

Final  
Environmental Impact Statement / Report

# VASONA CORRIDOR



## LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT

Federal Transit Administration  
and  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Volume I of II: EIS/EIR Text



March 2000



T A B L E S - 1

## PROPOSED VASONA CORRIDOR STATIONS

Station	Location	Park & Ride Lot	Estimated # of Spaces in Park & Ride Lot	Comments
San Fernando	San Jose: northside of San Fernando St., east side of Los Gatos Cr.	NO	n/a	Along with Diridon Station, will serve the nearby San Jose Arena.
San Jose/Diridon	San Jose: west of UPRR tracks, south of Santa Clara Street	NO*	62 - 67*	Existing passenger tunnel to be extended. LRT will cross under UPRR tracks in tunnel.
San Carlos	San Jose: south of West San Carlos Street	NO	n/a	Station to be constructed when the surrounding area redevelops.
Race	San Jose: northeast quadrant of Race Street/ Parkmoor Ave. intersection	NO	n/a	
Fruitdale	San Jose: south of Fruitdale Avenue	YES	19 - 25	Shared parking with nearby store, currently K-Mart.
Bascom	San Jose: south of Stokes Street	YES	102 - 150	Park-and-ride site currently undeveloped.
Hamilton	Campbell: south of Hamilton Avenue	NO	n/a	Platform will be adjacent to NB Hwy. 17 onramp.
Campbell	Campbell: south of Orchard City Drive	NO	n/a	Replacement parking to be constructed.
Winchester	Campbell: north of Camden Avenue	YES	123 - 170	Park-and-ride site occupied by Woolworth Garden Center and other businesses.
Hacienda	Campbell: south of Hacienda Avenue	NO	n/a	
Vasona Junction	Los Gatos: north of State Route 85	YES	163 - 220	Park-and-Ride site occupied by A to Z Nursery.

**Note:** The table shows a range for the number of parking spaces in each park-and-ride lot as detailed/final design for each facility has not yet occurred.

\*The park-and-ride lot at the Diridon Station is an existing facility. No addition will be made as part of this project.

# E I S / E I R    S U M M A R Y

## V A S O N A    C O R R I D O R    L R T

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### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project is the construction of an extension of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) System in Santa Clara County into what is commonly known as the Vasona Corridor. The Vasona Corridor, approximately 10.9 kilometers (6.8 miles) in length, extends from downtown San Jose on the north, through the City of Campbell, to the Town of Los Gatos on the south. As shown on Figures 1 and 2 (pages 2-3), the Vasona Corridor is generally oriented in a northeast-southwest direction. The downtown San Jose portion of the proposed project includes a direct connection to Caltrain, Amtrak, and Altamont Commuter Express rail service at the existing San Jose/Diridon Station. The project would also directly serve the San Jose Arena, a 19,000-seat sports/entertainment facility located across West Santa Clara Street from the San Jose/Diridon Station.

### Project Alignment

The alignment of the proposed Vasona Corridor LRT extension would extend from downtown San Jose to the Vasona Junction in the Town of Los Gatos (see Figure 2 on page 3). The northerly terminus of the alignment would be at the intersection of West San Carlos Street and Woz Way in downtown San Jose, where the Vasona LRT line would connect to the existing Guadalupe Corridor LRT line. From this point, the alignment would extend to the west along West San Carlos Street to Delmas Avenue. The line would extend north along the east side of Delmas Avenue to San Fernando Street, at which point the alignment would turn west again. The LRT would continue to the San Jose/Diridon Station on an alignment to the north of San Fernando Street. A new bridge across Los Gatos Creek will be required. The segment west of Autumn Street, including the location where the LRT would cross the existing railroad yard tracks, would be underground. After crossing under the railroad yard tracks at the San Jose/Diridon Station, the alignment would return to the surface and head in a southerly direction along the west side of the UPRR tracks.

From a point just south of Park Avenue, the proposed alignment would utilize the existing UPRR Vasona railroad corridor. The project would remain within this railroad corridor all the way to Vasona Junction in Los Gatos. Existing freight rail service in this corridor would continue unchanged, although the existing single track would be relocated in many areas to allow for construction of the LRT tracks. The LRT would be both double-tracked and single-tracked. The single-track configuration is necessary at various locations due to right-of-way constraints posed by adjacent development.

### Stations

As shown on Figure 2 on page 3, the Project would include 11 stations, including the San Jose/Diridon Station. Table S-1 provides an overview of these stations, their features, and their locations.

**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

The following discussion summarizes the primary environmental impacts of the proposed Vasona Corridor LRT Project. The reader is referred to the main body of this EIS/EIR for detailed discussions of the environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation measures.

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**Environmental Impact**

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**Mitigation Measure**

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**TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC (EIS/EIR Section 3.1)**

The project will reduce overall vehicle-miles-traveled and vehicle-hours-traveled In Santa Clara County. **(Beneficial Impact)**

The project will not result in any significant impacts at any of the 62 study intersections. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

The project will result in safety impacts at an existing private railroad crossing located between Sunnoaks and Hacienda Avenues. **(Significant Impact)**

Signs, lane striping and/or pavement modifications on northbound Winchester Blvd. will mitigate this impact. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

In the event that the project is only constructed to the Campbell Station, overall ridership would decrease and parking requirements at the Bascom Station would slightly increase. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

The project will not result in any significant safety impacts for pedestrians or bicyclists. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

The project will not substantially delay emergency vehicle response times. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

**Environmental Impact**

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**Mitigation Measure**

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**AIR QUALITY (EIS/EIR Section 3.2)**

The project will result in reduced emissions in the region. **(Beneficial Impact)**

The project will not result in any local exceedances of carbon monoxide standards. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

**NOISE AND VIBRATION (EIS/EIR Section 3.3)**

Increases in noise due to moving trains will exceed FTA thresholds at various residences located along the alignment in both San Jose and Campbell. **(Significant Impact)**

Soundwalls will be constructed. For 2nd & 3rd floor impacts, higher soundwalls and/or building modifications will be implemented *if required*, based on follow-up site-specific analysis. See main text for details. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Based on a preliminary screening, vibration in various residences located along the alignment in both San Jose and Campbell *may* exceed FTA thresholds. **(Significant Impact)**

Based on follow-up site-specific analysis, vibration-dampening track construction materials and/or trenches will be used, *if required*. See main text for details. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

At two locations in Downtown San Jose, wheel squeal could disturb nearby residents. **(Significant Impact)**

Special track design & lubrication will be employed to reduce wheel squeal. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Noise inside LRT trains could be substantial in the tunnel. **(Significant Impact)**

Noise-dampening techniques will be implemented as needed. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**ENERGY (EIS/EIR Section 3.4)**

The project will result in a net reduction in energy usage. **(Beneficial Impact)**

**Environmental Impact**

**Mitigation Measure**

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**LAND USE (EIS/EIR Section 3.5)**

The project will require the acquisition of up to 12 residences and 27 businesses. **(Significant Impact)**

Properties will be purchased at fair market value and relocation assistance will be provided to residents & business owners. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**SOCIO-ECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EIS/EIR Section 3.6)**

The project will not result in disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income populations. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

No neighborhoods will be divided and no cultural or religious facilities will be impacted by the project. **(No Impact)**

**VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE (EIS/EIR Section 3.7)**

The project will impact roughly 0.41 acres of wetlands and 0.23 acres of riparian habitat within Los Gatos Creek. **(Significant Impact)**

Replacement habitat will be created by the project. See main text for details. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

The project will remove up to approximately 187 mature trees along Southwest Expressway. **(Significant Impact)**

All trees that cannot be preserved will be replaced at the ratios listed in the main text. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

During construction, steelhead rainbow trout and chinook salmon in Los Gatos Creek may be impacted. **(Significant Impact)**

Measures to avoid impacts to fisheries and to allow for fish passage will be implemented. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Although unlikely, a California red-legged frog could be impacted during construction if washed into the area from upstream breeding populations. **(Significant Impact)**

Surveys will be conducted prior to construction. USFWS will be contacted if a frog is found. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

Nesting raptors and/or nesting swallows could be impacted during construction of the project. **Significant Impact)**

Preconstruction surveys will occur & any active nests that are found will be avoided. **Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**Environmental Impact**

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**Mitigation Measure**

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**WATER QUALITY (EIS/EIR Section 3.8)**

The project will not result in substantial long-term water quality impacts. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

During construction, degradation of water quality in Los Gatos Creek could occur. **(Significant Impact)**

Specific construction practices & methods will be utilized. See main text for details. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**FLOODPLAINS (EIS/EIR Section 3.9)**

The project would result in a very minor floodplain encroachment. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

**GEOLOGY (EIS/EIR Section 3.10)**

There are no seismic, topographic, or soils features present that would result in any significant geologic impacts. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (EIS/EIR Section 3.14)**

There are no known sites with major contamination in or adjacent to the alignment. However, hazardous materials (or contamination from same) from unknown sources *may* be found within the corridor. **(Significant Impact)**

Standard surveys & testing during the property acquisition process will occur. Sampling in the UPRR right-of-way and at park-and ride sites will occur. Any hazardous materials or contamination identified will be remediated. A Health & Safety Plan will be developed. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**MAGNETIC FIELDS AND INTERFERENCE (EIS/EIR Section 3.15)**

The project will not result in significant health effects or computer interference effects. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

**Environmental Impact**

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**Mitigation Measure**

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**CULTURAL RESOURCES (EIS/EIR Section 3.16)**

The project will impact a water tank which contributes to the Cahill Station Historic District. **(Significant Impact)**

The tank will be relocated or other measures required by SHPO will be implemented. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

The project may impact as-yet-unknown archaeological sites during construction. **(Significant Impact)**

Monitoring of construction by an archaeologist will occur near creeks. A Treatment Plan will be prepared and its procedures for dealing with unexpected finds will be followed. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**VISUAL/AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS (EIS/EIR Section 3.17)**

The loss of roughly 187 trees along Southwest Expressway due to the project would substantially alter the visual setting. **(Significant Impact)**

Trees which cannot be preserved will be replaced. Measures to design features of the project so that they are visually attractive will be implemented. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

**SAFETY AND SECURITY (EIS/EIR Section 3.18)**

The project will not result in any significant safety hazards due to moving trains. The project will not create any conditions that will result in substantial increases in crime. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

**CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS (EIS/EIR Section 3.19)**

The project will result in temporary lane and road closures, as well as temporary rail track closures. **(Less than Significant Impact)**

The project could result in the generation of substantial amounts of dust during construction. **(Significant Impact)**

Standard construction methods and practices to control dust will be implemented. See main text for details. **(Less than Significant with Mitigation)**

