

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Monday, September 11, 2017 4:40 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: September 11, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Monday, September 11, 2017

1. [Retired VTA Driver Hunkers Down in Hurricane Irma \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)
2. [BART Begins Operational Testing to Future Berryessa Station \(Hitchhiker's Guide to National Affairs\)](#)
3. [San Jose's Measure B Transportation Funding Caught in Legal Dispute \(Planetizen\)](#)
4. [California high-speed rail agency names Post, Rodriguez to leadership roles \(Progressive Railroading\)](#)

Retired VTA Driver Hunkers Down in Hurricane Irma (NBC Bay Area)

(link to video)

BART Begins Operational Testing to Future Berryessa Station (Hitchhiker's Guide to National Affairs)

BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) has been moving forward recently with its Silicon Valley Extension Project. For decades, the southern terminus of the rail system in Alameda County was Fremont Station, located on Mowry Ave. in Fremont in between Mission Blvd. and Fremont Blvd. However, as the Silicon Valley continues to expand, greater demand has arisen for BART to extend its southern terminus down into San Jose, America's 10th largest city and the heart of the Silicon Valley.

In the past, before the BART Silicon Valley Extension Project began, transit service connecting the Fremont BART station with the Silicon Valley was provided through Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) routes 120, 140, 160, 180, and 181. They used the highways 680, 880, and 237 to connect Fremont BART with various other locations in the Santa Clara County area.

But in the long term, demand for a one-seat ride from Alameda County into the Silicon Valley has risen, necessitating the BART Silicon Valley Extension Project. Thanks to federal funding, the project has been rolling forward. As of April 2017 BART opened a new station, Warm Springs/South Fremont Station, located ~4 miles south of the original southern terminus. And BART continues testing further, onwards towards Berryessa Station, located between Berryessa

and Mabury Roads in San Jose, CA. That was the main focus of this article- that BART is now starting to operate trains between Fremont and Berryessa station, running at various speeds between 5 and 80 mph to ensure the proper operation of train components on the new track.

And you may ask-- why should I care about BART extension? Right now the 680, 880, and 237 corridors are *gridlocked* during commute hour. Spending hours locked in traffic not only adds extra additional carbon dioxide emission to the environment, but also makes drivers fatigued and stressed. Time is money, and time wasted sitting in traffic is money lost to the American economy. Not only that, a full 10-car BART train can carry some 200-300 people at standard capacity (standing room only). During commute hour, I would estimate a single BART train to carry some 400-600 riders. Imagine 400-600 additional cars on the highway, adding to the gridlock. And did I mention that the Silicon Valley is expanding so even more cars are now trying to get there?

Thank God we have BART.

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[San Jose's Measure B Transportation Funding Caught in Legal Dispute](#) **(Planetizen)**

A one-woman crusade in San Jose, California has derailed transportation spending enabled by the voter approved funding package of Measure B.

"A Saratoga woman's lawsuit is holding up money from a tax hike that Santa Clara County voters approved last fall to fund a BART extension through downtown San Jose and various road and transit improvements," reports Ramona Giwargis.

"The lawsuit by Cheri Jensen, 78, claims Measure B's language was unclear and misleading to voters and that the BART extension will eat up the majority of funding, an estimated \$6 billion over 30 years," adds Giwatgis.

An [article on the same lawsuit for San Jose Inside](#) says Cheryl Jensen is a "retired urban planner from Saratoga who once sued Santa Clara County [over its mosquito fogging](#)."

As a result of the lawsuit, "[o]fficials are now worried some shovel-ready' projects in the traffic-choked region could be delayed 12 to 18 months." The article includes details of the legal case made by Jensen.

FULL STORY:

[Saratoga woman's lawsuit leaves Measure B tax money on hold, delays transportation projects](#)

Published on Thursday, September 7, 2017 in *The Mercury News*

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[California high-speed rail agency names Post, Rodriguez to leadership roles](#) **(Progressive Railroading)**

The [California High-Speed Rail Authority](#) (CHSRA) late last week appointed Thomas Post director of engineering.

In the role, Post will ensure that all engineering elements of the state's high-speed rail program are delivered within scope, quality standards, budget and schedule, CHSRA officials said in a press release.

He joins the authority from Jacobs Engineering Group, where he was operations manager for the firm's Northern California infrastructure portfolio.

Post has more than 34 years of experience in transportation and construction, including 18 years with the California Department of Transportation and 16 working for private engineering and consulting firms. His start date with CHSRA is Sept. 18.

"The addition of Thomas as the director of engineering to the high-speed rail program will provide essential knowledge and expertise as we continue our transition from planning to delivery of the nation's first high-speed rail system," said CHSRA Interim Chief Executive Officer Thomas Fellenz. "His experience with major infrastructure projects in both the private and public sector will be invaluable."

Meanwhile, CHSRA named Alice Rodriguez deputy director of external affairs. She'll be responsible for stakeholder outreach and strengthening relationships with communities near the project's alignment.

For the last two years, Rodriguez has served as the agency's small business advocate. That job involved managing the development and implementation of a program to ensure that 30 percent of high-speed rail work goes to small business.

She has more than 12 years of state experience in public outreach and stakeholder engagement, including seven years with CaliforniaVolunteers. She begins her new role with CHSRA today.

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 4:54 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: September 12, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Tuesday, September 12, 2017

1. [CA State Senator Jerry Hill's Bills Move Forward \(San Bruno Patch\)](#)
2. [Santa Clara to mull fixes for San Jose border feud \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

[CA State Senator Jerry Hill's Bills Move Forward \(San Bruno Patch\)](#)

**Senator Jerry Hill's Bills on Martins Beach and Caltrain Sales Tax Head to the Governor
Assembly Passes Hill Legislation to Ease the Cap on School Districts' Reserves**

SACRAMENTO – The state Senate approved bills today by Senator Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, to aid the effort to restore public access at Martins Beach and provide a stable funding option for Caltrain, sending the legislation to Governor Brown for his review.

The Senate voted 28 to 12 on the Martins Beach bill, Senate Bill 42, which required a two-thirds vote for approval, and 26 to 12 on the Caltrain funding bill, SB 797. The governor has until October 15 to act on bills that are passed by Friday, the Legislature's deadline to pass 2017 bills.

"We are one step closer to restoring public access to Martins Beach and a step closer to allowing the public to decide how they want to address traffic problems along the economic powerhouse of the Caltrain corridor," said Senator Hill.

Also today, the Assembly passed a bill to ease the cap that limits how much schools districts can hold in their reserve funds as savings. With an initial vote of 59-0, the Assembly approved SB 751 and returned it to the Senate for concurrence in recent amendments. If the Senate Education Committee approves the bill, it would then go to the full Senate and if passed would proceed to the governor for his consideration.

The cap was established in 2014 as part of a state budget trailer bill. Many districts contend, however, that the cap is too restrictive and does not allow them to save as much as they need.

“California voters understand the importance of saving for economic downturns – they approved a rainy day fund for the entire state to prevent devastating cuts in the future,” said Senator Hill. “This bill allows school districts to save for fiscal uncertainties and prevent adverse impacts to students and teachers. The longer the current cap is in place, the more it threatens the ability of California’s schools to maintain their fiscal solvency and provide students the best possible education.”

Senator Steve Glazer, D-Orinda, joined Hill to author the bill, with Assemblymembers Adam Gray, D-Merced, and Patrick O’Donnell, D-Long Beach, as principal co-authors.

Bill Summaries:

[SB 42](#) – Martins Beach: Creates a subaccount within the State Lands Commission’s Kapiloff Fund to be used for public access efforts – such as environmental studies, analyses and assessments – at Martins Beach in San Mateo County. The subaccount can accept money from public, private and nonprofit entities, including San Mateo County which will likely contribute matching funds. The bill provides the commission with the option to transfer up to \$1 million of existing money in the Kapiloff Fund into the subaccount, but specifies that other money in the subaccount must be used before Kapiloff funds are used.

[SB 797](#) – Caltrain Funding: Authorizes the counties of San Mateo, San Francisco and Santa Clara to place a 1/8-cent sales tax measure on the ballot to fund Caltrain operations and capital improvements, enabling local voters to decide how they want to improve traffic problems in their community. Before the measure could be put on the ballot, it would have to be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Caltrain board; a two-thirds vote from each of the Boards of Supervisors for San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties; and a majority vote of each of the following transit districts: the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, San Mateo County Transit District, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. To succeed as a ballot measure, it would need two-thirds vote of all three counties combined.

[SB-751](#) – Reserve Cap: Exempts basic aid and small districts with average daily attendance of 2,500 or less from reserve cap rules. Modifies the trigger that would require districts to spend down their reserves to the minimum allowed. Raises the cap percentage to 10 percent from the current 6 percent. Clarifies that the cap applies only to General Fund revenue, not other accounts such as construction, cafeteria, charter school or other funds.

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[Santa Clara to mull fixes for San Jose border feud \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

Santa Clara's City Council will spend part of Tuesday afternoon studying San Jose's "urban villages" concept, an effort that members hope will salve the sting along their Stevens Creek Boulevard border where the two cities have rubbed each other raw.

"We are working collaboratively with San Jose on some of these issues and hopefully we can find consensus on that," Vice Mayor [Dominic Caserta](#) said Monday.

Councilwoman [Teresa O'Neill](#) confirmed that she and Mayor [Lisa Gillmor](#) have had discussions with San Jose Mayor [Sam Liccardo](#) and [Councilmember Chappie Jones](#), whose district is along Stevens Creek, about the [dense mixed-use developments San Jose has approved](#) along the thoroughfare and their impact on Santa Clara's suburban-style neighborhoods across the street.

They represent the most recent outbreak of ill will between [two cities already at war with each other in court](#) about two other development issues: The huge City Place development planned by Santa Clara across Tasman Drive from Levi's Stadium from which San Jose fears increased housing demands, and Santana West, a smaller but still significant development across Winchester Boulevard from Santana Row that could pour even more traffic into its intersection with Stevens Creek.

Caserta was coy in his characterization of the dueling lawsuits other than to say "We're getting closer but we still have not resolved them yet."

O'Neill, who sits on the Valley Transportation Authority Board along with Liccardo and Jones, said a nagging concern is that Santa Clara has no "plans for meaningful residential development" along the Stevens Creek corridor, which has left the city unprepared to deal San Jose's far different vision.

Now she's worried that transportation planning is inadequate for what's about to happen.

"As I point out to a lot of the residents, a lot of the traffic that we are experiencing in Santa Clara is people coming from outside to drive through Santa Clara to get to jobs, particularly on our north side," she said. "So depending on where we position housing development, there's a lot of ways that we could improve the traffic in their neighborhoods and not necessarily make it worse. If we added the right infrastructure, that hopefully we will start getting people out of their cars."

She said that infrastructure should be bigger and more imaginative than new left turn lanes on Stevens Creek and that she hopes the study session can generate ideas for what that would be. The VTA's proposal to extend Bus Rapid Transit — dedicated bus lanes — on Stevens Creek Boulevard has been vehemently opposed by Santa Clara residents and businesses so far.

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Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 12:52 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: September 13, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Wednesday, September 13, 2017

1. [Caltrain reduces train horn usage \(Progressive Railroading\)](#)
2. [Editorial: In massive wealth transfer, \\$3 bridge toll hike subsidizes Silicon Valley \(East Bay Times\)](#)
3. [Report: Investment needed to prepare San Joaquin Valley communities for high-speed rail \(Mercury News\)](#)
4. [Council balks at proposed bike rules \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)
5. [Streamlined federal guidelines may 'unleash' autonomous vehicle industry \(Silicon Valley Business Journal\)](#)

Caltrain reduces train horn usage (Progressive Railroading)

[Caltrain](#) today will begin lowering horn noise from trains passing through certain stations in California.

The railroad chose the stations for horn-use reduction based on their configurations. For example, a train passing through the San Bruno, Belmont and San Carlos stations only needs to sound one short horn blast as it approaches because those stations have track and platforms that are separate from street level.

Visual message signs and audio announcements will warn passengers that trains are approaching at the 22nd Street, Bayshore, South San Francisco, Millbrae, Belmont, California Avenue, San Antonio, Lawrence and Santa Clara stations.

The reduction in horn noise is not expected to compromise safety standards set by the Federal Railroad Administration and the California Public Utilities Commission, Caltrain officials said in a press release.

Engineers will continue to sound horns at stations with pedestrian crossings, as well as when they see safety hazards near or around the tracks.

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[Editorial: In massive wealth transfer, \\$3 bridge toll hike subsidizes Silicon Valley](#) **(East Bay Times)**

East Bay residents should not have to subsidize the Silicon Valley.

But revised state legislation for a 60 percent Bay Area bridge toll increase still provides a windfall to Santa Clara County, shortchanges other parts of the region and lacks adequate safeguards against BART's wasteful spending.

After weeks of negotiations involving local and state officials, the latest plan improves on past iterations. It provides more money for the East Bay and an attempt at BART oversight. But both still fall way short.

The plan calls for permanently increasing tolls on every bridge except the Golden Gate from \$5 to \$8. Legislators are expected to vote on the bill, [SB 595](#), this week. If it passes and the governor signs it, the toll hike will be put before voters in nine Bay Area counties next year.

We wish we could support it. The region unquestionably needs more money to improve roads, highways and BART.

But residents saddled with toll hikes should proportionately reap the benefits. Instead, in a massive wealth transfer, Contra Costa and Alameda County residents would subsidize the South Bay, according to a [Contra Costa Transportation Authority analysis](#).

Drivers from the East Bay would pay half the toll hike but receive just 40 percent of the benefits from the projects that would be funded with the new revenues. In contrast, Santa Clara County would pay less than 2 percent but receive 19 percent of the benefit.

That's not all. The toll hike would be permanent and would increase annually with inflation. It would essentially be on unending auto pilot. There would be no opportunity for voters to weigh in again.

Meanwhile, the planned projects, which now total \$4.45 billion, would be paid off during approximately the first 25 years of the toll hike. After that, the extra money could be used, at the discretion of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, for bridge maintenance or other transportation projects.

Of that money, approximately \$1.1 billion would go for BART-related projects, including \$500 million for new train cars. Unfortunately, BART has repeatedly proven that it cannot be trusted with public funds.

That was shown recently when [BART reneged on campaign promises](#) for a \$3.5 billion tax-financed capital program. As we had warned, some of the money will be used to indirectly cover the transit system's [excessive salary and benefit costs](#).

At the insistence of state Sen. Steve Glazer, D-Orinda, the new bridge toll hike legislation contains requirements for an inspector general to oversee the transit agency's expenditures. We give Glazer credit for trying.

Unfortunately the BART board would essentially pick that oversight person: It would select three candidates for the job, one of which the governor must approve. Then the BART board could renew the inspector general's contract every four years, or fire him or her on a two-thirds vote.

So much for much-needed independent oversight. So much for responsible spending. This toll hike plan is still not ready to roll.

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[Report: Investment needed to prepare San Joaquin Valley communities for high-speed rail \(Mercury News\)](#)

Without state and local intervention, San Joaquin Valley cities with high-speed rail stations will become sleeper communities, farming out tech workers on express trains to the Bay Area and Los Angeles, a [report](#) released Wednesday by nonprofit think-tank SPUR argues.

While the Central Valley could serve to supply the cheap housing the Bay Area has so far failed to provide its own workers, report author Egon Terplan says that outcome would fail to capitalize on perhaps the single greatest infrastructure investment this state will make in the entire century. Rather than being the tide that lifts all boats, high-speed rail could exacerbate already-stark income disparities between the two regions, he said.

If it's done right, Terplan said those Central Valley cities can reverse years of high unemployment and disinvestment and become incubators for fledgling companies seeking cheaper rents outside the urban poles while still staying only a one- to two-hours' commute away from either end, he said.

But, it won't be easy.

Not only will state and local officials have to combat strong market pressures that for decades have favored single-family homes sprawled out on top of former farmland, but they will also have to find the money to beef up local transit options near the stations if they want to offer a viable transportation alternative in the auto-dominated region.

"This is our only chance to really fundamentally change the trajectory of the economy, particularly for these parts of California that have been left out of so much of the economic boom that has been experienced on the coast," Terplan said. "Getting these details right over the next couple of years (while) this system is still under construction, is really a legacy we want to leave for future generations of California."

Some progress has already been made. Caltrans is in the process of developing its 2018 [state rail plan](#). That plan will take a comprehensive look at how to integrate high-speed and other passenger rail services with local and regional public transit, “allowing door-to-door alternatives to driving,” the plan’s website reads.

The vision for a statewide rail network, as well as how that network will interact with local services, is critical, Terplan said, because it will focus state dollars in services that allow people to ditch their cars, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ease congestion on chocked freeways. Already, cities such as Fresno, Merced and Bakersfield are planning for regional local transit services that can connect to their high-speed rail stations, he said.

Those services won’t be successful without dense development in the downtown cores of those cities, he said, but achieving that kind of development is no small task. It’s much cheaper to pave over flat farmland than it is to construct high-rises on infill lots, Terplan said. And, the one tool at city officials’ fingertips was their redevelopment authorities, which have since been dissolved statewide. Though, the report argues development corporations should be reinstated for a limited time in cities that have high-speed rail stations to focus new growth.

The state is able to direct some funds through its Cap-and-Trade program, Terplan said, but new tools will be needed, as well.

“It’s still hard to get as much development as many would like, and there continues to be pressure to convert farmland,” he said. “We are seeing some small successes, but what we do not yet have is a strong enough state framework and set of policies to really give those cities the tools to make their downtowns, and high-speed rail, thrive.”

[Council balks at proposed bike rules \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)

Restrictive city code updates could have 'chilling effect' on alternative modes of transportation

Mountain View City Council members roundly criticized a package of changes to city laws Tuesday night that would have imposed strong restrictions on bicyclists, saying that city's staff's proposal was out of touch with the reality of trying to get around the city using alternative modes of transportation.

In a unanimous decision at the Sept. 5 meeting, council members agreed to send back to the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) several proposed ordinance changes that would have regulated the use of bikes, scooters, roller skates, skateboards and electrically motorized boards -- all of which would be defined under the new catch-all term "transportation devices."

Among the most contentious changes, the update would have made it illegal for bicyclists to ride on the sidewalk against the flow of traffic, and would have prohibited riding bikes along downtown Castro Street as well as on San Antonio Road north of El Camino Real. Proposed

changes also restricted bike parking on sidewalks to bike racks, lockers or "areas designated for bicycle parking" including bike-share corrals.

Everyone seemed to agree Tuesday night that Mountain View needs to update its decades-old city code regulating where people can ride and park bikes and other transportation devices. The laws date back to 1960, long before vehicles like electric skateboards hit the streets. But many of the proposed changes by city staff ran afoul of suggestions from BPAC, which sought to loosen the rules and make it more practical to get around the city.

In the case of riding on sidewalks, BPAC recommended allowing bicyclists to ride against the direction of traffic if vehicle traffic goes above 35 miles per hour, if there is only one sidewalk on the road, or if the bicyclist stays below 5 miles per hour -- the same rules would apply to people using other transportation devices. City staff recommended against all of the recommendations, noting that riding a bike against the flow of traffic on the street -- while not the same thing -- is the No. 1 cause of bicyclist at-fault collisions in the city.

"We want to be able to have a clear message to kids and everybody that going against traffic on the roadway or the sidewalk is a risk factor," said Nate Baird, the city's transportation planner.

BPAC member Theron Tock, speaking on his own behalf at the meeting, told council members that he was disappointed with staff's proposed changes, which several times went against BPAC's suggestions. He said it's cumbersome and challenging to get on the "correct" side of the road in order to ride on the sidewalk, and that the committee spent a lot of time developing reasonable exceptions.

"The recommendations that BPAC made were basically ignored," he said.

Adina Levin, a co-founder of the Friends of Caltrain, called the bike parking rules "draconian," and that she was dismayed that city code would entrench punitive policies on bicyclists when there's virtually no bike parking available in the downtown area. Mountain View resident John Scarboro said the new laws amount to heavy-handed treatment of bicyclists that exceeds what drivers have to deal with.

"I think overall it would have a chilling effect for people who want to ride anything other than motorized vehicles," Scarboro said.

Vice Mayor Lenny Siegel, who proposed sending the changes back to BPAC for a review, said he was concerned that the new city code, as written, would discourage people from biking in Mountain View. People are forced to lock their bikes on street signs and utility poles when there's no alternative, and biking the "wrong way" on the sidewalk is often times the safest route around town. The city simply doesn't have the bike infrastructure for the recommendations to make sense, he said.

"It appears to me that the recommendations we're seeing tonight were written by people who don't spend a lot of time bicycling around Mountain View," Siegel said.

City Council member Pat Showalter said the restrictions preventing people from riding on the sidewalk against traffic should be taken out altogether, and that she was skeptical that the hazards of riding a bike the wrong way on the road translated to a similar safety risk on sidewalks.

Another proposed change that gave City Council members heartburn was new language giving police the authority to seize a bicycle or transportation device after a person violates the updated city code twice within a one-year period. Showalter called the section too general, while Councilman Chris Clark suggested there be some clarification that shows the city has a compelling reason to confiscate a bike -- like if the rider was arrested or the bike has been abandoned.

Mayor Ken Rosenberg said it's rare to see proposed changes to the city's laws that were so ill-prepared for a final vote by the City Council. He raised concerns over the fact that city staff heavily disagreed with BPAC's recommendations without stating clear reasons why.

"Council has advisory bodies for a reason," Rosenberg said. "If they are summarily ignored or discounted, then it seems like we don't need the committee at all.

"They do good work, so my inclination is to punt this back," he said.

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[Streamlined federal guidelines may 'unleash' autonomous vehicle industry](#) (Silicon Valley Business Journal)

As technology continues to speed forward in the emerging field of autonomous vehicles, the U.S. Department of Transportation has released new policy guidelines that federal officials say are meant to streamline the process of self-driving car integration while addressing some emerging public safety concerns.

"Creativity and innovation are part of the great genius of our country, America," said U.S. Secretary of Transportation [Elaine Chao](#) at an event at the University of Michigan announcing the new guidelines. "Our goal ... is to help usher in this new era of transportation, innovation and safety, ensuring that our country remains a global leader in autonomous vehicle technology."

The guidance, titled "[A Vision for Safety 2.0](#)," is meant to address the upcoming testing and adoption of advanced autonomous vehicle technology that needs increasingly less human interaction. To that end the new guidelines update the initial policy framework released under the Obama Administration last year, but take an even more hands-off approach, including removing guidances on privacy and ethical considerations.

A series of 12 safety elements are laid out in the proposal including human-machine interfaces, post-crash behavior, data collection and vehicle cybersecurity considerations. The guidelines

also recommend best practices for state legislatures looking to enact legislation and regulation around autonomous vehicles. Participation in them will likely be largely voluntary.

One strong recommendation from the report is to leave the Department of Transportation the sole jurisdiction to regulate safety design and performance aspects of self-driving technology. In fact, the report strongly encourages states *not* to incorporate the guidelines into state statutes in order to reduce conflict between federal and state laws.

The goal, according to the report, is to create a more uniform regulatory environment, while ensuring that the government does not “impede progress with unnecessary or unintended barriers to innovation.”

One of the major promises of self-driving cars is increased safety for the nation’s drivers and passengers. According to data from the Department of Transportation, more than 90 percent of all traffic crashes involve human error.

However, the lack of updated Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards still remain a roadblock for the industry, especially as more ambitious advanced autonomous vehicles look to move away from conventional vehicle design.

“I think (the guidance) is fantastic,” said Grayson Bulte, an innovation consultant who specializes in autonomous vehicles. “We don’t know exactly how autonomy is going to disrupt the economy, but we do know that it is going to massively change things. What Secretary Chao is doing is helping to unleash the autonomy economy.”

The efforts to streamline the industry’s regulatory environment have also paired with a national legislative push to put more autonomous vehicles on the road sooner.

Recently, [the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill](#) that would allow hundreds of thousands of self-driving cars on the nation’s streets in the next few years through the implementation of national standards. While legislation still needs to pass in the Senate, the forward progress is indicative of the kind of bipartisan support that exists to fast-track the promising technology.

For the most part industry leaders like [General Motors](#) and The Self-Driving Coalition for Safer Streets, an interest group representing Google (NASDAQ: GOOG), Uber, [Ford](#) (NYSE: F), [Lyft](#) and [Volvo](#), have been largely supportive of the new stripped-down rules and its less stringent guidelines on data sharing.

“The Self-Driving Coalition for Safer Streets is pleased to see the Trump Administration continuing the work to bring fully self-driving vehicles to U.S. roads. With more than 35,000 motor vehicle deaths in 2015, the potential safety benefits of fully self-driving technology are too important to delay,” said David Strickland, the general counsel for the organization said in a statement.”

Still, the technology for self-driving cars is still getting off the ground. A fatal accident in Florida involving Tesla's (NASDAQ: TSLA) partially autonomous Autopilot feature highlighted complaints by consumer advocates on holes in the regulatory environment around self-driving cars.

"They really talked about this as a vision for safety," said John Simpson, the head of privacy for the non-profit progressive consumer rights group [Consumer Watchdog](#). "It's not. It's a roadmap to let automakers do whatever they want and turn our roads into their own private laboratories ... This is even more disconcerting when you look at what happened with Tesla."

The guidelines do take pains to state that suggestions are voluntary and continually evolving. New updated guidances may be released as early as next year.

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2017 5:15 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: September 14, 2017 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, September 14, 2017

1. [Councilwoman flies to Amsterdam, Barcelona to study transit \(Palo Alto Daily Post\)](#)
2. [State Legislature Approves Toll Bill, Gives Bay Area Voters Chance to Improve Commute Options \(Metropolitan Transportation Commission\)](#)
3. [Everything You Need To Know About Apple Park \(Digital Trends\) \(VTA mention\)](#)
4. [BART Weighs New Ordinance to Crack Down on Fare Cheaters \(KQED.org\)](#)

Councilwoman flies to Amsterdam, Barcelona to study transit (Palo Alto Daily Post)

Taxpayers and a political advocacy organization paid for Los Altos Mayor Jeannie Bruins and other officials to go to Barcelona and Amsterdam this summer.

The Barcelona trip was funded by VTA, though the agency has not yet disclosed the cost.

VTA sent Bruins, Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez and San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, as well as other San Jose and VTA officials to the Spanish city July 5-8 to see its subway system. VTA plans to build an extension of BART from the Berryessa Flea Market to downtown San Jose that will be mostly underground.

After the Barcelona trip, Bruins, Chavez, Liccardo and other officials then went to Amsterdam and surrounding areas from July 9 to 14. This trip was organized by SPUR, a San Francisco-based political advocacy organization.

The Amsterdam trip was funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, according to Teresa Alvarado, San Jose director of SPUR. This trip was to look at how European train stations accommodate for different types of rail services, buses and bicycles, Bruins said.

Since SPUR is a nonprofit, it doesn't have to report publicly how much money from the Knight Foundation that it spent on the trip.

VTA connection

Bruins said she traveled in her capacity as the VTA board president, and not as a Los Altos council member. However, she was able to get onto the VTA board because she was elected to the Los Altos council.

The purpose of the Barcelona trip was intended to let representatives of VTA and BART, who came on their agencies' dime, see how a subway line there operates. The line is in a single tunnel that is large enough to fit tracks for separate directions, instead of having two tunnels next to one another, like what BART has, Bruins said.

Bruins said that actually seeing the Barcelona subway station will help inform VTA and its board when it has to make decisions about how to dig a tunnel under San Jose for a BART extension.

"We could look at it not from a textbook or trust-me point of view, but experience the nitty gritty (of the systems) and see their operation systems," Bruins said.

As for the SPUR-funded trip, Bruins, Liccardo, Chavez and other officials from both VTA and SPUR used Amsterdam as a home base and went to four train stations in France and the Netherlands.

Studying train stations

The main focus for studying train stations was for when VTA improves Diridon Station in San Jose, Bruins said. With BART and high speed rail coming to the station in coming years, looking at these European stations were a way to see how to renovate stations with new types of rail systems, Bruins said.

Bruins also said that the SPUR trip was useful for her as a Los Altos councilwoman, even though she went in her capacity as chair of the VTA board. Bruins said it was interesting to see how employees in the Netherlands would ride a bicycle from home to the train station, leave it there, then ride a bicycle from the train station to work.

Expense reports not available

Because the tax-funded VTA paid for her Barcelona trip, the Post has been asking that agency since July 25 for travel receipts. First, the Post asked VTA representatives verbally for the information.

VTA did not provide the information. Then the newspaper filed a formal request under the California Public Records Act.

Under state law, a government agency has 10 days to respond to such a request or state a reason why a response will be denied or delayed.

On Aug. 30, the Post received an email from VTA Paralegal Jessica Rodriguez who said that VTA did not have all of the records needed to fulfill the Post's request, but that VTA was reviewing

the documents that have been turned in by officials who have turned in their receipts and “estimates we will be able to begin producing reasonably responsive records on or before Sept. 29.”

According to VTA spokeswoman Stacey Hendler Ross, officials who attended the Barcelona trip have two months to turn in their receipts. **[Wrong attribution, reporter is updating story soon]**

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[State Legislature Approves Toll Bill, Gives Bay Area Voters Chance to Improve Commute Options](#) **(Metropolitan Transportation Commission)**

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 14, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Bay Area voters will get a chance to take regional mobility issues into their own hands if Gov. Brown signs into law Senate Bill 595, which today was passed by the state Legislature. The bill, authored by South Bay Senator Jim Beall, would authorize a special election to be held as early as June 2018 in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma counties to decide whether to raise tolls by up to \$3 on the region's seven state-owned toll bridges in order to finance a \$4.45 billion slate of new transportation projects collectively known as Regional Measure 3 (RM 3).

"The downside of the Bay Area's tremendous population and jobs growth has been the crushing congestion on our freeways, rail systems and ferry routes," said Sen. Beall. "While the crush is heaviest along routes leading to or from Silicon Valley and the Bay Bridge, commuters in every part of our region are feeling the pain. If we're serious about having a dynamic Bay Area economy, we have to be equally serious about making the investments needed to keep businesses and their workers moving."

Major projects in the RM 3 expenditure plan include expansion of BART's railcar fleet to accommodate record ridership and the system's pending 2018 extension to Milpitas and East San Jose; further extension of BART's Silicon Valley service to downtown San Jose and Santa Clara; extending Caltrain to downtown San Francisco; expanding transbay bus services and AC Transit's bus rapid transit lines; constructing a direct freeway connector from northbound U.S. 101 to eastbound Interstate 580 in Marin County, and improving the westbound approach to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge and the I-580/Richmond Parkway interchange in Contra Costa County; constructing a direct connector between Interstates 680 and 880 in Fremont; upgrading the I-680/State Route 4 interchange in Contra Costa County, the I-680/State Route 84 interchange in Alameda County and the U.S. 101/State Route 92 interchange in San Mateo; various upgrades to relieve congestion in the Dumbarton Bridge corridor and improve State Route 37 in Marin, Sonoma, Napa and Solano counties; extending the new SMART rail system to Windsor and Healdsburg; expanding San Francisco's fleet of Muni Metro rail cars; and adding more vessels to the San Francisco Bay Ferry fleet. The bill also includes a \$150 million grant

program to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to regional transit hubs and to close gaps in the San Francisco Bay Trail.

According to MTC Chair Jake Mackenzie, who also serves as Mayor of Rohnert Park, "Bay Area residents get it. Nobody likes higher tolls, but voters know transportation investment is essential to maintaining our quality of life, and they've shown it by approving the Regional Measure 1 (RM 1) toll increase in 1988 and the Regional Measure 2 (RM 2) toll hike in 2004."

Projects funded through RM 1 include the new Carquinez and Benicia-Martinez bridges; widening the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge and the Bayfront Expressway connecting the Dumbarton Bridge with U.S. 101 in San Mateo County; building the Richmond Parkway connecting I-80 with the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge in Contra Costa County and the West Grand Avenue approach to the Bay Bridge in Oakland; and reconfiguring the I-880/State Route 92 interchange in Hayward.

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[Everything You Need To Know About Apple Park](#) (Digital Trends)

(VTA mention)

[Apple Park](#) may conjure images of picking a Golden Delicious on a crisp, fall day, but it's actually the iPhone maker's new spaceship-like campus. The company's [September 12 event](#) was held in the new [Steve Jobs theater](#) situated in a grove on a hillside overlooking the campus, and reporters were able to glimpse the giant donut employees have been [moving into](#) since April 2017. Although the building is filling up, construction isn't slated to be fully completed until the end of this year. Curious what's going on in Cupertino? Here's everything you need to know about Apple Park.

Spaceship campus?

A bit like a cross between a doughnut and a UFO, Apple Park earned its "spaceship campus" nickname due to its straight-out-of-sci-fi design. Construction started in late 2013, and the final outcome remained pretty faithful to [early renderings](#). A time-lapse video from satellite footage shows [years of building](#) in just seconds.

Steve Jobs himself dreamed up the idea for the campus, [designed by](#) Nathan Foster and his team at Foster + Partners. Before his death in 2011, [Jobs was very involved](#) in the process.

"He knew exactly what timber he wanted, but not just 'I like oak' or 'I like maple,'" project lead Stefan Behling told Wired. "He knew it had to be quarter-cut. It had to be cut in the winter, ideally in January, to have the least amount of sap and sugar content."

How big is it?

Sitting on 175 acres, the headquarters at 1 Apple Park Way has room for more than 12,000 employees. The main ring building is 2.8 million square feet of curved glass. The Steve Jobs Theater has seating for 1,000 and is a smaller, 165-foot cylinder, with 20-foot-tall glass walls and a carbon-fiber roof. Like the Apple Store in New York – a glass box sitting at ground level, with the store itself buried beneath it – the Theater is a glass cake jar at ground level with stairs descending to the theater itself, which is buried in the hillside. A pair of elevators sit beside the staircases, themselves a perfect example of the Apple way: Rather than having doors on both sides, the elevator is elaborately architected to rotate as it descends. It looks beautiful, yet must have been monstrously complex to build.

Additionally, there's a 100,000-square-foot Fitness and Wellness Center, complete with yoga and a dental practice. Research and development will take place in a separate facility you can see in [this video](#). Above-and-below-ground parking has space for 8,600 vehicles and stretches several stories underground.

How much did it cost?

The land alone is estimated to have a price tag of \$160 million.

Originally, the Apple Campus 2, as it was originally called, was supposed to cost \$3 billion and be finished in 2015. The land alone is estimated to have a price tag of \$160 million, and by 2013, the [budget was \\$5 billion](#), to the chagrin of some investors. Though Foster + Partners were looking to reduce costs at the time, it's unclear what the final cost will be when all is said and done. But with estimates like [\\$161 million](#) for the theater, [\\$74 million](#) for the fitness center, and [\\$25 million](#) for a tunnel, it's no wonder it might cost as much as [Richard Branson's net worth](#).

Are there any cool features?

If tons of curved glass isn't enough for you, how about a breathing building? The ring has heating and cooling systems but should stay between 68 and 77 degrees Fahrenheit most days. Ventilation and circulation move air in and out, and tubes of water in the concrete floor and ceilings help keep a lid on extreme temperatures.

"The flaps and the opening mechanism all have to relate to sensors that measure where the wind is coming from and how the air goes through it," Behling said.

Sloping glass protrudes at every floor to provide shade and keep rain off the clear walls.

All that glass is supposed to make workers feel one with nature and see what's happening outside as people run on the two miles of trails or grab one of the 1,000 bikes to traverse between buildings. There is an orchard (though we're not sure whether it has apples), as well as a pond and meadow. Should things get rough and tumble, as in an earthquake, the main building's steel base should allow it to move nearly five feet and still keep the lights on, Apple

Chief Design Officer Jonathan Ive told Wired. The curved walls are panels of safety glass, also important for earthquake-prone regions.

The campus has so many amenities, it's almost like they don't want you leave.

"Apple Park has been built to reflect Apple's values for both technology and the environment," CEO Tim Cook said at the September 12 event. "It connects extraordinarily advanced buildings with a rolling park land to form an open and inspiring environment for our teams to create and collaborate."

There are more than 9,000 trees on the 175 acres, all species able to survive in drought conditions. The ring runs on 100 percent renewable energy, powered by what Cook calls one of the world's largest on-site solar installations. Jobs was supposedly inspired by Stanford's quad, so perhaps one day there will be employees playing ultimate frisbee in the courtyard.

The ring has nine entrances and a 4,000-person capacity cafe. Massive four-story doors can open to temperate weather. For those who don't brown bag it, the kitchens are equipped to serve [15,000 lunches](#).

Does everyone love it?

Apple-fiends may call it the spaceship, but Sunnyvale residents call one of the fitness center's brick facade "[the prison wall](#)." They're about to trade constant construction noise for thousands of commuters, including those expected to avoid traffic by driving through their neighborhoods, residents complain. Apple said it will give money to Sunnyvale for traffic monitoring and the Valley Transportation Authority to ease congestion on freeways.

The campus has so many amenities, it's almost like they don't want you leave. While it seems like Apple thought of everything — food, fitness, feng shui — there's one big "f" missing: family. In the whole campus, there's no daycare facility. Meanwhile, John Gruber of [Daring Fireball](#) said he'd gotten complaints about the open floorplan from some workers who weren't excited to move into the new digs.

Can I visit?

Cook promised the North Tantau Avenue Visitor Center, which holds an Apple store and cafe, would open to the public later this year. In it, a retail location with special t-shirts and hats promises to do a brisk business, with a cache akin to the remotest Hard Rock Café shirt. If the augmented reality experience that shows you all about Apple Park isn't enough, perhaps the cafe will have those crazy [pizza boxes](#) that keep your slice from getting soggy.

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[BART Weighs New Ordinance to Crack Down on Fare Cheaters \(KQED.org\)](#)

It was that rarest of occurrences: a heart-warming BART moment.

Exiting just ahead of me at San Francisco's 16th/Mission station one day last week, a woman, probably in her 20s, approached an unlocked side gate on the station's concourse.

She glanced behind her and toward the agent's booth, 20 yards or so away, to see if anyone who would do anything was watching.

Then she pushed the gate open and left without paying her fare ... almost.

She hadn't noticed the two BART cops standing just outside the gate, attending to a man suffering some form of medical distress. One of the officers looked at the young woman and smiled broadly. She turned with a "can you believe this?" look and headed toward the exit gates to put her ticket through like the rest of us fare-paying losers.

I couldn't help it. It was so pleasing, and so surprising, to see a fare cheater get caught — even better than getting a seat at rush hour — that I whooped and called out, "There you go!" Another passenger broke into raucous guffaws.

If you ride BART with any regularity, you know how unusual that scene is. BART police have publicized focused enforcement targeting fare evasion in the last couple of months — including one involving Chief Carlos Rojas himself — and by our count, have announced issuing about 175 citations and warnings to fare jumpers and gate swingers in just the last five weeks.

But the prodigious scale of fare evasion on BART appears to dwarf the enforcement effort.

Earlier this year, [the agency estimated](#) as many as 22,000 people a day may glide in and out of the system without paying fares. The cheaters cost the agency, which is struggling to balance its budget, as much as \$25 million a year.

Now, the agency is spending \$2.65 million in the current year on a series of pilot initiatives to stem the tide of fare cheating. At the downtown Berkeley station, for instance, 5-foot-high glass barriers now surround the entrance to new, Clipper-only fare gates. Similar hard-to-jump barriers are slated for other stations.

BART is also moving to restrict movement through "swing gates" adjacent to agents' booths throughout the system — a popular access point for fare evaders. The agency is also working to make it harder for people to use station elevators to avoid payment, in some instances incorporating elevator access into the stations' paid areas.

At San Francisco's Embarcadero station, the system's busiest and the stop believed to have the highest incidence of fare evasion, BART is testing video software to try to get a handle on just how many people are using swing gates or jumping fare gates.

And at its meeting Thursday, the BART board of directors is scheduled to consider another step in cracking down on evaders: an ordinance that would help implement a "proof of payment"

fare-checking system by imposing fines on those caught on trains or in paid areas of stations without valid fare cards.

The fines — \$120 for adults, \$60 for juveniles — would be administrative, not criminal. The new ordinance, to take effect Jan. 1, 2018, if approved, would be enforced by BART police and by a new six-person group of community service officers who would patrol trains and stations with new handheld fare-inspection devices.

BART's [proposed protocol](#) for fare inspections would direct officers to inspect *everyone* on a car or in a given station area, requiring them to “progress from one person to the next closest person, not skipping any persons in between.”

To try to ensure that anti-fare-evasion measures are enforced in a non-biased manner — in other words, that fare inspection don't focus on minority riders or those who appear to be homeless — fare enforcement operations will be recorded on body cameras, according to the BART proposal, with random video pulled for review on a monthly basis.

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2017 5:22 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: VTA Correspondence: Support Letter for SB 797 (Hill)

VTA Board of Directors:

We are forwarding you the following:

From	Topic
VTA	Letter of support for SB 797 (Hill)

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



Conserve paper. Think before you print.



September 12, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) supports SB 797 (Hill) and respectfully requests that you sign this bill into law.

SB 797 authorizes the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB), through the adoption of a resolution by a two-thirds majority, to submit to the voters of San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties a measure proposing a sales tax at a rate not to exceed 1/8 percent to pay for operating, maintenance and capital expenditures related to the Caltrain Commuter Rail Service. The legislation provides that the sales tax could be submitted to the voters only upon: (1) the approval of the boards of supervisors of San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, consistent with each county's applicable procedures; and (2) the approval of the governing boards, by a simple majority vote, of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) and VTA. Once placed on the ballot, the sales tax would need to be approved by a two-thirds majority of all those voting on it.

Caltrain is a 76-mile daily commuter rail service that runs between San Francisco and the city of Gilroy in the southern part of Santa Clara County. It operates on railroad tracks owned by the Peninsula Corridor JPB between San Francisco and the Tamien Station in San Jose, and on Union Pacific Railroad tracks between the Tamien Station and Gilroy. Caltrain is administered through a joint powers agreement that was executed by the City/County of San Francisco, SamTrans and VTA. The JPB, which consists of three members appointed from each of the three counties, governs the service, while SamTrans serves as the managing agency.

A long-standing problem for Caltrain has been the lack of a dedicated revenue source to support its operations, maintenance costs and capital projects. Instead, Caltrain must rely on fare revenues, state and federal grants, and voluntary contributions from its three member agencies, which operate and financially support their own local public transit services. This awkward situation results in financial instability for Caltrain, particularly during those fiscal years when the three member agencies are experiencing their own budgetary challenges and need to use as much of their revenues as possible to pay for their own transit services.

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Support for SB 797 (Hill)
September 12, 2017
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SB 797 takes an important first step toward resolving this problem by authorizing the Peninsula Corridor JPB to impose a 1/8 percent sales tax in the three Caltrain counties, subject to voter approval. Such a sales tax would generate approximately \$100 million a year for Caltrain operating, maintenance and capital expenses and, thus, offset the need for voluntary contributions from the three member agencies.

Securing a dedicated, predictable and permanent revenue source to replace the member agencies' contributions has been a long-sought goal of Caltrain. Therefore, we respectfully seek your support for SB 797. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeannie Bruins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

From: Board Secretary
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2017 11:36 AM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: VTA Standing Committee Agenda Packets - September 2017 Meetings

VTA Board of Directors:

You may access your VTA Standing Committee Agenda Packet for **the September 2017, Regular Meetings** by clicking on the links below:

- **Congestion Management Program and Planning (CMPP) Committee** – [CMPP Packet](#)
- **Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee** – [A&F Packet](#)

Please also find attached Work Plans for CMPP and A&F for your reference.

We would like to thank you for your support of VTA's Sustainability Program and to **“GO GREEN”** by subscribing electronically to the packets.

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, September 15, 2017 3:37 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: VTA Daily News Coverage



VTA Daily News Coverage for Friday, September 15, 2017

1. [Top 40 Under 40 2017: Aaron J. Vogel \(Mass transit Magazine\)](#)
2. [Local Transit Agencies Heighten Security \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)
3. [Willow Glen road diet, bike lanes planned for Minnesota Avenue \(Mercury News\)](#)
4. [Bridge Toll Measure Would Raise Billions for Bay Area Transportation; Passes Over Objections from East Bay Legislators \(KQED.org\)](#)

[Top 40 Under 40 2017: Aaron J. Vogel \(Mass transit Magazine\)](#)

- **Alma Mater: Michigan State Spartans**
- **Favorite book: “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Stephen R. Covey**
- **Favorite TV show: “Shark Tank”**
- **Favorite hobby(ies): Ice Hockey**
- **Fun fact about yourself: Vogel is addicted to hockey and traveling. He is the assistant coach for the Jr. Sharks 18U AA hockey team and has traveled to 19 countries and 47 of the 50 U.S. states.**
- **What is your favorite transit system (outside of the one you work for or have worked for!) and why?: San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency. It is multimodal and the heart of the Bay for passenger trips taken compared to any other.**

It was looking through the classifieds for the highest paid position that started Aaron Vogel’s career in public transportation as a bus driver at Northstar ski resort in Lake Tahoe. Within months he was promoted to a supervisor and helped transition it from a seasonal mom-and-pop operation to a year-round operation, transporting the most passengers in the Tahoe basin and sustaining year-round work for some of the employees.

Revamping Northstar's BlueGO service to make it financially viable to sustain itself included revamping the entire network – more than 20 percent of the services, the fare system and included putting in new technologies.

Vogel continued to broaden his experience, going to Google in California to oversee its commuter shuttle and bike shuttle program for employees. He was a part of the operations when transitioning from contractor-owned vehicles to Google-owned vehicles. He also executed a rapid transportation service growth plan of 70 percent in six months.

Previously to his position at the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) in San Jose, California, Vogel was at San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI), responsible for coordinating and managing several aspects of a large-scale operational shift, including developing training curriculum, such as manuals, presentations and testing materials, into a year-long module-based program where staff could test out of certain areas and start from certain modules based on previous working experience; developing and implementing new operating procedures related to a new radio and CAD/AVL system; and service planning and tunnel management for a 6-month early subway shutdown to facilitate the radio replacement construction.

At Keolis Transit America, Vogel served in several roles, including general manager, regional director and assistant director, overseeing operations for Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada's public transit fixed-route operations. He managed a 24/7 service which included many high frequency services, like the Stripe/Duce and SDX/BRT routes.

Currently, as manager of Regional Transportation Services at VTA, Vogel focuses on long-range program plans for all services he oversees. His department collaborates with transit agencies throughout the region to provide service into Santa Clara County, including three regional rail systems and three regional express bus services. He and his team also manage private contractors that provide the ACE Shuttles and Paratransit Services, and secures Air District funds to support the ACE shuttles and VTA's Downtown Area Shuttle. He is responsible for a \$35 million operating budget.

Current work includes in-vehicle technology innovation projects for consumer use, such as WIFI, interactive monitor displays with "rate my driver" features, traffic alerts and program notifications. Additional innovations include the deployment of online Paratransit trip bookings, cashless faring and user "track my ride" features.

Aaron volunteers and serves on the organization's deferred compensation committee, and as the staff liaison for VTA's Committee for Transportation Mobility and Accessibility (CTMA). Aaron has organized several public workshops and given presentations to ensure the public was well-informed. To further expand his understanding of public transportation needs, he works with several community advocacy groups.

Aaron frequently attends, participates and contributes in industry events: the California Association of Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) and the American Public Transit Association (APTA) serving on its Access and Bus Operations Committees. He has given back through participating as a panelist and speaker on First/Last mile solutions. He is also a part of the Bay Area Regional/Partnership of Accessibility Committee (BAPAC).

Aaron has a Bachelor's in Management and will soon graduate with a Master's Degree in Transportation Management from the Mineta Transportation Institute with a concentration in High Speed Rail. He is a graduate of UITP's Public Transport Manager Program and a Certified Community Transit Manager from Community Transportation Association of America. At Northstar, Aaron was awarded A New Level of Customer Service award and Operations of the Year award in 2008.

"Surround yourself with good people. Have a good boss and mentor that through your work to challenge yourself to make your job exciting to come to every day."

"Always be willing and open to take on new tasks and learn new things. Do not be afraid to take risks. We are all different, be open to new approaches, processes and technology which can lead to new and better ways of doing things."

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[Local Transit Agencies Heighten Security \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)

(Link to Video)

[Willow Glen road diet, bike lanes planned for Minnesota Avenue \(Mercury News\)](#)

Minnesota Avenue in Willow Glen will be going on a road diet this fall to accommodate bicycle lanes.

But unlike the controversial Lincoln Avenue road diet that divided the Willow Glen community, the San Jose Transportation Department's latest proposal may get a better reception if the sentiment at a Sept. 5 community meeting is any indication.

Out of approximately 100 people who attended the meeting at Willow Glen Elementary School, only one neighbor raised a hand when the crowd was asked who opposed the proposed lane changes on Minnesota.

The city wants to reconfigure the lanes on Minnesota between Weaver Drive and Alma Avenue from four to one in each direction plus a center turnout lane. Those changes, and the removal of on-street parking between Lincoln and Alma, would free up enough space for buffered bike lanes.

Councilwoman Dev Davis, who represents the Willow Glen neighborhood, said in an interview that neighbors have been asking about a road diet on Minnesota since before she was elected.

“People on Minnesota, when I was campaigning, asked about adding bike lanes and slowing down traffic,” Davis said. “After I was elected, probably in the first three or four months, other people contacted me about it and so I asked (the Department of Transportation), because I knew Minnesota was going to be repaved, if they would look at that possibility.

“They did look at it and it was feasible, so that’s why we went out to the community,” she added.

Adrianna Jones, who lives near the corner of Minnesota and Hicks avenues, told the Resident she welcomes the road diet on Minnesota because “there’s a lot of accidents that don’t get reported there.”

“I’m all for keeping it two lanes all the way,” Jones said. “I think people use Minnesota and Hicks as thoroughfares now.”

She said many people often speed near her house “because it goes from two lanes at Hicks and Minnesota, then opens up” to four lanes.

“Folks seem to view that as a reason to speed up and they race,” she added.

The transportation department expects the same 11,774 cars to continue traveling on Minnesota during peak commute hours, but likely 2 or 3 mph slower and closer to the posted 30 mph speed limit. Neighbors on streets parallel to Minnesota shouldn’t notice any motorists using their street as a detour.

Davis said she thinks the lane configuration planned for Minnesota is getting less heat from neighbors than Lincoln’s did because it’s along a residential route instead of through a business district.

“I think it’s more attractive because people want traffic to be slow in front of their houses,” Davis said. “But also people want to be able to safely get to school, the library, transit. There’s an Alzheimer’s center right there, and the new renovated Three Creeks Trail is also going to be able to be connected now with the bike lanes.”

A loss of street parking between Lincoln and Alma to make way for the bike lanes didn’t seem to phase residents at the meeting.

“I did hear from some people on the part of Minnesota that will lose the parking, and they said, ‘We don’t park there anyway because it’s not safe,’ ” Davis said. “People don’t feel safe parking there because you’re basically in a lane of traffic when you park there.”

Transportation staff surveyed parking in the area multiple times and found just five cars parked during the peak hour of 11 p.m., so the city will be “taking away parking not being used anyway.”

“I live in that area and didn’t even know until we started this process that parking is allowed at any time on that stretch of Minnesota because I’d never seen a car there,” Davis added.

Davis said she’s “pleasantly surprised” at the general response to giving Minnesota a road diet.

“Of course, not everyone is going to want the change or like the change, but it was much more positive than the experience with Lincoln Avenue,” she said.

Staff will take all public input and evaluate any possible changes to make the design more user-friendly. If all goes as planned, city workers will repave and restripe Minnesota sometime next month.

[Bridge Toll Measure Would Raise Billions for Bay Area Transportation; Passes Over Objections from East Bay Legislators \(KQED.org\)](#)

If you live in the Bay Area, you’ll be hearing a lot about [Senate Bill 595](#) over the next year or so. The bill by state Sen. Jim Beall, D-Campbell, won final Senate passage Thursday and now awaits the governor’s signature.

SB 595 provides for a vote in the nine Bay Area counties next year to raise tolls on the region’s state-owned bridges — that’s all of them, except the Golden Gate — by as much as \$3. If the Bay Area Toll Authority, the agency that oversees the bridges, seeks that maximum \$3 increase, tolls on the bridges would be \$8 to \$9. (We still wouldn’t be in Verrazano-Narrows Bridge territory, though; the cash toll on the span between Brooklyn and Staten Island rose to \$17 earlier this year.)

The higher tolls would raise something like \$375 million a year, according to [the latest legislative analysis](#), and pay for nearly three dozen transit and highway projects totaling \$4.45 billion.

Traffic backs up at the Bay Bridge toll plaza. *(Justin Sullivan/Getty Images)*

BART would get \$500 million to help pay for its expanded fleet of new-generation rail cars, and \$50 million for preliminary design and engineering work on a second transbay crossing. The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority would get \$375 million, part of what it needs to build a planned BART extension to downtown San Jose. Some \$325 million would go to a long-dreamed-of Caltrain extension from San Francisco’s far-South of Market to downtown. The Bay Area’s Water Emergency Transportation Authority would get \$300 to pay for new boats and dock facilities.

On the highway side, \$300 million in toll proceeds would go to building new paid express lanes on Bay Area freeways, and another \$1.1 billion would go to rebuilding interchanges and improving the most heavily traveled highway corridors.

Another major provision: In a provision put forward by longtime BART critic Sen. Steve Glazer, D-Orinda, the measure creates a new inspector general position that would have sweeping authority to watch over the agency's finances and performance.

A long list of local officials, unions, business and urban planning groups supported SB 595 as crucial for dealing with current and future transportation challenges in the Bay Area.

"This bill gives the Bay Area the bold plan it needs for the future," Sen. Beall, the bill's sponsor, said in a statement after the proposal finally made it through the Assembly on Wednesday. He added that the measure is especially important in Silicon Valley.

"On weekdays, an average of 602,000 vehicles enter and exit the Bay Area," Beall said. "With the expansion of tech firms, such as Google and Apple, those numbers will grow. Let's take action now to curb traffic before it becomes worse."

So, what's not to like in this picture?

Several Contra Costa County legislators — Assemblymember Tim Grayson and Congressman Mark DeSaulnier among them — opposed SB 595, saying that it's 1) a regressive tax and 2) a ripoff for the residents of the East Bay.

Their main argument — both [DeSaulnier](#) and [Grayson](#) penned op-ed pieces for the East Bay Times — is that residents of Alameda and Contra Costa counties will pay significantly more in increased tolls than their communities will get back in benefits.

Grayson said after SB 595 passed the Assembly that while he understood the need for infrastructure upgrades in the Bay Area, "there is a fundamental lack of equity in this proposal. ... East Bay commuters deserve a better and far more just measure."

DeSaulnier, who has vowed to fight the toll increase when it appears on the ballot, said he feels the long shopping list of projects in SB 595 is the result of what he termed a politically driven planning process on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

"It's frustrating that such an innovative area is so backward when it comes to transportation," DeSaulnier said.

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