



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: John Ristow

**SUBJECT: RAIL CORRIDOR PLAN FOR
SAN JOSE AND INTER-AGENCY
AGREEMENT**

DATE: May 20, 2019

Approved

D. D. SyL

Date

5/22/19

COUNCIL DISTRICTS: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, & 10

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to develop an agreement between the City of San José, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain), the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and the California High-Speed Rail (HSR) Authority ("Partner Agencies") that will provide for development of a Rail Corridor Plan for San José.

OUTCOME

The proposed agreement will ensure effective collaboration between and among the Partner Agencies. The agreement will establish a framework for the agencies to partner on the range of capital plans and projects necessary to plan and build-out the long-term vision for the rail corridor and related interfaces throughout San José. This effort nests within broader rail corridor projects underway across the Bay Area and South Bay. The top priority for San José under the agreement will be developing a Rail Corridor Plan for San José (Rail Corridor Plan) to effectively integrate the various plans and projects, maximizing the benefits of these projects while minimizing negative impacts. The agreement and Rail Corridor Plan scope will be brought to City Council and the other partner agencies' governing boards for approval.

BACKGROUND

Status of Rail Capital Programs in San José

San José hosts several rail mainlines and branches through the city. The main rail corridor, owned by a combination of Caltrain and Union Pacific, stretches for around 20 miles through San José, from the Newhall neighborhood on the Santa Clara border in the north and through Coyote Valley to Morgan Hill in the south. Additionally, the Union Pacific-owned Coast Line through Alviso carries East Bay train services through Santa Clara into Diridon station. Multiple

agencies have significant heavy rail capital projects through San José on diverse timelines. These include:

- Caltrain's electrification program is in construction with completion anticipated by early 2022. Caltrain's Board will select a 2040 Service Vision in summer 2019 and adopt its long-range Business Plan by the end of 2019.
- The San José to Merced segment of the HSR Program is currently in the environmental review stage. HSR staff plans to recommend a Preferred Alternative in July and begin the process of gathering public feedback on their recommendation. The HSR Authority Board is scheduled to identify a Preferred Alternative in September. The target for publishing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIR/S) for this segment is the end of 2019.
- VTA is developing engineering drawings for the Phase 2 BART extension and plans to start construction by 2022.
- Capitol Corridor and Altamont Corridor Express are planning to increase train capacity and climate resilience from Fremont to Santa Clara through Alviso to significantly increase train service into San José.

In 2018, the City of San José, VTA, Caltrain, and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (the "Partner Agencies") formed a public agency partnership via a Cooperative Agreement to redesign and expand Diridon Station, through the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan ("Station Concept Plan"). The agencies agreed to coordinate their capital projects in a manner that integrates the transit station facilities and the surrounding development area. Both the success of the Station Concept Plan efforts, and a series of developments throughout 2018 and early 2019, point to the need for a new agreement that is broader in geographic scope.

Some of these developments include:

- The 2018 HSR Business Plan – which introduced a new alignment and EIR/S alternative blending Caltrain and high-speed trains south from Santa Clara through San José to Gilroy.
- The in-process Caltrain Business Plan and 2040 Service Vision – ridership modeling has shown that significantly increased Caltrain service to southern San José would attract thousands of new daily riders.
- Blending HSR and increased Caltrain service through San Jose would also require rebuilding Caltrain stations and constructing new turnaround facilities for Caltrain south of the Blossom Hill Station.
- Both the new HSR alternative and improved Caltrain service would greatly increase the number of trains through at-grade crossings along Monterey Road. In response the City, in late 2018, began developing conceptual design alternatives for grade separations on Monterey Road to address crossing safety concerns.
- Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan – the track and platform designs in all three scenarios being considered for the station would require relocating Capital Corridor and Caltrain train storage and turnaround movements out of Diridon Station.

- Caltrain's larger future train fleet, combined with relocating train storage out of the Diridon Station, would require construction of new train yards and maintenance facilities south of Diridon.

Through cooperative efforts around these plans and projects, the Partner Agencies recommend a new framework for integrating efforts and delivering the interrelated sets of plans and projects necessary to achieve each agency's long-term goals. This effort nests within broader rail corridor projects underway across the Bay Area and South Bay.

ANALYSIS

The Partner Agencies' experience with the Station Concept Plan to-date is that more and higher quality work is accomplished when the relevant agencies work together in a collaborative framework. The Partner Agencies therefore are interested in using a similar approach to the development of the rest of the mainline rail corridor through San José. Whereas the Cooperative Agreement for the Diridon Station focused on a single place, the proposed agreement would set up a program framework for multiple plans and projects along the entire rail corridor. The program framework approach acknowledges that the multi-agency collaboration to advance rail plans and capital projects in and through San José will require a years-long implementation effort to integrate multiple, overlapping plans and projects. Each of these plans or projects will have inherently distinct subject matter and geographic scopes, lead entities, stakeholders, constituencies, and timelines. For the result to be a seamless, convenient, and user-focused system, the programs must all be planned and implemented incrementally as part of an overall network.

Several of the plans and projects underway will set the foundation for further work covered by the agreement. These include the:

- Caltrain Electrification and Modernization project
- Caltrain Business Plan
- HSR Authority's EIR for the San José – Merced Segment
- Phase 1 and 2 of the Diridon Station Integrated Concept Plan
- Capitol Corridor Vision Plan
- Altamont Corridor Express's Valley Rail and ACEforward plans

The agreement would:

- Define a master program of rail plans and projects through San José as well as the associated elements of other plans that will interface with the rail corridor
- Identify critical coordination, decision, and dependency interfaces between efforts
- Define a group of key partners and stakeholders and identify roles, responsibilities and expectations that will be applicable to each of the different efforts

A central part of the agreement will be a set of guiding principles and goals to ensure effective collaboration and pursuit of outcomes greater than the individual agencies could achieve in isolation. The agreement would set a framework for work on a variety of on-going and follow-on plans and capital projects. Example plans and projects could include:

- Follow on phases of the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan
- A Rail Corridor Plan for San José
- Diridon Station Area Plan
- Rail storage and maintenance analysis; and the design and construction of new facilities
- San José grade separation studies and construction along with complete street safety improvements on Monterey Road, and a broader corridor-wide grade separation strategy
- Individual rail station plans and local multi-modal transportation improvement plans, including improved and coordinated local transit access to stations.
- Other anticipated land use and station planning efforts within San José, such as the results of the Monterey Corridor Working Group efforts
- A South County Rail Corridor Plan for service and infrastructure south of San José
- Coordinated funding and revenue strategies

For San José, one of the first plans and projects to be accomplished under the agreement, and one of the highest priorities, would be the development of a Rail Corridor Plan for San José. For the Diridon area, the Station Concept Plan has advanced solutions for integrating rail infrastructure, urban integration, and local access planning. The Rail Corridor Plan would establish the overall configuration of future rail infrastructure, stations (beyond Diridon), and local access across San José, developing solutions for rail infrastructure, urban integration, and local access in a unified planning process. The Coast line through the Alviso neighborhood and Santa Clara could be covered by either the Rail Corridor Plan or a parallel plan, in partnership with the City of Santa Clara.

Several City priorities for the Rail Corridor Plan include:

- Modern, frequent, regional and inter-city rail service throughout San José that gives people far better access to homes and jobs, helping achieve City policy objectives such as:
 - Shifting resident and employee trips from auto to transit
 - Reducing vehicle miles travelled (VMT)
 - Increasing employment and housing near transit stations
- Infrastructure construction phasing plans to allow for incremental build-out of rail infrastructure with flexible phasing that minimizes throwaway costs and impacts to neighborhoods.
- Transit stations and facilities that provide users with joy and convenience.
- Implementation plan for completing grade separations at: Auzerias Avenue, W. Virginia Street, Skyway Drive, Branham Lane, and Chynoweth Avenue.
- Focused design efforts in potentially high-impact areas, to find solutions to accommodate service increases while preserving or improving surrounding community quality of life.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

When an Agreement has been developed, it will be brought to City Council and the other partner agencies' governing boards for approval. Department of Transportation (DOT) staff will provide updates on the projects developed under the agreement to the City's Transportation and Environment Committee and/or City Council at key milestones.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

A public engagement strategy will be incorporated into the Rail Corridor Plan and all other plans and projects pursued under the proposed agreement. Regular updates to rail corridor planning and capital projects will be brought to the Transportation and Environment Committee and/or City Council. This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the June 4, 2019 Council Meeting.

COORDINATION

This project has been coordinated with the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, and Office of Economic Development. The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this memo.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009. Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/
JOHN RISTOW
Director of Transportation

For questions, please contact Brian Stanke, DOT Rail Planning Manager, at (408) 795-1834.

Attachment: Map of Potential Projects in Rail Corridor

Attachment – Map of Potential Projects in Rail Corridor

