

# **VTA NEWS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NR 11 25  
November 22, 2005

## **BART to Silicon Valley Project to Receive Federal Earmark**

San Jose, Calif. – Demonstrating their continued commitment to transportation relief in the Bay Area, Congressman Mike Honda (D – 15) and Senator Dianne Feinstein (D – CA) championed a \$6.5 million federal earmark for the BART to Silicon Valley extension.

The money will be allocated as part of the FY 2006 Transportation and Treasury Appropriations bill, which pass both chambers of Congress on Friday.

"This step continues the essential long-term federal investment in the future of our economy and the quality of life in our region," said Mayor Ron Gonzales. "This is great news for our residents, commuters, and employers in San Jose, Silicon Valley, and California."

"This latest appropriation bill was a real challenge because many projects were competing for a smaller portion of New Starts funding," said Michael T. Burns, VTA's general manager. "Congressmember Hondy's and Senator Feinstein's success in making the BART extension a priority is an important step. It will enable us to move the preliminary engineering for the project forward and help us address the critical transportation needs of our county."

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“BART to Silicon Valley will serve 111,500 daily trips by 2030, serving commuters heading into and out of Silicon Valley’s congested corridors,” said Silicon Valley Leadership Group’s President and CEO, Carl Guardino. “We are indebted to Congressman Honda, Senator Feinstein and our united Bay Area delegation for championing the needs of workers throughout the region.”

The funding will allow the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to continue preliminary engineering on the project, which is currently scheduled to go to construction in 2007 and begin passenger operations in 2015.

In December, VTA’s Board of Directors is expected to review a proposed expenditure plan that assumes the passage of a new quarter-cent sales tax. If the plan is adopted, passenger operations on the BART to Silicon Valley extension could begin in 2018 allowing VTA to complete other critical transportation priorities earlier in the 30-year measure.

Due to the Bay Area’s economic downturn, sales tax proceeds for the 2000 Measure A Program have been dramatically reduced forcing VTA to identify an additional funding source to move many of the 2000 Measure A projects forward.

### **About BART to Silicon Valley**

The 16.3-mile BART Extension Project is one of approximately 15 transportation projects slated to receive funds from 2000 Measure A. The extension creates a new regional public transportation link between Santa Clara County and the greater San Francisco Bay Area region. The project connects with other public transit systems, including VTA Light Rail and Bus Service, at seven different stations (plus one future station) in Milpitas, San Jose and Santa Clara. Construction is slated to begin in 2008 and the project is expected to open for service in 2015.

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### **About the 2000 Measure A Program**

The 2000 Measure A package of transit improvements was approved by Santa Clara County voters in November 2000 by a 70.3% majority and authorized a 30-year, 1/2 cent sales tax to begin in 2006. Measure A supports the Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) and Expenditure Program, a long-range transportation planning effort focused on addressing the Valley's transportation needs. VTP provides a balanced transportation system consisting of transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements. The revenue from Measure A enables approximately \$2 billion in future state and federal funds to be directed towards these projects. The Zero-Emission Bus Program is one of the 2000 Measure A projects.

### **About VTA**

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is an independent special district responsible for bus, light rail and paratransit operations; congestion management; specific highway improvement projects; and, countywide transportation planning. As such, VTA is both an accessible transit provider and multi-modal transportation planning organization involved with transit, highways and roadways, bikeways and pedestrian facilities. VTA provides services to cities throughout the county including Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga and Sunnyvale.

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