



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** John Ristow

**SUBJECT:** SAN JOSE DIRIDON INTEGRATED  
STATION CONCEPT PLAN

**DATE:** January 24, 2019

Approved

Date

1/24/19

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 3 & 6**

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept the report on progress to date on the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan.

## OUTCOME

The City Council will receive a briefing on the initial design concepts that the Diridon Partner Agencies have developed in collaboration with their consultant team, Arcadis and Bentham Crouwel Architects.

## BACKGROUND

San Jose Diridon Station is the primary transit hub of the South Bay, currently serving about 17,000 passengers daily. The station is an historic depot with transit service provided by Amtrak, Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE), Caltrain, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) light rail and bus service. The station's importance as a transportation node will increase significantly in the next 10-15 years, as Bay Area Transit (BART) and California High-Speed Rail extend service into the station, and also as Caltrain, ACE, Capitol Corridor, and Amtrak increase service there.

As the only location in the Bay Area where BART, commuter rail, high-speed rail, and light rail will converge, Diridon Station will have more high-capacity transit connections than any other place in the Bay Area. In order to effectively accommodate all of this planned activity and make it easy to use the station, the station must be completely reconfigured to function as an integrated whole. The Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan (Concept Plan) is a collaborative effort of four public agencies to redesign and expand Diridon Station. The "Diridon Partner Agencies" include the City of San Jose, VTA, Caltrain, and the California High-Speed Rail Authority. The

Partner Agencies have employed the assistance of a consultant team led by Arcadis and Bentham Crouwel Architects.

### **Key Milestones**

- **Spring 2014:** City Council adopted the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP), a comprehensive framework for the development of the Diridon Station Area with a world-class train station and multimodal hub at its core.
- **Fall 2015:** Recognizing that the DSAP provided little guidance on the future development of the station, and also that the station is a shared facility that needs to be planned jointly by multiple stakeholders, VTA, the California High Speed Rail Authority, Caltrain, and the City of San Jose created an interagency working group to think comprehensively and holistically about the redevelopment of the station.
- **Summer 2017:** SPUR Study tour of European central city stations in which City representatives participated. The tour highlighted the need to think boldly, comprehensively, and long-term about the future of the station and station area. The SPUR Study tour laid the groundwork for the Concept Plan.
- **May 2018:** The City and other Partner Agencies (1) approved a cooperative agreement setting forth framework for Diridon Partner Agencies to collaborate on project; (2) approved a joint funding agreement for project; and (3) selected the consultant team to work on the project.

### **ANALYSIS**

The attached report describes progress to date on the Concept Plan. It focuses especially on the development of different spatial configurations for the station and its key elements.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

The Partner Agencies will provide periodic updates to the City's Transportation and Environment Committee and/or City Council at key milestones in the Concept Plan's development.

January 24, 2019

**Subject: San Jose Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan**

Page 3

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Completed and planned future activities include:

- Presentations in April and October 2018 to the Diridon Station Area Advisory Group
- First Community Meeting in December 2018; two additional meetings planned in 2019
- Supported SJSU Master of Urban Planning capstone class project on Diridon Station
- Updating [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) with information on the Concept Plan
- Maintaining email list to provide updates

### **COORDINATION**

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Manager's Office.

### **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT**

No City commission recommendation or input is associated with this report.

### **CEQA**

This project qualifies for a Statutory Exemption under CEQA Guidelines 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Studies).

/s/

JOHN RISTOW  
Acting Director of Transportation

For questions, please contact Eric Eidlin, DOT Station Planning Manager, at (408) 795-1638.

**Attachment**

## **SUBJECT**

Update on work accomplished to date on the San José Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan

## **BACKGROUND**

San José Diridon Station, owned by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB), is the primary transit hub of the South Bay, currently serving approximately 17,000 daily passengers. Today's Station is a historic depot with passenger rail service provided by PCJPB (the "Caltrain" commuter rail service), Amtrak, Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, Altamont Commuter Express (ACE), with connecting Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) light rail and bus service as well as other regional bus transportation providers. With the introduction of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and California High-Speed Rail service to San José Diridon in the next decade, the Station's importance as a transportation node will increase significantly. In addition to these new rail services, electrified Caltrain and expanded services from ACE, Capitol Corridor, and Amtrak will lead to San José Diridon becoming one of the busiest train stations in California. Increased rail and bus service in the Station area will also support the development envisioned in San José's guiding land use policy documents. The 2040 General Plan and the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP) foresee a marked expansion of the city's relatively small downtown core to a size and density more appropriate for a city of one million people.

## **AGENCY PARTNERSHIP - COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**

The City of San José, VTA, PCJPB, and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (the "Partner Agencies") have formed a public agency partnership via a Cooperative Agreement to redesign and expand Diridon Station. Key to this is the agreement to coordinate their respective capital projects in a manner that integrates the transit station facilities and the surrounding development area.

The Concept Plan was shaped through insights gained over the course of a study trip that City, VTA/County, PCJPB and Bay Area leaders participated in summer 2017. The trip highlighted the need to think boldly, comprehensively, and long-term about the Station, urban redevelopment, and the multiple transportation and development projects that will intersect at the station and in the surrounding area.

The Partner Agencies agree that a unified vision and cohesive strategy for investments at the Station and the broader Station area will generate more value than if the Partner Agencies planned and acted on development opportunities individually. The Partner Agencies have hired a consultant team led by Arcadis and Bentham Crouwel Architects ("Team ABC") to prepare the Integrated Station Concept Plan ("Concept Plan"). Team ABC is familiar with complex, multi-

agency infrastructure and urban design projects, such as major capital transit and station projects, through their experience in Europe and elsewhere.

## WHAT IS THE DIRIDON INTEGRATED STATION CONCEPT PLAN?

When BART, commuter rail, high-speed rail, light rail, and supporting bus services converge, Diridon Station will support more high-capacity transit connections than any other place in the Bay Area. To effectively accommodate this planned growth in transit and development activity as well as to make it easy to use, the Station should be redesigned and expanded to function as an integrated whole. Instead of having individual transit projects “tack onto” the Station in a piecemeal manner, the Concept Plan will combine the major transportation and land use components into a single, unified vision. The result of this unified vision will be a wholly integrated station.

The Concept Plan scope includes two primary parts:

1. A spatial design component
2. An organizational component

**The spatial design component** will establish (a) transportation infrastructure to enable capacity for future, expanding transit services (b) an optimal physical relationship between transportation modes and (c) a balanced relationship between the Station and surrounding neighborhoods. This will frame the vision for what the Station will become over time. The Concept Plan will focus on the functionality of the Station, rather than its architectural appearance. Later phases of work will include detailed design and engineering, as well as environmental review.

**The organizational component** will begin to frame an organizational structure that can effectively deliver and operate the future Station. The redevelopment of Diridon Station is a project that is not simply complex from a physical design perspective but also from an organizational perspective.

The Concept Plan began in early September 2018. The 18-month Concept Plan process includes two phases and the following steps:

### Phase I: Development of Spatial Configuration

- Ambitions, scenario development and evaluation
- Selection of a Single Preferred Option (SPO)

### Phase II: Advance the Single Preferred Option and Preparation of Concept Plan

- 10% engineering and design plans
- Preliminary cost estimate, roadmap to delivery (including a potential phasing program)

## **AMBITIONS, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Partner Agencies established a philosophy for what the future Diridon Station is aimed to become. This provides a guiding set of goals and objectives, or ambitions, for the Concept Plan development. These ambitions articulate what the Partner Agencies hope to achieve for both the urban design form and the associated organization for the project.

The goals and objectives are:

- A Multi-modal, Integrated, and Human-centered Station
- The Station as Catalyst for the Urban Environment
- The Station as a Destination
- A Compelling Vision for the Future of Diridon Station
- A Futureproof, Flexible, Adaptive, and Innovative Station
- Partnership Organization
- Internal & External Stakeholder engagement
- Funding Objectives and Risk Management

## **DIRIDON INTEGRATED CONCEPT PLAN APPROACH**

Team ABC is working with the Partner Agencies to establish requirements, such as design criteria, site constraints, and agency needs, and to also understand the ambitions of each agency for the future Station. These set an important foundation in the concept planning process. To turn requirements into a conceptual program, Team ABC is leading a series of interactive workshops with the technical experts from each Partner Agency on myriad topics. The workshops are structured around urban integration, station configuration, track configuration and access planning.

The organizational framework for the project is being developed simultaneously with the conceptual design and planning work. Team ABC is leading a series of organizational workshops on topics, such as governance, funding, risk sharing, and project management. Experience in delivering similar projects in Europe led Team ABC to believe that concept and organization must move in tandem for successful project delivery.

## **DESIGN PROCESS AND PROGRESS TO DATE**

The initial focus has been on the Caltrain rail corridor and platforms. An important lesson from the 2017 Study Trip was the notion to “design from the tracks out” since rail infrastructure is a long-lasting and significant investment and the least flexible project element. At the same time, the way in which this heavy infrastructure is brought through a city has profound place-defining effects. The track design and configuration will enhance the quality of the urban places that the tracks go through. As such, while the Concept Plan is being developed with an understanding that while the heavy rail infrastructure must be designed first, it must also be designed with an appreciation of its effects on the urban fabric. The Concept Plan contemplates the benefits and trade-offs of the relationships between these elements.



Team ABC and the Partner Agencies have explored many different vertical configurations for the station. These options are generally described as:

- **At-Grade:** The station remains at the current at-grade elevation;
- **Elevated 25' above existing grade:** All tracks and platforms would be elevated approximately 25 feet above the current track elevation;
- **Recessed:** The tracks and platforms would be lowered by about 20-25' below the existing elevation; and
- **Stacked:** High-speed rail tracks are in a shallow tunnel, approximately 30' below grade, while the other rail modes are placed in an elevated viaduct, approximately 25' above grade.

Thus far, there are several options emerging that appear to best align with the ambitions expressed by the Partners and the community. Specifically, the Partner Agencies will continue to further explore the at-grade and elevated track options. These appear to hold the most promise over the other two options to align with the ambitions, goals and objectives as well as meet the various requirements.

The Concept Plan is being closely coordinated with the Caltrain Business Plan, which is the strategic, long-range rail operations planning effort for the Peninsula Corridor. It contemplates future rail service growth for Caltrain while operating in blended fashion with California High-Speed Rail. Coordination with the Caltrain Business Plan is essential to ensure that the number of tracks and platforms considered at Diridon Station accommodate future rail service growth.

Team ABC and the Partner Agencies are also considering the location of the main station entrance relative to the rail platforms and how it relates to the surrounding area. Two of the options currently appear to hold the most promise to best meet the ambitions for the future vision, and they are

- the station entrance hall generally in the same location as the Diridon Depot today
- the station entrance shifts to the north closer to Santa Clara Street.

The rationale for locating the station entrance north to Santa Clara Street would be to bring the heavy rail modes as close as possible to the planned BART station and other transit facilities.

As described above, Team ABC and the Partner Agencies are also considering the track and station hall options' effect on the overall urban integration of the area for development, movement of people to/from and through the station, and connections between other transit modes (buses and VTA light rail).

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Partners developed a Community Outreach Strategy with the aim to:

- Inform and educate the public about the project and decision-making process



- Gather feedback for the Partner Agencies to consider during preparation of the Concept Plan
- Foster a sense of pride and collective ownership in the vision established by the Concept Plan

The Partner Agencies are seeking to encourage active participation from a broad cross-section of the community.

Completed and future activities include:

- October 18, 2018: Presented to the City's Diridon Station Area Advisory Group
- December 10, 2018 Community Kick-off Meeting
- Supported SJSU Masters of Urban Planning capstone class project on Diridon Station, which included focus groups of community leaders, an interactive event on December 1, 2018, and final report and presentation
- Updated [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org) with information on the Concept Plan
- Maintaining email list to provide updates

The Partner Agencies will continue to engage the community throughout the process using a variety of methods, such as additional community meetings, presentations to the SAAG and other advisory groups, and online tools.

### **Community Engagement - Emerging Themes**

Based on input received, the following priorities are emerging for the future of the Station:

- The Station must work well for the passenger above all
- The Station should function as a community hub, a destination in and of itself
- The Station should reflect the cultural diversity of San José through its design, art, accessibility, public spaces, and amenities
- The Station should be easy to get to from anywhere in the city, region and state. It should facilitate mobility across scales.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Team ABC and the Partner Agencies will continue to explore the at-grade and elevated track options with the station entrance located either around the current location or shifted to the north. While the efforts so far have looked at individual components, the next step will be to start to combine these various elements into full station scenarios and to explore trade-offs between them. These scenarios will include the track spatial organization, the station entrance, and all transit modes.

### **COORDINATION WITH OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS**

The Partner Agencies each have their own initiatives or major projects in development at the same time as the preparation of the Concept Plan. Part of the intent of the Cooperative Agreement is to ensure that the agencies are aligned with each other to realize not only their





individual projects but also to work together to develop a new Diridon Station. The following projects are actively being coordinated with the Concept Plan:

<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Project</b>
VTA	BART to Silicon Valley Phase II
CHSRA	San José – Merced Project Segment of the statewide High- Speed Rail system
Caltrain	Caltrain Electrification
Caltrain	Caltrain Business Plan
City of San Jose	Diridon Station Area Plan amendment
City of San Jose	Google master plan/development project
City of San Jose	Downtown Transportation Plan

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information on the Concept Plan, including Frequently Asked Questions, can be found on the project website at [www.diridonsj.org](http://www.diridonsj.org).