

28th Street/Little Portugal Station

Design Development Framework (DDF)

Project Context Memo

August 2025

Prepared For

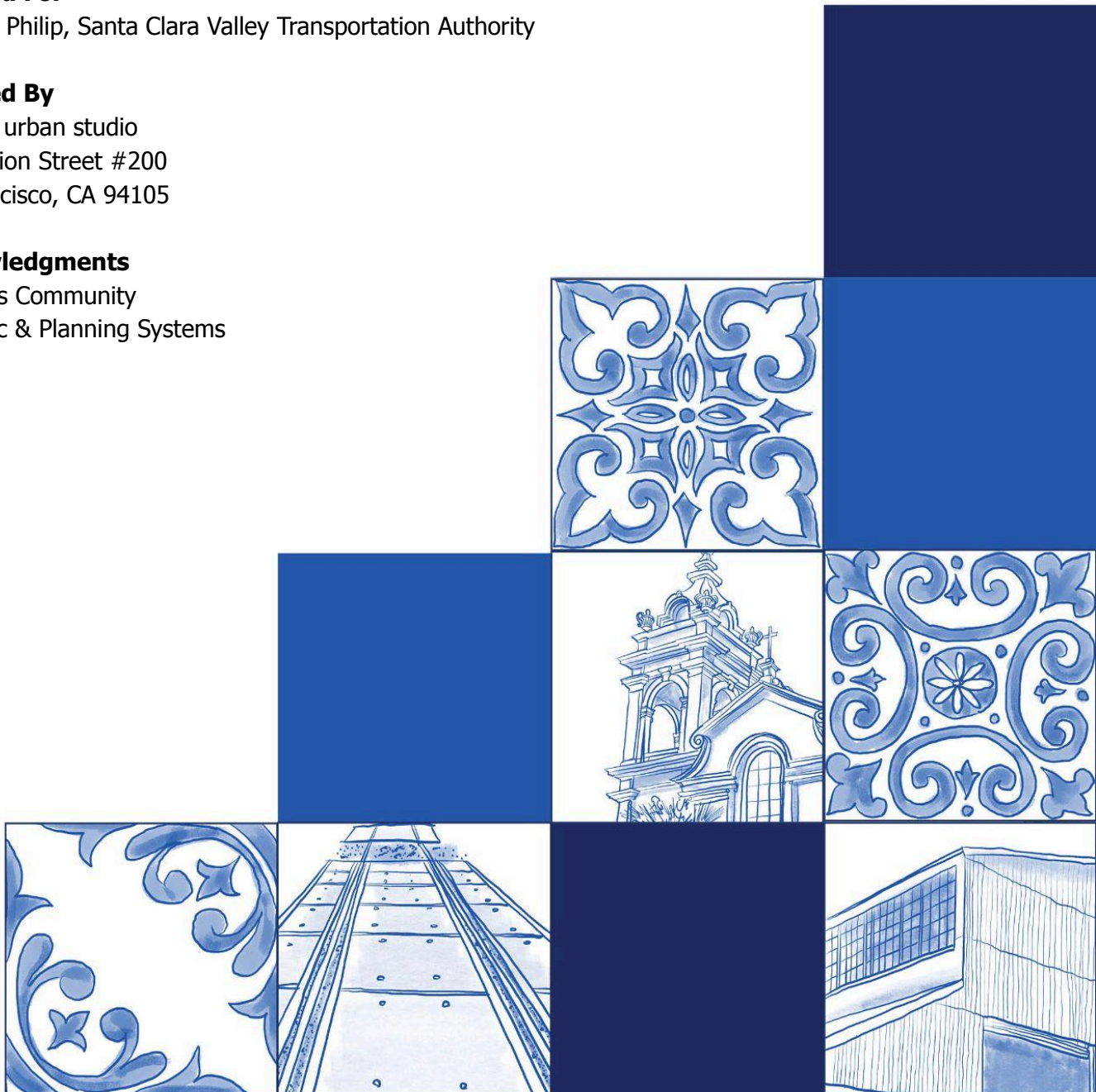
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Acknowledgments

Art Builds Community
Economic & Planning Systems
Introba



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1 Introduction

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) Design Development Framework (DDF) provides a concept vision and guiding principles for real estate development at the 28th Street/Little Portugal Transit Center (the "Station") in San José, California. The DDF will be used by VTA and stakeholders to guide and evaluate developers' future proposals and designs for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) on approximately 12 acres of VTA-owned property by the Station (www.vta.org/28LPdevelopment). The Station is being constructed as part of the BART Silicon Valley Phase II (BSVII) Extension Project (www.vtabart.org).

1.1 Memo Purpose

- Ground the DDF effort in site history, local cultures, and existing community infrastructure.
- Analyze physical constraints and opportunities of the site and surrounding areas, including urban fabric patterns and environmental considerations.
- Highlight mobility networks, and identify conflict areas and opportunities for better connectivity.
- Review similar Bay Area TOD projects as comparative examples, with a focus on key takeaways and lessons learned to inform the DDF. Comparative examples include Fruitvale Station in Oakland, Berryessa Station in San José, and El Cerrito del Norte and Plaza Station in El Cerrito. These examples highlight ways to reflect community members through programming and design elements, introduce new mixed-uses while preserving neighborhood character, and integrate a neighborhood trail.

The memo is only an initial gathering of information predominantly informed by initial site visits, desktop research, and planning documents. This work preceded further design analysis captured in additional memos. Refer to Appendix E: Engagement Summary for summary of community engagement in 2023, including opportunities, gaps, and lived experiences of the site and surrounding areas.

The diagrams and figures provided in this memo are conceptual and subject to change. This content is for preliminary planning purposes only; it is not a formal planning application nor a regulatory document. Unless otherwise noted, all figures in this document were created by SITELAB urban studio for VTA.

1.2 Memo Organization

The memo opens with emerging project goals, informed by studies and legacy planning efforts to date. It is organized into three main themes, each including a comparative Bay Area TOD project.

- Culture and Community: Reviews site history, demographics for the census area as they relate to city and county averages, and local places, artists, and programs.

- **Urban Fabric and Environment:** Identifies existing and planned land uses. Analyzes urban form, built and public realm character, environmental conditions, and physical opportunities and constraints.
- **Mobility and Connectivity:** Analyzes networks and movement patterns by different modes and conflicts. Identifies opportunities for a more connected mobility system including the Five Wounds Trail.

The memo concludes with preliminary topic areas for community engagement, identifying qualitative knowledge gaps to be further explored.

1.3 Station Area Planning History

The 28th Street/Little Portugal Station has an extensive planning history with many urban design and policy documents to build from. Two formative documents include the *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Draft Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* (2006) and *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace BART Station Area Community Concept Plan* (2010), both resulting from a collaboration between the City of San José's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) and CommUniverCity San José, a unique partnership between San José State University, the City of San José, and underserved communities in Central San José. Informed by robust community engagement including youth and Spanish-speakers, these documents outlined vision, goals, and implementation strategies for the station area. The desire for a "town square" at the heart of the station area—along with intentions to accommodate the needs of seniors and children, create a safe and accessible pedestrian environment, and emphasize art and legacy of local cultures, among others—are foundational and critical to bring forward through the DDF process.

Two noteworthy documents have continued to evolve the intentions articulated in these community-based plans:

- [*Five Wounds Urban Village Plan*](#) (City of San José, 2013) City of San José-led planning initiative for the approximately half-mile area surrounding the 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station. The plan underwent an update in 2022-25, simultaneous to the creation of this DDF. The Urban Village Plan includes four Districts in the area—Roosevelt Park, Five Wounds, Little Portugal, and 24th & William. It identifies vision, principles, land use, urban design, streetscape, circulation, open space, parking, and implementation policies and actions. [*VTA's BART Phase II Transit Oriented Communities 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station Area Playbook*](#) (VTA, 2019) identified implementation strategies and actions for the station area. These detailed recommendations around land use, small businesses and commercial nodes, workforce and affordable housing, community identity, mobility, parking, and funding and implementation will guide the DDF effort and help shape priorities to carry forward.

1.4 Terms and Definitions

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):** Individual real estate projects that are compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented and centered around high-quality transit,

enabling a carless lifestyle with everyday access to residences, businesses, civic institutions, and amenities.

- **28th Street/Little Portugal TOD** (also referred to as “TOD” or “new development” in this document): The area of VTA-controlled parcels available for mixed-use, transit-oriented development surrounding the forthcoming 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station—approximately 12 acres. Development(s) may be built by a single developer or multiple developers. The area is within the City of San José’s Five Wounds Urban Village Plan boundaries.
- **Five Wounds Urban Village Plan (FWUVP)**: City of San José-led planning initiative for the approximately half-mile area surrounding the 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station. The plan underwent an update in 2022-25, simultaneous to the creation of this DDF. The Urban Village Plan includes four Districts in the area—Roosevelt Park, Five Wounds, Little Portugal, and 24th & William. It identifies vision, principles, land use, urban design, streetscape, circulation, open space, parking, and implementation policies and actions.

The TOD is located within the Little Portugal area within East San José. Many community members view Little Portugal as spanning both sides of Highway 101.

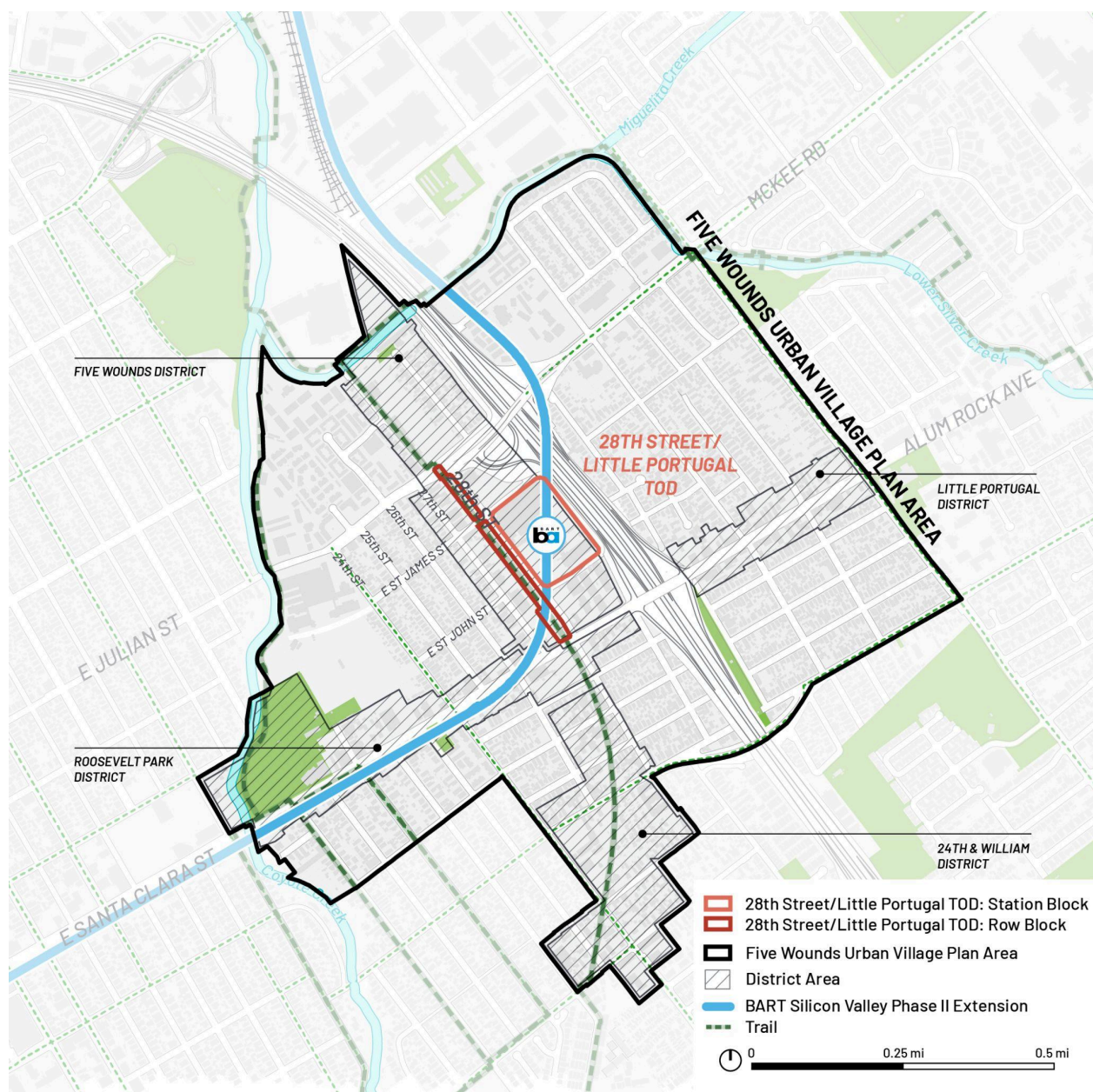


Figure 1. 28th Street/Little Portugal Station TOD within Five Wounds Urban Village Plan area

2 Emerging Project Goals

Six emerging project goals, organized by the memo's three main themes, are informed by studies and legacy planning efforts to date.

- Culture and Community
 - How can we celebrate and foster local cultures, art, and stories?
 - How can the public realm be inviting to multiple generations, including seniors and youth?

- **Urban Fabric and Environment**
 - How can new development—on a former industrial site—take on an intimate and responsive quality?
 - How can a plaza on the site serve as a central gathering place?
 - How can we build on the legacy of local businesses and community-serving uses?
- **Mobility and Connectivity**
 - How can a regional transit experience feel local?
 - How can walking and biking become preferred modes of travel to the station?

3 Executive Summary: Key Takeaways and Opportunities

3.1 Culture and Community

- There is a rich history here that has left a lasting legacy. This area is racially and ethnically diverse and multilingual, with a strong presence of local businesses, community and arts organizations, and cultural programming. Successful future development will incorporate design and programming that builds upon local assets and reflects community stories. Engaging youth early in the process, as well as partnering with local artists and creative organizations, will also be important.
- Though there is an abundance of K-12 schools (which creates a supportive environment for future family housing), this area has disparities in educational achievement when compared city and county wide. Consider including programming that supports college readiness in future development. Create an active place centered around culture, education and learning to support the aspirations of youth in the community.
- This area has disparities in income when compared city- and county-wide which underscores the importance of housing, including affordable housing amidst an affordability crisis and indirect displacement as transit arrives.
- There are many large public open spaces (Roosevelt Park, Watson Park, Plata Arroyo Park) in the surrounding area that offer diverse amenities, but smaller spaces are limited. Increase access to active, inviting smaller scale open spaces, including pocket parks, plazas, and paseos, that can support gatherings of nearby community members.
- Through engagement, conduct a more thorough analysis of services and amenities that community members would like to see more of in their neighborhood.

3.2 Urban Fabric and Environment

- The surrounding residential block structure—with typical blocks measuring approximately 250-feet by 600-feet—is interrupted by larger industrial blocks west of the TOD and Highway 101 east of the TOD. This presents challenges for walkability and connectivity, which can be improved by reconnecting the site through a finer grain urban fabric and more intimate streetscape.

- This area is eclectic and mixed in architectural character, with some notable landmarks such as the Five Wounds Portuguese National Parish (inspired by churches in Portugal), the Mexican Heritage Plaza, and the now-vacant historic Mexico movie theater on the corner of E. Santa Clara Street and N. 25th Street. The DDF will explore bringing these qualities forward, considering how they may translate to future development in order to reflect local cultures and retain a distinctive sense of place.
- Environmental opportunities include increasing tree canopy around the site, providing more places to enjoy the warm climate but also to seek shelter from it, and buffering from highway noise and pollution. Orientation and design of the TOD's buildings and public realm should optimize for environmental comfort and performance.

3.3 Mobility and Connectivity

- Reducing single occupancy vehicle trips to meet General Plan and Climate Smart targets (from 70% today to 40% by 2040 and 12% by 2050) requires a fundamental shift in mobility behavior toward active mobility and transit through planning, programs, and infrastructure improvements. Reorienting the station access priority from cars to pedestrians, bikes, micro-mobility devices, and transit will also considerably reduce emissions.
- As the priority modes for VTA and BART, walking, biking, and transit need to become the most obvious and desirable choice of mobility to and from the station. Infrastructure improvements include introducing a walkable grid, extending E. St. John Street to N. 28th Street, and implementing improvements identified in En Movimiento to close gaps for access and safety.
- Connecting the Five Wounds Trail prominently to the station as a regional connection is of significant importance to the local community and overall mobility network.
- Transit access needs to be made seamless and holistically integrated—improving connections between BART, rapid buses and other VTA bus routes, paratransit, and other multi-modal connectivity options.
- Parking availability leads to driving. As San José shifts away from parking minimums and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) implements maximums, parking in the station area has the opportunity to aim for lower supply targets and implement district strategies focused on reducing automobile dependency while improving accessibility and travel affordability for the neighborhood for households that do not have access to a car. Access for people who walk, roll, and take transit should take priority over other modes in design of the site.

4 Culture and Community

4.1 Cultural History

The 28th Street/Little Portugal Station is situated within an area of rich history, offering many opportunities for connection with local cultures and stories. The following section is not

intended to paint a comprehensive picture of this history, but it is meant to highlight some key themes that have shaped the current landscape of Little Portugal and East San José. Community engagement for the project surfaced insights about stories of Little Portugal, furthering this analysis of the neighborhood (refer to Appendix E: Engagement Summary).

The area's first inhabitants (the Ramaytush, Awaswas, Mutsun, and Tamien peoples) thrived on the diverse vegetation and animals of the fertile valley and creeks for nearly 13,000 years.^{1,2} Spanish colonization of the Pacific coast in the 1770's along with the formation of ranchos, farms, and missions resulted in enslavement, genocide, forced assimilation, and dislocation of the First Peoples. San José de Guadalupe was the first pueblo in the Bay Area, used to raise crops to support the Spanish military.³ San José became a territory of the Republic of Mexico in 1823, and then a territory of the United States in 1850 following the end of the Mexican-American War.

The California Gold Rush in the 1850's, along with waves of immigration, shaped the local cultures, industries, and the built environment of the Santa Clara Valley as people came to build new lives for themselves and their families.⁴ Large numbers of Portuguese, Mexican, Italian, and Asian immigrants brought to the region their heritage, traditions, and diverse skills, finding work on farms, orchards, mines, canneries, and in building the transcontinental railroad. Portuguese immigrants eventually owned and operated the majority of dairy farms⁵—one of many examples of how immigrant contributions transformed the region. However, many immigrants also faced racism and violence, with an example being the destruction of San José's largest Chinatown by arsonists in 1887.⁶

As San José's major economies shifted from agriculture to industrial manufacturing, neighborhoods began to change, featuring larger blocks with factories adjacent to railways. The 28th Street/Little BART Station is nested on a historic railroad right-of-way—once known as the San José branch of the Western Pacific Railroad in the mid 1800's and later absorbed as part of the Union Pacific Railroad, the railroad served as a significant freight connector between San José and Oakland.⁷ Uses in this area were primarily industrial to take advantage of the proximity to rail and eventual freeway access—including San José Steel which was located along E. St.

¹ Land Acknowledgment, Five Wounds Urban Village Plan Community Workshop #3, VTA, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/106056/638333107266300000>.

² "A Walking Tour of Public Art Sites in East San Jose", History San Jose, <https://historysanjose.org/exhibits-activities/online-exhibits/welcome-to-eastside-art-history/>.

³ "Silicon Valley's Hispanic Roots", Google Arts & Culture, <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/a-year-in-the-life-of-a-spanish-colonial-pueblo-san-jos%C3%A9-de-guadalupe-in-1809-history-san-jose/wAVBEgJtbqBZLw?hl=en>.

⁴ David J St Clair, "The Gold Rush and the Beginnings of California Industry", in *A Golden State*, ed. James J. Rawls and Richard J. Orsi, (University of California Press: 1999), <https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft758007r3&chunk.id=d0e7698&toc.depth=1&toc.id=d0e7698&brand=ucpress>.

⁵ "The Power of the Spirit," Portuguese Historical Museum, https://portuguesemuseum.org/?page_id=1808&category=&exhibit=10&event=80.

⁶ Associated Press, "San Jose apologizes for Chinatown destruction in 1887", Los Angeles Times, September 28 2021, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-09-28/san-jose-apologizes-for-1887-chinatown-destruction>.

⁷ Abandoned Rails of San Jose, California, <https://www.abandonedrails.com/san-jose-california>.

James Street east of N. 28th Street. Furthermore, trolleys located on E. Santa Clara Street and Alum Rock Avenue carried people to/from the city center and Alum Rock Park from the late 1800's until they were dismantled in the 1930's.⁸ As cars became increasingly accessible, neighborhoods shifted again; highways and roads designed for multiple lanes of cars took precedence, creating barriers through communities just as they connected others. Today, the former railway alignment and tracks are still visible running parallel to N. 28th Street, the proposed location of the Five Wounds Trail.

César Chávez raised his family with his wife Helen Chávez in Sal Sí Puedes neighborhood in East San José, and began his organizing out of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (then known as Mission Guadalupe)⁹ approximately 1.3 miles from the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station. Sal Sí Puedes (Get out if you can) transformed into Sí, Se Puede (Yes we can) during the United Farm Workers movement—shifting a negative neighborhood stereotype into a positive message of empowerment. This strong history of activism and resilience, and lasting legacy of Portuguese, Mexican, Italian, and Asian immigration, can be seen in the community organizations and local businesses that are here in Little Portugal today.

4.2 Demographics

The 28th Street/Little Portugal Station is located within census tract 5014.01, and consists of predominantly Hispanic (64%) and Asian (14%) communities with a median age of 33.4 years—making it significantly more diverse and younger than the median age in both San José and Santa Clara County (37.5), according to data from the American Community Survey (ACS) 2021.¹⁰ Approximately 30% of the neighborhood is under 20 years of age, highlighting the importance of youth engagement.

From 2010 to 2020, the Diversity Index for this tract substantially increased from 67 to 89, indicating considerable neighborhood change.¹¹ 43% of people were born in countries outside of the United States (64% from Latin America, 29% from Asia). Spanish is the most spoken language (spoken by 72% of children and 53% of adults at home).

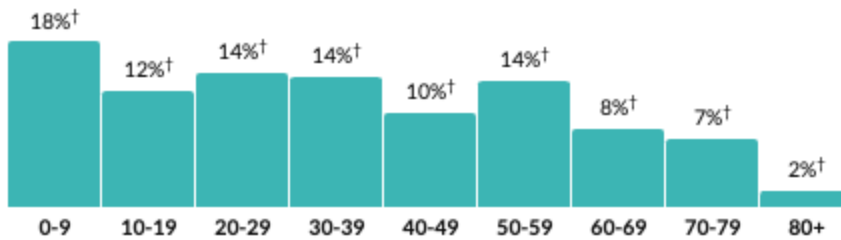
⁸ City as Nature, Death and Life of the American Streetcar (2012), <https://cityasnature.org/post/2012/death-and-life-of-american-streetcar/>.

⁹ "A Walking Tour of Public Art Sites in East San Jose", History San Jose, <https://historysanjose.org/exhibits-activities/online-exhibits/welcome-to-eastside-art-history/>.

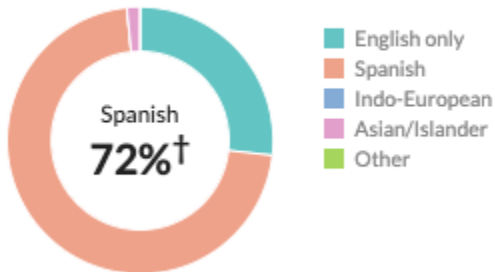
¹⁰ "Census Tract 5014.01, Santa Clara, CA", Census Reporter, <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/14000US06085501401-census-tract-501401-santa-clara-ca/>.

¹¹ "2020 Decennial Census", Reno Gazette Journal, <https://data.rgj.com/census/total-population/total-population-change/census-tract-501401-santa-clara-county-california/140-06085501401/>.

Population by age range



Language at home, children 5-17



Language at home, adults 18+

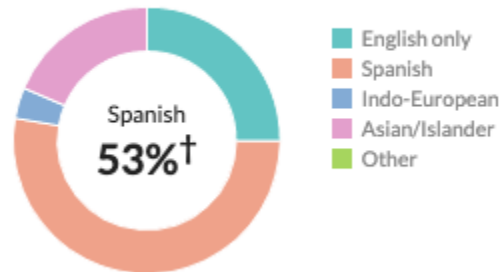


Figure 2. Age and language data for census tract 5014.01¹²

When compared to averages in San José and Santa Clara County, both income and education levels are notably lower in this census tract. The median household income is \$60,648—approximately half the amount in San José and two-fifths the amount in Santa Clara County. 13% of people live below the poverty line, which is approximately 1.5 times the rate in San José and two times the rate in Santa Clara County. Regarding education, 74% of people have graduated from high school (compared to 86% in San José and 89% in Santa Clara County) while only 17% have a Bachelor’s degree or higher (compared to 45% in San José and 54% in Santa Clara County).

Additional data from SOMOS Mayfair on housing displacement data expands beyond the station’s census tract to include five adjacent tracts (5014.02, 5015.01, 5015.02, 5036.01, 5036.02).¹³ Within this larger area, average household size is 3.7 persons, compared to 3.2 persons in San José. 60% of households are renters—compared to 43% in San José—of which 59% are rent burdened. 44% of renters live in single family homes or duplexes, as compared to 35% citywide. Furthermore, more renters in the area live in 3-4 unit buildings and mobile homes (including a mobile home park on McLaughlin Avenue) when compared to San José averages. This data underscores the importance of housing in Little Portugal, including new affordable housing amidst an affordability crisis and indirect displacement as transit arrives.

¹² “Census Tract 5014.01, Santa Clara, CA”, Census Reporter, <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/14000US06085501401-census-tract-501401-santa-clara-ca/>.

¹³ SOMOS Mayfair, “Demographic Data: Little Portugal BART Station Area”.

Finally, data on the Portuguese community in this area is limited. According to census data analyzed by VTA, approximately 467 people identify as Portuguese across census tracts 5012.002, 5014.011, 5014.012, 5014.021, 5014.022, 5015.011, 5015.012, 5036.011, 5036.012, 5036.021, 5036.022, 5037.073.¹⁴ While the number of Portuguese residents is small, the area is a hub and destination for Portuguese culture including restaurants, a grocery store, and cultural centers where Portuguese history and traditions are celebrated and kept alive. Further understanding around this community and their needs, especially those closest to the site, will be an important gap to fill through engagement.

4.3 Local Places and Programs

The following sections aim to highlight the diverse array of institutions, retail businesses, public spaces, community and arts organizations, and cultural programs that currently exist within Little Portugal. The strong presence of small-scale and local retail, the abundance of schools and large public parks, and the investment of many community organizations in this area are important contributors to the neighborhood's character and present opportunities to build upon within future development. VTA continues to look to community input to better understand the lived experiences of these places and the gaps that exist.

The 28th Street/Little Portugal census tract has a Healthy Place Index score in the 38th percentile: dramatically lower than San José and Santa Clara County, which score in the 77th and 95th percentile, respectively.¹⁵ However, for this census tract, the highest performing policy area is Neighborhood—which scores in the 80th percentile for park access, 57th percentile for retail density, and 80th percentile for tree canopy. Conversely, the lowest performing policy action area is Healthcare Access (scoring in the 15th percentile for insured adults), highlighting an opportunity to consider including medical services within the future station area programming. The nearest hospitals, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and Regional Medical Center, are approximately 1 and 1.5 miles from the station area respectively, but are among few in the surrounding area. Family wellness services will be provided in the future by Gardner Health Services at La Avenida, a planned development on Alum Rock Avenue across from the Mexican Heritage Plaza.

4.3.1 Institutions

Schools and religious institutions are both abundant within the neighborhood. Five Wounds Parish and Cristo Rey High School are directly adjacent to the station, serving as anchor institutions. Protecting sightlines to this landmark church will be important. Within a half mile of the station, there are at least six religious institutions and seven schools (such as San José High School, Sunrise Middle School, Rocketship Discovery Prep), ranging from preschools all the way up to high schools—underscoring an opportunity to meaningfully engage youth as important stakeholders in this process. In addition, the high number of schools in the area can support

¹⁴ VTA, "28LP Demographics-GIS_Update_2022-10".

¹⁵ California Healthy Places Index, <https://map.healthypacesindex.org/?redirect=false>.

future families that may move into 28th Street/Little Portugal TOD. Lastly, San José State University is located within two miles of the site.

As mentioned in Section 4.2, the percentage of people with a Bachelor's degree or higher in this area is much lower when compared to San José and Santa Clara County. This disparity highlights an opportunity to include educational resources such as college prep within future development. This is also supported by *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment*, which lists creating a "college-going culture in the neighborhood" among its top 10 action items.



Figure 3. Map of schools and religious institutions

4.3.2 Retail

Two types of retail appear frequently within the neighborhood. The first is local restaurants that reflect the neighborhood's different cultures, including Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese restaurants and bakeries, along with a lively evening presence of food trucks. The second most common retail type is automobile services, including used car dealerships, auto repair, and tire shops. Other small businesses, largely along E. Santa Clara Street and E. Julian Street, offer an array of services. These include beauty salons, florists, laundromats, party supply, tax help, and printing and sign services. Also abundant are convenience/liquor stores, small/specialty markets, and fast food chains (such as McDonalds and Wienerschnitzel). Larger scale grocery stores and farmer's markets are less frequent in the neighborhood; the closest store is located on the east side of Highway 101 (approximately 0.3 miles from the station area), and the closest farmer's market is in Japantown (approximately 1.5 miles from the station area). Community members at the first Five Wounds Urban Village Workshop on December 8th, 2022 reiterated interest in expanding food access in the neighborhood.

4.3.3 Public Spaces

Access to public open space in Little Portugal is strong. According to the Trust for Public Land ParkScore index, this area is within a 10-minute walk (half-mile) service area of a park with public access.¹⁶ Watson Park and Roosevelt Park are the two largest public open spaces in the neighborhood—26.6 acres and 11 acres, respectively. Watson Park is bordered by Highway 101 to the north and Empire Gardens Elementary School to the south, and includes soccer fields, basketball courts, a playground, a dog park, and picnic areas. Roosevelt Park is bordered by San José High School to the north, E. Santa Clara Street to the south, and Coyote Creek to the east, with diverse amenities including soccer fields, baseball fields, basketball courts, a playground, a roller hockey rink, a skatepark and the City's Roosevelt Community Center. Coyote Creek is adjacent to both Watson Park and Roosevelt Park, providing an opportunity to enhance the connection between these two important spaces. Finally, Plata Arroyo Park is a 10.6 acre park located on the east side of Highway 101, including basketball courts, a skatepark, and a playground.

There are a few smaller public spaces in the neighborhood. Other parks include Esther Medina Park (linear park along Highway 101) and Hacienda Park (small playground adjacent to Hacienda Creek Senior Apartments). Spaces such as the plaza outside Five Wounds Parish also serve as platforms for public life. Both the *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Draft Neighborhood Improvement Plan Amendment* and the *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace BART Station Area Community Concept Plan* articulated a vision for a new public plaza, or "Town Square," that would be a place to gather and strengthen the bonds of the community, and connect to surrounding development via a new pedestrian and bike trail.¹⁷ Increasing access to active,

¹⁶ City of San Jose, *Activate SJ Strategic Plan (2020-2040)*,

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/43503/637178743945470000>.

¹⁷ CommUniverCity San José and City of San José Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace BART Station Area Community Concept Plan*, September 2010.

smaller-scale community gathering spaces is an important programmatic consideration for future development on the TOD site.

The Five Wounds Trail is an important potential public space with long term community investment. The trail alignment follows a former railroad right-of-way, which connects the Coyote Creek and future Lower Silver Creek Trails. Within the station area, the trail extends from E. Santa Clara Street to E. Julian Street along N. 28th Street—presenting a regional off-street bike and pedestrian connection at the front door of the station. Friends of the Five Wounds Trail and Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful currently help steward this space with annual cleanups. More details on community desires for the Five Wounds Trail can be found in *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace BART Station Area Community Concept Plan* and on the Friends of Five Wounds Trail website: <https://fivewoundstrailsj.org/>.



Figure 4. Map of public spaces

4.3.4 Community Organizations

There are countless community organizations in the neighborhood that have advocated for various interests and been involved in station area visioning for many years. Community Working Groups (CWG's) were initially created when VTA's BART Silicon Valley Program was a 16-mile extension into Santa Clara County. In 2009, the project was split into two phases and beginning in 2015, the CWG for the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station resumed. CWG members have been tasked with sharing information with their unique constituencies and providing feedback to the project team. Participants for this CWG include representatives from¹⁸:

¹⁸ 28th Street/Little Portugal Community Working Group Contact List, https://vtabart.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/28LP-CWG-Contact-List_ADA.pdf

- Alum Rock Business Network
- Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association
- Alum Rock Urban Village Advocates
- CommUniverCity
- Cristo Rey San José High School
- Cristo Rey San José High School Student Council Representative
- East Santa Clara Street Business Association
- Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Action Coalition
- Five Wounds Parish
- Friends of Five Wounds Trail
- Latino Business Foundation
- Plata-Arroyo Neighborhood Association
- Portuguese Organization for Social Services and Opportunities
- Northside Neighborhood Association
- Ride East Side San José
- Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
- School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza
- Somos Mayfair

Other community organizations and places of interest include the Portuguese Athletic Club and I.E.S. Portuguese Hall of San José, which are located immediately south of the site across Five Wounds Lane.

4.3.5 Artists and Arts Organizations

The prevalence of local artists and arts organizations in this area—spanning multimedia art, music, dance, and other performing arts—presents opportunities for partnerships and programming on the TOD site. Among others, they include:

- Bloco Do Sol
- Calpulli Tonalehqueh
- Cashion Cultural Legacy
- Eastside Community Arts
- Eastside Magazine
- Ensemble Folclórico Colibrí
- Local Color SJ
- Los Lupeños de San José
- MOSAIC America
- Multicultural Artists Guild
- Multicultural Arts Leadership Institute
- Portuguese Band of San José
- San José Jazz
- San José Taiko
- School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza

- Teatro Visión
- Together We Create
- United Lowrider Council of San José

While the City's public art master plan, *Public Art Next!* (2007), is out of date, VTA has recently conducted community engagement about art at the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station.

Community preferences were gathered around location of station art, themes to represent, and artists and organizations to partner with.¹⁹ Some ideas were to represent Portuguese azulejo or the agricultural history of the region, including the contributions of Portuguese, Latinx/Mexican, and Indigenous peoples. It was recommended that Cristo Rey San José Jesuit High School, San José High School, and local elementary schools further inform ideas.

In addition, the BART Arts Master Plan (2019) offers an updated vision, strategy, and framework to incorporate art at BART stations. Some of the recommendations include supporting community-initiative arts activities on property outside BART stations, and creating partnership and sponsorship opportunities to businesses, universities, and community organizations.²⁰ Though BART is not leading efforts for arts at the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station, these recommendations could still serve as a helpful contextual reference when considering the larger art landscape at BART stations.

4.3.6 Cultural Programs

A variety of neighborhood programming celebrates local cultures, ranging from annual festivals to informal gatherings.

- Día de Los Muertos celebration, held by the School of Arts and Culture, is a several day event based at the Mexican Heritage Plaza and extends down Alum Rock Avenue to Highway 101.
- Additional cultural programming and annual events at the Mexican Heritage Plaza include Chile Mole Pozole, Tres Vinos Dinner, La Avenida De Altares, Fiesta Navideña, and Cafecitos.
- Dia de Portugal Festival, held by the Portuguese Heritage Society of California and including traditional food, singing, and dancing, occurs annually in June at Kelley Park.
- Festa do Divino Espírito Santo (Holy Ghost Festival) is held annually at the I.E.S. Portuguese Hall during the last week in June. Parades and processions temporarily close E. Santa Clara Street between N. 28th Street and N. 33rd Street, including Highway 101 ramps.
- The Portuguese Band of San José—the oldest existing Portuguese marching band in California—holds community concerts, and their facility is located across from the station on N. 27th Street.

¹⁹ VTA, *VTA's BART Silicon Valley Phase II Extension Project: 28th Street Little Portugal Community Working Group Meeting*, September 14, 2022, <https://www.vta.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/Sep14-22-28thLittlePortugalCWG.pdf>.

²⁰ BART, *BART Arts Master Plan*, 2019.

- Viva Calle SJ is a regularly occurring event that closes miles of San José streets including E. Santa Clara Street in Little Portugal, allowing community members to engage with neighborhoods while they walk, bike, skate, and play where cars usually have priority.
- The Wienerschnitzel on E. Santa Clara Street has also become a popular place for lowrider gatherings.
- Local restaurant owners regularly hire mariachi bands to perform throughout the week in their businesses for customers.

4.4 Precedent: Fruitvale Station

Fruitvale Station in Oakland is often cited as a model for TOD, due to an extensive community engagement process and ultimate reflection of its majority-Latino community through amenities, activities, and design elements.²¹ Because of the efforts of the Unity Council—a community organization with a long history in Oakland—community members were deeply engaged for four years to shape the vision for the neighborhood. Fruitvale Village (the 4-acre mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development) features a wide range of amenities within a five-minute walk of the BART station, including a senior center, public library, legal services, multilingual health clinic, childcare, bike station, and charter high school. A significant anchor is the Fruitvale Public Market, a small business incubator for vendors who sell Latin American arts, crafts, and food. This area is further activated by programming (with events such as a weekly farmers market and the annual Dia de Los Muertos Festival) and enriched by public art (including a mural memorializing Oscar Grant). In addition to these amenities and activities, the community is reflected through design choices; for example, a paseo includes Spanish and Indigenous architectural influences, and a clear sightline was kept from the station to a prominent local church.

5 Urban Fabric and Environment

5.1 Site Physical Constraints and Connections

The 28th Street/Little Portugal Station is geographically located in the Santa Clara Valley between the Diablo and Santa Cruz mountain ranges and within the Coyote Creek watershed, where water flows from Coyote Creek to the San Francisco Bay estuary. Within East San José, the Little Portugal neighborhood is approximately 2 miles east of Downtown San José. The site is bounded by Highway 101 to the east and main corridors—E. Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue to the south and E. Julian Street/McKee Road to the north—which extend from the East Foothills to the Alameda west of Downtown. N. 28th Street—a historic rail corridor (formerly used by the Western Pacific Railroad)—bisects the site and connects the main corridors.

5.2 Land Use and Zoning

Existing land uses include industrial, residential, and public/quasi-public uses. Existing site zoning is heavy industrial, transitioning to light industrial and multi-family residential moving

²¹ Yumika (Miki) Takeshita, "Fruitvale BART Station", Project for Public Spaces, <https://www.pps.org/places/fruitvale-bart-station>.

further south into the neighborhood. E. Santa Clara Street and E. Julian Street are largely zoned commercial general and commercial pedestrian respectively.

The San José General Plan 2040 designates the site as an Urban Village and Transit Employment Center.²² The Urban Village designation is a flexible land use enabling either residential up to 250 dwelling units per acre or a floor area ratio (FAR) up to ten. Transit Employment Center is the highest density commercial land use permitted outside of downtown (up to 12 FAR), however residential is not a permitted use. While not presently included in the Five Wounds Urban Villages, Transit Residential may also be considered as an appropriate designation permitting both the highest residential density (250 du/ac) and commercial density (12 FAR).

Surrounding parcels are designated public/quasi-public, open space/parklands/habitat, neighborhood/community commercial, and residential neighborhood. More detail on existing and planned land use and zoning for the half-mile surrounding the station can be found in the *Five Wounds Urban Village Plan's Existing Conditions Memorandum* (2022).

As proposed, the Five Wounds Urban Village Plan Update, which was developed concurrently with the DDF, has since revised the entire site to Urban Village.

See Supplementary Figures for maps depicting existing and future land use designations from the *Five Wounds Urban Village Plan* (Administrative Draft, September 2024), respectively.

5.3 Urban Fabric and Character

The surrounding fabric of residential blocks is separated from the station area by large industrial blocks. Highway 101 creates a literal and figurative barrier between the site and neighborhoods to the east. This presents challenges for walkability and connectivity, but also opportunities to knit the area together through increased connectivity and density and diversified uses that take inspiration from the neighborhood's unique cultural and architectural qualities.

Common building types in the area are one to two story residential buildings (predominantly single family homes and duplexes) interspersed with schools and churches surrounded by surface parking lots. Commercial uses largely line E. Santa Clara Street and E. Julian Street with industrial uses aligning to the former rail corridor and future Five Wounds Trail.

5.3.1 Large Block Legacy

East of Highway 101, the neighborhood is composed of larger blocks divided by looped streets with dead-ends. There are predominantly single-family or smaller multi-family residential buildings set back from the street—a popular development pattern of suburban areas after World War II.

²² City of San José, *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*, 2011.

West of Highway 101, the neighborhood is largely laid out in a grid with most blocks measuring approximately 250 feet east to west and 600 feet north to south. Streets provide local access and average approximately 60 feet in width, including travel lanes in each direction, on-street parking on both sides, and sidewalks. While industrial and commercial buildings often have limited (or no) setbacks, single family homes and duplexes are often setback 10-15 feet from the sidewalk.

Notably, the station site breaks this grid. Situated among larger industrial blocks, the site has a distinct fabric and character in both connectivity and parcelization. These large industrial blocks are challenged by the adjacency and impermeability of Highway 101, which limits access to the site from the east. There is a significant opportunity here to create a finer walkable grid and reconnect the site to the surrounding grid, including extending E. St. John Street to N. 28th Street.

5.3.2 Architectural Character

E. Santa Clara Street and E. Julian Street commercial corridors are a mixture of pre-war and post-war styles, typically 1-2 stories tall. Pre-war commercial buildings hold the street edge, creating a more intimate, walkable environment. Post-war commercial buildings were designed for the mass adoption of automobiles, which is reflected in the deep setbacks making space for parking, driveways, and green buffers. Unlike the pre-war buildings, post-war commercial development contributes to an undefined street wall and car-oriented environment. Some buildings integrate architectural characteristics of Mexican and Portuguese cultures, such as brightly painted stucco and detailed ornamental features, respectively). During SNI efforts stimulated by the San José Redevelopment Agency (RDA) in the early 2000's, the neighborhood underwent projects such as streetscape and facade improvements which protected some of these features.²³

Many landmark buildings in the neighborhood have notable facades that include iconography, symbols, symmetry, defining organic shapes, and other decorative elements. The Five Wounds Parish, built in 1914, includes several character-defining features from the Baroque Revival ornamentation: two grand square bell towers, detailed reliefs, and stained glass windows with Catholic imagery. Other Portuguese landmarks include the Portuguese Band of San José building and SF Nova Alianca Portuguese Band Hall. Mexican Heritage Plaza is another distinct landmark, with brightly painted stucco, red clay tile roof, and murals that celebrate community voices, culture, and stories. Future development can incorporate contemporary adaptations of these special details to reflect local cultures and retain the distinctive qualities of the place.

²³ Oscar Inzunza, "Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI)" (2015). *Master's Projects*. 461. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.ux4g-gzr8>. https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_projects/461.



Figure 5. One of the landmark buildings in the neighborhood: the Five Wounds Parish

The predominant housing typology in the neighborhood is from the mid-20th century, featuring small-lot single-family homes with varied setbacks from the street. Front yards are landscaped or paved, with a variety of fence types. Driveways for residential parking are at the back of the house, with no exposed parking garage entries towards the street. Homes are 1-1.5 stories tall, some symmetrical and others asymmetrical. Most homes have stucco or wood siding. Designs primarily focus on simplicity and functionality, containing low-pitched roofs with wide overhangs. Some have prominent porches.

Lastly, there are many industrial buildings in this area. They tend to have large, open floor plans, high ceilings, raw materials such as metal and wood paneling, lack of ornamentation on the building facade, and exposed ductwork and piping. These buildings include ample space for parking and loading. Industrial facades are typically simple with limited openings or ornamentation using materials that are easy to replace or repair, such as concrete block, corrugated metal, and stucco.



Figure 6. Industrial buildings in the area, including Monarch Truck Center

5.4 Environmental Conditions

The climate, adjacencies, and orientation of the site presents considerations for how development can be responsive to reduce health impacts and improve environmental comfort. Opportunities include increasing tree canopy, designing the public realm to enable enjoyment of warm weather while providing shelter from extreme heat events, and orienting buildings to reduce shadow and buffer noise and pollution.

Climate Smart San José—adopted by the City Council in 2018—is a community wide initiative to reduce air pollution, save water and improve quality of life.²⁴ The recently proposed pathway to carbon neutrality by 2030 includes strategies to move to zero emission vehicles and to reduce miles traveled in personal vehicles by at least 20%.

5.4.1 Topography

The site is largely flat, without noticeable changes in topography. The site is roughly the same elevation as Highway 101, and is not protected by a sound wall or vegetation. As a result, particulates, emissions, and sound from highway traffic are unmitigated within the site. Overpasses at E. Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue and E. Julian Street/McKee Road are elevated, providing views toward the hills to the east, towards Downtown San José, of the Five Wounds Parish, and of the future TOD. Given the relatively low building height east of Highway 101, views of the Diablo mountain range will be available above the second floor of future TOD buildings. Similarly, views toward the west will capture Downtown and the Santa Cruz mountain

²⁴ Climate Smart San José, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/environment/climate-smart-san-jos>.

range and views to the north from higher up may capture views of the San Francisco Bay—although future development in surrounding Districts may limit visibility.

5.4.2 Sun and Shade

The climate is generally warm and sunny which presents an opportunity to take advantage of being outdoors; however, there are also many paved surfaces, without many outdoor places for respite during extreme heat events. The location of the BART station, the Station Plaza, and the Five Wounds Parish to the south of the primary development zones of the TOD mitigates the potential impact of shadow from adjacent TOD development.

As noted in Section 4.3, tree canopy is relatively abundant in the station area compared to San José and Santa Clara County at large; however, trees are noticeably limited on streets surrounding the site—N. 28th Street in particular, in addition to Five Wounds Lane and E. St. James Street. Generally, heat and income are inversely related in San José, where areas with lower incomes experience hotter temperatures.²⁵ Taken together, these conditions present a social justice opportunity to increase canopy cover and provide public places for shelter and respite from the heat.

5.4.3 Wind

The site is subject to a strong prevailing summer wind from the northwest direction.²⁶ Conversely, during the winter, the site is subject to a strong prevailing wind from the southeast direction. This presents an opportunity to utilize wind to improve cooling during the summer months and to protect the site from elevated wind speeds at the ground during the winter months. In addition, the siting, orientation, and design of the public realm and buildings can improve environmental comfort.

5.4.4 Pollution

The site's census tract has a pollution burden score of 68 out of 100—a score consistent with other areas along Highway 101, 280, and 87 as well as near the SJC airport.²⁷ Two of the highest contributors to this score are diesel particulate matter (exhaust from vehicles with diesel engines) and traffic impacts (exhaust, other pollutants, and noise from high numbers of vehicles on surrounding major roads and highways). Mass adoption of electric vehicles (EV) will reduce exhaust particulate and the TODs should support EV infrastructure where possible.

Unfortunately, brake and tire wear emissions will endure with vehicular trips. These factors underscore the importance of shifting the station access priority from cars to pedestrians, bikes, micro-mobility devices, and transit to reduce emissions and limit future environmental burden.

²⁵ Meg Anderson and Sean Mcminn, "As Rising Heat Bakes U.S. Cities, The Poor Often Feel It Most", September 3, 2019, NPR, <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/03/754044732/as-rising-heat-bakes-u-s-cities-the-poor-often-feel-it-most>.

²⁶ Climate Visualization, Klimaat Consulting & Innovation, <https://klimaat.ca/epw/>.

²⁷ CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Indicator Maps, <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ed5953d89038431dbf4f22ab9abfe40d/>.

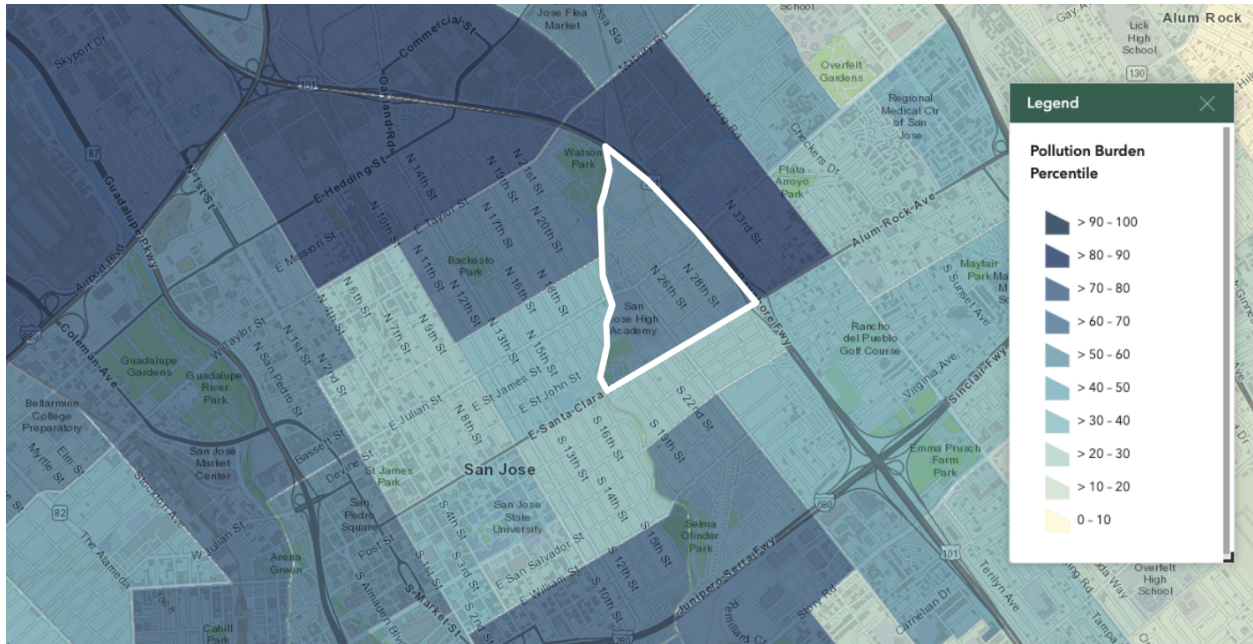


Figure 7. Map of pollution burden; the site's census tract scores 68 out of 100²⁸

According to the Health Effects Institute, living within 300-500m of a highway is considered a public health concern without mitigation.²⁹ Research suggests that physical barriers such as soundwalls or buildings play the biggest role in reducing the spread of roadway pollution into neighborhoods. Where buildings do not create a physical barrier, tree canopy paired with a soundwall can deflect and absorb particulate matter.³⁰ Where possible, consider locating open space and residential buildings further from Highway 101 to reduce potential health impacts from long term exposure and improve experience in the public realm. Increased mechanical ventilation should also be considered for buildings nearest the highway.

5.4.5 Noise

The site experiences the highest level of road noise in the area (75-79 dBA) due to its proximity to Highway 101.³¹ Some combination of a soundwall and buildings should buffer active public realm locations, including the plaza, from the highway as noted in the section above.

5.5 Precedent: Berryessa Station

The Berryessa Transit Center is the most recently opened BART station. The area is envisioned to be a mixed-use commercial and residential neighborhood that follows the principles of TOC initiatives and strategies listed in the City's Envision 2040 General Plan. The *Berryessa BART Urban Village Area Plan (BBUV Plan)* is an approved comprehensive plan that outlines the

²⁸ CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Indicator Maps, <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ed5953d89038431dbf4f22ab9abfe40d/>.

²⁹ Health Effects Institute, Traffic Related Air Pollution: A Critical Review of the Literature on Emissions, Exposure, and Health Effects, January 2010, https://www.healtheffects.org/system/files/SR17TrafficReview_Exec_Summary.pdf.

³⁰ Adams and Harvey, "Investigating Contaminant Accumulation in Landscapes Adjacent to Highways", Landscape Architecture Foundation, 2022, <https://www.lafoundation.org/resources/2022/03/highway-landscapes-research>.

³¹ San José Spatial Team, Public GIS Viewer, <https://gisdata-csj.opendata.arcgis.com/>.

roadmap of a regional transit urban village to guide the area's growth into 2040. Similar to 28th Street/Little Portugal Station, the Berryessa/North San José Station has a mix of large industrial blocks adjacent to suburban single-family neighborhoods. As a result, some important goals in the BBUV Plan are to protect residential and mixed-use character of existing neighborhoods, integrate them with the new urban fabric, and to grow the urban village into an economically vibrant area that balances employment generation and residential development.³² Additionally, the Plan aims to reduce single occupancy vehicles and parking, leading to reduced emissions and vehicles on the street.

6 Mobility and Connectivity

The arrival of BART in Little Portugal will improve access to and from the surrounding neighborhoods, providing a significant improvement in community connectivity for East San José, as well as regional connectivity through the BART system. The success of the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station relies on improved access through planning, programs, and infrastructure improvements.

The goals of VTA, BART, and the City of San José collectively are to reduce the need for private automobile use and increase mobility options for people who walk, roll, and take transit (see Figure 8 for BART access hierarchy). According to a 2018 analysis of the study area from East San José Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (ESJ MTIP), or "En Movimiento", the current mode splits for this area are the following: 3% walk, 1.7% bike, 6.7% rely on transit, and 70% drive alone.³³ The City's Envision 2040 General Plan targets a citywide mode split that increases biking and walking to 15%, transit to 20%, and carpooling to 10% while reducing driving alone to 40% of trips.³⁴ The "Bold Goals" in Climate Smart San José exceed those goals, aiming to reduce the drive-alone trips to only 12% of all commute trips by 2050.³⁵ Transition from today's travel patterns to the target mode splits of tomorrow requires a fundamental shift in mobility behavior toward active modes—walking, rolling, and biking—and transit. For the site, opportunities to prioritize safe access to trails, sidewalks, bikeways, and transit stations while also limiting the amount of parking are essential.

³² City of San José, Berryessa BART Urban Village Area Plan (BBUV) (2020).

³³ City of San José, East San José Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (ESJ MTIP) En Movimiento (2020), <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/68800/637473579726970000>

³⁴ City of San José, *Envision 2040 General Plan* (San José: 2011), <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/22359/637928744399330000>

³⁵ Climate Smart San José, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/environmental-services/climate-smart-san-jos/climate-smart-data-dashboard/mobility-single-occupancy-vehicles>

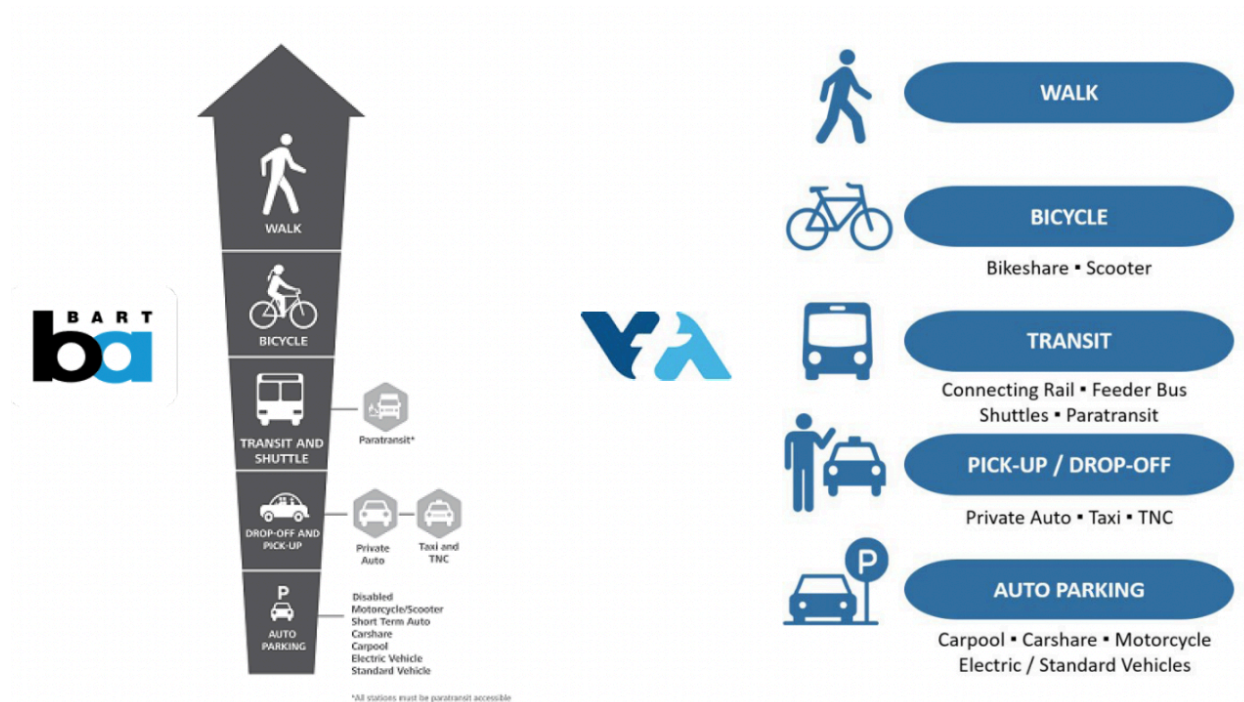


Figure 8. BART and VTA access hierarchies

6.1 Identified Gaps, Future Opportunities

In 2019, En Movimiento identified key locations for projects to improve connectivity and to implement in accident-prone areas. A significant planned improvement is the extension of E. St. John Street to N. 28th Street, which will provide pedestrian access and a bikeway connecting the site to Roosevelt Park and further to Downtown. This will help shift primary east-west bikeways in the area off the major connectors and transit corridors of E. Santa Clara Street and E. Julian Street, which were identified by En Movimiento and the TOC Playbook as locations with many bike and pedestrian involved collisions, likely due to the traffic volumes on these streets and their proximity to Highway 101 access ramps.³⁶ Another priority improvement is providing comfortable walkways and bikeways along N. 28th Street, together with traffic calming strategies to improve accessibility to the station as there is currently no sidewalk on either side of N. 28th Street.

³⁶ City of San José, *East San José Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (ESJ MTIP)* En Movimiento (2020), <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/68800/637473579726970000>

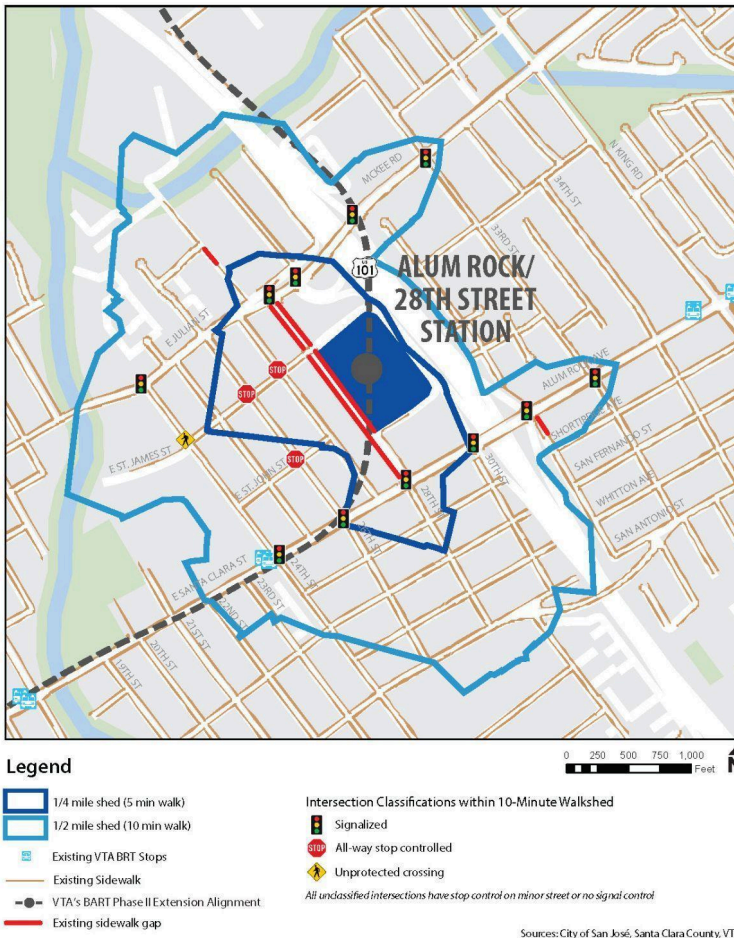


Figure 9. Existing Pedestrian Network (Playbook Appendix F - Figure 17). Note the existing sidewalk gaps and limited crosswalks adjacent to the station area.³⁷

En Movimiento suggests other specific improvement concept strategies to improve comfort and safety such as improving intersections, adding pedestrian crossings, and adding Class I-III bike lanes around the site area.³⁸ Another important study area to reduce conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles is the drop-off zone for Cristo Rey High School, especially during school and church attendance times when higher than average volumes of vehicles may interact with BART riders coming to/from the station. Parents/guardians drop off their children at the high school in both directions of N. 28th Street—on the school side as well as on the opposite side where there is no sidewalk or crosswalk currently. Cristo Rey High School provided circulation commentary about drop off taking place on both sides of N. 28th Street and discouraging u-turns of Five Wounds Lane for those turning in from N. 28th Street. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to create a new Rapid stop for transit to connect with the BART station on N. 28th Street.

³⁷ Valley Transportation Authority, *The 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station Area Playbook* (2020)

³⁸ City of San José, *East San José Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (ESJ MTIP) En Movimiento* (2020), "Five Wounds On-Street Trail Crossing Project", "E. Julian Street Connection to BART Project".

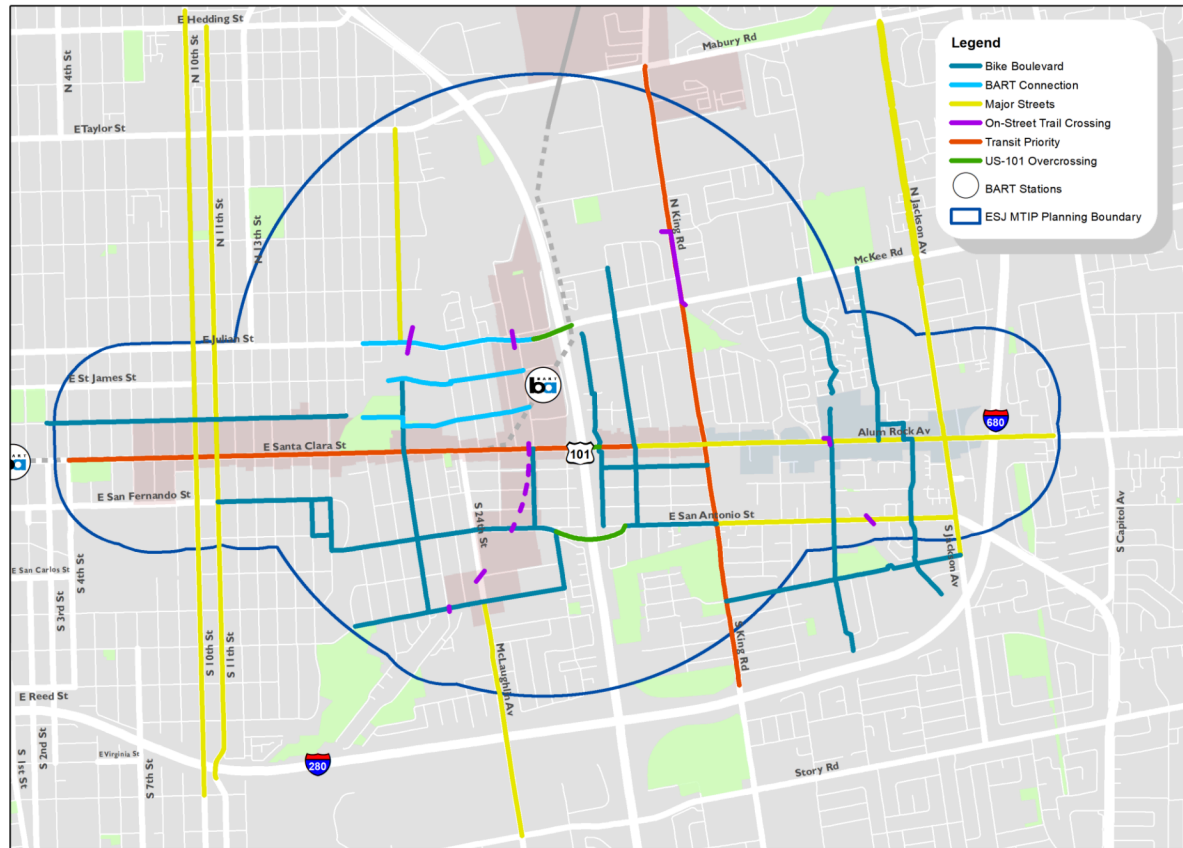


Figure 10. Conceptual projects outlined in En Movimiento. This includes: 1) Bike Boulevards, 2) BART Connections, 3) Major Streets, 4) On-Street Trail Crossings, 5) Transit Priority Projects, 6) US-101 Overcrossings.

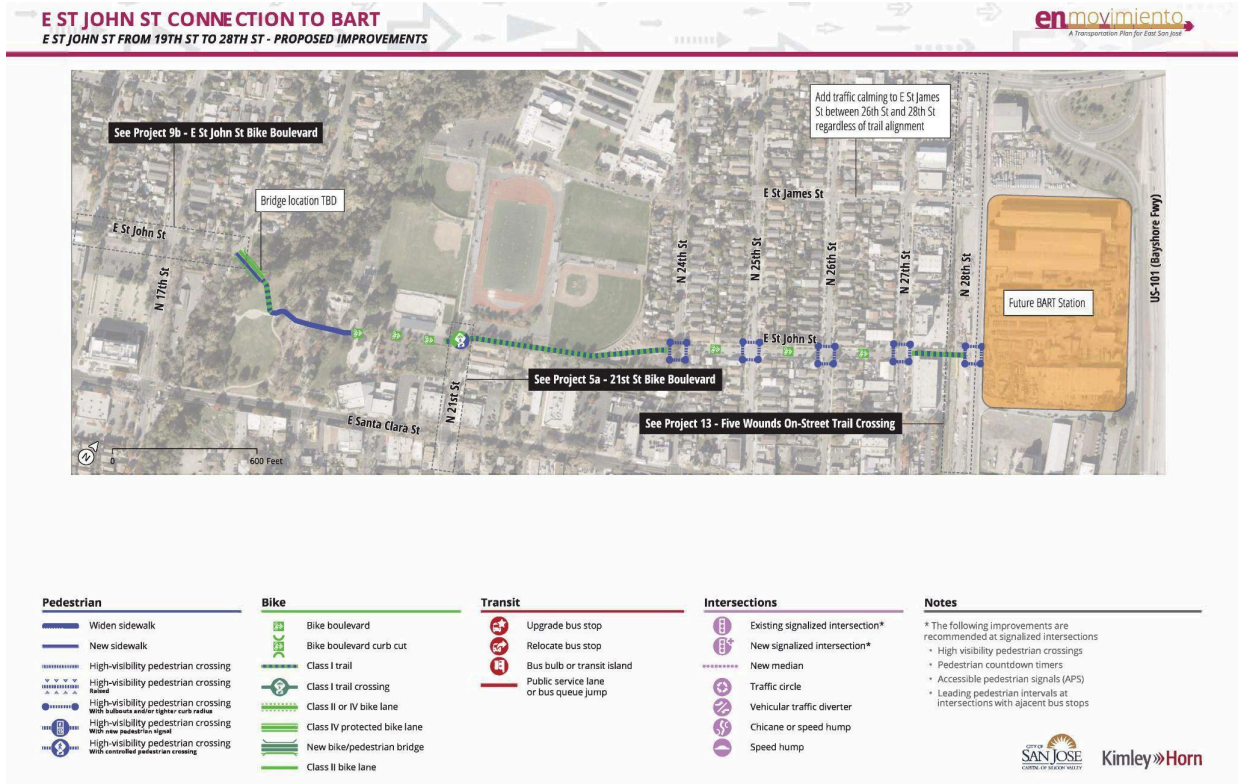


Figure 11. Example of conceptual project outlined in En Movimiento: connect E. St. John Street to BART.

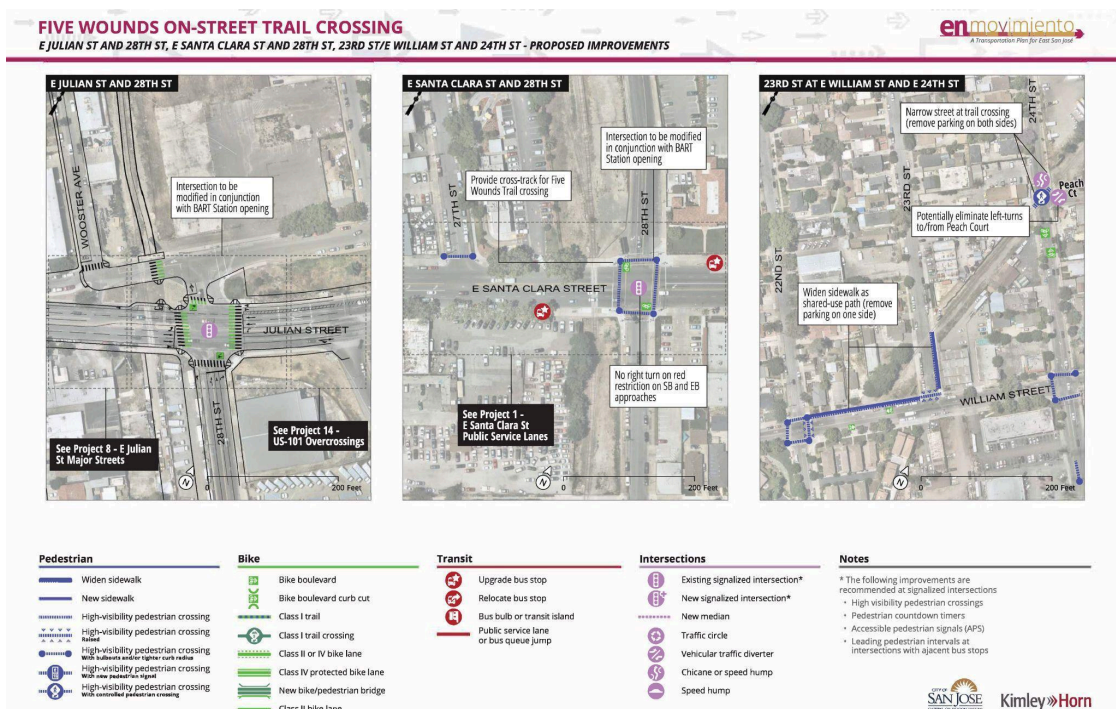


Figure 12. Example of conceptual project outlined in En Movimiento: Five Wounds On-Street Trail Crossing Improvements.

The proposed improvements to the streetscape and active mobility network, in tandem with VTA's mission of providing safe, reliable, and quality transit service for riders, will address existing limitations to shifting from drive-alone trips in the future station area to improve connectivity in the neighborhood.

6.2 Active Mobility: Pedestrians and Bicycle Priority

Both BART and VTA prioritize pedestrian and cyclist access and safety above other modes at transit stations. As a guiding document for TOC planning, VTA's Station Access Policy expands and improves on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure through strategies on system-wide access mode shifts, to reduce drive-alone rates, invest in pedestrian/bicycle assets, and make BART facilities accessible to all users, including users with disabilities.³⁹ One opportunity identified with local stakeholders for the TOC Playbook Station Access Planning Report was to design more walkable streets to support businesses and preserve the character of the existing establishments along E. Santa Clara Street, in addition to adding sidewalk lighting to make the streets more pedestrian-friendly.⁴⁰ The TOC Playbook states that while many local neighborhood destinations are located within a half-mile walkshed, people tend to drive. More strikingly, less than 5% of trips use active mobility (walking and biking).⁴¹ The new BART station will bring opportunity for improved connectivity, and will shift the existing need to rely on driving to walking, biking, and riding buses and trains.

Additional existing documents discuss methods to improve pedestrians' and cyclists' mobility:

- VTA's Pedestrian Access to Transit Plan (2017) aims to improve the safety, comfort, and convenience of the walking environment to transit stops. Focus areas include narrowing right-turn radii on major corridor streets such as E. Santa Clara Street.⁴²
- The Station Access Planning Report from the TOC Playbook calls for incorporating a plaza to maximize pedestrian activity and provide a connection to the station from N. 27th Street via an extension of a right-of-way on E. St. John Street with protected bike facilities.⁴³
- BART's Multimodal Access Design Guidelines (2017) include design standards for sidewalk zones, accessible paths, bikeways, adjacent network connections, station entrances/exits, bus stops, and more, specifically for planning around transit stations.⁴⁴

³⁹ BART, *Station Access Policy* (2016), https://www.bart.gov/sites/default/files/docs/BART%20Access%20Policy%20-%20Adopted%202016-06-09%20Final%20Adopted_0.pdf.

⁴⁰ City of San José, VTA, Nelson Nygaard, *Station Access Planning Report* (2016), 35-37.

⁴¹ Valley Transportation Authority, *The 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station Area Playbook* (2020), Figure 19 - Station Access Planning Profile - 28th Street.

⁴² Valley Transportation Authority, *Pedestrian Access to Transit Plan* (2017), https://www.vta.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/FINAL-Pedestrian%20Plan-ACTION%20ITEM-09-07-2017_0.pdf

⁴³ City of San José, VTA, Nelson Nygaard, *Station Access Planning Report* (2016), <https://www.vta.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/San%20Jose%20BART%20Stn%20Area%20Planning%20FINAL.pdf>

⁴⁴ BART, *Multimodal Access Design Guidelines* (2017) https://www.bart.gov/sites/default/files/docs/BART%20MADG_FINAL_08-31.pdf

- San José Complete Streets Design Standards and Guidelines (2018) outlines a comprehensive set of principles, standards, and guidelines that guide facility design on all public streets in San José.⁴⁵
- San José Trail Network Planning and Design Toolkit (2018) provides considerations that will continue common and familiar aspects of trail design throughout the 60-plus mile citywide trail network, including functional and aesthetic objectives.⁴⁶
- VTA Countywide Bicycle Plan (2018) proposes the creation of a bicycle network that is safe, convenient, and connected, and expands the network of Cross County Bicycle Corridors (CCBCs) to include low-stress bikeways.⁴⁷
- VTA Bike Superhighway Implementation Plan (2021) documents nearby extensions of the Coyote Creek Trail (Superhighway) and Five Wounds Trail, defining a superhighway as high quality, uninterrupted, long-distance bikeways separated from motor vehicles to allow people to travel quickly by bicycle.⁴⁸
- San José Better Bike Plan (2025) adds enhanced bicycle connections across Highway 101 on E. Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue and on E. Julian Street.⁴⁹

6.3 Five Wounds Trail

The Five Wounds Trail will serve as a critical piece of infrastructure providing a safe, off-street connection through the neighborhood and to transit. The Five Wounds Trail is envisioned along a former railway alignment to complement the citywide Three Creeks Trail network. The trail will extend from the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station along N. 28th Street toward Lower Silver Creek Trail and Berryessa BART to the north, and Coyote Creek Trail to the south. The alignment, function, and character of the trail segment between E. Julian Street and Santa Clara Street will play an important role in establishing the identity of the station area's public realm and reinforcing the priority modes of walking and biking to the station. Several railroad structures have been saved by VTA at the community's request to be installed along the Five Wounds Trail. This includes several railroad signal masts and railway equipment.

The San José Trail Network Toolkit for Planning & Design (2018) provides guidelines to ensure that trails meet functional and aesthetic objectives through classifications of trails by setting. In the Toolkit, the Five Wounds Trail is designated as a parkway-rail/utility trail and is encouraged to incorporate design cues from its rail history, architectural details of Five Wounds Parish, and

⁴⁵ City of San José, *Complete Streets Design Standards & Guidelines* (2018),

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/33113/636771160514830000>

⁴⁶ City of San José Department of Parks, Recreation And Neighborhood Services Trail Program in collaboration with MIG, INC. *San Jose Trail Network Toolkit Planning & Design* (2018),

<https://cdn2.assets-servd.host/material-civet/production/images/documents/San-Jose-trail-network-planning-and-design-toolkit.pdf>

⁴⁷ Valley Transportation Authority, *Countywide Bicycle Plan* (2018),

https://www.vta.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/SCCBP_Final%20Plan%20_05.23.2018.pdf

⁴⁸ Valley Transportation Authority, *Bicycle Superhighway Implementation Plan* (2021),

<https://www.vta.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/Bike%20superhighway%20Implementation%20plan%28print%29.pdf>

⁴⁹ City of San José, *Better Bike Plan 2025* (2020),

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/68962/637477999451470000>

colored concrete for material.⁵⁰ The Five Wounds Trail provides an important connection from neighboring communities to regional transit while also providing a meaningful connection to the character and culture of the site's context, history, and culture through interpretive design elements and integrated art.

6.4 Transit

The 28th Street/Little Portugal Station will serve as a gateway to East San José while providing regional connectivity that has historically been limited. Transit connections are predominantly composed of bus routes extending along arterial routes toward downtown along E. Julian Street and E. Santa Clara Street. Bus routes on E. Santa Clara Street/Alum Rock Avenue include frequent Route 22 and 23 and Rapid 522. Bus routes on E. Julian Street/McKee Road include frequent Route 64. The closest existing bus stops to the site are on E. Santa Clara Street/N. 28th Street adjacent to the Five Wounds Parish and E. Julian Street/N. 26th Street next to the Speedway Express gas station—both within a 5-minute walk from the future station. The closest pair of Rapid stops are on N. 24th Street.

In the Station Access Planning Report, future proposals will integrate a Rapid stop along N. 28th Street at the station in order to improve convenience and expand ridership.⁵¹ A proposed realignment of Route 72—which currently provides access between Downtown and Senter & Monterey via McLaughlin—would serve this stop and will improve bus access to BART from neighborhoods south of the station area.

En Movimiento also suggests E. Santa Clara Street incorporate Transit Priority improvements, with new distinct Red Curbs for Rapid lines and removal of parking spaces on either side of the street near the Five Wounds Parish.⁵² Finally, bus frequency and alignment to BART scheduled timetables are key factors to encourage ridership and build up trust in a connected, reliable system.

6.5 Automobiles and Parking

Within the station area, there is a balanced need to provide enough parking to serve commuters, local residents, and the adjacent uses while encouraging more people to shift to walking, rolling, biking, or taking transit. Currently, the station plan provides 1,200 parking spaces for transit ridership when BART opens.

On-street parking in the 28th Street/Little Portugal Station—approximately 1,400 spaces—was moderately utilized as of the 2020 TOC Playbook (~61% occupancy rate midday, ~56%

⁵⁰ City of San José Department of Parks, Recreation And Neighborhood Services Trail Program in collaboration with MIG, INC. *San Jose Trail Network Toolkit Planning & Design* (2018), <https://cdn2.assets-servd.host/material-civet/production/images/documents/San-Jose-trail-network-planning-and-design-toolkit.pdf>

⁵¹ City of San José, Nelson Nyygard, *Station Access Planning Report* (2016).

⁵² City of San José, *East San José Multimodal Transportation Improvement Plan (ESJ MTIP) En Movimiento* (2020), <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/68800/637473579726970000>

occupancy rate in evening).⁵³ In the station area neighborhood based on the census tract, 10.4% of households have no vehicles available, a relatively low proportion of households without vehicles in comparison to other locations in San José, which have better access to transit and active mobility, including Downtown where 20-25% of households have no vehicles.⁵⁴

Development on the site is not subject to parking minimums due to the proximity to transit as a result of California State Law AB 2097⁵⁵, and as a result of San José City Council unanimous decision on December 6th, 2022 to remove parking minimums across most of the city.⁵⁶ The MTC's TOC Policy establishes an upper limit for the site at 1 stall/unit for new residential and 2.5 stalls/1000 sf for new commercial development.⁵⁷ The TOC Playbook recommended parking targets of 0.8 spaces/unit for new residential (with additional reductions for affordable/senior housing), approximately 1-2 spaces/1000 sf for new office uses, and no parking for ground floor retail. It is important to note that most of the TOC Playbook statistics are pre-pandemic. As a point of comparison, the Berryessa Urban Village Plan sits in between MTC maximums and the TOC Playbook recommendations, suggesting 1 space/unit and 1.5 spaces/1000 sf for commercial development.⁵⁸

While perceived parking needs for development is largely market-driven, providing too much parking will increase the number of drive-alone trips to the station area and increase traffic. However, providing too little parking may strain the already over-capacity on-street parking in surrounding neighborhoods. Further market and parking analysis is needed to refine the parking ratios for the TOD.

6.6 Precedents: El Cerrito Del Norte and El Cerrito Plaza Station

El Cerrito Del Norte BART Station and El Cerrito Plaza BART Station showcase the possibility of knitting stations into their commuting corridors through a neighborhood trail. The Ohlone Greenway, a 4.5-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail in the East Bay, is separated as an off-street facility, away from the main vehicular lanes running parallel to the BART tracks to the east. The Ohlone Greenway two-way cycle track ranges from 8-11 feet wide in areas adjacent to both stations. Some segments include landscape buffers from vehicles with trees, bike parking/storage, and clear markings indicating when the path is shared between pedestrians and cyclists. Cross-sections of the greenway's relationship to the BART station are illustrated in Figure 12. There are also designated areas for bus services that transport people to and from

⁵³ Valley Transportation Authority, *The 28th Street/Little Portugal BART Station Area Playbook* (2020), Figure 20.

⁵⁴ ARCGIS Map Viewer, ACS Vehicle Availability Variables - Boundaries

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=9a9e43ec1603446880c50d4ed1df2207>

⁵⁵ Legiscan, California Assembly Bill 2097

[https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB2097/2021#:~:text=California%20Assembly%20Bill%202097%20\(Prior%20Session%20Legislation\)&text=Bill%20Title%3A%20Residential%2C%20commercial%2C,other%20development%20types%3A%20parking%20requirement s.&text=An%20act%20to%20amend%20Section,by%20Governor%20September%202022%2C%202022](https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB2097/2021#:~:text=California%20Assembly%20Bill%202097%20(Prior%20Session%20Legislation)&text=Bill%20Title%3A%20Residential%2C%20commercial%2C,other%20development%20types%3A%20parking%20requirement s.&text=An%20act%20to%20amend%20Section,by%20Governor%20September%202022%2C%202022)

⁵⁶ Mercury News, "Bye Bye Parking Requirements: San José Becomes Largest City to Abolish Parking" (2022),

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2022/12/07/bye-bye-parking-requirements-san-jose-becomes-largest-city-to-abolish-minimum-parking/>

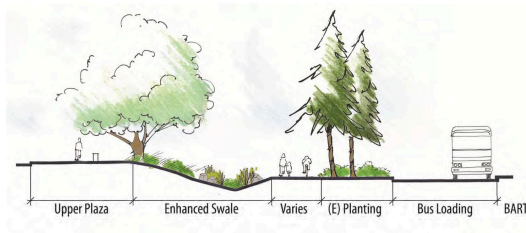
⁵⁷ Metropolitan Transportation Commission, *MTC Res. No. 4530* (2022).

⁵⁸ City of San José, Berryessa BART Urban Village Area Plan (BBUV), (2020), Appendix 1.

the BART stations to make connections beyond the station as well as bike stations that allow for increased last-mile mobility options. The parking is dispersed through surface lots and structures, which include EV share hubs for neighboring residents of the BART stations. These two BART stations are great examples of how to allocate zones between transit, automobile, bike/trail, and pedestrian uses in an integrated system.

Plaza BART Trail Cross Section

- » Existing section is 8'-10' wide
- » Proposed section is 10.7-12' wide



Del Norte BART Trail Cross Section

- » Existing section is 8.3'-9' wide
- » Proposed section is 9' wide interim condition
- » BART to increase to 12' in future

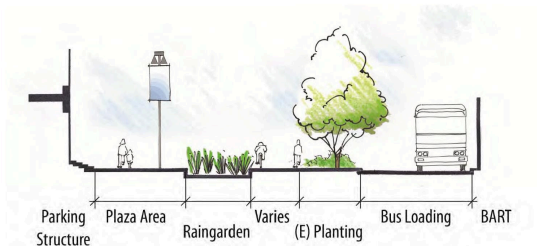


Figure 13. Sections of proposed Ohlone Greenway Trail at El Cerrito Plaza and El Cerrito Del Norte BART Stations, respectively⁵⁹

⁵⁹ City of El Cerrito and Placemakers, *Ohlone Greenway BART Station: Access, Safety, and Placemaking Improvements (2015)*. <http://www.el-cerrito.org/DocumentCenter/View/5284/PowerPoint-Presentation-11-17-15-small?bidId=>

7 Supplementary Figures

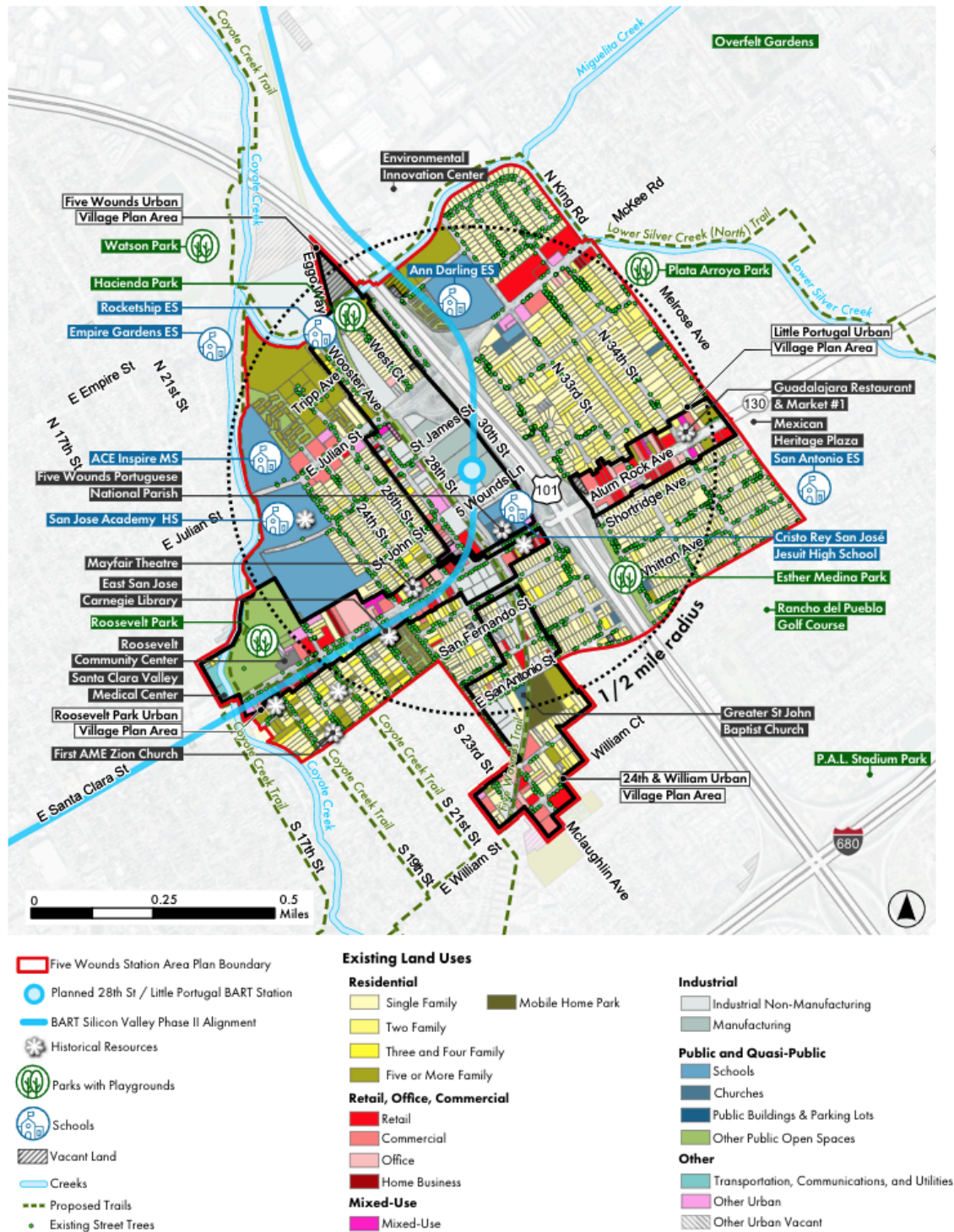
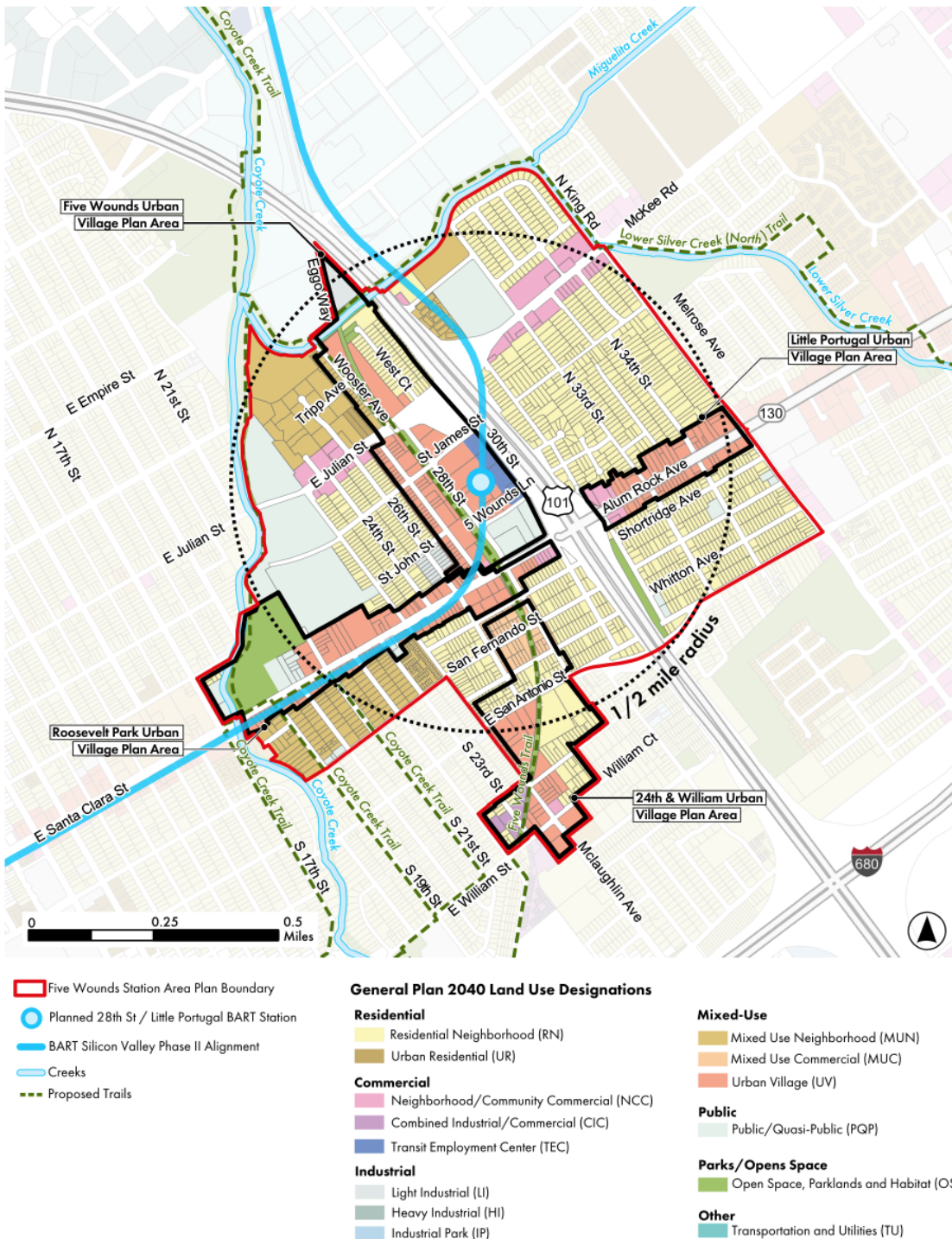


Figure 2: Existing Land Uses

Five Wounds Station Area Plan Existing Conditions Memorandum: Existing land uses in Five Wounds Urban Village

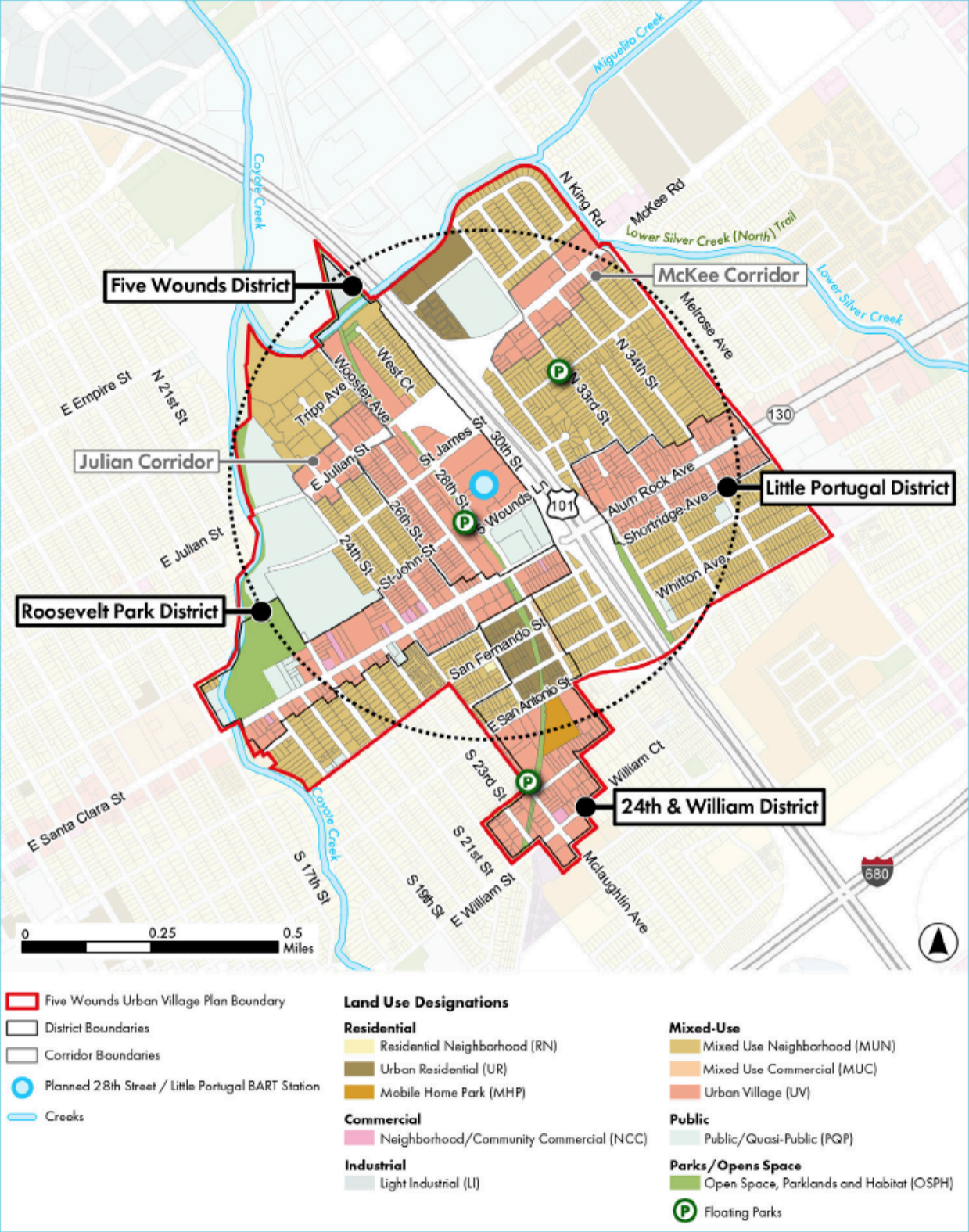


Five Wounds Station Area Plan

Figure 3: General Plan 2040 Land Use Designations

Five Wounds Station Area Plan Existing Conditions Memorandum: General Plan 2040 land use designations in Five Wounds Urban Village

Figure LU-2. Land Use Plan



Five Wounds Urban Village Plan: proposed land use designations