

KEY ISSUES STUDY GUIDE

PART II

Public Outreach and Decision
Making Process

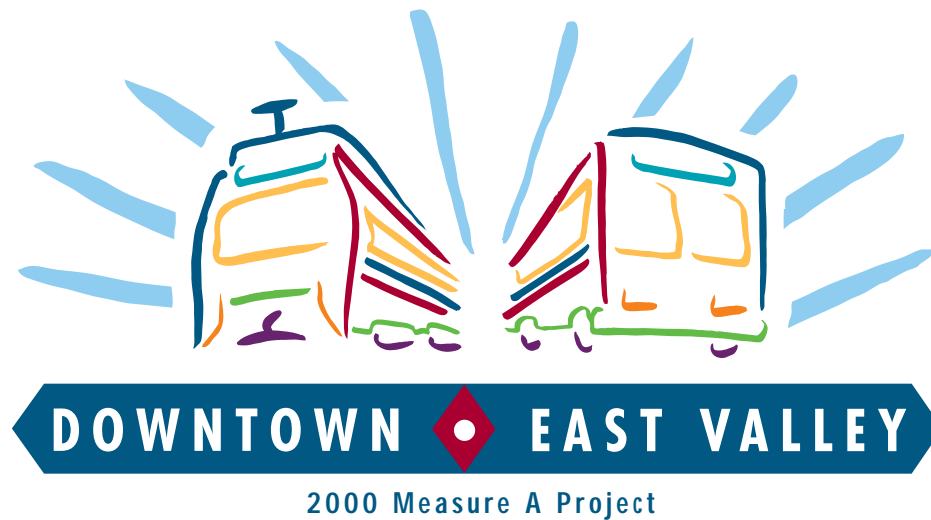
Travel Patterns and Transit Usage
in the Corridor

The Corridor

The Alternatives

Project Goals and Evaluation Criteria

Next Steps and Key Project Milestones



DOWNTOWN EAST VALLEY TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SANTA CLARA/ALUM ROCK CORRIDOR

January 2003

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Note: Revised meeting locations

JANUARY COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

January 22, 2003

Segment Focus: 10th Street to Capitol Avenue

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Eastside Neighborhood Center

2150 Alum Rock Avenue

San Jose, CA

January 23, 2003

Segment Focus: Diridon Station to 10th Street

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

24 N. Fifth Street

San Jose, CA

FEBRUARY COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

February 26, 2003

Segment Focus: 10th Street to Capitol Avenue

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Eastside Neighborhood Center

2150 Alum Rock Avenue

San Jose, CA

February 27, 2003

Segment Focus: Diridon Station to 10th Street

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

24 N. Fifth Street

San Jose, CA

PUBLIC OUTREACH & DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Moving Toward a Preferred Mode and Alignment for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor

Major transit improvements are proposed in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor between Capitol Avenue and the Diridon Station in Downtown San Jose as part of the Downtown East Valley Transit Improvement Plan. These improvements will form a critical link in the regional transit network, as shown in the map below.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is planning a series of workshops and meetings in January and February 2003 that will lead to the selection of the preferred mode of transit (light rail, streetcar or bus) and the preferred alignment (or route) through the corridor. These decisions will form the basis of the “project description” for the environmental document for this corridor.

This study guide is the second in a series of information packets that will assist in the decision making process.

Study Guide Part II: Summary of Key Considerations

CONSIDERATION # 1

Which alternative will best address and complement the transit usage and travel patterns in the study area?

CONSIDERATION # 2

Alternative Options:

- Two Car Light Rail
- Single Car Light Rail
- Single Car Light Rail with New Vehicles
- European Modern Streetcar
- California Modern Streetcar
- Enhanced Bus Service

CONSIDERATION # 3

Which alternative will best meet the project goals based on the evaluation criteria?

SANTA CLARA COUNTY TRANSIT NETWORK



Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

Public involvement and agency coordination are important components of the project development, environmental review, and design and construction processes. VTA will continue to provide opportunities to ensure that public dialogue occurs. Some of these opportunities include public meetings and workshops, updates on VTA’s website, newsletters and distribution of study documents for public review.

POLICY ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Five elected officials serve on the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board (PAB). The PAB meets regularly to review the project and forward recommendations to the VTA Board of Directors. The VTA Board will make the ultimate decision regarding the preferred alignment and mode for the Downtown East Valley Project.

Downtown East Valley PAB

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Information

For more information on the Downtown East Valley Transit Improvement Plan call VTA Planning and Programming at (408) 321-5744, TDD only (408) 321-2330 or visit us on the web at www.dtev-vta.org.

Targeted Schedule For Upcoming Meetings

January 2003: PAB Hosts Community Workshops to Provide an Update on Project Alternatives and the Evaluation Process, and Receive Input

- | | |
|---|---|
| ▶ January 22, 2003
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Eastside Neighborhood Center
2150 Alum Rock Avenue
San Jose, CA | ▶ January 23, 2003
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
24 N. Fifth Street
San Jose, CA |
|---|---|

February 2003: PAB Hosts Community Workshops to Receive Evaluation Report and Staff Recommendation

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ February 26, 2003
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Eastside Neighborhood Center
2150 Alum Rock Avenue
San Jose, CA | ▶ February 27, 2003
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
24 N. Fifth Street
San Jose, CA |
|--|--|

March 2003: PAB Adopts Preferred Alignment and Mode to be Analyzed in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report

CONSIDERATION #1:

Which alternative will best address and complement the transit usage and travel patterns in the study area?

Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor Provides Link Between Downtown San Jose and the East Valley

The Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor is an extremely important east/west travel corridor between the East Valley and Downtown San Jose. It is the primary direct roadway link between the heart of Downtown San Jose and the East Valley, and is the most heavily used transit corridor in VTA's transit system. With projected growth in the Downtown and East Valley areas of San Jose and the tremendous level of both public and private investment anticipated in Downtown in the coming years, the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor will become even more important than it is today as a gateway to Downtown San Jose.

Approximately 20,000 to 33,000 vehicles per day travel the corridor, representing traffic volumes comparable to that on Market Street in Downtown San Jose. As such, this corridor is a major gateway into Downtown. Traffic volumes are within the carrying capacity of the roadway, however, on-street parking and frequent traffic signals and access points (i.e., driveways) and cross traffic tend to reduce the roadway capacity and, likely, increase the perceived level of traffic congestion in the corridor.

Highest Transit Ridership Area in the County

The Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor exhibits an extremely high level of current transit use, with 12,000 daily transit boardings occurring in the four-mile segment between Capitol Avenue and the Diridon Station area. This is the highest ridership area in Santa Clara County, which is both a historical trend and one that is projected to continue for the foreseeable future.

While there is more transit service provided in this corridor than in any other area of the County, it should be noted that the high ridership is not merely the result of the high level of transit service provided. As shown in the box to the right, the services provided in the corridor are extremely productive. Each weekday, the corridor carries over 8% of the total ridership on VTA's entire system, even though it accounts for only .3% of the number of "transit route miles" of service.

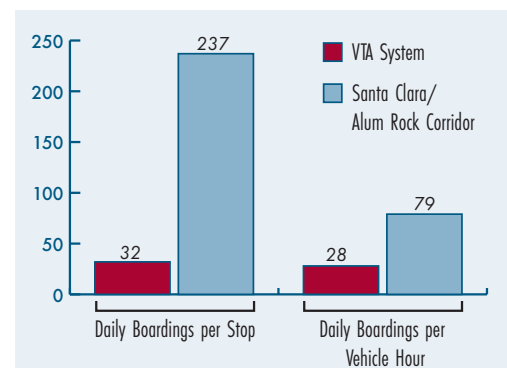
VTA bus stops serve an average of 32 riders each day, whereas the typical bus stop in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor serves 237.

Transit ridership is less "peaked" in this corridor than the overall VTA system with fairly constant ridership throughout the day. The balanced number of transit trips being made during peak commute and non-peak times suggests a broader range of trip purposes for East Valley transit riders and/or less traditional work schedules.

In addition, there are dual transit needs in the corridor. There is both a demand for short "circulator" types of transit trips and longer transit trips through the corridor and beyond (sometimes referred to as "line-haul" trips).

A survey conducted by VTA in 2002 revealed the following: of all Bus Line 22 riders in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock segment, 51% got on and off within the segment, suggesting a shorter, "circulator" type of trip. The remaining 49% either got on, got off, or both outside the corridor, suggesting a longer trip through the corridor. Similarly, 42% of Bus Line 64 riders in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock segment got on and off between Capitol Avenue and the Diridon Station, versus 58% who got on, off, or both outside the corridor. This fairly even split for these two types of trips suggests significant demand for "circulator" as well as "line-haul" service.

The 2002 survey of VTA riders in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor showed a high level of transit dependency among riders. There are a high percentage of riders in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor who have "no other way to make the trip", and this percentage is higher than that found in the rest of VTA's service area. The survey also found that 85% of the transit riders in the study area use transit four or more days per week.



	VTA System	Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor
Total Daily Bus Boardings	150,000	12,000*
Percentage of Total System Riders	100%	8%
Percentage of Miles of Service Area	100%	.3%
Average Daily Boardings per Bus Stop	32	237

* Represents combined ridership on Line 22 (6,500), Line 64 (4,300), and Line 300 (1,100)

Travel Patterns in the Corridor

The Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor is very diverse, characterized by a high level of small business and community activity. It includes some of the most densely populated neighborhoods in Santa Clara County.

The entire 30-square mile Downtown East Valley area has 300,000 residents but only 51,000 jobs. In other words, approximately 16% of the population of Santa Clara County lives in the Downtown East Valley area, but only 5% of the County's jobs are found there. This means that a high percentage of Downtown East Valley residents commute to jobs located outside the study area. Because of the limited number of east/west roadways in the East Valley and increasing development in the east foothills and Evergreen area and communities to the south of San Jose, there are also a large number of commuters, traveling through the study area.

Other important characteristics of the Downtown East Valley study area:

- Average household incomes in the study area are 44% less than the countywide average.
- The number of persons per household is almost 30% higher than the countywide average (4.16 as compared to 2.97).
- People who live in the study area have fewer autos per household than is found countywide, resulting in a much higher number of "persons per auto."

This demographic makeup suggests a high need for the current transit service provided in the corridor.

TRAVEL PATTERNS & TRANSIT USAGE IN THE CORRIDOR

VTA ON-BOARD SURVEY

Topic	Study Area	System-wide
Take Transit Because No Other Other Way to Make Trip	73%	62%
Live in Multiple Family Dwelling	55%	65%
Under 35	77%	61%
Female	51%	42%
Minority	81%	67%
Under \$35,000 Annual Income	71%	55%
Employed (Full or Part Time)	59%	70%
Student	26%	17%

Future Demand in the Corridor

Bus lines 22, 64 and 300 accommodate nearly 12,000 passengers each day along the corridor. Projected transit demand (bus and/or rail) in 2020 in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor is in the range of 16,000 to 19,000 daily riders.

Transit improvements are needed in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor to meet the current and future transit needs of residents and commuters.

CORRIDOR CHARACTERISTICS

- Major east/west travel corridor
- Gateway into Downtown San Jose
- Vibrant central business district, characterized by small businesses and community activity
- High level of transit use
- High level of transit dependency
- Vehicle traffic and transit use projected to increase
- Population and population density projected to increase at a higher rate than the rest of San Jose

Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor



EXAMPLES OF EXISTING SANTA CLARA/ALUM ROCK STREETScape



Overview of Proposed Alternatives for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor

Six alternatives are proposed and outlined in this Study Guide. VTA developed the alternatives based on recent technical information and the input from the community, agencies and the City of San Jose.

The alternatives offer a variety of choices that can be considered for the corridor and reflect some initial screening choices. For example, all of the alternatives now run primarily on Santa Clara Street west of King Road. The alignment is consistent with the San Jose Downtown Strategy Plan and takes into account other recent decisions, such as the Santa Clara Street alignment for BART.







Each alternative provides connections to the proposed BART Extension stations as well as the Guadalupe, Vasona and Capitol light rail lines, Caltrain, ACE, Capitol Corridor (to Sacramento), and many VTA bus lines.

Station improvements and landscaping would be included in each alternative. To the extent that it is needed and is feasible to do so, replacement parking lots would also be an element of each alternative.

The matrix below provides an overview of key elements of each alternative. A detailed overview of each alternative is also provided in this Study Guide. When reviewing the alternatives, note that the locations for proposed stations are basically the same for each alternative. After a preferred alternative is chosen, the exact station placement will be discussed further during the environmental review phase of the project.

CONSIDERATION #2: ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- Two Car Light Rail (existing VTA vehicles)
- Single Car Light Rail (existing VTA vehicles)
- Single Car Light Rail (New Vehicles)
- European Modern Streetcar
- California Modern Streetcar
- Enhanced Bus Service

		Street Design West of King Road	Street Design East of King Road	Vehicle Dimensions	Station (platform) Characteristics	Estimated Capacity	Estimated Frequency of Service	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Provided By	
	Two Car Light Rail	Two car light rail trains (existing VTA vehicles)	Rail and autos share center traffic lanes	Rail exclusively in center median	Length: 180 feet Width: 8.7 feet	Height: 14 inches Length: 200 feet	130 seats and can hold up to 340 persons	10 minutes	Low floor vehicle design with level boarding
	Single Car Light Rail	Single car light rail trains (existing VTA vehicles)	Rail and autos share outside traffic lanes	Rail exclusively in center median	Length: 90 feet Width: 8.7 feet	Height: 14 inches Length: 80-100 feet	65 seats and can hold up to 170 persons	10 minutes	Low floor vehicle design with level boarding
	Single Car Light Rail with New Vehicles	Single car light rail trains (new vehicles)	Rail and autos share outside traffic lanes	Rail exclusively in center median	Length: 77 feet Width: 8.7 feet	Height: 10 inches Length: 75-90 feet	60 seats and can hold up to 145 persons	10 minutes	Low floor vehicle design with bridge plate
	European Modern Streetcar	Single streetcar vehicles similar to those used in Portland, Oregon	Rail and autos share outside traffic lanes	Rail exclusively in center median	Length: 66 feet Width: 8 feet	Height: 10 inches Length: 50-60 feet	30 seats and can hold up to 115 persons	5 to 10 minutes	Low floor vehicle design with bridge plate
	California Modern Streetcar	Single streetcar vehicles similar to the European modern streetcar but would be a strengthened vehicle.	Rail and autos share outside traffic lanes	Rail exclusively in center median	Length: 66 feet Width: 8 feet	Height: 10 inches Length: 50-60 feet	30 seats and can hold up to 115 persons	5 to 10 minutes	Low floor vehicle design with bridge plate
	Enhanced Bus Service	Articulated buses similar to VTA's existing vehicles and small circulator buses.	Bus and autos share outside traffic lanes	Bus and autos share outside traffic lanes	Articulated Bus Length: 60 feet Width: 8.5 feet Circulator Bus Length: 30 feet Width: 8.5 feet	Height: 6 inches Length: 50-60 feet	Articulated Bus 57 seats and can hold up to 99 persons Circulator Bus 20 seats and can hold up to 45 persons	Articulated Bus 10 minutes Circulator Bus 5 to 10 minutes	Low floor vehicle design with ramp

Key Issues and Concepts

Overview of the Existing Streetscape for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock Corridor

Each proposed alternative results in different effects on the existing streetscape depending on where it runs in the street (center lanes, outside lanes), how long the vehicle is and the type of station that would be required. It may be helpful to review the elements of the existing streetscape before assessing the different alternatives. The corridor currently includes sidewalks on both sides and landscaping with trees.

SANTA CLARA STREET WEST OF KING ROAD

- Roadway has four traffic lanes, two in each direction.
- Left turn lanes at intersections are available for most of the corridor.
- Between 17th and 23rd Streets, the roadway narrows and left turns must occur from the inside through lane.
- On-street parking along the outside of the street occurs within each block, typically on both sides of the street with the exception of a small area near Coyote Creek and at the US 101 interchange.

ALUM ROCK AVENUE EAST OF KING ROAD

- Roadway has four traffic lanes, two in each direction.
- A striped center median provides for left turns at most intersections.
- On-street parking along the outside of the street occurs with each block on both sides of the street with the exception of an area near Sunset Avenue and from the west side of the I-680 interchange to Capitol Avenue.



Street Design Alignment East of King Road

The width of the street determines the type of alternatives considered. For each alternative in this Study Guide, there are different options for the street design west of King Road where the road is narrow. East of King Road, all the alternatives [except the Enhanced Bus Service Alternative] offer rail service exclusively in the center median.

Regulatory Consideration for the Streetcar Alternatives

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has regulatory authority over the safety of rail transit systems in California. The CPUC issues General Orders that define rules and procedures to which rail transit systems must adhere. General Order 143-B “Safety Rules and Regulations Governing Light-Rail Transit” contains requirements for the strength of major vehicle structural components.

VTA’s existing light rail vehicles meet the requirements of General Order 143-B; however, the European modern streetcar under consideration does not meet this requirement, which is specific to California. Therefore, if a streetcar is chosen as the preferred transit mode, each streetcar vehicle would have to be modified to meet CPUC requirements, or VTA would have to work with the CPUC for approval to accommodate streetcar operations.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

For people with disabilities, access means simply being able to use, enjoy and participate in the many aspects of society, including work, commerce and leisure activities. Transportation is a vital link that allows full participation.

VTA is committed to providing transit that provides equal access for all users. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all fixed rail and bus systems be fully accessible.

There are three options for the alternatives: low floor rail vehicle design with level boarding, low floor rail vehicle design with level boarding using a bridge plate and low floor bus design with a ramp. A bridge plate is a small ramp deployed from the vehicle when the door opens. It “bridges” the horizontal and vertical gap between the floor of the vehicle and the station platform.



Example of level boarding for a low floor bus



Example of level boarding with a bridge plate



Example of level boarding for a light rail vehicle

Key Issues and Concepts

Examples of Rail and Bus Stations

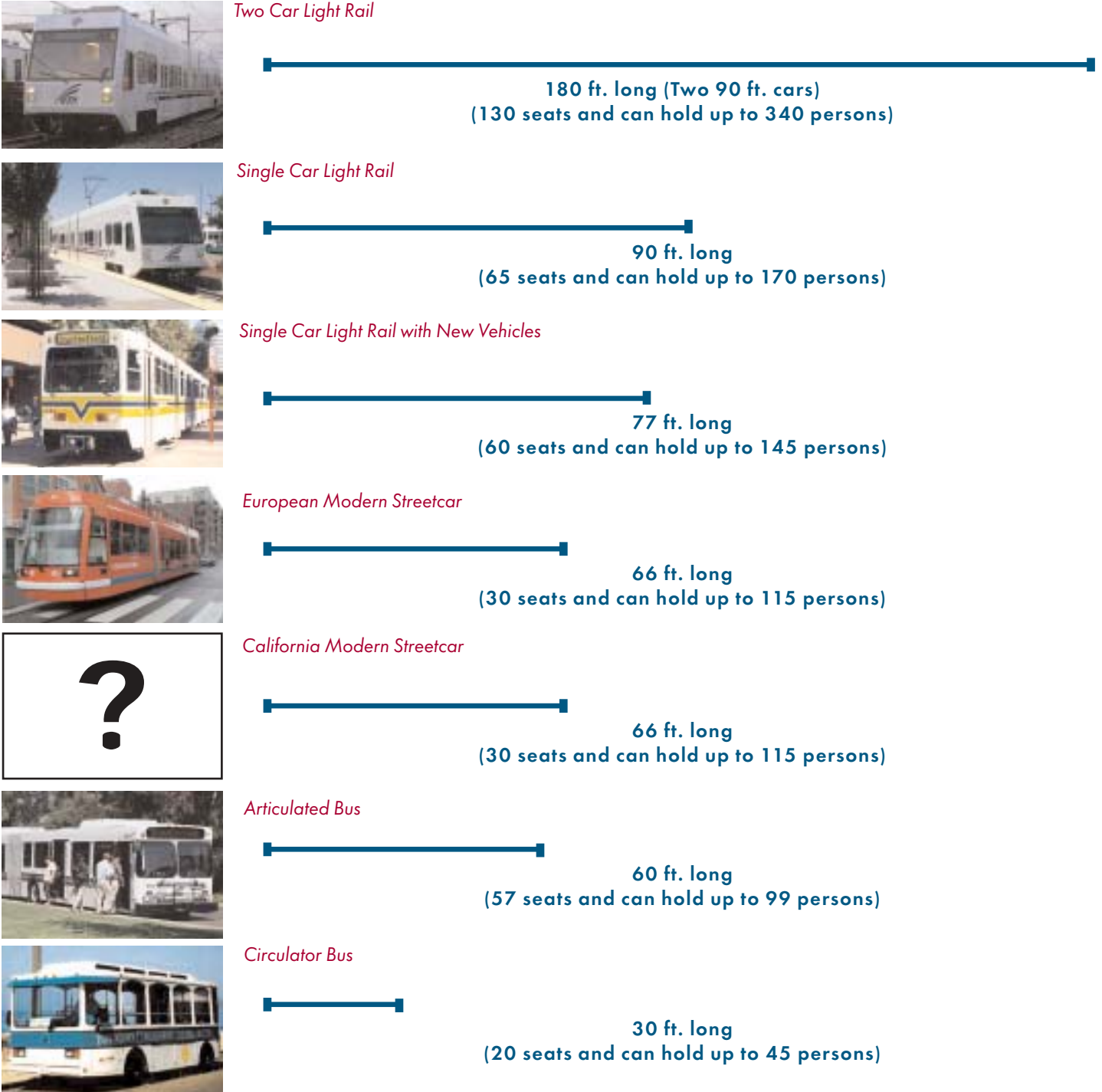
The alternative descriptions provide details for the different rail and bus stations. Generally a station stop would consist of a distinct shelter, ticket vending machines, special lighting and landscaping.



Example of a station stop

Examples of Transit Length and Capacity

The transit modes under consideration vary in size and capacity. Capacity is expressed both in number of seats as well as total capacity including people standing.



KEY ELEMENTS

- Would use two car light rail trains (existing VTA vehicles)
- The capacity would be adequate to serve the current number of transit riders with a train arriving every 10 minutes
- Two rail cars have 130 seats and can hold up to 340 persons
- Could directly connect onto the Vasona and Capitol Light Rail tracks



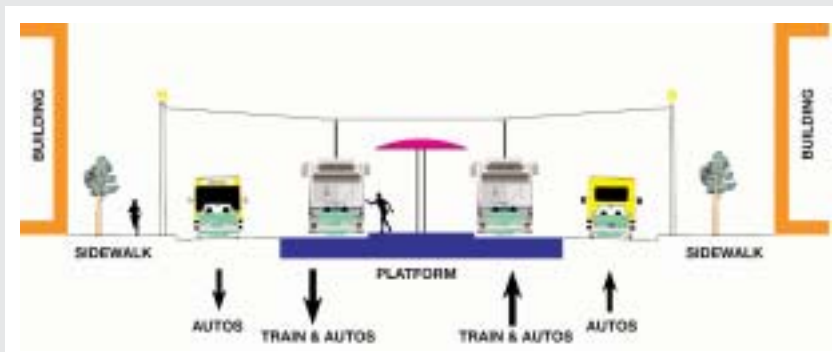
Example of VTA Two Car Light Rail Train

TWO CAR LIGHT RAIL ALTERNATIVE



Proposed Alternative Alignment and Stations

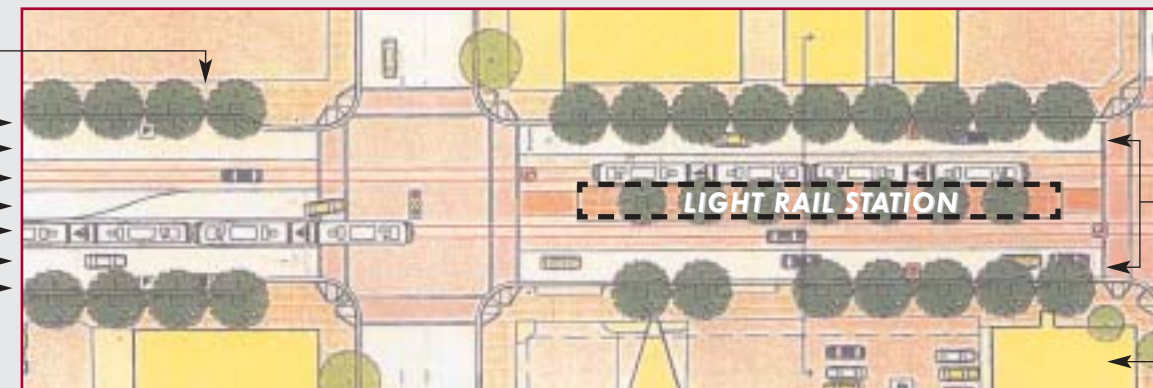
Santa Clara Street West of King Road: Rail and Autos Share Center Traffic Lanes



STATION DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Platform Height: 14 inches (for 200 foot section)
- Platform Length: 200 feet
- Platform located in street median with access from signalized crosswalks

- Existing Bus Stop Remains
- Some On-street Parking Remains
- Auto Lane Westbound
- Train and Auto Lane Westbound
- Left Turn Lane
- Train and Auto Lane Eastbound
- Auto Lane Eastbound
- Some On-street Parking Remains



- Existing Parking Removed to Accommodate Station
- Possible Replacement Parking Lot

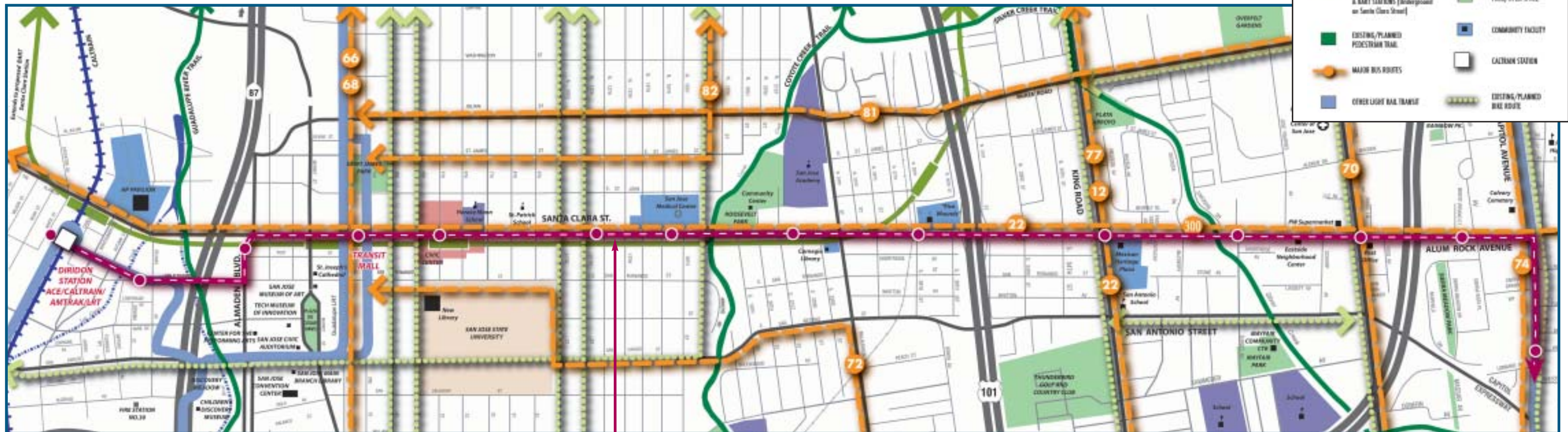
KEY ELEMENTS

- Would use single car light rail trains (existing VTA vehicles)
- The capacity may not be adequate to serve the current number of transit riders with a train arriving every 10 minutes; Bus Line 22 service would continue to meet the total transit demand in the corridor
- Each car has 65 seats and can hold up to 170 persons
- Could directly connect onto the Vasona and Capitol Light Rail tracks
- Service reliability would be affected by possible auto interference on the side of the street



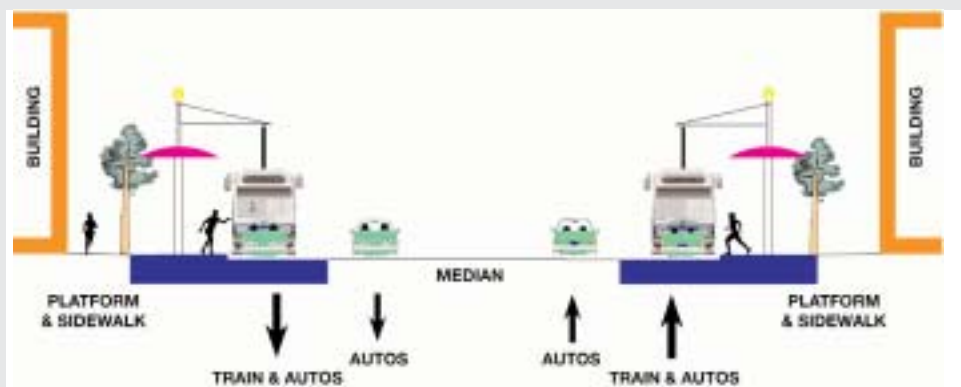
Example of VTA Single Car Light Rail Train

SINGLE CAR LIGHT RAIL ALTERNATIVE



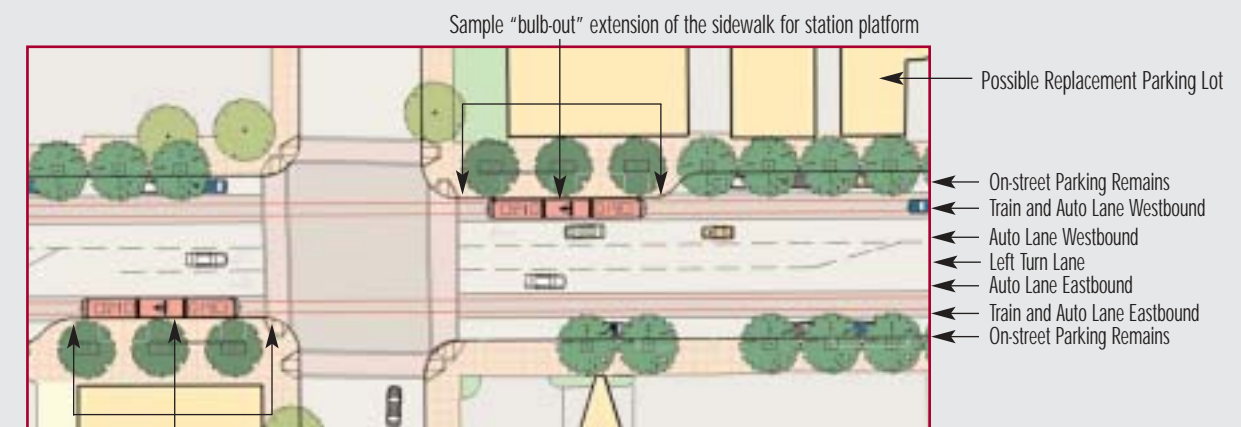
Proposed Alternative Alignment and Stations

Santa Clara Street West of King Road: Rail and Autos Share Outside Traffic Lanes



STATION DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Platform Height: 14 inches (for 60 foot section)
- Platform Length: 80–100 feet
- Platform located in the outside lanes of the street as a “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk at the intersection and serves trains and buses



Sample “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk for station platform

KEY ELEMENTS

- Would use single car light rail trains (new vehicles)
- Each car has 60 seats and can hold up to 145 persons
- The capacity may not be adequate to serve the current number of transit riders with a train arriving every 10 minutes; Bus Line 22 service would continue to meet the total transit demand in the corridor
- Could directly connect onto the Vasona and Capitol Light Rail tracks
- Service reliability would be affected by possible auto interference on the side of the street



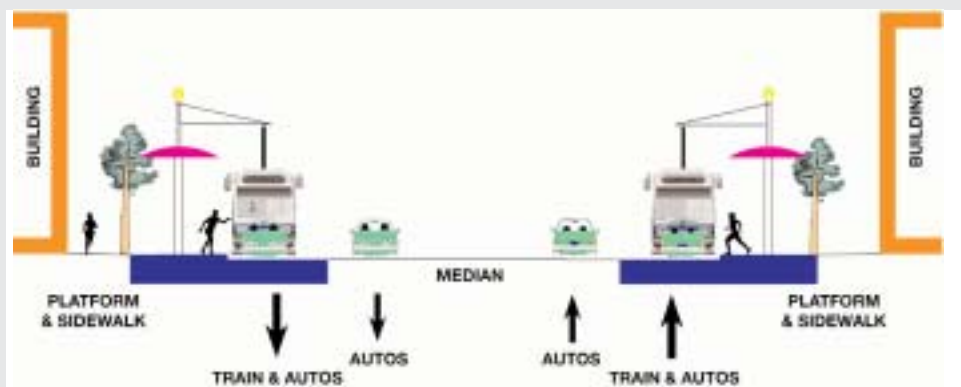
Example of Sacramento, California Light Rail Train

SINGLE CAR LIGHT RAIL WITH NEW VEHICLES ALTERNATIVE



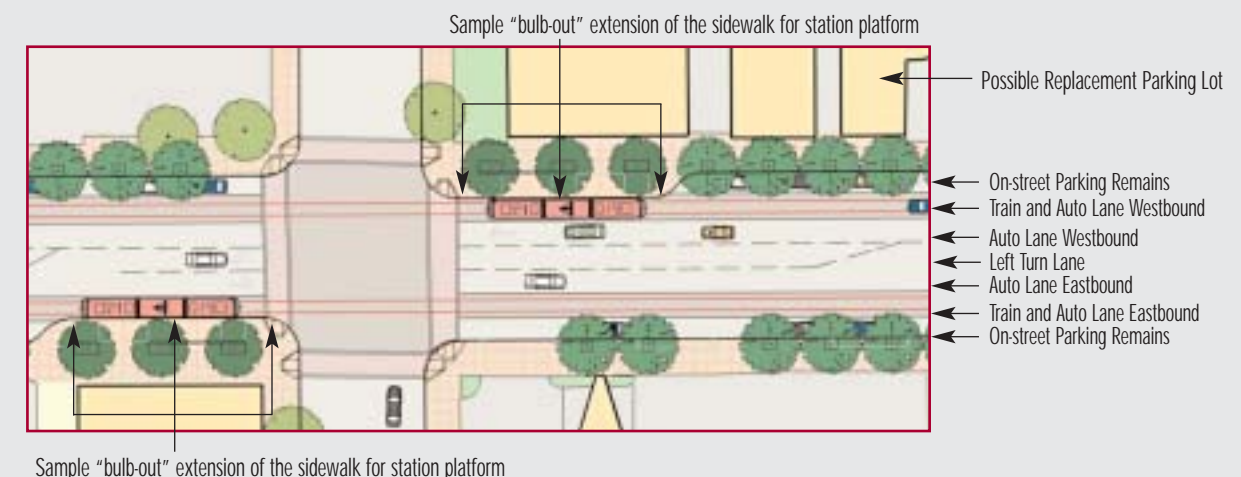
Proposed Alternative Alignment and Stations

Santa Clara Street West of King Road: Rail and Autos Share Outside Traffic Lanes



STATION DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Platform Height: 10 inches
- Platform Length: 75–90 feet
- Platform located in the outside lanes of the street as a “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk at the intersection and serves trains and buses



Sample “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk for station platform

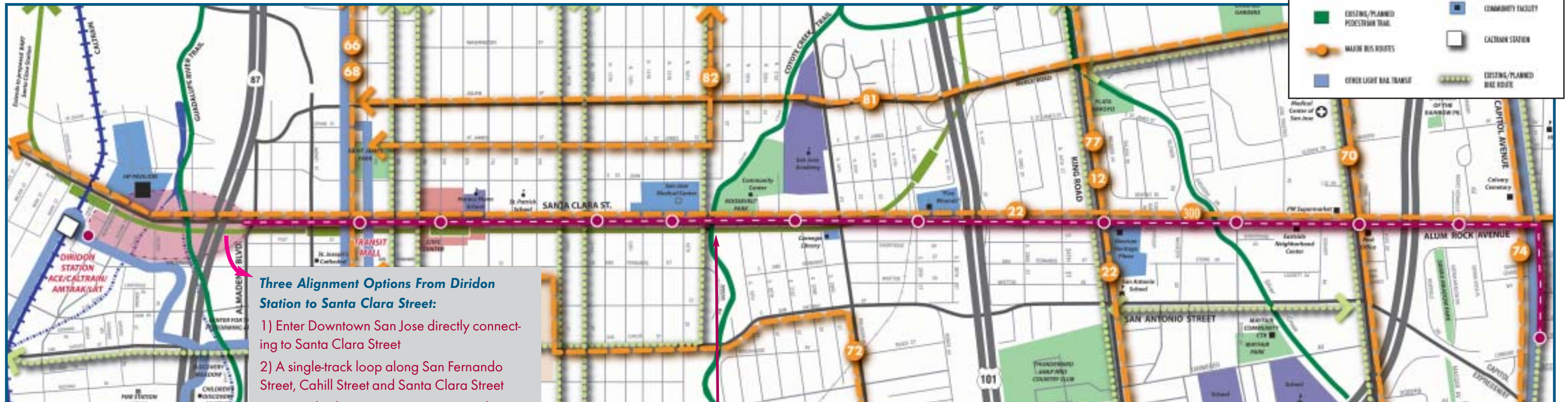
EUROPEAN MODERN STREETCAR ALTERNATIVE

KEY ELEMENTS

- Would use single streetcar vehicles similar to those used in Portland, Oregon
- Streetcar vehicle would require California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) approval
- Each car has 30 seats and can hold up to 115 persons
- To serve the current number of transit riders, a train would arrive every 5–10 minutes; Bus Line 22 service would continue to meet the total transit demand in the corridor
- Potential high cost for new station and separate tracks to connect to Capitol Light Rail



Example of European Modern Streetcar Used in Portland, Oregon

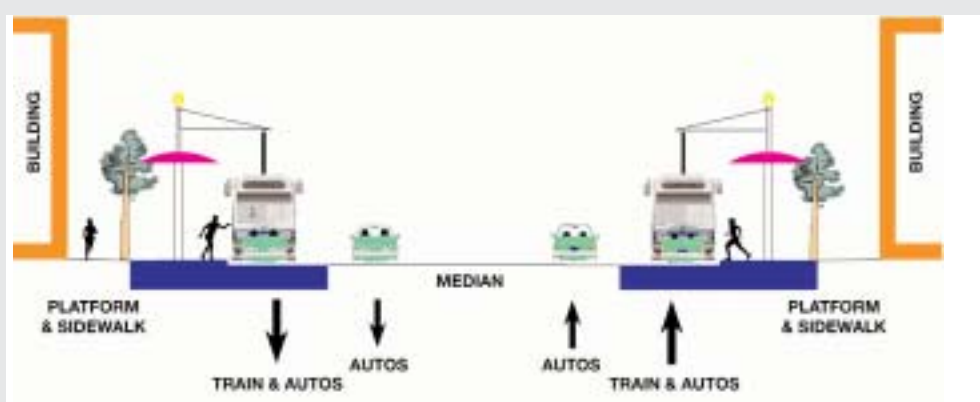


Three Alignment Options From Diridon Station to Santa Clara Street:

- 1) Enter Downtown San Jose directly connecting to Santa Clara Street
- 2) A single-track loop along San Fernando Street, Cahill Street and Santa Clara Street
- 3) A new bridge across Los Gatos Creek just south of Santa Clara Street

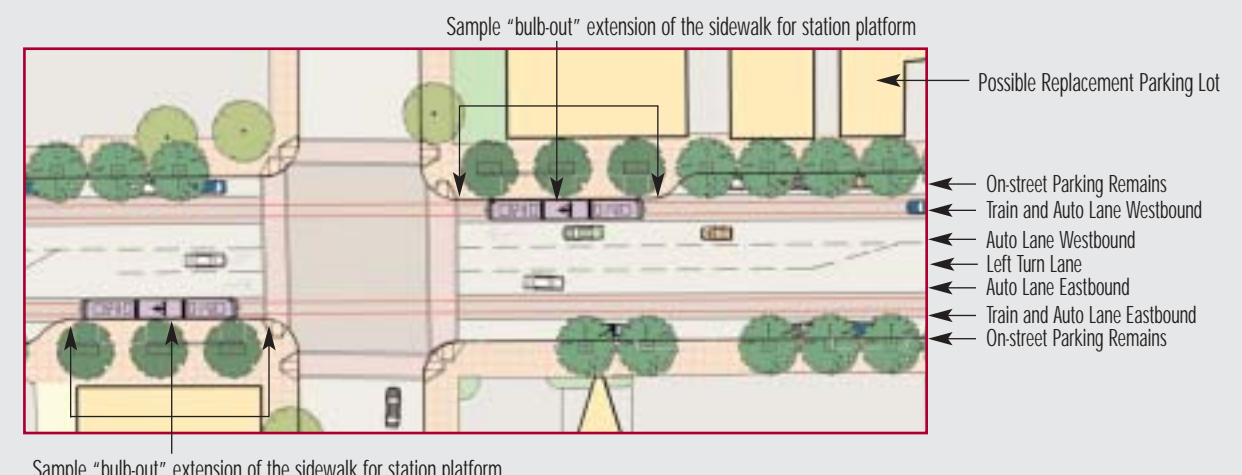
Proposed Alternative Alignment and Stations

Santa Clara Street West of King Road: Rail and Autos Share Outside Traffic Lanes



STATION DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

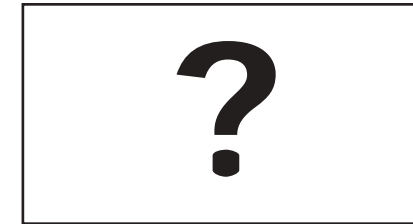
- Platform Height: 10 inches
- Platform Length: 50–60 feet
- Platform located in the outside lanes of the street as a “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk at the intersection and serves streetcars and buses



Sample “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk for station platform

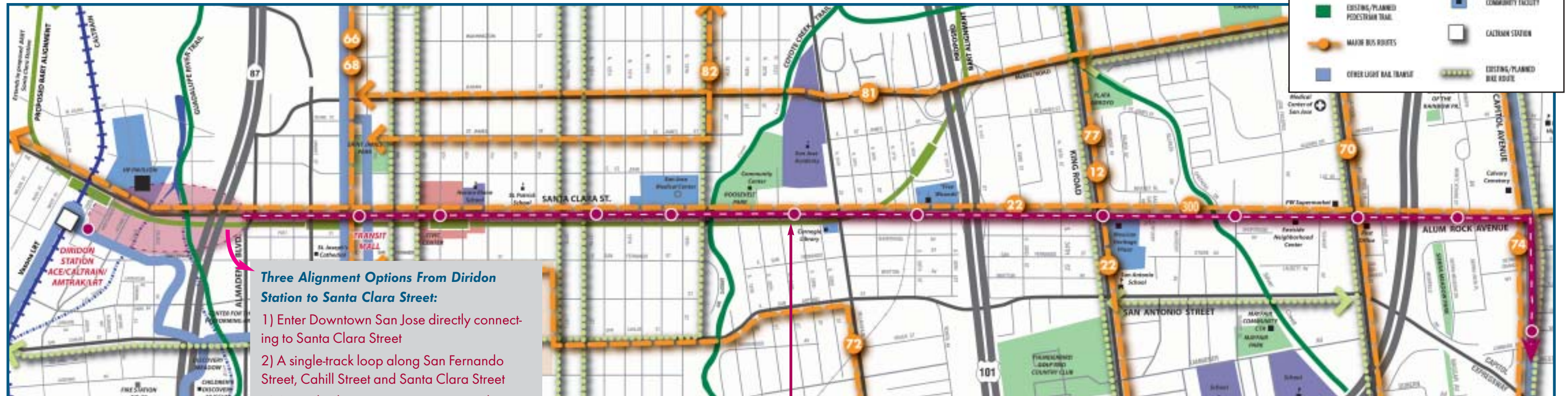
KEY ELEMENTS

- Single streetcar similar to European Modern Streetcar but would be a strengthened vehicle to meet CPUC regulations
- Each car has 30 seats and can hold up to 115 persons
- New vehicle may be available but the cost and design is not yet known
- To serve the current number of transit riders, a train would arrive every 5-10 minutes; Bus Line 22 service would continue to meet the total transit demand in the corridor
- Would require transfer to the Vasona Light Rail but may be able to directly connect onto the Capitol Light Rail tracks



The California Modern Streetcar does not presently exist, but VTA expects it may be feasible to strengthen a European Modern Streetcar vehicle to meet CPUC requirements. This may increase the vehicle cost.

CALIFORNIA MODERN STREETCAR ALTERNATIVE

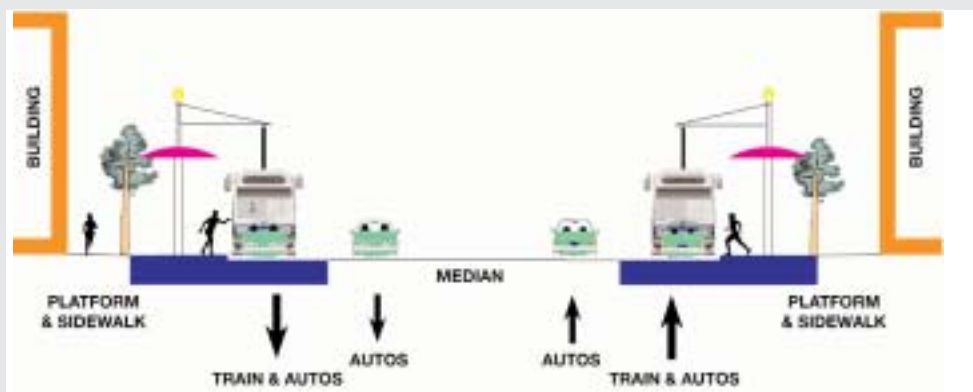


Three Alignment Options From Diridon Station to Santa Clara Street:

- 1) Enter Downtown San Jose directly connecting to Santa Clara Street
- 2) A single-track loop along San Fernando Street, Cahill Street and Santa Clara Street
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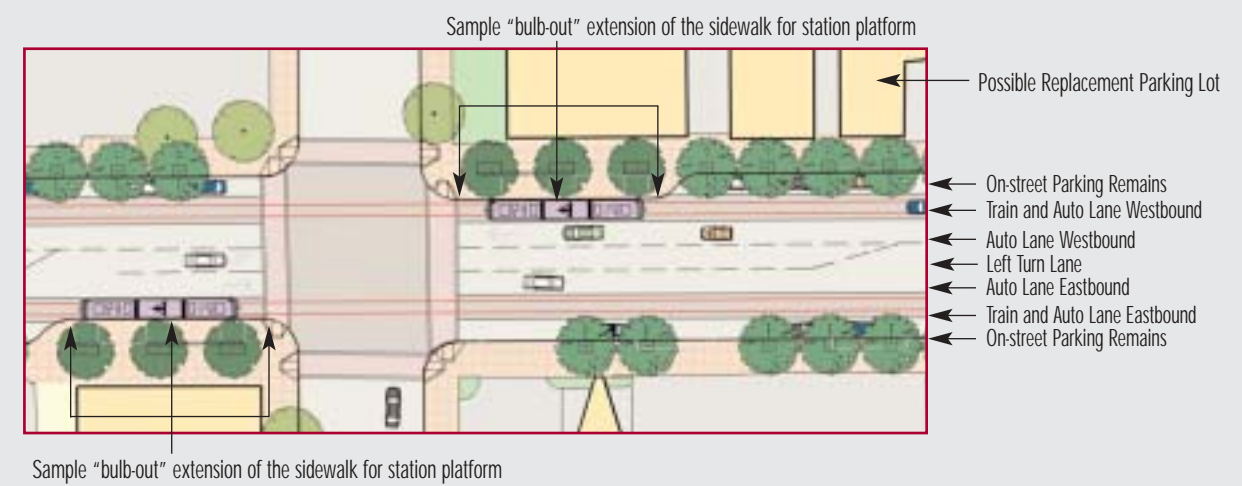
Proposed Alternative Alignment and Stations

Santa Clara Street West of King Road: Rail and Autos Share Outside Traffic Lanes



STATION DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Platform Height: 10 inches
- Platform Length: 50–60 feet
- Platform located in the outside lanes of the street as a “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk at the intersection and serves streetcars and buses



KEY ELEMENTS

- Service would include limited stop service using articulated buses and circulator bus service with smaller, specially designed buses
- Stop improvements would be similar to the other alternatives, including including shelters, special lighting and real-time transit information.
- Would include traffic signal priority for faster bus operation
- Would provide 10 minute service with the limited stop service and 5-10 minute circulator bus service
- The articulated bus has 57 seats and can hold up to 99 persons
- The circulator bus has 20 seats and can hold up to 45 persons

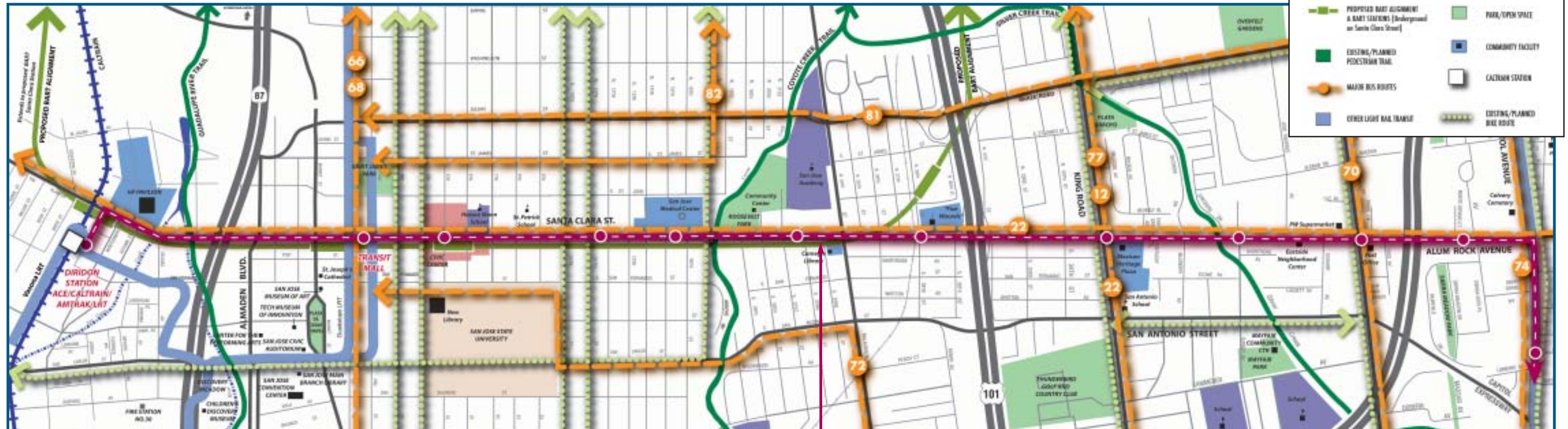


Example of VTA Articulated Bus



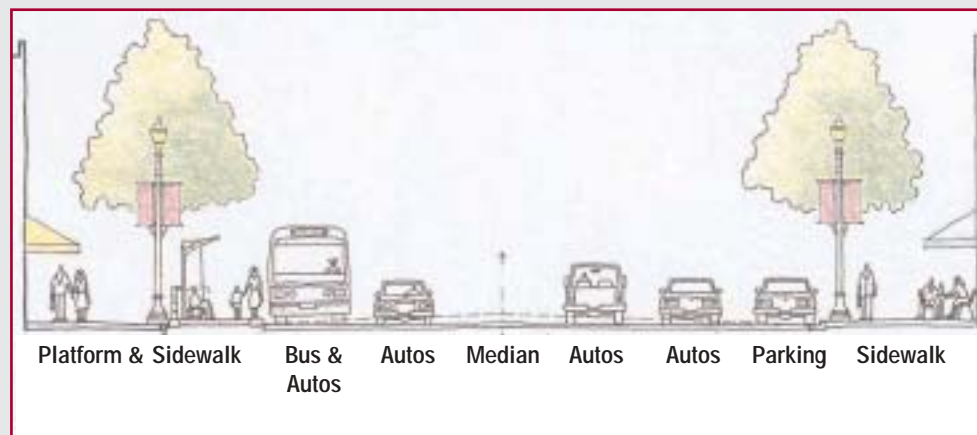
Example of Small Circulator Bus from Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District

ENHANCED BUS SERVICE ALTERNATIVE



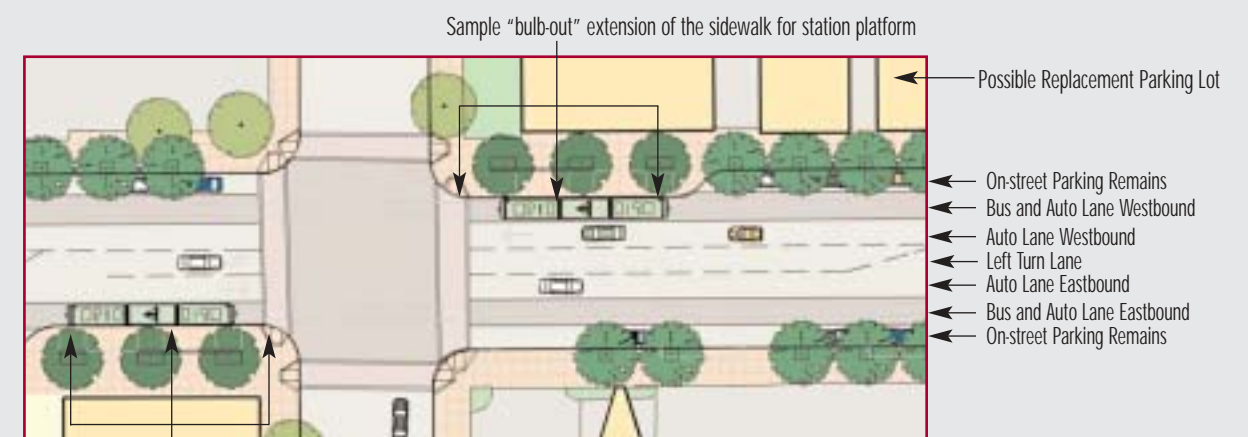
Proposed Alternative Alignment and Stations

Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue



STATION DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:

- Platform Height: 6 inches
- Platform Length: 50–60 feet
- Platform located in the outside lanes of the street as a “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk at the intersection to serve both articulated buses and smaller circulator buses



Sample “bulb-out” extension of the sidewalk for station platform

CONSIDERATION #3:

Which alternative will best meet the project goals based on the evaluation criteria?

Project goals provide a framework for the development of the preferred mode and alignment for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor. Goals are also used to guide the evaluation of alternatives.

In the evaluation process, it is critical to use relevant evaluation criteria to compare alternatives. This process helps determine the alternative that demonstrates the most merit from both a technical and community perspective. VTA has developed preliminary evaluation criteria proposed to be used in the evaluation. Input from the upcoming community workshops will help to refine this list.

Additional technical analysis and further community input will help complete the evaluation process.

Preliminary Evaluation Criteria

MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

- Quality of Transit Service
- Quantity of Transit Service
- Connections to Existing/Future Transit System
- Travel Time
- Reliability
- Ridership
 - Potential to Attract New Riders
 - Accommodation of Current/Projected Transit Demand
 - Serves Existing Riders and Transit Dependent

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- Capital Cost
- Operating Cost
- Potential for Federal Funding
- Compatibility with Existing Transit System
- Feasibility of Implementation
- Construction Impacts
 - Duration
 - Extent

COMMUNITY COMPATIBILITY

- Relationship to Community Scale/Character
- Streetscape/Sidewalk Impacts
- Transportation Impact
 - Parking
 - Driveway Access
 - Loading Zones
 - Roadway Traffic
- Support for Neighborhood Revitalization, Priorities and Initiatives
- Environmental Justice
- Level of Community Support

Environmental Review and Conceptual Engineering To Move Forward with Approval of Project Description

The environmental review phase of the Downtown East Valley Transit Improvement Plan began following the completion of the Major Investment Study (MIS) in 2000. Federal and state laws require a formal review of projects that may affect the environment. A federal law, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A state law, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). A joint document, the EIS/EIR, will be prepared to identify the environmental impacts of the completed project, including short-term issues related to project construction.

In 2001, input was provided at public scoping meetings, workshops and coordination meetings with the City of San Jose and the Policy Advisory Board (PAB). The input on the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor raised new considerations for the project alternatives that required additional technical analysis. The Downtown East Valley PAB recently approved a process that will result in a decision on the preferred mode and alignment for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor in March 2003. Once that decision is made, VTA will commence the environmental technical studies for the Draft EIS/EIR for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor. The next steps for the environmental process are outlined in the graphic.

The environmental and the conceptual engineering phase generally progress at the same time. In the conceptual engineering phase, the project design is refined for various project elements including station locations, design elements, the operating and transit service plan, analysis of existing and future traffic conditions and identification of right-of-way needs.

Project Phases: Preliminary Engineering Through Construction

The advancement of the preliminary engineering, final design and construction phases will depend on available funding.

Preliminary engineering is the next project phase after conceptual engineering and it generally takes one year to complete. In preliminary engineering, project design is further refined and the station platform layout and alignment are developed. A formal value engineering analysis is done to evaluate potential cost saving measures. Cost estimates and cash flow projections are updated. Right-of-way acquisition can begin when the EIS/EIR is complete.

The next phase, final design, can take approximately 18 months and entails developing detailed design for the corridor. Decisions will be made on elements along the corridor, including stations. Construction procedures will be established, including days/hours of construction work, traffic and parking for construction workers, dust and noise control and access during construction. The traffic management plan will be finalized and a detailed community outreach program for the construction phase will be outlined. In this phase the construction of replacement parking could begin. During this phase, construction phasing and detailed mitigation plans will be finalized with the cities and the regulatory agencies.

The timing for the start of construction will be coordinated with the construction of the VTA-BART Extension project. The construction phase can begin toward the end of the final design phase and takes approximately two and one-half years.

Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

Public involvement is an important part of the environmental, design and construction phases. VTA will continue to conduct regular coordination meetings with the PAB, project stakeholders and the public. Multiple opportunities will continue to be available to ensure that public dialogue occurs throughout the study process.

MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY (MIS)

- 2000**
 - ▶ Identify travel needs and mobility issues within the study area
 - ▶ Develop broad range of possible transportation alternatives and conduct initial screening process; refine remaining alternatives to be carried forward
 - ▶ Conduct technical analyses and evaluate alternatives including ridership, costs and potential impacts
 - ▶ Conduct public meetings and receive input
 - ▶ **August 2000** · VTA Board of Directors approve a Preferred Investment Strategy for the Downtown East Valley Improvement Plan

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONCEPTUAL ENGINEERING PHASE

- 2001**
 - ▶ **Summer 2001** · Environmental process initiated
 - ▶ **Fall 2001** · EIS/EIR introduction and public scoping meetings
- 2002**
 - ▶ Environmental scoping process results in need for additional technical analyses to clarify the alternatives for the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor
 - ▶ The PAB and the public review technology mode, alignment and station options
- 2003**
 - ▶ **January 2003** · PAB hosts community workshops on the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor project alternatives
 - ▶ **February 2003** · PAB to host community workshops to receive alternative evaluation report and VTA staff recommendation
 - ▶ **March 2003** · PAB to adopt the preferred alignment and mode to be analyzed in the EIS/EIR
 - ▶ **April 2003** · San Jose City Council to approve project description
 - ▶ **May 2003** · VTA Board of Directors to approve project description
 - ▶ **Prepare Draft EIS/EIR** · Evaluate community and environmental impacts of project alternatives
 - ▶ **Conduct Public Outreach** · Meet with the PAB and public to provide project updates and preliminary environmental impact findings
- 2004**
 - ▶ **Release Draft EIS/EIR** · Release the Draft EIS/EIR for public review. The document will describe project alternatives, the existing environmental setting, potential impacts from construction and operations and mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potential impacts.
 - ▶ **Public Hearing on Draft EIS/EIR** · Public review and hearing on the published content of the Draft EIS/EIR
 - ▶ **Refine Preferred Alternative** · VTA will develop responses to written comments and oral testimony the public submitted on the Draft EIS/EIR. Those comments and responses will be presented to the VTA Board of Directors for consideration when refining the Preferred Alternative.
 - ▶ **VTA EIR Certification** · The Final EIS/EIR will be issued and will contain VTA's responses to comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR, as well as describe any changes to the document resulting from these comments. The VTA Board of Directors will consider certifying that the Final EIR is complete and accurate in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
 - ▶ **FTA Record of Decision** · The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will review the Final EIS/EIR and consider signing a Record of Decision indicating that the document satisfies the federal government's requirements in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).