \(San Jose Mercury News\)](#)
2. [VTA Service Impacts \(KNTV\)](#)

[San Jose gateway village proposal adds housing units, expands offices \(San Jose Mercury News\)](#)

SAN JOSE — A transit village planned for San Jose, a few train stops from a huge development that Google has proposed in the city’s downtown, is growing in potential size by expanding the number of housing units and office spaces slated for the project.

The South Bascom Gateway Station mixed-use development, according to an updated proposal now on file with San Jose city planners, would be built on a triangle-shaped plot of land totaling 6.4 acres at the corner of Southwest Expressway and South Bascom Avenue.

The site is the location of a shopworn retail property known as Dick’s Center, where a Zorba the Greek restaurant had operation. Bay West Development is developing the Gateway Station project.

“San Jose is finally building up and not out,” said Bob Staedler, principal executive of Silicon Valley Synergy, a land use and planning consultancy, referring to the city’s current push under the leadership of Mayor Sam Liccardo to build more offices and residences in dense developments near transit stops, rather than to sprawl in a Los Angeles-style pattern.

The latest version of the proposed transit village envisions 590 residential units and nearly 214,000 square feet of offices. The housing would consist of 125 studios, 353 one-bedroom units and 112 two-bedroom units, the planning documents stated.

A [prior iteration](#) of the anticipated development had proposed 447 residences and 200,000 square feet of offices.

“Gateway Station is a great mixed-use transit-oriented project,” Staedler said. “It’s a can’t-miss development with the amenities of the Willow Glen area and access to light rail.”

Bascom Station Owner, an affiliate of Bay West Development, paid \$37.25 million on June 5 for the property, which at present consists primarily of a strip mall and considerable surface parking.

The development would rise next to the South Bascom light rail stop. That station is just a few stops south of the Diridon transit station that itself is a hub for light rail, ACE Train, Caltrain, Capitol Corridor and Amtrak stops and in the future would be the site of a BART station.

Next to the Diridon Station, Google plans a transit-oriented community of offices, residences, shops, restaurants, open spaces, along with a cultural and eco-walk, in a development where 15,000 to 20,000 of the tech titan’s employees could work.

With technology giants such as Apple, Facebook, Adobe Systems and Amazon expanding in huge ways in Silicon Valley, San Jose has led the charge for creation of urban villages that would blend offices, housing and retail with immediate access to transit stops. Such developments could help combat worsening traffic woes in the Bay Area.

That close access is the case with the Gateway Station development. Open spaces in the project would physically connect the site to the South Bascom station platform, according to the proposal submitted to San Jose officials.

The proposal calls for eight levels of residences and 10 levels of offices, the city planning documents show.

“For us, it’s critical to have a rail stop,” Pete Beritzhoff, a partner with Bay West Development, said earlier this year in discussing the company’s development proposal at Southwest and South Bascom.

[Back to top](#)

[VTA Service Impacts](#) (KNTV)

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[Back to top](#)

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