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## 3.13 LAND USE

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### Introduction

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This section describes existing land uses along the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor and discusses pertinent local and regional adopted plans, policies, and land use regulations. This section also includes an assessment of potential impacts that may result from implementation of the proposed project as well as corresponding mitigation measures, if warranted. Finally, a discussion of the consistency of the proposed project with plans, policies, and land use regulations is provided. Related information can be found in Section 3.16, Population and Housing.

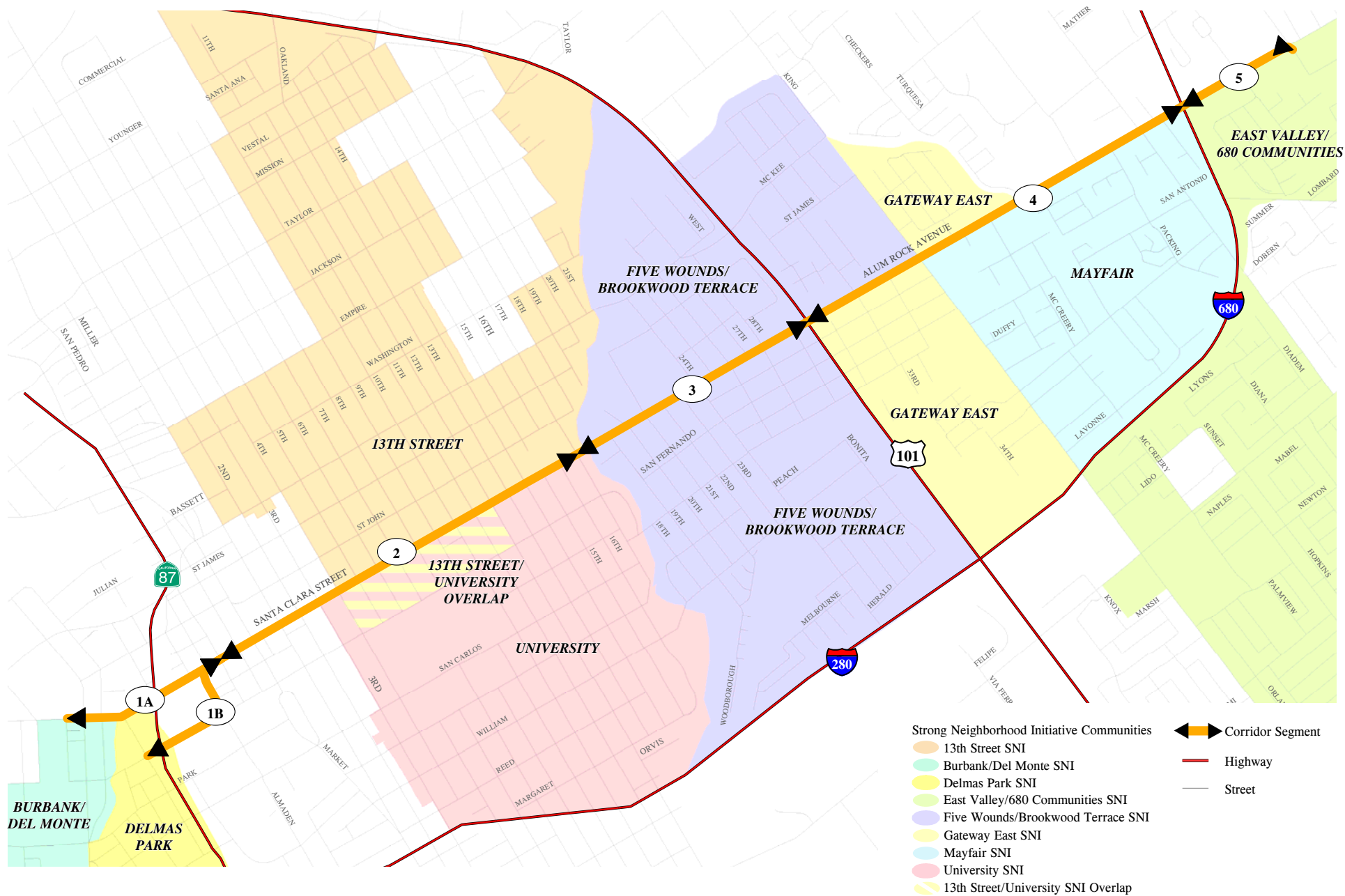
### Existing Conditions

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The Santa Clara Street-Alum Rock Corridor is located along Santa Clara Street and Alum Rock Avenue (and portions of San Fernando Street), stretching from eastern San Jose at Capitol Avenue through Downtown San Jose to the San Jose Diridon Station. The Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor is designated by the City of San Jose's General Plan as an Intensification Corridor. Intensification Corridors are areas designated as generally suitable for higher residential densities, more intensive non-residential uses, and mixed uses. These corridors are centered along existing or planned LRT lines and/or major bus routes. During the early stage of development, Intensification Corridors are intended to include properties within approximately 500 feet of the right-of-way of the Corridor's central transportation facility.

As discussed in Section 2, Project Description, eight Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) areas are located along the Corridor. Within these SNIs there are various land uses, including residential, commercial, and industrial. There are also areas of open space, public land, and vacant land. In order to discuss the variety of land uses along the Corridor, the Corridor has been divided into five segments that are generally based on the adjacent SNI boundaries. Figure 3.13-1 presents the five Corridor segments and adjacent SNIs.

Land use surveys were conducted in June 2004 and March 2008 to determine the various land uses along the Corridor. Land uses and zoning within the Corridor segments are presented by segment in Table 3.13-1, beginning on the western end of the Corridor. Because there are alignment variations associated with Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project, Table 3.13-1 presents two Corridor segments for the western end of the Corridor. Segment 1A in the table represents the western end of the Phase 1 BRT and Phase 2 Single Car LRT, Alignment Option 1. Segment 1B represents the western end of Phase 2 Single Car LRT. Generally, land uses transition from industrial in the west, to commercial and residential to the east.



**FIGURE 3.13-1: LAND USE STUDY AREA**

Source: EIP Associates, 2004.

**Table 3.13-1  
Land Uses and Zoning along the Corridor**

<b>Segment</b>	<b>Location along Corridor</b>	<b>Adjacent SNI(s)</b>	<b>Land Use Designations</b>	<b>General Land Uses</b>	<b>Zoning Districts</b>
1A Phase 1 BRT and Phase 2 Single Car LRT Alignment Option 1	Along West Santa Clara Street from the San Jose Diridon Station to Almaden Boulevard	Delmas Park and Burbank/Del Monte	Public Park/Open Space; Public/Quasi-Public; General Commercial; Combined Industrial/ Commercial; Core Area; Neighborhood Business; Mixed Use Overlay	Hotels; parks; HP Pavilion; parking lots auxiliary to San Jose Diridon Station	CN; CO(PD); LI; A(PD); DC
1B Phase 1 Single Car LRT	Along West San Fernando Street from the Vasona LRT connection to Almaden Boulevard and along Almaden Boulevard from West San Fernando Street to West Santa Clara Street (LRT route)	Delmas Park and Burbank/Del Monte	Core Area; Public Park/Open Space; Public/Quasi-Public; General Commercial; Medium Density Residential; Transit- Oriented Development Corridor	Residences; parks; offices; school; industrial facilities with auxiliary parking lots	CN; LI; A(PD); DC
2 BRT and Single Car LRT	Along West Santa Clara Street and East Santa Clara Street from Almaden Boulevard to 17 <sup>th</sup> Street	13 <sup>th</sup> Street and University	Core Area; Public/Quasi- Public; Office; General Commercial; Medium Low Density Residential; Medium Density Residential; Medium High Density Residential; Neighborhood Business District; Transit-Oriented Development Corridor	Multi-family apartments; hotels; grocery store; vacant retail; retail stores; restaurants; gas stations; medical facilities; school; civic center; professional offices; church; empty lots	CN; CG; A(PD); R-M
3 BRT and Single Car LRT	Along East Santa Clara Street from 17 <sup>th</sup> Street to U.S. 101	Five Wounds/ Brookwood Terrace and Gateway East	Public Park/Open Space; Public/Quasi-Public; General Commercial; Medium Density Residential; Neighborhood Business District; Mixed Use Overlay; Mixed Use Industrial Overlay	Single-family homes; multi- family apartments; community centers (one under construction); schools and churches; strip malls; markets; retail stores; bank; restaurants; professional offices; auto service; used car lots; City park; fire station	R-1-8; CG; A(PD); LI; R-M; CP

**Table 3.13-1 (Continued)**  
**Land Uses and Zoning along the Corridor**

Segment	Location along Corridor	Adjacent SNI(s)	Land Use Designations	General Land Uses	Zoning Districts
4 BRT and Single Car LRT	Along Alum Rock Avenue from U.S. 101 to I-680	Mayfair Initiative	Medium Density Residential; Medium High Density Residential; Public/Quasi-Public; General Commercial; Neighborhood/Community Commercial; Neighborhood Business District	Single-family homes; multi- family residences; community centers; church; strip malls; retail stores; restaurants; supermarkets; medical and dental facilities; professional offices; gas stations; auto service shops; vacant buildings; mixed-use residential/commercial	CN; CG; LI; A(PD); CP; R-1- 8
5 BRT and Single Car LRT	Along Alum Rock Avenue from I-680 to Capitol Avenue	East Valley/680 Communities	Medium High Density Residential; General Commercial; Neighborhood Business District; Private Open Space	Single-family homes; multi- family apartments; senior housing complex, strip malls, restaurants, professional offices, gas stations; self storage company; cemetery; PG&E phone line tower lot	CN; CG; A(PD)

*Sources:* PBS&J, 2008; City of San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram, January 2008; City of San Jose Zoning Map, March 2008.

*Notes:*

R-1-8 = Single-Family Residential  
R-2 = Two-Family Residential  
R-M = Multi-Family Residential  
CP = Commercial Pedestrian  
CN = Commercial Neighborhood

CO(PD) = Commercial Office, Planned Development  
CG = Commercial General  
A(PD) = Agricultural, Planned Development  
LI = Light Industrial  
DC = Downtown Commercial

## Regulatory Setting

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Land use plans and policies applicable to the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor were reviewed to identify plans and policies relevant to the proposed project. These relevant plans and policies are described below. The City's Zoning Ordinance and zoning maps do not provide designations for roadways; therefore, zoning regulations are not applicable to the proposed project and are not included in this discussion.

**Transportation 2030 Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area.**<sup>1</sup> The Transportation Plan 2030 for the San Francisco Bay Area is a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and comprehensive blueprint for the development of mass transit, highway, airport, seaport, railroad, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area (Bay Area). The RTP, which was adopted in 2005, specifies how anticipated federal, State, and local transportation funds will be spent in the Bay Area during the succeeding 25 years. The agency responsible for the RTP is the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), which is the transportation planning, coordinating, and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

In tandem with the RTP, MTC administers a Regional Transit Expansion Program, which calls for investment in new rail and bus projects that would improve mobility and enhance connectivity throughout the Bay Area. The project alternatives are among the new rail and bus projects to be funded under the Regional Transit Expansion Program.

**San Jose 2020 General Plan.** The San Jose 2020 General Plan provides goals and policies for the development of the City. The Land Use/Transportation Diagram within the General Plan depicts thoroughfares (including right-of-way widths, rail lines, and land use designations) throughout the City. The General Plan anticipates implementation of an extensive LRT system that would connect large portions of Santa Clara County by 2020. The Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor is identified in the Land Use/Transportation Diagram as an Intensification Corridor, which may be distinguished by the innovative application of transportation projects and other means of maintaining effective circulation. The Land Use/Transportation Diagram identifies Santa Clara Street and Alum Rock Avenue as an 80- to 106-foot-wide arterial. General Plan goals and policies applicable to the proposed alternatives relate to transportation and are provided below.<sup>2</sup>

**Transportation Goals:** Provide a safe, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive transportation system for the movement of people and goods.

*Transportation Policy 1:* Interneighborhood movement of people and goods should occur on thoroughfares and is discouraged on neighborhood streets

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<sup>1</sup> Metropolitan Transportation Commission, *Transportation Plan 2030 for the San Francisco Bay Area (FINAL)*, February 2005. [http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/2030\\_plan/index.htm](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/2030_plan/index.htm). Accessed February 28, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> City of San Jose, *San Jose 2020 General Plan and Land Use/Transportation Diagram*, last updated June 5, 2007. <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/gp/gptext.asp>. Accessed March 28, 2008.

*Transportation Policy 4:* Additional public street right-of-way beyond that designated in the Land Use/Transportation Diagram may be required to facilitate left-turn lanes, bus pullouts, and right-turn lanes in order to provide additional capacity at some intersections

*Transportation Policy 10:* The City of San Jose is evolving as an interregional transit hub for Northern California and the City should foster and encourage this evolution.

*Transportation Policy 11:* The City should cooperate with the Santa Clara County Transit District, the California Department of Transportation, and other transportation agencies to achieve the following objectives for the County’s public transit system:

- Provide all segments of the City’s population, including the disabled, elderly, youth, and economically disadvantaged, with adequate access to public transit.
- Design public transit to be an attractive, convenient, dependable, and safe alternative to the automobile.
- Enhance transit service in major commute corridors, and provide convenient transfers between public transit systems and other modes of travel.
- Develop an efficient and attractive public transit system which meets the travel demand at major activity centers, such as the Downtown, major employment centers, major regional commercial centers, government offices, and colleges and universities.

*Transportation Policy 12:* New development should be required to install indented curbs for bus pullouts, bus shelters, and other transit-related public improvements, where appropriate.

**Strategy 2000: San Jose Greater Downtown Strategy for Development.**<sup>3</sup> Strategy 2000 was created under the provisions of the General Plan and for the Redevelopment Agency of San Jose under the leadership of a Community Task Force composed of residents, San Jose State University, the cultural community, and business representatives from Downtown San Jose and throughout the City. Strategy 2000 identifies strategies and actions for the development and redevelopment of Greater Downtown San Jose in accordance with the Task Force’s vision for the revitalization of Downtown San Jose, including an expanded bus and LRT system centered on Downtown. The formulation of strategies and actions were initially driven by guiding principles that included providing excellent circulation with traffic and transit systems connecting to regional hubs in San Jose. Relevant strategies and actions from Strategy 2000 are identified below.

General Transportation and Access Strategy a	Improve and expand transit services.
General Transportation and Access Strategy b	Upgrade transit stops, particularly bus stops, providing rider amenities that complement downtown streetscapes.

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<sup>3</sup> San Jose Redevelopment Agency, *Strategy 2000: San Jose Greater Downtown Strategy, Draft*, February 2001. [www.sjredevelopment.org/downtown.htm](http://www.sjredevelopment.org/downtown.htm). Accessed February 20, 2004.

General Transportation and Access Strategy l	Coordinate with BART and light rail expansion in the downtown. Pay particular attention to the effects that rail alignments have on adjacent developable parcels, walkability, and street vitality. The San Jose Redevelopment Agency should work closely with VTA to ensure developable land and street function and character area not unnecessarily compromised.
General Transportation and Access Strategy q	Keep LRT tracks generally at street level, and work with cars that are easily accessible. Maintain the walkability on the street with easily accessible LRT cars.
Transportation Action 5	Invest in comfortable, attractive BART, bus, and light rail stops to welcome riders downtown. Designs should be integrated with and supportive of individual streetscape characters.
Transportation Action 15	Integrate light rail with the pedestrian streetscape environment. Use cars with easy pedestrian access without mechanical lift and which do not require platforms that disrupt movement across the street.

**Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Community Plans.** The San Jose SNI program is a partnership of the City of San Jose, the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, and participating San Jose communities intended to improve neighborhood conditions, enhance community safety, expand community services, and strengthen neighborhood associations within San Jose communities that participate in the SNI. SNI Community Plans are developed to guide revitalization or development within the SNI communities.<sup>4</sup> In general, these Community Plans contain goals or actions to improve and provide economic development within the SNI communities. Demographic data from these SNIs are discussed in Section 3.16, Population and Housing.

**Valley Transportation Plan 2030.**<sup>5,6</sup> Developed by VTA, the Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2030 provides a framework for making key transportation decisions, a plan for investing in the transportation system, and strategic direction for VTA’s involvement in land use and other livability issues. VTP 2030 is the long-range transportation plan for Santa Clara County that provides policies and programs for roadways, transit, intelligent transportation systems, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and land use for Santa Clara County. The Land Use and Transportation Integration section of the VTP identifies programs that provide means for integrating VTA and local government (and other member agency) land use and transportation plans and objectives. VTP 2020 identifies the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor as a Designated Corridor, where expanded or enhanced transit would support existing or planned development as determined by the City.

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<sup>4</sup> San Jose Strong Neighborhoods Initiative. [www.strongneighborhoods.org](http://www.strongneighborhoods.org). Accessed March 28, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> VTA, *Valley Transportation Plan 2030*, February 2005. [http://www.vta.org/studies/index\\_vtp2030.html](http://www.vta.org/studies/index_vtp2030.html). Accessed March 28, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> VTP 2035, which will be an update of VTP 2030, is currently being developed by VTA. This analysis compares the proposed alternatives against VTP 2030 because VTP 2035 has not been adopted as of the preparation of this EIR.

## **Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures**

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### **Approach and Methodology**

The analysis of impacts related to land use was based on a qualitative assessment that included evaluation of compatibility and consistency of the proposed project with applicable plans, programs, and policies pertaining to land use in the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor. This analysis considers the effects of the proposed project as described in Section 2, Project Description, of this document. Additionally, the potential cumulative effects of the proposed project are considered in Section 4, Other CEQA Considerations, of this document.

### **Standards of Significance**

Based on the significance criteria used by VTA, the proposed project may result in adverse effects related to land use if they:

- Physically divide an established community;
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project, adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- Conflict with a habitat conservation plan (HCP) or natural community conservation plan (NCCP).

According to State law, VTA is not required to comply with local plans and policies; therefore, designations of significance are not made in terms of the project's consistency with the San Jose General Plan, and mitigation is not suggested if the project is inconsistent with local policies. VTA nevertheless wishes to disclose the extent to which the construction of the proposed project along the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor is consistent with the adopted San Jose General Plan and land use goals.

### **Environmental Analysis**

In order to determine land use impacts due to construction and operation of the proposed project, a level of significance is determined and reported in the impact statement. Conclusions of significance are defined as follows: significant (S), potentially significant (PS), less than significant (LTS), no impact (NI), and beneficial (B). If the mitigation measures would not diminish potentially significant or significant impacts to a less-than-significant level, the impacts are classified as "significant and unavoidable (SU)." For this section, LU refers to Land Use.

For the purposes of this analysis, the proposed project includes the implementation of BRT and Single Car LRT in the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor in two phases. Phase 1 includes the implementation of BRT service and Phase 2 includes the implementation of Single Car LRT service. Potential land use impacts associated with Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the proposed project, including project options, would be largely similar. Therefore, the analyses for the two project phases are discussed together. Areas in

which the effects of the two phases differ are detailed within the discussion of each significance threshold.

Potential impacts associated with the extension of transit services in the Capitol Expressway Corridor were analyzed in the Capitol Expressway Light Rail Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (FSEIR) dated January 2007, which is incorporated herein by reference. Potential impacts of the proposed project not analyzed in the Capitol Expressway Light Rail FSEIR are described below, as necessary.

*LU-1. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in physical division of an established community. (NI)*

The alignment of the proposed project would pass through or adjacent to eight SNIs, including Burbank/Del Monte, Delmas Park, 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace, Mayfair, Gateway East, and East Valley/680 Communities. However, the alignment would traverse established thoroughfares characterized by high traffic volumes and existing bus service. The proposed project would maintain major street intersections and crosswalks that currently provide vehicle and pedestrian circulation across the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor. Also, the proposed project does not include the construction of walls or other structures that would serve as barriers, which would then physically divide the communities. Region-wide, the project would provide an increased link between Downtown San Jose and the eastern neighborhoods of the City by providing enhanced transit service along the four-mile Corridor. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed project would have no impact related to the division of an established community.

*LU-2. The proposed project would be compatible with existing adjacent land uses. (LTS)*

The proposed project would be constructed within existing thoroughfares with adjacent industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential uses, and with existing bus service that supports the adjacent development. The proposed project would not conflict with existing land uses because the proposed project would enhance the current transit service that supports the existing adjacent development. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in uses that are incompatible to adjacent land uses nor would the proposed project result in the reduction of efficiency or effectiveness of adjacent land uses.

Station platforms for the proposed project would be constructed adjacent to existing sidewalks along West Santa Clara Street, East Santa Clara Street, and along Alum Rock Avenue west of 34<sup>th</sup> Street. The bulb-out platforms would be 110 to 275 feet long and nine feet wide, with a curb height of six inches for BRT and up to 14 inches for Single Car LRT. Center-running platforms would be constructed in the median of Almaden Boulevard and Alum Rock Avenue east of 34<sup>th</sup> Street. The center-running platforms would be approximately 90 feet long and 12.5 feet wide, with a height of six to 14 inches. The height of the station platforms would not be sufficient to obstruct frontages along the Corridor, either adjacent to existing sidewalks or within roadway medians. Adjacent uses would continue to be served by existing sidewalks and would be readily viewable from across station platforms. The height of station platforms would

therefore not be considered incompatible with existing land uses. Consequently, the proposed project's impact with respect to land use compatibility would be less than significant.

*LU-3. The proposed project would be consistent with applicable land use plans, policies and regulations. (B)*

In general, adopted goals and policies in the San Jose 2020 General Plan, Strategy 2000, and VTP 2030 support enhanced and expanded transit along the Corridor. Therefore, the proposed project would be generally consistent with these goals and policies. The proposed project is part of the project to be funded under the RTP; therefore, it is considered part of the RTP and inherently consistent with this plan. For this reason, no consistency analysis between the project alternatives and the RTP is provided.

**San Jose 2020 General Plan.** The San Jose 2020 General Plan, which governs the land use decisions in the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor area, is in support of transit oriented development and the expansion and enhancement of existing transportation corridors. The General Plan identifies the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor as an Intensification Corridor where intensified development is planned along major bus routes or LRT routes. The anticipated intensified development would be restricted to generally the same types of land uses as allowed by the zoning designations along the Corridor. Both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the proposed project would be consistent with the anticipated intensification of development along the Corridor by providing enhanced transit to support the intensified development.

The proposed project would be inconsistent with the Land Use/Transportation Diagram within the San Jose General Plan. The Land Use/Transportation Diagram identifies Santa Clara Street-Alum Rock Avenue as an 80- to 106-foot-wide arterial. The actual roadway width ranges from 60 to 90 feet (with a 42-foot-width at Coyote Creek Bridge),<sup>7</sup> and therefore does not meet the designated width along its entire length. Construction of side-running station platforms would require the construction of nine-foot bulb-outs extending into the street from the existing curb at proposed stations, thereby reducing the road width at platform locations. The construction of center-running platforms would also reduce the roadway width by about 12.5 to 15 feet.

Final Project Plans of the proposed project would be developed in coordination with the City of San Jose. The proposed project would not substantially change existing conditions since Santa Clara Street-Alum Rock Avenue already has a roadway width that is less than 80 feet in some locations.

**Strategy 2000.** Strategy 2000 aims to enhance transit services towards Downtown San Jose by developing a pedestrian-friendly, attractive, and efficient transit system towards Downtown San Jose. In conjunction with existing LRT service on the western and eastern ends of the Corridor, and the proposed Capitol Expressway Line that would extend LRT service south to the Eastridge Transit Center, the proposed project would enhance transit connections from the

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<sup>7</sup> VTA, *Downtown East Valley Major Investment Study, Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue Light Rail Transit Alternative Definition, Working Paper*, March 2000.

eastern parts of the City and from the anticipated transit project east of the Corridor to Downtown San Jose and to the San Jose Diridon Station in the Downtown area. The design of the proposed project includes distinguishing features, streetscape, or public art elements along the transit corridor, including Downtown San Jose, so that the proposed project would complement the adjacent streetscape character. The proposed project would also include pedestrian amenities for safe and convenient pedestrian access to transit stations. The proposed project would therefore generally comply with Strategy 2000.

**Strong Neighborhood Initiative Community Plans.** Both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the proposed project would be consistent with SNI Community Plans within the Corridor. These Community Plans have been developed for the revitalization of their respective SNI communities. Some Community Plans, such as the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace SNI and the East Valley/680 Communities SNI Community Plans consider transit expansion along the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor in planning revitalization efforts within their respective SNI Communities. The proposed project would support revitalization of the adjacent communities by providing enhanced transit service that would support increased development along the Corridor.

**Valley Transportation Plan 2030.** VTP 2030 identifies the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor as a Designated Corridor, where expanded or enhanced transit would support existing or planned development as planned by the City. Implementation of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the proposed project would enhance transit along the Corridor to support intensified development as described in the San Jose General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with VTP 2030.

Overall, the proposed project would be consistent with the San Jose 2020 General Plan, Strategy 2000, SNI Community Plans, and VTP 2030. These plans and policies generally aim to revitalize the Corridor area in conjunction with providing enhanced transit to support the revitalization. Because the proposed project would support these goals, the proposed project would be consistent with the plans and policies and would result in beneficial impacts related to relevant adopted plans, policies, or regulations.

*LU-4 Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with existing or future Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) or Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCP). (NI)*

As discussed in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, the Santa Clara Valley HCP/NCCP has been prepared by a regional partnership between six local agencies, including the City of San Jose and VTA, along with three wildlife agencies. The Corridor is located within the City of San Jose in a heavily developed area that is designated for intensified development in the future. Because the HCP/NCCP has not been adopted by the City of San Jose and VTA, the proposed project would not impact this plan.