



Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Mayor Sam Liccardo
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez
Councilmember Raul Peralez
Councilmember Dev Davis
Councilmember Maya Esparza


SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: May 31, 2019

SUBJECT: RAIL CORRIDOR PLAN FOR SAN JOSE, AND INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT

Approved

Date


The signature block contains three handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is 'Sam Liccardo', the second is 'Maya Esparza', and the third is 'Dev Davis'. The signatures are written over a horizontal line.

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the staff memo with the following recommendations:

1. City staff to work with VTA, Caltrain, and High Speed Rail on an agreed-upon scope of work and preliminary funding plan for the interagency agreement, and Rail Corridor Plan, to be brought to Council prior to the High Speed Rail Authority Board meeting in September where they will be considering the Preferred Alternative for the San José to Merced segment.
2. Prior to publishing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIR/S) for the San José to Merced segment — staff should return to Council with an interagency agreement that allows for multi-agency collaboration, accounts for the need to integrate multiple overlapping plans and projects – and ultimately delivers high-quality rail service in San José.
3. Explore with VTA, Caltrain, and other stakeholders an environmental process for the Rail Corridor Plan that explicitly incorporates three grade separations in the Monterrey corridor (at Branham, Skyway, and Chynoweth), two grade separations in the Gardner/North Willow Glen neighborhood (at Auzerais and West Virginia), and – once established – the DISC Preferred Option. Establish which local agency would constitute the lead agency for the EIR, and commence scoping for the study.

DISCUSSION

The Diridon Integrated Station Concept plan work is a collaborative model for the partner agencies, and replicating that effort as it relates to rail writ large in the South Bay will be a step in the right direction. The expanded interagency agreement will establish a framework for partnership on the range of capital plans and projects necessary to plan and build-out the long-term vision for rail in the South Bay. The 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.

There are several plans and projects underway that set the foundation for further work covered under the agreement including: Caltrain Electrification and Modernization; Caltrain Business Plan and 2040 Service Vision – including significantly increased Caltrain service to southern San José; 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; and Altamont Corridor Express’s Valley Rail and ACEforward plans. Coordination is crucial when there are so many ongoing efforts to realize a comprehensive rail vision in San José. Bringing the agency partners together is critical. Discussions are underway on a nine-county transportation measure – “Faster Bay Area” – that if approved, will raise significant revenue to advance our rail priorities in the South Bay. It behooves us to do this planning work now, so we are well-positioned for much-needed funds to advance a comprehensive rail vision for San José and the region.

The scope and funding plan for the interagency agreement, and rail planning effort, should return to Council prior to when the High Speed Rail Board considers the Preferred Alternative for the San José to Merced segment. Our community has been engaged on the promise of HSR, as well as issues and impacts it presents. Having the scope nailed down, and the funding secured to proceed with this planning work, is critical to keep the trust with the community. Additionally, having the interagency agreement approved by all four agencies prior to the circulation of the Draft EIR/S would demonstrate to the community that comprehensive rail corridor planning is underway.

Finally, we want to thank staff who are at the table with our partners, and in the community, doing this difficult work. It’s work that requires balancing many complex interests – but the circumstances brought on by “once in a generation” type investments, presents an enormous opportunity for Downtown, greater San José, and the South Bay.

Brown Act Disclaimer

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member’s staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer’s staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member’s staff.