

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 4:25 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: December 17, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Monday, December 17, 2018

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Those are traffic signal sensors, not red-light cameras: Roadshow (includes BART SV Update question) (Mercury News)

Q: Why don't cities and the state put radar sensors on light poles and traffic signals to detect autos? Then sensors would not be damaged by grinding roads or ditches dug. If they work on the new automobiles they should work while on poles.

Robert Leverton, Morgan Hill

A: A good idea, and one that is becoming common practice in most cities. At countless intersections, there are cameras installed above the traffic signals at the busiest intersections. Many drivers think these are to nab red-light runners, but they are not. Instead, they monitor the flow of traffic and help engineers reset signals to ease delays and not rely on pavement sensors which are often damaged during paving work.

This idea doesn't work well on freeways, where there are no traffic signals.

Q: Any Berryessa BART updates? Seems we haven't heard anything for a few weeks.

SJ Guy

A: We could know more next month. Faulty parts are being replaced and trial runs could begin by the end of January. That will take at least six months, and the often delayed 10-mile extension from Fremont to Berryessa could open late next year. So we hope.

Q: I heard about this technique that you wrote about seven years ago and am trying to find out if it has been successful. I live in Puerto Rico and one of the neighboring towns is planning to build an asphalt plant as economic development. I think this is a terrible idea and would like to present them with an alternative.

Alison Mason, Jayuya, Puerto Rico

A: Here is what I can tell you. Asphalt is very popular with drivers. It emits less noise, the black pavement greatly improves visibility and withstands wear-and-tear much better than in the past. Caltrans now requires asphalt be used on nearly 30 percent of its paving projects,

Q: The metering lights to get on southbound Highway 101 at Marsh Road in Palo Alto have been out for a couple of weeks. Are copper thieves really still a thing? Or is there some other explanation?

Allen Lucas, Redwood City

A: Can't blame this on copper thefts. The metering light at the loop on-ramp was hit by a car and the meter at the diagonal ramp has electrical problems and has no power. No time frame yet on the fix.

Q: About those signs saying slow traffic stay right, how about we change the sign to show a turtle with civilian clothes on and the rabbits behind him with prison stripes on?

Greg Diprinzio, San Juan Bautista

A: Greg knows his turtles and rabbits. He sees them both on his truck commute on Highway 101 to the Bay Area.

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[Express lanes will extend into North County starting next year \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)

Plans for a broad network of toll lanes on major highways in Santa Clara County will take a big step forward next month, when construction is set to begin on so-called express lanes on Highway 101 in Mountain View and Palo Alto.

The \$23.5 million contract for the project, which passed on the consent calendar at the Dec. 6 meeting of the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) board of directors, calls for replacing the existing carpool lanes with express lanes on Highway 101 from Highway 237 to the San Mateo County line. Express lanes still permit free carpool use, but will allow single-occupancy vehicles to pay to use the lanes.

VTA officials have been pursuing a comprehensive network of express lanes in Santa Clara County since 2008, calling it a quick and inexpensive way of mitigating traffic by leveraging "unused capacity" in carpool lanes. Referred to by various names over time -- toll, express or managed lanes and "roadway pricing" systems -- the vision is to eventually construct these lanes along the entirety of Highway 85 and Highway 101 in Santa Clara County. The project is being broken out into several phases due to lack of available funding, according to a VTA staff report.

This latest contract marks the third phase of VTA's express lane projects, with the first two creating express lanes along the entire length of Highway 237. Although most of the Phase 3 work will be on Highway 101 in Mountain View and Palo Alto, it does include express lane conversion on the northernmost segment of Highway 85 in Mountain View in order to connect existing carpool lanes on both highways at the interchange.

VTA spokeswoman Brandi Childress said traffic is particularly bad along the stretch of highway and is "ripe for a congestion management solution" like express lanes, which she said provide another option for commuters. This phase doesn't involve any roadway widening -- carpool lanes are simply getting converted within the existing footprint of the highway -- making the project both cheaper and faster to build. Construction is scheduled to begin in January and be completed in the summer of 2021.

The only express lanes currently operated by VTA, the eastern section of Highway 237, collected tolls on 106,700 single-occupancy vehicle trips between July 1 and Sept. 30 this year, totaling about \$324,400 in revenue and accounting for about 14 percent of the traffic using the lanes. Westbound morning commuters were more likely to pay the tolls compared to eastbound evening commuters, and single-occupancy drivers paid anywhere from 30 cents to \$8 to drive in the lanes. California Highway Patrol officers issued 294 citations during the three-month period, down from 551 over the same time in 2017.

When traffic gets bad enough, the express lanes convert back into carpool lanes and single-occupancy drivers are prohibited from using the lanes. But the reality is that conditions rarely get that bad. From July through September this year, carpool-only restrictions were in effect for a total of seven hours -- averaging about six minutes per day.

Similar to express lane construction on the western segment of Highway 237, the future work on Highway 101 will be done at night or behind temporary barriers, Childress said.

"There will be minimal or no impacts to traffic during the daytime and commute hours," she said.

In previous versions of the Silicon Valley Express Lane program, VTA sought to convert the median along Highway 85 into additional toll lanes, which was a source of intense controversy among West Valley residents and elected officials. Critics argued that the median was intended for a public transit option ever since construction of the southern end of Highway 85 was

completed in the 1990s, and that a toll lane would do little to provide congestion relief on the clogged highway.

VTA's Highway 85 Policy Advisory Board, chaired by Mountain View City Council member John McAlister, is currently exploring alternative options for the median, which could be used for a transit lane that would run from South County all the way up into Mountain View's tech campuses. Though VTA had previously explored putting light rail in the median, McAlister said there's a strong consensus among the board's members that a fixed-rail system is too expensive and too slow to work.

"Rail has proven to be not the technology of the future, it's the technology of the past," McAlister said. "It's a mode of transit that is no longer viable, either economically or (for) efficiency, in this area."

Multiple projects, including the policy advisory board's study for the future of Highway 85 transit, have been slowed to a halt due to a lawsuit against Measure B, VTA's 2016 sales tax, but express lane projects are not among them. The projects are funded largely through state sources, including the gas tax signed by Gov. Jerry Brown last year.

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[Impasse for Managed Lanes](#) (The Daily Journal)

County officials split on what agency will own and operate toll collection, management

Local policymakers are divided as to who should own and operate tolled express lanes proposed for Highway 101, and the choice is often described as that between local and regional control.

The two remaining options on the table are to have San Mateo County own the express lanes and have the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority operate them, or to hand over ownership and operation duties to the Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority, a joint powers authority between the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Bay Area Toll Authority. BAIFA manages other express lanes, including Interstate 680 in Contra Costa County.

The owner and operator decision is up to both the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, which oversees the county's sales tax revenue earmarked for transportation, and the City/County Association of Governments. C/CAG is a joint powers authority comprised of board members representing each city and the county that works on quality of life issues such as air quality and transportation, among others.

At a meeting Thursday, C/CAG voted 11-7 to enter into negotiations with BAIFA after the TA last week voted 5-2 for the local ownership option.

Those divergent votes mean the project is currently at an impasse, though policymakers appear confident the two boards can come to a consensus within the next month or two. Part of the C/CAG motion Thursday entailed the creation of a joint ad hoc committee between both boards to resolve differences.

“Both boards have to come to an agreement in order for the Managed Lanes project to move forward,” said TA spokesman Dan Lieberman. “Both staffs are already in contact with one another and will work together to find a way forward on this issue.”

Facebook, which was part of a group of private sector employers that donated \$50 million to the project, weighed in Thursday, Dec. 13, with a letter to C/CAG highlighting the benefits of consistency and regional interoperability if the BAIFA model is selected.

Andrew Fremier, deputy executive director of BAIFA, said whatever choice the two boards make will be virtually permanent because the express lane technology infrastructure doesn’t transition well between agencies.

“I think the decision you make, whatever it is, is a decision you’re going to be staying with for a long time,” he said.

How it works, raises money

The \$514 million Managed Lanes proposal entails the construction of an additional lane in each direction on the stretch of Highway 101 in San Mateo County. The far left lane in both directions would be converted to an express lane equipped with signs and real-time surveillance equipment. After the project is complete, continuous express lanes would extend from Interstate 380 in San Bruno to San Antonio Road in Mountain View.

Express lanes promise speeds of at least 45 mph on all lanes at all times by allowing buses, carpools of three people or more and motorcycles to travel free while charging an electronic toll for other drivers who choose to use them. The tolls would fluctuate based on traffic volumes, but initial estimates suggest the average price would be \$1 per mile in San Mateo County, which is relatively cheap compared to express lanes elsewhere.

The facility would also generate money. Estimates range from \$9.7 million to \$20.5 million in net revenue annually for the Highway 101 facility, but it could generate much less money or no money at all the first year it’s in operation or if there is an economic downturn. Revenue must be reinvested into the corridor and officials are excited to spend it on an express lane expansion as well as express bus service on those lanes.

The ultimate vision for many officials is to build continuous express lanes from Fourth and King streets in San Francisco to Mountain View. Fremier argued BAIFA can best realize that vision.

“We honestly believe that the things that BAIFA and MTC bring to the table give a lot more flexibility for developing the rest of the corridor and offering multiple mobility options in that corridor,” he said. “San Francisco seems to be much more engaged now to invest in an express

lane system that would connect to [San Mateo County]. ... There seems to be quite a bit of momentum to get the work going and frankly I think when the [San Mateo County] system starts to operate, people will really get engaged in recognizing the shortfalls of ending at 380.”

Construction on the Managed Lanes project is slated to begin in spring 2019 and wrap up by mid-2022.

The owner of an express lane facility owns all the tolling equipment, sets tolling policies and rates, issues violations and would be responsible for implementing any equity programs. The owner also assumes all liabilities and risks.

The operator of the facility, as one might guess, manages day-to-day operations.

Voting representation

BAIFA is a six-member committee comprised of voting members from the counties in which it operates. If BAIFA were to own the express lane facility on Highway 101, then the BAIFA committee would grow to seven members and San Mateo County would have one voting representative at the table.

That relatively small degree of influence was a turnoff for some C/CAG boardmembers.

“I have a deep concern about completely handing over [ownership to BAIFA] — one out of a handful of people doesn’t make me super comfortable that this isn’t going to get out of control and it’s going to negatively impact people’s lives and we’re doing this to make people’s lives better,” said Boardmember Catherine Carlton, who is also a Menlo Park councilwoman. “I’m uncomfortable with just handing it over.”

Boardmember Doug Kim, also a Belmont councilman, suggested local control wouldn’t be drastically compromised by granting ownership to BAIFA.

“As long as we can make sure that our representative on BAIFA has clear direction from the county, from the cities, I feel that we can make sure that our representative represents us on the BAIFA board,” he said. “As long as other counties can’t roll over us, I feel like we can preserve local control even though we only have one boardmember on BAIFA.”

Kim also suggested the BAIFA approach would be best in terms of expanding the corridor, but he’s not without reservations. He wants to see BAIFA’s promises in writing and wants to gain a clearer understanding of San Francisco’s willingness and ability to build express lanes there.

“I think there’s more advantages to the BAIFA approach, but it’s close,” he said.

Emily Beach, a TA boardmember and Burlingame councilwoman, spoke during public comment in support of the VTA partnership.

“What we’ve heard from our community is we’ve got to improve mobility on this corridor not just for cars on the highway but all modes of transportation and we also have to do it for all income levels. The VTA operating with ownership in San Mateo County I believe will best fulfill

that vision,” she said. “Because this project is controversial and there’s concern about ‘are we creating a Lexus lane for wealthy people to drive faster in their single occupancy vehicles on the highway’ it becomes even more important that we have very transparent and local accountability to our constituents that yes we’re generating revenue, but we can draw a direct and local line to how we are investing and addressing equity.”

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Electric Buses in CA by 2040 (10 articles)

[Mass Transit Magazine](#)

[San Francisco Chronicle](#)

[Trucks.com](#)

[Earther.gizmodo.com](#)

[USA Herald](#)

[UPI.com](#)

[EcoWatch.com](#)

[TechCrunch.com](#)

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[Praying for Mass Transit Won't Bring It Back \(Berkeley Daily Planet\)](#)

When I was a child in St. Louis in the late 1940s and early 1950s we lived two or three blocks from two streetcar lines to the north and south of our house and a bus line to the east. When we needed to shop for essentials like school shoes my mother took my sister and me downtown on the streetcar, wearing our white cotton gloves to make sure we didn't contract polio by touching unclean surfaces. On a couple of very special occasions when I was about 10 I took the streetcar downtown all by myself to have lunch with my father near his office. No one worried about safety, since each streetcar had both a driver and conductor.

Our family had a car, but it was seldom used during the week. There was only one limited access thoroughfare, called "The Superhighway".

I have never lived in the real suburbs. Mostly, I've lived in the trailing edge of what were called streetcar suburbs, houses built in the early 20th century to be served by the proliferating streetcars. When an aunt's family moved into to a brand-new house in the real suburbs in the 50s, they were considered eccentric within our extended family, all the rest of whom lived within a few blocks of each other in "The West End".

When my nuclear family moved to Pasadena in 1953, my mother, my sister and I, plus a dog and at least one cat and I think a parakeet got on the train at the St. Louis Union Station to share a sleeping compartment.

Three or four days later we arrived at the Southern Pacific station in Pasadena, close to our new home in another transit-shaped community, this one with rail lines to downtown Los Angeles.

But things were starting to change. The train schedule was shrinking, so my father bought a station wagon to drive to work in L.A. on the Pasadena Freeway. My mother needed to chauffeur us to many destinations in the sprawling Los Angeles metropolis not served by transit, so she happily acquired a beloved used Mercury convertible. By the end of my high school days, most of my peers had their drivers' licenses, and some had their own cars.

My college transportation was feet and bicycles. I seem to remember that Cal undergraduates were not allowed to have cars, though how that was enforced I can't imagine.

In Berkeley by that time the Key System train line had been removed. If we needed to go to San Francisco, which we seldom did, the F bus ran often, day and night.

After I got married and graduated (in that order) I moved to Ann Arbor, where we lived without a car until we had two children, when I won a camper van in a 25-words-or-less contest. Twelve years later we moved back to Berkeley with three kids, who were conveniently bussed to school for integration purposes. When they got to Berkeley High, the 65 bus stopped in front of our door,

Their grandparents were in Santa Cruz. Greyhound had several direct Oakland-to-Santa-Cruz busses every day, staffed by friendly drivers who kept an eye on kids travelling alone, so they could visit frequently in the summer. This was a big plus for busy me—at that point I was going into San Francisco for night classes on the E bus, which ran many times, day and night, just a block from my house,.

By this point readers might be wondering why I'm sharing all this personal transportation history. Cue Joni Mitchell's Big Yellow Taxi: You don't know what you got till it's gone.

What's gone, sadly, is the extensive and effective public transportation network that we used to enjoy, which has largely disappeared. BART is not a patch on what the Key System plus frequent AC transit buses used to offer—it's dirty, over-crowded and unreliable. There's just one early morning Greyhound run to Santa Cruz, and it's sketchy.

Concurrently, a myth has grown up around the existence of public transit, one part nostalgia and one part fairy tale. It's become a cult which resembles the [cargo cults](#) beloved of island dwellers.

(Wikipedia: "A **cargo cult** is a belief system among members of a relatively undeveloped society in which adherents practice superstitious rituals hoping to bring modern goods supplied by a more technologically advanced society.")

The idea is that if you create the need, technology to fill it will follow. If you'd like to have a really great transit system, just build housing and Tinker Bell will provide one that works.

There's just one problem: Today's transit infrastructure is orders of magnitude worse than the one of my youth, or of my children's youth.

Exhibit A: The next time one of those huge exhaust-spewing busses passes you, count how many people are riding in it. Just let me know any time you see more than six passengers. I live on Ashby Avenue, and the infrequent 80 busses which pass my front door never have more than two passengers, any hour of the day or night.

These runs are meeting an unfelt need, yet at the same time the E line now makes only four East Bay stops for just five morning-only runs daily. If you have an evening event or meeting in San Francisco, forget it.

Or maybe you might like to try to ride BART from San Francisco to Berkeley in the rush hour. The cars are jammed, despite frequent promises that improvement is just around the corner.

What we currently have just doesn't work. But proximity to dysfunctional transit is being used by the real estate development industry to promote land speculation in neighborhoods unlucky enough to be located near supposed transit.

There's now an unholy alliance between real estate developers and the politicians they pay for (think Scott Wiener, Nancy Skinner, and now, from a destination near you, Buffy Wicks) that is trying to take over small communities' ability to plan how local development takes place.

This massive push by developers and their lackeys to revamp the Bay Area for maximum profits has culminated in a new organization with the homey sobriquet of CASA.

There was a cream-puff description of what they're up to in a recent SF Chronicle article:

[Two more nominations in the pipeline](#)

With help from Stephanie Beasley and Daniel Lippman

Editor's Note: This edition of Morning Transportation is published weekdays at 10 a.m. POLITICO Pro Transportation subscribers hold exclusive early access to the newsletter each morning at 6 a.m. To learn more about POLITICO Pro's comprehensive policy intelligence coverage, policy tools and services, [click here](#).

TWO MORE IN THE PIPELINE: President Donald Trump will [nominate](#) Textron Aviation's Michael Graham to the NTSB and renominate Jennifer Homendy, while 17 other nominees for transportation posts are still awaiting confirmation. The Eno Center for Transportation has a handy-dandy list of those outstanding nominations [here](#). A dozen of them have been approved by Senate committees.

So what? Trump will need to nominate anew anyone the chamber doesn't confirm before this Congress wraps. It's possible at least some could be folded into a nominations package, especially if they're considered noncontroversial.

Now, about NTSB: Homedy's current term is set to expire at the end of next year. If confirmed, her new term would expire in December 2024. Graham, the director of flight operations safety, security and standardization at Textron Aviation, would serve out the rest of a term that expires at the end of 2020.

IT'S MONDAY: Thanks for tuning in to POLITICO's Morning Transportation, your daily tipsheet on all things trains, planes, automobiles and ports. I'm your pilot on this flight into a new week, but Sam will be back Tuesday. Reach us at bgurciullo@politico.com or [@brigurciullo](https://twitter.com/brigurciullo) and smintz@politico.com or [@samjmintz](https://twitter.com/samjmintz).

["Red light, green light, red light, green light / Red light, green light, they like, we like / Fast cars."](#)

LISTEN HERE: Follow MT's [playlist](#) on Spotify. What better way to start your day than with songs (picked by us and readers) about roads, rails, rivers and runways?

**** A message from PlanetM – Michigan, where big ideas in mobility are born:** When it comes to mobility, safety is no accident in Michigan. Recently named a federal driverless car proving ground, Michigan's American Center for Mobility offers real world testing environments to validate self-driving systems. Learn how public-private ventures are helping Michigan create a safer world. Visit PlanetM.com **

Speaking of nominations: Gordon Hartogensis, Trump’s nominee to lead the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, “is a stranger to most of Washington” and “has little professional paper trail,” Pro Employment & Immigration’s Ian Kullgren [reports](#). But he is married to Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao’s sister, making Chao his sister-in-law and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell his brother-in-law. Hartogensis is likely to soon be confirmed by the Senate. “Hartogensis’ supporters note that he’s conversant with the investment world, having founded and then sold two tech companies before retiring in 2011,” Ian writes.

AVIATION

REVIEW OF DRONE NOTICE IS DONE: OMB has [finished](#) reviewing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking on “safe and secure operations” of drones. The administration has [said](#) that the ANPRM is “necessary to address safety and security concerns from the homeland security, federal law enforcement, and national defense communities.”

I’LL RULE, I’LL RULE, I’LL RULE: Now that an FAA reauthorization has been enacted, the agency is sorting into piles the 32 or so “regulatory actions” required within the law. At an Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee meeting late last week, an FAA official said about a half-dozen provisions touch on rulemakings already in the works, and the agency’s job is to ensure they align with the new law. Another is already done: The reauthorization requires FAA to scrap a rule related to Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast “In,” but the agency “actually never went forward with” such a rulemaking, said Lirio Liu, the executive director of the Office of Rulemaking.

It’s on the list: During the meeting, Paul Hudson, the president of FlyersRights.org, asked about the status of regulations — required by the reauthorization — to set minimum dimensions for airline seats. FAA is trying to “assess the priority and timing” of the law’s requirements “based on resources,” Liu said. “It is being worked through the process just like all the other requirements that are in the legislation with tight deadlines.”

STARTED FROM THE BOTTOM: In a first, Spirit Airlines beat out other carriers in terms of on-time flight arrivals in October. “Spirit had the worst on-time performance every month but one between May 2015 and May 2016,” David Koenig [writes](#) for the Associated Press. The airline “still has a high rate of passenger complaints, and some travelers avoid it and other budget airlines because of their reputation for poor service.” But more on-time flights could help bring down complaints.

In related news: DOT [dedicated](#) its newest air travel consumer report to the director of the aviation consumer protection division, Norman Strickman. He is set to retire in January after overseeing 400-plus editions of the report.

SULLY GETS AWARD: Chesley Sullenberger took home the annual Tony Jannus Award last week. American Airlines CEO Doug Parker [handed out](#) the award to the “Miracle on the Hudson” pilot at an event in Florida. Parker received the award himself last year.

TRANSIT

DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT: The American Public Transportation Association slammed CBO for including the idea of eventually terminating FTA in its most recent [report](#) on “options for reducing the deficit.” Shuttering the agency would “negatively impact the American people, the communities they live in and the companies they work at,” Paul Skoutelas, the president and CEO of APTA, said in a statement Friday. “This is a time when we should be significantly increasing investment in our public transit infrastructure.”

NOT GOOD: Moody’s Investors Service’s outlook for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s transportation revenue bond rating has gone from “stable” to “negative,” Dana Rubinstein [reports](#) for POLITICO Pro New York. The update is “based on lower-than-expected ridership and debt service coverage in 2018,” Moody’s said. “Without a full funding solution” to the authority’s “substantial capital needs and growing budget gaps,” the credit rating agency said, “MTA could turn to additional fare increases or service cuts that would exacerbate negative ridership trends, and its financial position could decline further, resulting in increased leverage position and weakened credit quality.” The bonds are, however, keeping an A1 rating for now.

SHIFTING GEARS

The Academy of Model Aeronautics’ executive council elected Chad Budreau as the group’s executive director. He was director of public relations and government affairs before he became interim executive director in April. Meanwhile, Shelly Simi will head up the National Association of State Aviation Officials starting next year. Simi is the director of corporate communications and public affairs for Aurora Flight Sciences. And Scott Mayerowitz is leaving the Associated Press, where he has worked for eight years first as an enterprise airlines reporter and most recently as deputy global business editor. He will be executive news director and lead the editorial team at The Points Guy media brand.

THE AUTOBAHN

- “Access denied: 2 climate change pages removed from DOT’s website.” [CNN Politics](#).
- “Possible drone collision renews focus on safety systems.” [The Wall Street Journal](#).
- “Lion Air and Boeing are heading into a \$22 billion feud.” [Bloomberg](#).
- “The maddening struggle to make robo-cars safe — and prove it.” [Wired](#).
- “A Norwegian Air Boeing 737MAX was forced to divert to Iran after suffering a mechanical failure.” [Business Insider](#).
- “In the move toward personal mobility devices, D.C.’s poorest are left behind — again.” [The Washington Post](#).
- “Electric scooters need to toughen up — and stay out of lakes — if they are going to survive 2019.” [The Verge](#).

- “Boeing flies close to trade tussle with new facility in China.” [The Wall Street Journal](#).
- “Due to fly WOW Air next year? Your trip might be canceled.” [USA Today](#).

THE COUNTDOWN

DOT appropriations run out in 5 days. The FAA reauthorization expires in 1,748 days. Highway and transit policy is up for renewal in 654 days.

**** A message from PlanetM – Michigan, where big ideas in mobility are born:** Self-driving cars are just the start of the mobility revolution. Everything from transportation to jobs to quality of life for the elderly will be affected. And Michigan is leading the charge for the future of mobility. That’s because Michigan has the resources, progressive legislation and infrastructure that enable mobility companies to thrive. 22 venture capital firms and eight angel groups are active in the mobility space in Michigan while another 46 provide entrepreneurial support. Learn more about the reasons to invest in Michigan at [PlanetM.com](#). **

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Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 5:08 PM
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Subject: From VTA: December 18, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Tuesday, December 18, 2018

1. [Teresa O'Neill Appointed Valley Transportation Authority Chair \(Santa Clara News Online\)](#)
2. [Santa Clara VTA elects O'Neill chair, Chavez vice chair \(Progressive Railroading\)](#)
3. [Tiny Houses on VTA Land \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)
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5. [San Jose City Council will think small on housing, transportation solutions at tomorrow's meeting \(Business Journal\)](#)

[Teresa O'Neill Appointed Valley Transportation Authority Chair \(Santa Clara News Online\)](#)

Councilwoman **Teresa O'Neill** was selected to be **Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)** Chair for 2019. She was chosen by her colleagues on the VTA Board.

This is the first time O'Neill or any Santa Clara City Council member has served as VTA Chair. Kudos to her.

The Board has 18 members (12 voting and 6 alternates). Fifteen representatives are City Council members from Santa Clara County cities. Three are County Supervisors. The Board sets VTA policy.

O'Neill was appointed to the VTA board by the City Council in March 2016. In addition to Santa Clara, she represents the cities of Sunnyvale and Milpitas.

O'Neill previously served on the following VTA committees:

- Governance and Audit Committee
- BART Silicon Valley Ad Hoc Committee

- Administration and Finance Committee

VTA provides bus, light rail, and para-transit services. They are also the **Congestion Management Agency** responsible for countywide transportation planning.

But next couple of years won't be an easy one for O'Neill and the rest of VTA. They'll have a \$46 million deficit in the next two years. Wow.

The VTA is looking to close it with:

- employee buyouts
- fare hikes
- reduced bus service

Here's a [link to the VTA's plan](#).

They've also raised taxes a lot over the last few decades. 80 percent of the VTA's income comes from our local sales tax! Double wow.

And VTA has spent down its reserves from \$50 million to \$5 million in the span of 18 months — mostly when San Jose Mayor **Sam Liccardo** was VTA chair. Triple wow.

Let's hope O'Neill does a better job than Liccardo. It would be hard to do worse.

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[Santa Clara VTA elects O'Neill chair, Chavez vice chair \(Progressive Railroading\)](#)

The [Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority](#) (VTA) recently elected Teresa O'Neill as chair and Cindy Chavez as vice chair, effective Jan. 1.

O'Neill is a Santa Clara council member and Chavez is a Santa Clara County supervisor.

This is the first time O'Neill will serve as chair, VTA officials said in a press release. She previously served on the board's governance and audit, BART Silicon Valley ad hoc, and administration and finance committees. O'Neill was appointed to the board in March 2016 representing the cities of Santa Clara, Sunnyvale and Milpitas.

Chavez has served on the board on and off for almost 20 years. She has served as chair twice and was a member of numerous committees, VTA officials said.

Meanwhile, the agency's second fare hike under a two-phase fare increase passed in June 2017 takes effect Jan. 1. A single ride on light-rail and local bus routes will increase to \$2.50 for adults and \$1.25 for youths.

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[Tiny Houses on VTA Land \(NBC Bay Area\)](#)

(Link to video)

[VTA Fare Increases \(ABC 7 News\)](#)

(Link to video)

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[San Jose City Council will think small on housing, transportation solutions at tomorrow's meeting \(Business Journal\)](#)

The San Jose City Council is thinking small as it prepares for its final meeting of the year in advance of a holiday week off.

At its meeting on Tuesday, the council is scheduled to deal officially with the placement of the first two [communities of “tiny homes”](#) — one- and two-person sleeping shelters to house homeless residents waiting for permanent housing — and to create the first ordinance dealing with “micro-mobility permits” for businesses renting bicycles and electric scooters downtown.

Both represent new approaches to addressing elements of intractable Bay Area problems — housing and transportation — and both have potential for controversy. Here's a closer look.

Tiny homes

“We must say yes to this creative opportunity to rapidly house 80 of our houseless neighbors ...,” wrote Mayor [Sam Liccardo](#) and three councilmembers, Vice Mayor [Magdalena Carrasco](#), [Chappie Jones](#) and [Sylvia Arenas](#), in a memo supporting creation of the two tiny home developments.

To which one resident responded in an email for the public record: “The vagrants who invade our community are not your ‘neighbors.’ They are vagrants! When you refer to vagrants as your ‘neighbors’ you are legitimizing their lifetime of poor decisions and actions. Therefore — you WILL discontinue this poor use of words! And you will begin to advocate for the actual tax payers — whom I can assure you — are not your ‘homeless neighbors’ as so foolishly worded!”

The city has identified two unused publicly owned properties, a Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority staging area on Mabury Road and a Caltrans tract adjacent to the I-280/I-680/101 interchange, for locating clusters of the 80-square-foot tiny homes around temporary sanitation and cooking structures for residents.

The housing is to be built by Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley for \$4.3 million, including land preparation — the major expense — with a 20 percent contingency. The individual units, designed by architecture firm Gensler, cost \$6,500 each.

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Wednesday, December 19, 2018 11:25 AM
To: VTA Board of Directors
Subject: From VTA: December 19, 2018 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Wednesday, December 19, 2018

1. [**SJ City Council Approves Tiny Homes Plan \(Multiple outlets\)**](#)
2. [**San Jose Approves 2 Tiny Home Locations For Emergency Housing \(KPIX Ch. 5\)**](#)
3. [**It may be temporary, but San Jose seems to have lost its fear of tiny homes \(Business Journal\)**](#)
4. [**San Jose Local creates model for operator apprenticeship \(In Transit Magazine, ATU\)**](#)
5. [**FTA awards \\$16.6 million in TOD planning grants \(Mass Transit Magazine\)**](#)
6. [**BART Howl Becoming a Whisper? \(SF Streetsblog\)**](#)

SJ City Council Approves Tiny Homes Plan (Multiple outlets)

[ABC 7 News](#)

[NBC Bay Area](#)

[KTVU Ch. 2](#)

San Jose Approves 2 Tiny Home Locations For Emergency Housing (KPIX Ch. 5)

The San Jose City Council on Tuesday approved the construction of two “tiny home” communities to house unsheltered individuals over the next two years.

The Emergency Bridge Housing, or EBC, will be located at Mabury Road near the Berryessa BART station and near the U.S. Highway 101 and Interstate Highway 680 interchange near Felipe Avenue.

The cabins are expected to house about 320 individuals while transitioning at least 240 into permanent housing, according to city officials, who are currently in the process of negotiating a lease agreement with Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and Caltrans.

Habitat for Humanity EastBay/Silicon Valley will oversee the development of both sites, which will each include 40 cabins, community space, restrooms and showers. The city said construction and operation and services by HomeFirst are expected to cost about \$7 million annually.

Similar structures, like “Tough Sheds” have also popped up in other Bay Area cities, including [Oakland](#) and San Francisco. Residents of the temporary homes have offered mixed responses, including concerns about security and excessive police presence.

The City Council’s decision is ultimately a temporary fix, and includes collaboration with landowners to research additional emergency housing sites, such as unused industrial land or parking lots.

In September, Hope Village received a short-term lease for a fenced-off tent village near Mineta San Jose International Airport [after facing a threat of removal](#).

The lease prevents law enforcement from doing a sweep and is among a new crop of emergency measures from the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and the city to mitigate an escalating homelessness crisis in the South Bay.

According to a federal housing department study released Tuesday, the San Jose/Santa Clara County area has the fifth-largest homeless population in the country, with New York City first and Los Angeles city and county second. About 75 percent of 7,254 homeless individuals and families in the area are unsheltered, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The San Jose City Council most recently declared a shelter crisis on Nov. 27, 2018, preceded by three others beginning in 2015. The city housing department predicts the crisis will continue through Jan. 1, 2022.

A pastor Tuesday evening announced that a record 157 people died on the streets of Santa Clara County between Dec. 1, 2017, and Nov. 30, 2018, according to a public records request he made to the medical examiner’s office.

The previous record was about 135, Rev. Scott Wagers said. The numbers this past year surprised him because so much attention has been given to homelessness recently, he said.

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[**It may be temporary, but San Jose seems to have lost its fear of tiny homes**](#)
(Business Journal)

As recently as last spring, providing temporary "tiny homes" for the homeless was still controversial in San Jose.

Now it seems that at least among elected officials, debate on the issue had simmered down: The San Jose City Council on Tuesday gave the official go-ahead for the first two such communities of small, temporary sleeping structures for housing homeless residents.

The initiative passed with 10-1 of the vote, with only Councilmember Don Rocha voting no.

"As far as season finales go, I was hoping for a bit more, you know, friction, conflict and then resolution," cracked Councilmember Lan Diep, whose district is separated by the width of Mabury Road from one of the communities is expected to open next spring.

Mayor [Sam Liccardo](#) also acknowledged the lack of opposition at the meeting, but he said that's not necessarily due to a sudden coalescence of public opinion.

"We need a lot more of this housing, and it needs to be sited all over this city," he said. "We're going to need a many more doses of courage to stand in front of audiences that may be less than receptive to say that we're going to house homeless individuals in our community because having homeless individuals in our communities is far worse."

[Councilmember Johnny Khamis](#), who described himself as a vocal opponent, said, "I still have some concerns, but I feel a lot more comfortable about the money that we're spending. I really want to thank staff for bringing down the per unit cost and other costs that you've been whittling down on this effort."

Officially called "bridge housing communities," the first two of the tiny home communities will each temporarily house 40 homeless individuals with housing vouchers while they await a permanent place to live. San Jose's pilot program is about twice the size of earlier programs in Seattle and Oakland that the city housing department has studied.

Eventually there will be a community in each of the 10 city council districts. [Jacky Morales-Ferrand](#), the city's housing director, said some may be housed in unused industrial buildings or warehouses if a way can be found to inexpensively provide residents with the same privacy that the cabins unveiled last week provide.

Architecture firm Gensler designed the homes. After a year's work, the cost of the original design of an 80-square-foot home for one person has been cut by nearly two-thirds to \$6,348 per unit, Morales-Ferrand said. The biggest area of cost difference between the other two cities and San Jose is site infrastructure, the cost of providing utilities to a pair of sites that lack them.

Nevertheless, Morales-Ferrand said, the total costs of Seattle (\$1.4 million) and Oakland's (\$1.2 million) communities is about half that of San Jose (\$2.9 million), which initially will house twice as many homeless.

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[San Jose Local creates model for operator apprenticeship](#) (In Transit Magazine, ATU)

Local **265** in San Jose, CA, pioneered efforts in union-led workforce initiatives when it opened space in the contractual relationship between the union and management for creation of the partnership known as Joint Workforce Investment (JWI) more than a decade ago.

Local 265 and the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) created the model for the Transit Coach Operator Apprenticeship being adapted locally in many locations, most recently with Local **1005** – Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, and Metro. JWI also oversees skills upgrades and apprenticeship programs for bus mechanics, vehicle fuelers and cleaners, light rail technicians, and overhead power electricians.

Current JWI leaders credit Local 265 retiree Tom Fink with taking the initiative to create a worker-to-worker coach operator mentoring program that has now evolved into a registered apprenticeship, and he spearheaded the effort to create the labor-management partnership essential for its success.

In describing his own evolution, Fink explains how much he hated his job as a driver for the first five years. “When I applied for the bus driving job, I was working as a local truck delivery driver. This will be easy, I thought, because the freight loads and unloads itself.”

It didn’t turn out to be so simple. Fink describes the dilemma of the bus driver starkly. “You have responsibility, but you don’t have authority, and you haven’t been trained to cope with the core human challenges of the work. That automatically creates stress, and it can limit the quality of public service we deliver.”

VTA provided training on how to drive. For Fink and other coach operators, however, that training didn’t address the skill sets needed to deliver public service in a fully professional way or to effectively handle the multiple stressors that are part of the job.

After years of stoically enduring stress for the sake of steady wages and benefits, Fink realized that embracing the public service aspect of the job made the work more than just a paycheck. It gave his work life a much bigger meaning, and his stress level declined as a result. And he didn’t want new operators to suffer through the learning process as he did.

In an era of privatization and government budget cuts, he believed that union transit workers needed to be seen by voters and taxpayers as a value-added factor in the services their taxes supported. In fact, that was the common ground which initially motivated ATU and VTA to establish a labor-management training partnership: the need to secure voter support. ATU 265 called it *partnering with the public*.

[An important tool in the union toolbox](#)

JWI became an important tool in the union toolbox. It served members in the following ways:

Worker voice: with union support and guidance, JWI created a space for amplifying the voice of front-line workers in the policies and affairs of the transit agency.

Attracting allies: by actively cultivating professionalism, JWI elevated the credibility of union workers as worthy allies in struggles for transit and other vital public services.

Operator health: JWI identified stress reduction techniques as core skills of bus operators, not only because it reduced the long-term health risks of the occupation, but because it elevated the capacity for professional service delivery.

Union took lead role

Engaging experienced drivers to act as mentors could help new drivers learn the essential communication and problem-solving skills of a very demanding job. For the mentoring to be meaningful, Fink and his co-workers realized it had to be a “worker-to-worker” program. The union initiated the program and took the lead role in choosing and training

the mentors. New drivers got the benefit of hard lessons learned by more experienced workers who volunteered as mentors. The mentors took no role in disciplining newer workers nor did they function as grievance representatives.

Member engagement and leadership development

JWI became another portal for member engagement with unionism. It turned out that many members were keenly interested in participating in union-led worker-to-worker programs. When they did so, they discovered their own capacity for leadership, especially when given responsibility for operating the mentoring and apprenticeship program. ATU members have leadership abilities that JWI cultivated and amplified.

Always active in the union, Fink became an executive board member and the leader for political action for Local 265 in 1993. He joked that when other members saw him coming, they ran away because he was likely to enlist them in making phone calls or walking precincts.

Union-initiated programs made a difference for drivers

After the mentoring program for operators really got going, Fink found people coming to him—veterans, mentors, and newer drivers. They were telling him that the union-initiated program really made a difference in their lives. They asked if he could he use some help with precinct walking?

ATU bus operators Sue Yates (now retired), Robert Hannibal, and Jamaine “G” Gibson picked up the baton when Fink retired, as has former Local 265 President and current JWI Director Diana Hermone. Together they perform the complex task of running the Operator Apprentice program. They became true union leaders who are passionate about making their brothers’ and sisters’ lives better and their union stronger. Former bus driver and Local 265 E-Board member, Steve Jovel, who was promoted to supervision after 17 years as an operator, is their management partner in the joint program.

More Locals developing apprenticeship programs

The idea has spread to other locals. Ray Messier, retired PBA of Local 1575-San Rafael, CA, established a labor management partnership, and now an enthusiastic group of members are

running a mentoring program at Golden Gate Transit. Local 192 in Oakland, CA, is also partnering with AC Transit to develop apprenticeship programs.

Gibson, Hannibal, and Jovel helped Minneapolis Metro Transit and Local 1005 develop their new operator apprentice program. Since that program started, Local 1005 President Ryan Timlin is accompanied by Alec Johnson, a 1005 Operator and the new program's Apprenticeship & Mentorship Coordinator, when holding union orientation sessions for new operators. Johnson presents the apprenticeship as one of the benefits of union membership and a way that "union workers are passing on union skills." This message is resonating with the new hires.

Partnership is one way to operationalize union and public-sector values. It's a national movement, and it will prepare ATU to adapt to meet the changes to our industry, whatever they turn out to be. It will help us keep workers at the center of the conversations shaping the future of transportation.

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[FTA awards \\$16.6 million in TOD planning grants \(Mass Transit Magazine\)](#)

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded grants to U.S. communities that are developing new or expanded mass transit systems through its Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

The \$16.6 million in funds will benefit 20 organizations who are integrating land use and transportation planning efforts with eligible transit projects. The grants will fund comprehensive planning to support transit ridership, multimodal connectivity and mixed-use development near transit stations.

"Convenient and safe access to public transportation can improve mobility," said FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams.

FTA's TOD Pilot Program was established under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in 2012 and continued by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in 2015. The program is authorized through fiscal year 2020.

The grant awards range between \$250,000 and \$2 million, with seven organizations received more than \$1 million. Those organizations include:

- Maryland Department of Transportation will receive \$2,000,000 to plan for TOD along the Maryland Purple Line, a 16.2-mile light-rail project under construction linking Montgomery and Prince George's counties.
- Chicago Transit Authority in Illinois will receive \$1,480,000 to plan for TOD along a proposed [5.3-mile southern extension of the Red Line](#).

- Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority in Florida will receive \$1,200,000 to plan for TOD along the proposed Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, an 11-mile BRT line connecting downtown St. Petersburg to St. Pete Beach.
- Metro in Portland, Ore., will receive \$1,076,000 to work with the city of Portland to identify affordable housing, economic development and business stabilization opportunities along a proposed 2.3-mile streetcar extension to Montgomery Park.
- Jacksonville Transportation Authority in Florida will receive \$1,015,280 to plan for TOD along the proposed Ultimate Urban Circulator, which is the planned modernization of the existing Skyway monorail system in Jacksonville into an autonomous circulator.
- The city of Jackson in Mississippi will receive \$1,000,000 to reshape development along the ONELINE project, a bus rapid transit system running from Fondren through downtown to Jackson State University.
- The city of Winston-Salem in North Carolina will receive \$1,000,000 to develop a comprehensive plan for the 5.4-mile corridor along the North-South Urban Circulator, a proposed streetcar connecting colleges, jobs and the city's downtown area.

For a full list of projects to receive grants, please visit FTA's [website](#).

In Fiscal Year 2018, FTA has awarded more than \$15 billion in funding through both formula and competitive grant programs to support public transportation.

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[BART Howl Becoming a Whisper? \(SF Streetsblog\)](#)

Streetsblog rides "Fleet of the Future" through Transbay for a true test of noise insulation

ART's new "Fleet of the Future," [whatever other problems it may have](#), is really, really quiet.

When Streetsblog took a review-ride on one of [BART's new train sets when it first went into limited service last year](#), it was hard to evaluate one of the most important differences between the new fleet and the old: noise levels. There's a big distinction between how a train sounds running on a viaduct or through a short tunnel in Oakland, versus cooking along at 80 mph in the 3.6 mile tunnel under the Bay.

Obviously, the latter generates far more noise and reverberation. So riding the new train in the East Bay only says so much about its noise performance. And for a long time, that was the only place BART was running them. Peering out the front on approach into West Oakland, moments before the moment of truth: the Transbay crossing

But the agency is now running them under the Bay to San Francisco as well.

The first time I set out to ride one under the Bay [last month](#), the run was cancelled due to an unspecified glitch. Yesterday, I finally got to go for a trip through the tube, on an off-peak train assigned to the Green Line between Warm Springs and Daly City.

What a difference 40 years of sound-proofing and wheel-on-rail interface technology can accomplish! The ride was smooth, quiet and—well, the only thing I can liken it to is riding the Eurostar train through the Channel Tunnel. There's just a whirring sound.

BART has also been [working steadily to replace and grind rails and wheels on the conventional fleet](#) to make them quieter too. Once that's done and the new fleet is fully deployed, the BART howl will become just something to read about in history books.

Well done, BART.

BART is spending [a reported \\$2.6 billion](#) for [775 new cars](#), which will be delivered over the next several years. "As of November 2018, 45 new cars are available for revenue service, with two 10-car trains in regular service," according to [a BART release](#). "By end of year 2018, BART expects to have at least three 10-car trains in regular service on the yellow, green and red lines."

From: VTA Board Secretary
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VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, December 20, 2018

1. [Revel Too Much? Get A Free Ride \(Campbell Patch\)](#)
2. [City Council Approves 2 'Tiny Home' Locations For Emergency Housing](#)
3. [Homestead Safe Routes to School project moves forward \(Los Altos Town Crier\)](#)

[Revel Too Much? Get A Free Ride \(Campbell Patch\)](#)

VTA has offered to be a designated driver on light rail and buses from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. over the New Year's holiday.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority released its 2018 Holiday Service Schedule, which highlights limited stops and some cancellations on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Nonetheless, VTA has suggested being a designated driver on New Year's for those indulging in holiday celebrations. A user can ride for free on light rail and bus lines from 8 p.m. until 5 a.m. on New Year's Day.

VTA offices will be closed with all service operating on a Sunday schedule for Christmas Day and New Year's Day. If a route doesn't normally operate on Sundays, it will not be in service.

In addition, ACE train & shuttles will not be in service.

More scheduling information can be found at <http://www.vta.org/getting-around/new-years-service>.

[Subscribe](#)

As 2019 rolls into sight, VTA would like to remind riders of the new year's fare increase. For a single ride on local bus and light-rail routes, the youth fare will be \$1.25 while adults will pay \$2.50. A single-ride on an express bus will cost \$5.00. [View more on our blog](#).

[City Council Approves 2 'Tiny Home' Locations For Emergency Housing](#)

The San Jose City Council today approved the construction of two "tiny home" communities to house unsheltered individuals over the next two years.

The Emergency Bridge Housing, or EBC, will be located at Mabury Road near the Berryessa BART station and near the U.S. Highway 101 and Interstate Highway 680 interchange near Felipe Avenue.

The cabins are expected to house about 320 individuals while transitioning at least 240 into permanent housing, according to city officials, who are currently in the process of negotiating a lease agreement with Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and Caltrans.

Habitat for Humanity EastBay/Silicon Valley will oversee the development of both sites, which will each include 40 cabins, community space, restrooms and showers. The city said construction and operation and services by HomeFirst are expected to cost about \$7 million annually.

Similar structures, like "Tough Sheds" have also popped up in other Bay Area cities, including Oakland and San Francisco. Residents of the temporary homes have offered mixed responses, including concerns about security and excessive police presence.

The City Council's decision is ultimately a temporary fix, and includes collaboration with landowners to research additional emergency housing sites, such as unused industrial land or parking lots.

In September, Hope Village received a short-term lease for a fenced-off tent village near Mineta San Jose International Airport after facing a threat of removal.

The lease prevents law enforcement from doing a sweep, and is among a new crop of emergency measures from the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and the city to mitigate an escalating homelessness crisis in the South Bay.

According to a federal housing department study released today, the San Jose/Santa Clara County area has the fifth-largest homeless population in the country, with New York City first and Los Angeles city and county second. About 75 percent of 7,254 homeless individuals and families in the area are unsheltered, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The San Jose City Council most recently declared a shelter crisis on Nov. 27, 2018, preceded by three others beginning in 2015. The city housing department predicts the crisis will continue

through Jan. 1, 2022.

A pastor this evening announced that a record 157 people died on the streets of Santa Clara County between Dec. 1, 2017, and Nov. 30, 2018, according to a public records request he made to the medical examiner's office.

The previous record was about 135, Rev. Scott Wagers said. The numbers this past year surprised him because so much attention has been given to homelessness recently, he said.

[Homestead Safe Routes to School project moves forward](#) (Los Altos Town Crier)

With the first Homestead Road Safe Routes to School community meeting held last month and the next one set for January, the project to improve the thruway for cyclists and pedestrians is moving forward.

Most of the more than 50 residents who attended the Nov. 26 meeting at Homestead High School provided input on traffic problems in preparation for road improvements planned for sections of Grant Road in Los Altos, South Bernardo Avenue in Sunnyvale and Homestead Road, which runs through both cities and Cupertino. There are three schools in the area: Homestead High, Cupertino Middle School and West Valley Elementary School.

Those who attended the two-hour meeting received a report on existing road conditions and an overview of the plan from members of the project task force, which includes city and school officials. Later, attendees were given a chance to ask questions as part of a formal Q&A, share how they use the corridor and offer comments and concerns about it. They also could talk with Adam Dankberg of Kimley-Horn, the consulting firm advising on the project.

“While there are some facilities (along the corridor) – there are sidewalks, there are bike lanes – they aren’t necessarily well connected,” Dankberg said. “There are gaps in the sidewalks, there are gaps in the bike path.”

He added that his consulting firm aims to identify ways to close the gaps in students’ path to and from school. By incorporating small, near-term improvements, Dankberg said the project team hopes to make an impact more quickly.

ESTABLISHING A TIMELINE

However, “quickly” is a relative term, as Santa Clara County District 5 Supervisor Joe Simitian explained at the meeting.

“I’m not being flip,” he said. “When I say ‘near-term,’ in transportation planning it is never as fast as we’d like it to be. When someone says it’s going to be done in a couple of years, that can

be disappointing if your kid only has a couple more years at their local elementary school, but I hope that's part of the conversation as well."

Dankberg noted that the timeline depends on the specifics of the project. An example he gave as a potential quick solution may be restriping a bike lane for greater visibility. He said restriping might be cost-effective, especially if that city is planning to repave the road in the near future. But even a project like that would not be finished until late 2019 or early 2020, according to Dankberg, and larger-scale projects would likely take two to three years.

In his presentation, Simitian said the project addresses three main questions: "What's the problem? What's the solution? Where does the money come from to implement the solution that will fix the problem?"

The meeting marked a shift in the project focus from identifying existing conditions to suggesting possible solutions, according to the project timeline.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

There was time for only 10 public comments before the open-house session for residents to provide feedback to the consulting firm one-on-one. A wide range of topics was covered, from the scope of the study itself to factors in the return-on-investment calculation, uses of the corridor and possible solutions.

During the open house, residents expanded on public comments made earlier. A request for a new Valley Transportation Authority bus route that would serve students from Los Altos who attend Cupertino Middle and Homestead High gained positive traction, while other suggestions – like placing no-parking signs on Homestead Road – sparked debate.

The project team plans to use the comments, as well as information from the open house, to develop the final report. The goal is to have the report completed by February, which would allow the team to apply for grants that Dankberg said his firm would try to help the project secure.

In August, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors allocated \$100,000 toward the project.

The next community meeting is tentatively scheduled Jan. 31. Until then, residents may weigh in by emailing comments to the project team or visit the study website to learn more about the plan.

For more information, visit sccgov.org/sites/rda/PnS/CP/Pages/Homestead-Rd.aspx or email RDA-HomesteadRoad.Study@rda.sccgov.org.

From: VTA Board Secretary
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VTA Daily News Coverage for Friday, December 21, 2018

1. [Emergency Housing For Homeless Comes To San Jose \(Campbell Patch\)](#)
2. [Free shuttle service set to expand \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)

[Emergency Housing For Homeless Comes To San Jose \(Campbell Patch\)](#)

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[Free shuttle service set to expand](#) (Mountain View Voice)

Five new shuttles being added along with other upgrades

In response to rising ridership, Mountain View's commuter shuttle program, MVgo, is set to grow in 2019. Five new shuttles are being added to the free transit system.

Since MVgo first launched in 2015, its ridership has increased by more than 35 percent, according to officials. The system's ridership is expected to surpass 130,000 by the end of this year. The MVgo shuttle is a separate service from the Mountain View Community Shuttle, which is free service for residents paid entirely by Google.

With the expansion, the transit service will now have a total of seven shuttles. The five new shuttles will be larger, capable of taking up to 30 riders to better meet demand during peak periods.

In another improvement, MVgo is launching a new mobile app, RIDEMVGO, to allow riders to track where each individual shuttle is along its route.

Starting sometime early next year, the shuttle service will also be launching a new partnership with Lyft and Uber. The ride-sharing companies will offer discounted rates for riders starting or ending in Mountain View from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Organizers are also looking at similar partnerships for carpooling with Scoop and WazePool.

The MVgo shuttle system is funded by a coalition of other local companies through the Mountain View Transportation Management Association.