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Established in 1978 by
David Packard

December 6th, 2019

Mayor Sam Liccardo, Vice Mayor Chappie Jones, and Honorable
Councilmembers
City of San José
200 E Santa Clara St,
San José, CA 95113

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's Transit-Oriented Communities Playbooks

Dear Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, and Honorable Councilmembers Arenas, Carrasco, Davis, Diep, Esparza, Foley, Jimenez, Khamis, and Perez,

On behalf of the over 340 member companies of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, **we would like to express our support** for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Playbooks at the future BART Phase Two station locations in San José.

The Silicon Valley Leadership Group was founded in 1978 by David Packard, Co-Founder of Hewlett Packard. Today, the Leadership Group is driven by more than 340 member companies to proactively tackle issues to improve our communities and strengthen our economy, with focuses on education, energy, the environment, health care, housing, tax policy, tech & innovation policy, and transportation.

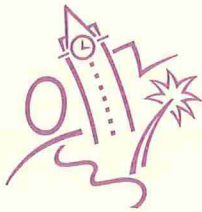
At a time when the Bay Area is in a dire housing crisis, high-density housing near our public transportation infrastructure is an effective solution for helping to ease housing woes, increase transit ridership, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. VTA's TOC Playbooks guide future development, planning for both housing and commercial space, a strategy the Capital of Silicon Valley needs to thrive for today and the future.

The playbooks plan for nearly 16,000 new homes, of which almost 3,200 are affordable, in downtown San José. Further, the 28th Street playbook plans for nearly 7,800 new homes with almost 2,000 being affordable.

As the region grapples with a severe housing shortage, the playbooks provide a map for leaders to plan for smart growth for the future of San José and its residents. We are heartened by VTA's proactive plans for the future growth and development of San José, and encourage the City to incorporate the vision for vibrant land uses around transit investments into the General Plan 2040 update.

Sincerely,

Vince Rocha
Senior Director of Housing & Community Development
Silicon Valley Leadership Group



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ASSOCIATION**

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October 18, 2019

Ron Golem
Transit Oriented Development and Real Estate Director
Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95134

RE: VTA BART PHASE II Transit Oriented Communities Strategy Study Downtown San José
BART Station Area Playbook

Dear Ron,

We would like to thank you and your team working on the Transit Oriented Community Downtown Playbook. We believe that instituting strong urban design principles at this early stage in the planning process will result in the best possible development built around the Downtown Central Station BART Station. In order to ensure this area is a major transit hub *and* a destination for smart residential and commercial development, we must consider both short and long term impacts. We offer the following feedback at this first stage in the planning process on the “big moves” as described in the downtown playbook.

Update Land Use Across The Station Area To Ensure Good Transit Oriented Communities:

As I’m sure you’re well aware, there are a multitude of plans, guidelines and policies governing land use in downtown, and we have been pushing for another important piece to be added in the form of a traffic and circulation plan. We want the City to take a holistic approach to ensuring the limited downtown street grid can accommodate future densities and population growth for all modes of travel. We agree with the fundamental point of this “big move” that prioritizing jobs around transit hubs makes the most sense, especially when paired with retail uses on the ground floor. There is also increased need for housing in this area and we are pleased to see that reflected in the plan as well. One point we will continue to emphasize is our staunch belief that the downtown station must have a second entrance on the south side of the block. We will advocate on behalf of these common sense land use issues at City Hall.

Protect and Support Small Business and Enhance Commercial Nodes:

This work is critical to SJDA's mission. We employ a full time staff person dedicated to assisting small businesses and have advocated on behalf of establishing a Business Interruption Fund to protect our small business members during BART construction. We have also been actively looking for ways to connect the various districts of downtown through design, activation and beautification efforts. Development plays a crucial role in this work, as more dense development will lead to increased foot traffic and patrons for the small business community. The retail sphere is changing rapidly, and we will not pretend to know what this sphere will look like once these developments are built, but we agree that an emphasis on active ground floor uses and transit-oriented retail make the most sense in broad terms.

Create a 24/7 Mixed-Use Downtown With A Targeted Mix Of Uses:

Again, this section fits nicely into work that we are already doing and we would be happy to assist in VTA's efforts to enact shared principles on a large scale in the future Transit Oriented Community. Our communications and marketing team is actively working on the downtown brand and our street life program has a record of leading and executing public realm projects. Our hope is that the arrival of BART will increase activity downtown that will, for instance, convince a restaurant that is only open for lunch to begin dinner service, and to help draw traditional retail back downtown, especially along Santa Clara Street, the city's main east-west thoroughfare.

Protect and Produce Workforce and Affordable Housing:

Downtown San Jose has some affordable housing projects currently being built, more than anywhere else in the city, and can accept many more. We are pleased to see an emphasis on Workforce Housing, a sometimes forgotten but important piece of the affordable housing market. The City of San Jose needs to increase efforts to address the so-called "missing middle" income earners in order to stabilize the local economy and ensure that young professionals, service providers, teachers, etc. can afford to live in the communities in which they work.

Unlock the Value of Mobility For All Stakeholders:

The most intriguing piece of this is the proposal to eliminate parking requirements. We know that there is a movement within urban planning circles to begin to plan for a future where the single-driver automobile is phased out in urban areas, but according to feedback from our members, we don't think that downtown San Jose is there quite yet. Over and over in community meetings both internally and at the City, we hear concerns around parking and how it will affect people's decisions on whether or not to visit downtown San Jose. We want to be cautious in supporting policies that will negatively affect the perception of downtown in the short term. Perhaps in the intervening years we will begin to see upgrades in Transit Demand Strategies that allow for less reliance on the automobile and our position is subject to change on this matter. For now we are open to a conversation about advocating for lessening parking requirements for certain uses.

Prioritize Funding and Implementation:

We support the creation of a position within the CSJ staff to oversee TOC development and are willing to support VTA as a partner on grant applications and to identify local partners to ensure that this work is undertaken in a way that's sensitive to the needs of the existing downtown community.

Sincerely,

✓
Scott Knies
Executive Director

CC: Michael Rewkiewicz

Nate LeBlanc

Jessica Zenk

Jill Gibson

From: davide@vieiracorp.com [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 11:59 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Terry.Christensen [REDACTED]; 'Kate Christopherson' <kchristopherson@vtabsv.com>; Dennis Kearney <dkearney@vtabsv.com>; 'Jill Gibson' <jgibson@vtabsv.com>; Pereira, Paul <Paul.Pereira@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: 19-1173 Report on BART Phase II Transit-Oriented Communities Strategy Study

Hello,

Please include my comments in the public record.

I was there at the beginning. Not at the big bang, but pretty close. I was there when it was proclaimed to great fanfare that BART was going to gopher its way through my Little Portugal Neighborhood. "Yeah, sure, when?" was the general retort. And then came the VTA-sponsored Alum Rock/Hostetter Community Working Group to engage our community. Didn't much care for the name at the time. VTA's first "vision" was a 17-acre surface parking lot on top of a subway station. "No, don't think so" was the next retort. That's because our community had already been working on the seminal idea and early details of a little town, or a village, built on top of the subway station – complete with a public plaza that was the brainchild of a San José High student. And it only took two years to get VTA sort of on board with our concept, even after producing our 210-page BART Station Area Community Concept Plan to demonstrate to them and anyone else who would listen what we meant by our town square village. Things went kind of dormant for a time. The Alum Rock/Hostetter CWG died. We put our plan on a shelf until Envision 2040 happened in 2010. We got the city to buy into our concept since it tracked with their "urban village" concept. So we sat down with Planning and transformed our 210-page plan into the first four urban village plans that were approved into the General Plan in 2013. Then VTA perked up again and at the bidding of a Board Member, restarted the Community Working Groups. Ours became Alum Rock/28th Street. Didn't much care for that name either. Once again, the purpose was to engage the community in the development of plans for BART in our neighborhood. But things were also changing at VTA. No longer was VTA "meh" about our plans for transit-oriented development, they were actually starting to engage us in the details. Of course, that was after the "Let's move the station to 23rd Street fiasco"; we don't need to re-hash that here. So VTA got on board with us at the Alum Rock/28th Street Station. They eventually hired their own consultant team that used our plans as the starting point for what you are reviewing in their Transit-Oriented Communities Playbooks today. It's a good draft, and I look forward to working with VTA to work through the kinks in the coming months. Oh, and I especially like the name change to the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station.

Regards,
Davide Vieira

All you leave behind are memories -- make them good ones

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