

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers,

The proposed resolution for planning, design, and consulting services for an Airport Connector Pre-Development Agreement, as described in File 21-1542, Version 1, should not be passed by City Council.

Specifically, the consent item should also include the evaluation of an SJC to Santa Clara train station connector as either an alternative or addition to what is proposed.

**Measure A Called for a Santa Clara to SJC to Light Rail Transit Connector:**

According to the VTP2040 Long-Term Transportation Plan, one of the projects earmarked in the Measure A sales tax was project T18, the *Mineta San Jose International Airport APM Connector*.<sup>1</sup>

“Project would provide transit link to San Jose International Airport from VTA’s Guadalupe Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line, and from Caltrain and future BART in Santa Clara, using automated People Mover (APM) technology. The environmental phase is included in VTP 2040.”

As shown in Figure 2.1, T18 is the short line between the Santa Clara train station, SJC and light rail.

The summary specifically states that this project is for connecting SJC with the Santa Clara Caltrain and BART station, not SJC and Diridon.

*Is there a legal issue using Measure A money to fund a study for anything other than the SJC/Santa Clara connection?*

**Do the Economics Favor the Santa Clara Train Station to SJC?**

VTA and the Council should expand the scope of the Airport Connector Pre-Development Agreement to include the original T18 project as an alternative or addition. Like the current memo states, the focus should be on a private-public-partnership to leverage limited Measure A and other funds.

This author’s analysis suggests the amortized capital and operating cost for such a Santa Clara to SJC connector could be less than \$1.50 per ride.<sup>2</sup> This could be attractive for a private entity as, even if price of the ride were set for \$3.00 (which is half the price of the OAK-BART connector), operating margins would be in the 50% range.<sup>3</sup> This assumes about 7.3% of 14M annual passengers or about 2,900 per day take the connector.

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<sup>1</sup> See page 38, [http://vtaorgcontent.s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/Site\\_Content/VTP2040\\_final\\_hi%20res\\_030315.pdf](http://vtaorgcontent.s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/Site_Content/VTP2040_final_hi%20res_030315.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Here is the link to the downloadable spreadsheet, where the assumptions can be changed. [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rxBCOGifqLi03E6Sr\\_LzRd9qS-E4EK\\_N9qsNxxh2gOh8/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rxBCOGifqLi03E6Sr_LzRd9qS-E4EK_N9qsNxxh2gOh8/edit?usp=sharing)

<sup>3</sup> Here is a link to the January 2019 blog post about creating such a connector. The comments below that post provide updates and links to other connector projects, such as what the Ontario Airport has planned with its almost 3-mile link. <https://winchesterurbanvillage.wordpress.com/2019/01/14/a-practical-application-for-a-boring-company/>

### **Shorter Distance – More Frequent Service – Opportunity for Multiple Modes**

A connector from the Santa Clara Train Station to SJC would be approximately 4-miles closer for people traveling south on Caltrain or the ACE (e.g., they would not have to travel to Diridon and back to the airport). Similarly, if, as envisioned in project T18, the connector would open another path from Guadalupe Light Rail Transit to SJC and the Santa Clara Train Station.

Similarly, the connector would provide an anchor tenant for BART as passengers destined for the airport could stay on BART until its final stop at the Santa Clara train station. Given that the straight-line distance is approximately one mile between the Santa Clara Train Station and SJC, the frequency of service could be much greater than the approximately 2.5-mile link between Diridon and SJC.<sup>4</sup>

People traveling from west of the airport could take rideshare or public transit to the Santa Clara train station, avoiding having to drive into the airport or navigate the Diridon area.

Further, assuming a tunneling option is chosen, there is the potential to create a safe biking/pedestrian corridor between the Guadalupe River trail and El Camino Real.

### **Please Consider All the Options**

Although this project has not been part of nor does it appear to be on a future Airport Commission agenda, please consider this input as part of the scope the Airport Commission's duties per its charter.<sup>5</sup> Specifically, point 3 of Section 103, states,

“Providing adequate, safe and convenient public improvements on and near the Airport to accommodate air and supporting ground transportation elements, including rapid and mass transit.”

This project fits within that scope. Again, please expand the scope of the Airport Connector Pre-Development Agreement to include a Santa Clara Train Station to SJC to Light Rail Transit Connector.

In Community,

Ken Pyle

Airport Commissioner, Vice Chair

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<sup>4</sup> This assumes the same number of vehicles for each solution.

<sup>5</sup> Please see [http://sanjose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?meta\\_id=632133](http://sanjose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?meta_id=632133)

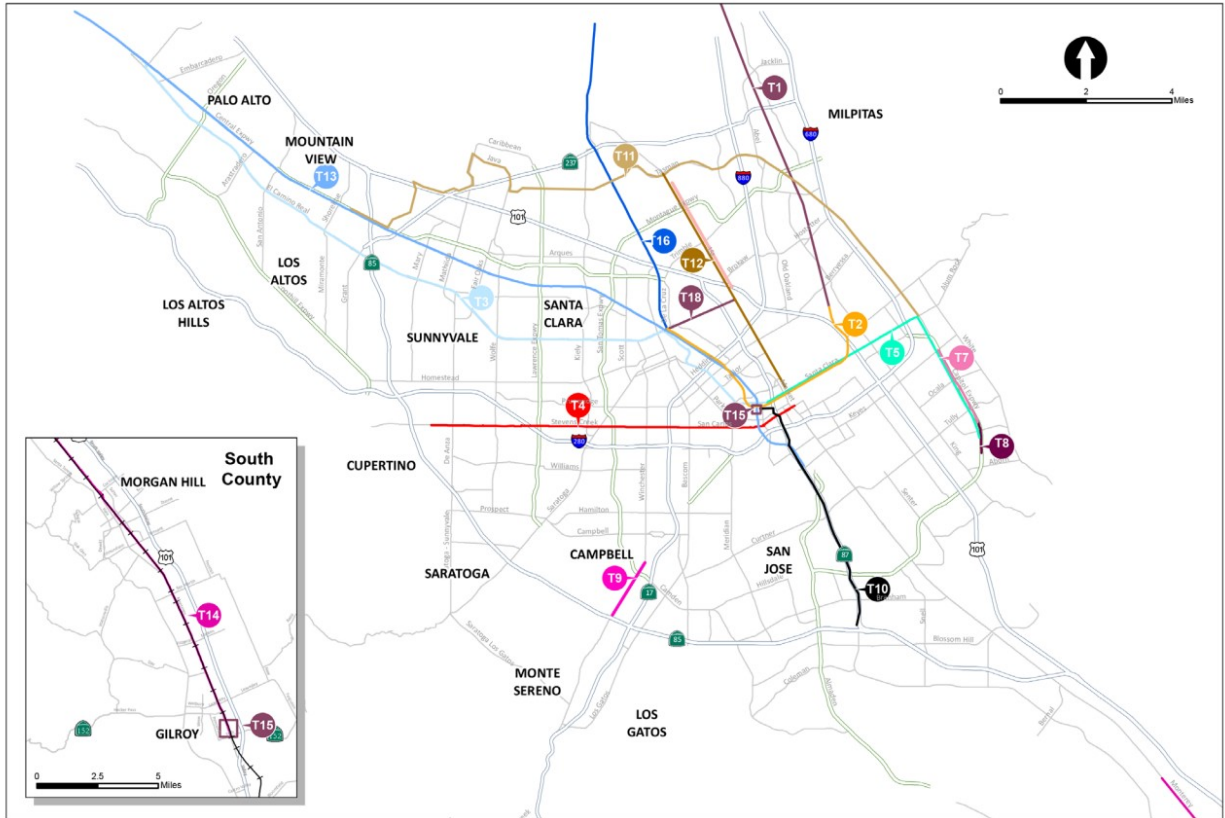


Figure 2.1 Transit projects in Santa Clara County. Source: VTA