Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project

SCOPING INFORMATION PACKET

September 2009

Federal Transit Administration

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the scoping process for the Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project. The process of determining the scope, focus and content during environmental review of a project is known as "scoping." Scoping is conducted before we begin writing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

This packet of information is intended to provide background materials and answer questions as we initiate the scoping period. The scoping packet discusses the following topics:

- Project Overview: provides a draft description of the project location, purpose and need, and a map of the project.
- Alternatives: identifies past and current alternatives under consideration.
- Methodologies: outlines how the analyses will be conducted for the environmental areas under the jurisdiction of participating agencies.
- Preliminary Schedule: outlines key dates in the environmental review process and preparation of the EIS.
- Public and Agency Involvement: provides details for the project Scoping Meeting and Coordination Plan.

Specifically this packet serves to provide information to the public and agencies on the environmental review process for the proposed project. The key element of the process will be the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will consider reasonable alternatives that would achieve the goals and objectives of the project, including discussion of environmental impacts of project alternatives and measures to mitigate any identified significant adverse environmental impacts.

Comments

Please read the Scoping Information Packet and Coordination Plan. Then provide comments by October 19, 2009. After comments are received, a Final Scoping Summary Report, Annotated Outline, and Coordination Plan will be prepared and distributed.

Comments, questions and requests for additional materials and reading formats can be directed to: Tom Fitzwater, Environmental Program Manager, 3331 North First Street, Building B-2, San José, CA 95134-1927; (408) 321-5789 (phone); (408) 321-5787 (fax); CapitolExpresswayEIS@vta.org; hearing impaired (TDD): (408) 321-2330.

OVERVIEW

Project Description

The proposed project is located in San Jose, California, and will extend light rail along Capitol Expressway between the existing Alum Rock Light Rail Station and Eastridge Transit Center, a distance of approximately 2.3 miles (see Figure 1). Light rail will operate primarily in the median of Capitol Expressway within exclusive and semi-exclusive rights-of-way. Property acquisition for the project will be minimized through the removal of two High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on Capitol Expressway. The alignment will include an elevated section that will extend north of Capitol Avenue to south of Story Road, and an elevated crossing of Tully Road. The project will include new light rail stations at Story Road (aerial), Ocala Avenue (optional, at-grade) and Eastridge Transit Center (at-grade and aerial options). At Eastridge Mall, the transit center and park-and-ride lot will be modified and expanded to accommodate the project. The project will also include traction power substations at Ocala Avenue and Eastridge Transit Center. Approximately seven 115-kilovolt electrical transmission towers and two tubular steel poles will require relocation from the median of Capitol Expressway to the east side of Capitol Expressway in order to accommodate the project. While the project will cross over Silver Creek, no work is anticipated below the top of the bank.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide efficient, convenient and accessible light rail service that improves mobility, increases transit ridership, enhances regional connectivity, improves regional air quality, improves mobility options and supports local economic and land development goals in the Capitol Expressway Corridor.

The proposed project is needed to meet projected growth and transit needs. The overall character of the Corridor reflects demand for higher speed, commute-oriented trips in which travel times and speeds are very important. According to a Major Investment Study (MIS) for the Downtown/East Valley area of San José in 1999, high levels of traffic congestion exist within the Corridor and growth is projected to continue, leading to serious transportation deficiencies and decreased mobility.

The improvement of transit service would link the residents of east and south San José with the existing light rail system, and provide improved connections and greater mobility options to major employment and activity centers throughout the Santa Clara Valley. Because expanded transit service would be available in the corridor, parking and circulation effects could be reduced. The reduction in automobile trips could result in improved regional air quality because of reduced growth in automobile emissions. The proposed alternatives would serve two high schools, two middle schools, Eastridge Mall, three libraries, recreational facilities, and two colleges/universities.

ALTERNATIVES

The planning process for improving transit services in the Capitol Expressway Corridor has been ongoing since early 1999. During this process, many alternatives have been evaluated. Beginning with the Downtown/East Valley MIS, the following 17 alternatives were initially identified from proposals submitted by the community, VTA staff, and consultants.

Table 1: Downtown/East Valley Initial List of Candidate Conceptual Alternatives

Alternative	Mode and Description
1	Light Rail Transit (LRT) on Santa Clara/Alum Rock from Downtown to Capitol (Avenue) LRT
2	LRT on Capitol Expressway from terminus of Capitol (Avenue) LRT to Eastridge Mall
3	LRT on Capitol Expressway from Eastridge Mall to Guadalupe LRT (Capitol Station)
4	LRT on 10th/11th Streets and Senter Road from Downtown to Tully Road. *[Modified by the PAB on December 16, 1999, as follows: LRT on 2nd/3rd, 5th, and 7th or 8th Streets from Downtown to County Fairgrounds.]*
5	LRT on 10th/11th Streets, Senter and Tully Roads from Downtown to Eastridge Mall
6	LRT on 10th/11th Streets and Keyes/Story Road from Downtown to terminus of Capitol (Avenue) LRT
7	LRT on Alum Rock and White/San Felipe Road from Capitol (Avenue) LRT to Evergreen Valley College
8	Busway/HOV lanes on Highway 101 for Express Bus Service from the Alum Rock, Capitol Eastside and Evergreen study area neighborhoods to "Golden Triangle" employment centers
9	Busway/HOV lanes on Capitol Expressway for Express Bus Service from Eastridge Mall to Guadalupe LRT (Capitol Station)
10	Busway/HOV lanes on Capitol Expressway from terminus of Capitol

Alternative	Mode and Description
	(Avenue) LRT to Eastridge Mall and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) features on Quimby and White Roads from Eastridge Mall to Evergreen Valley College
11	BRT on Santa Clara/Alum Rock, King, Tully and White/San Felipe Roads from Downtown to Evergreen Valley College. *[Modified by the PAB on December 16, 1999, as follows: BRT on Santa Clara/Alum Rock from Downtown to White Road, and along King, Tully and White/San Felipe Roads to Evergreen Valley College.]*
12	BRT on Santa Clara/Alum Rock and White/San Felipe Road from Downtown to Evergreen Valley College
13	BRT on $10^{th}/11^{th}$ Streets, Senter Road and Tully Road from Downtown to Eastridge Mall
14	BRT on $10^{th}/11^{th}$ Streets and Keyes/Story Road from Downtown to terminus of Capitol (Avenue) LRT
15	BRT on Monterey Highway from Downtown to Guadalupe LRT (Santa Teresa Station)
16	Transportation System Management (TSM) improvements throughout study area including more frequent bus services and improved intersection signalization.
17	No Project

After preliminary technical analysis was completed and public input was received, Alternatives 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, and 14 were eliminated from further consideration. The remaining nine alternatives were subject to further refinement and more detailed analysis. Once the refinement process was complete, technical analysis of the alternatives was conducted with respect to established evaluation criteria and performance measures. In addition, strategic and targeted outreach was undertaken concurrently.

On August 3, 2000, the VTA Board of Directors approved the Downtown/East Valley (DTEV) Preferred Investment Strategy. This strategy included light rail to serve what was referred to as the Capitol Expressway/Evergreen Corridor, which extended from the Alum Rock Station on the Capitol (Avenue) Light Rail Line to the Eastridge Transit Center and continued to a transfer connection with the Guadalupe Light Rail Line at State Route (SR) 87. In September 2001, VTA initiated the state and federal environmental process for the Capitol Expressway Corridor

Project. The Light Rail Alternative was selected as one of several alternatives to be evaluated according to state and federal guidelines. The Light Rail Alternative included ten design options.

During the public review of the draft environmental document that was circulated in April 2004, the public and agency staff expressed concerns regarding unresolved traffic and future land-use issues between Aborn Road and SR 87. As a result, VTA staff recommended that project-level decisions beyond Nieman Boulevard be deferred until after land-use and transportation decisions are made for this portion of the Corridor related to the *Evergreen Smart Growth Strategy* and *U.S. 101 Central Corridor Study*. In addition, staff made recommendations on the ten design options for the LRT Alternative that were under consideration. The DTEV Policy Advisory Board (PAB) met on August 5, 2004, and approved staff's final recommendations regarding the Recommended Light Rail Alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Final EIR for the Capitol Expressway Corridor Project was certified in May 2005 and the Recommended Light Rail Alternative was approved.

Based on the alternatives analysis that was conducted in the MIS and in the Final EIR, it is proposed that the Final EIS evaluate a No-Build Alternative in addition to Light Rail Transit. The No-Build Alternative represents conditions that would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the proposed build alternative were not implemented. This includes existing transit conditions and programmed transportation projects that will be constructed by 2035. It is not proposed that a Baseline Alternative, which represents the optimal level of bus service that could be provided in the corridor without an investment in major new infrastructure, be evaluated. VTA is not only currently operating Line 522 Rapid Bus service in the Capitol Expressway Corridor, but is also proposing to improve this service with Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) by 2013. BRT will provide more frequent headways, upgraded facilities, real-time information, transit priority, and specialized vehicles.

METHODOLOGIES

Air Quality

Methodology

The primary operational emissions associated with the proposed alternatives are Carbon Monoxide (CO), Particulate Matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter (PM10), and ozone precursor, which include reactive organic gases and oxides of nitrogen (ROG and NOX), emitted as vehicle exhaust. Ozone precursors and PM10 operational emissions for with-project conditions in 2035 were estimated by multiplying EMFAC 2001 model emission factors by the VMT information provided by Korve Engineering. EMFAC 2001 is an emission inventory model that calculates emission factors (grams per mile) for motor vehicles operating on roads in California. An emission inventory can be summarized as the product of a vehicle emission factor (e.g., grams of pollutant emitted per mile) and vehicle activity (e.g., miles driven per day).

CO concentrations were also estimated for sensitive receptors located near intersections in the vicinity of the Capitol Expressway Corridor. The Transportation Project-Level Carbon

Monoxide Protocol states that, for a single project with multiple intersections, only the three intersections representing the worst LOS ratings under project conditions in the PM peak need to be analyzed. Therefore, CO modeling was conducted at the three existing intersections in the Capitol Expressway Corridor that would operate at LOS F, with the most delay and highest volume/capacity (v/c) ratio in 2035:, Capitol Expressway/Quimby Road, Capitol Expressway/Story Road, and Capitol Expressway/Capitol Avenue, respectively. These intersections were selected based on the likelihood that they would experience changes in traffic conditions, including increased volumes and congestion, and the presence of sensitive receptors (e.g., residences). CO concentrations were estimated using the CALINE4 dispersion model.

Thresholds of Significance

Based on significance criteria used by VTA and professional practice, the proposed alternatives would result in substantial adverse effects related to air quality if they would:

- conflict with or obstruct implementation of the federal or California Clean Air Act;
- violate federal or California air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation;
- exceed Bay Area Air Quality Management District's (BAAQMD) significance criteria;
- expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations;
- create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people; or
- result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is classified as nonattainment under an applicable federal or California ambient air quality standard.

With regard to the BAAQMD significance criteria above, thresholds are contained in the BAAQMD CEQA guidelines (1999). The proposed alternatives are subject to these guidelines and would result in a significant impact on air quality if they would result in: a net increase in pollutant emissions of 80 pounds per day or 15 tons per year of ROG, NO_x, or PM10, or localized carbon monoxide concentrations in excess of the California Ambient Air Quality standards (9 ppm averaged over 8-hours, and 20 ppm averaged over 1-hour).

Biological Resources

Methodology

The assessment of adverse effects related to biological resources was evaluated by reviewing the proposed alternatives and engineering plans, in comparison to the status of existing biological resources as identified during previous field surveys. Identified adverse effects were reported as either temporary (short-term) or permanent (long-term). Temporary effects could result from construction noise, runoff, staging, and other construction activities. Permanent effects could result from continuing operation of new facilities and infrastructure, including roads, transit stations, parking and storage facilities, and pathways.

Thresholds of Significance

Based on significance criteria used by VTA and professional practice, the proposed alternatives may result in substantial adverse effects related to biological resources if they would:

- have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, and coastal wetlands) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites; or
- conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan (HCP), natural community conservation plan (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or state HCP.

Cultural Resources

Methodology

The cultural resources investigation will include a records search, Native American consultation, field surveys, and additional research.

A background literature review for the APE and a 1-mile radius around the APE (the study area) was conducted in 2006, at the California Historical Resources Information System's Northwest Information Center (NWIC), located at Sonoma State University. The purpose of this review was to determine the geographic boundaries of previous surveys, the location of potential significant historical resources, and the number of documented sites near the APE. Sources reviewed include archaeological site maps and records, archaeological study maps and reports, historic maps, and local reference books. The data was used to assess the likelihood of unrecorded resources based on historical references and the distribution and environmental setting of nearby sites.

The project area was surveyed by Jones & Stokes in 2006. No new archaeological resources were encountered during these surveys.

Thresholds of Significance

For federal projects, cultural resource significance is evaluated in terms of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP is the official federal list of significant historic resources. The National Park Service administers the NRHP in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Officer. The NRHP includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level. Properties can be listed individually in the NRHP, or as contributors to an historic district.

The NRHP criteria for eligibility are:

- Resources associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.
- Resources associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Resources that have yielded or may likely yield information important in prehistory or history.

A resource may be considered eligible for listing in the NRHP if it meets one or more of the criteria and it possesses historic integrity. Historic properties must retain sufficient historic integrity to convey their significance. The assessment of historic integrity must be grounded in an understanding of the resource's physical features and how they relate to its significance.

Energy

Methodology

The methods used to evaluate the potential effects from operation (direct energy effects) of the proposed alternatives are described below. The potential energy effects associated with construction were not considered. The effects that each proposed alternative would have on regional energy supply (the combination of energy derived from petroleum fuels and electrical energy by both the project proponent and personal vehicles in the County) were assessed. The effects on electricity reserves by the Light Rail Alternative during periods of peak-demand were also assessed. Overall regional energy consumption refers to 1) fuel consumed by on-road vehicles and 2) electricity consumption. Both are discussed briefly below.

Regional Overall Energy Supply

The analysis of operational effects on regional energy supplies estimates quantitatively the total amount of energy expected to be consumed by the proposed alternatives from operation. The energy used to power vehicles (automobile, truck, bus, or train) of various fuel types, and facilities, was captured and reported in British thermal units (1 BTU is the quantity of energy necessary to raise 1 pound of water 1°F), which was then converted to the equivalent barrels of oil for comparison of alternatives. For the calculation of overall energy, the annual countywide Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) VMT for automobiles/trucks, buses, and LRT vehicles and their respective rates of fuel consumption were required and provided by the Project proponent. The energy-consumption calculation for each of the proposed alternatives was based on projected 2035 regional traffic volumes and total VMT. The 2035 daily traffic volumes for Santa Clara County were modeled with the CMP countywide model and annualized using a factor of 250 days per year. The change in annual BTU was also calculated for each proposed alternative. The VMT fuel consumption method used is outlined in the *Technical Guidance on Section 5309 New Starts Criteria* (Federal Transit Administration 1999).

Electricity Generation and Transmission

The peak-period electricity demand by the Light Rail Alternative was determined using the energy consumption factor for light rail vehicles obtained from the *Transportation Energy Book: Edition 22* (Oak Ridge National Laboratory 2002) and the proposed headway and round-trip durations. Demand was calculated in megawatts and compared to current estimates of future peak-demand for electricity and electricity generating capacity and transmission capabilities within the Cal-ISO-controlled grid. This is a cumulative analysis because it combines the electricity demand estimates for the proposed project with statewide demand when making the determination as to whether electricity generating and transmitting infrastructure would be adequate to supply electricity to the proposed project in addition to each of the other existing and future electricity consumers.

Thresholds of Significance

Based on significance criteria used by VTA and professional practice, the proposed alternatives may result in adverse effects related to energy if they would:

- lead to a wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary usage of energy;
- place a substantial demand on regional energy supply or require substantial additional capacity; or
- significantly increase peak and base period electricity demand.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Methodology

This assessment evaluates the potential for construction and operational activities under the proposed alternatives to adversely affect the environmental conditions within the Capitol Expressway Corridor with respect to hydrology and water quality. Specifically sedimentation issues from construction will be evaluated along with operational related water quality effects. Where applicable, mitigation measures are provided to minimize anticipated adverse effects.

Thresholds of Significance

Based on significance criteria used by VTA and professional practice, the proposed alternatives may result in substantial adverse effects on hydrology or water quality if they would:

- violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements;
- substantially deplete water resources;
- create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff;
- substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site;
- place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows;
- expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam; or
- substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted).

Noise and Vibration

Noise Impact Assessment Methodology

The primary component of noise from LRT train operations is wheel/rail noise that results from steel wheels rolling on steel rails. Secondary sources, such as vehicle air conditioning and other ancillary equipment, will sometimes be audible but are not expected to be significant factors. The projection of noise from LRT train operations was based on the anticipated Light Rail Alternative operating plan and the prediction model specified in the FTA guidance manual. Significant factors are summarized below.

- Based on the FTA guidance manual and VTA vehicle dimensions, the predictions assume that a single 90-foot-long vehicle operating at 40 mph on ballast and tie track with continuous welded rail generates a maximum noise level of 79 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the track centerline.
- The operating period of the Light Rail Alternative was assumed to be between 4:30 a.m. and 1:30 a.m. with headways ranging from 10 to 60 minutes.
- One to three-car train consists are assumed based on ridership demands.
- Vehicle operating speeds are based on maximum speeds along the Light Rail Alternative alignment, taking into account station locations. The speed limits range from 35–55 mph along the corridor.
- The projections near grade crossings include noise from train horns. The noise levels are based on typical LRT system audible warning signal equipment and practices.
- Wheel impacts at crossovers and other special trackwork typically cause a noise increase of about 6 dBA near such locations.
- The effects of existing noise walls along the corridor will be included in the noise projections.

Vibration Impact Assessment Methodology

The potential vibration impact from LRT operation was assessed on an absolute basis using the FTA criteria. The following factors were used in determining potential vibration impacts along the Light Rail Alternative alignment.

- Vibration source levels for the VTA vehicles were based on direct measurements conducted by Harris Miller Miller & Hanson and Wilson Ihrig and Associates.
- Vibration propagation tests were conducted at four sites along the corridor near sensitive receptors. These tests measured the response of the ground to an input force. The results of these tests were combined with the vibration source levels to provide projections of vibration levels from vehicles operating on the Light Rail Alternative alignment.
- Light rail vehicle operating speeds are based on the vehicle acceleration rate and the operating speed limits for the light rail alignment. The speed limits range from 35–55 mph.
- Wheel impacts at crossovers and other special trackwork typically cause a vibration increase of about 10 VdB near such locations.
- Shredded tire underlays were considered a project design feature at all locations where vibration impacts were identified. The vibration reduction effects of the shredded tires are included in the analysis and impact reporting.

Thresholds of Significance

Based on the significance criteria used by VTA and FTA's noise and vibration impact criteria, the proposed alternatives may result in adverse effects related to noise and vibration if:

- transit-system operational noise contributes to a cumulative increase in noise levels that would be considered as a severe impact by FTA criteria,
- ancillary equipment noise levels exceed 45 dBA at the nearest indoor noise sensitive receptor, or
- operation of the transit system would result in vibration levels in buildings that exceed FTA criteria.

Climate Change

Methodology

Climate change impacts associated with the proposed project were evaluated by determining the effects of the proposed project on regional VMT and energy usage. Specifically, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions due to diesel and gasoline fuel consumption by VTA buses was evaluated by applying emission factors from the California Climate Action Registry General Reporting Protocol v 3.1 and EPA Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2005 to fuel consumption associated with the proposed project.

GHG emissions associated with changes in electricity demand associated with project implementation were evaluated by applying emission factors from the California Climate Action Registry Reporting, Online Tool and e-GRID version 1.1 data for the California Region to yearly electricity consumption required to provide light rail service.

GHG emissions associated with changes in automobile activity associated with project implementation were evaluated by applying emission factors from the EMFAC2007, v2.3 emissions model to projections of daily averaged VMT for Existing Conditions, for the No Project scenario, and for the Project scenarios. Emission factors for CH4 and N2O were provided in grams/mile for each gas by the US EPA's Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2005, EPA 430-R-07-002, Annex 3.2

Thresholds of Significance

The BAAQMD is in the process of updating the guidelines for evaluating climate change. The Guidelines Update will review, revise, and develop significance thresholds, assessment methodologies, and mitigation strategies for criteria pollutants, air toxics, odors, and greenhouse gas emissions. Since the preparation of the document, the BAAQMD has revised their draft guidelines. Consequently, the proposed project may result in adverse impacts related to climate change if it would directly or indirectly make a considerable contribution to cumulative GHG emissions, thus conflicting with the State's goal of reducing state-wide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

References:

Bay Area Air Quality Management District. 1999. *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines: Assessing the Air Quality Impacts of Projects and Plans*. Adopted: April 1996. Revised: December 1999. San Francisco, CA.

Federal Transit Administration. 2006. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment.* (FTA-VA-90-1003-06). Washington, DC.

Harris Miller Miller & Hanson. 2003. *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment for the Capitol Expressway Corridor.* (HMMH Report 298210-01.) Burlington, MA.

Wilson, Ihrig & Associates, Inc. 2007. *Noise and Vibration Study for Supplemental Impact Review*. Oakland, CA.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

The preliminary schedule for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is as follows:

Action	Date
Notice of Intent Published in the Federal Register	September 16, 2009
Public Scoping Meeting/ Open House	September 30, 2009
Scoping Period Ends	October 19, 2009
Development of Draft EIS	Fall 2009 to Spring 2010
Public Meetings on Draft EIS	Spring 2010
Development of Final EIS	Fall 2010
Record of Decision	Winter 2010

PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Scoping Meeting: September 30, 2009

Public involvement is a key element in the environmental evaluation process. The public and agencies are invited to attend a scoping meeting which includes an open house and presentation on the proposed project, purpose and need, and alternatives. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 30, 2009 at 6:00 PM in the Community Room at Eastridge Mall (2200 Eastridge Loop, San José, CA 95122), located near Cinnabon on the second level. Look for the signs near the Old Navy and JCPenney entrance. To assure full participation at this meeting, accommodations for effective communications— such as sign language and foreign language interpreters or printed materials in alternate formats—will be provided if requested at least five working days prior to the date of the scheduled event.

Comments received during the 30-day (September 16 to October 19, 2009) scoping period on the draft purpose and need statement, proposed alternatives, and analytical methodologies will be considered by FTA and VTA in developing the final environmental document.

Following the public scoping meeting, additional public outreach activities will include newsletters, media releases, project updates, and meetings with interested stakeholders and other groups. To download and view project materials, visit the project website at: http://www.vta.org/projects/capitol_rail_project/index.html. The project website will be periodically updated to reflect the current status of the project.

Coordination Plan

In an effort to provide for more efficient reviews during the environmental review process, the Federal "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users," Section 6002, included the development and implementation of a coordination plan as a requirement for all projects for which an Environmental Impact Statement is prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The Coordination Plan is intended to document the process by which VTA will communicate with FTA, as the lead federal agency. In addition, the Coordination Plan will:

- Identify early coordination efforts;
- Identify cooperating and participating agencies;
- Establish the timing and form of public involvement; and
- Describe the communication methods that will be implemented to inform the community about the Capital Expressway Light Rail project.

The Coordination Plan is a living document and can be modified throughout the progression of the EIS process. This plan is available electronically at the project website noted above.