

4.17 VISUAL QUALITY AND AESTHETICS

4.17.1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This section assesses the visual affects of both the Baseline and BART alternatives. The visual analysis characterizes the SVRTC in terms of "landscape units," which are distinct segments of the corridor that have a consistent or cohesive visual or physical character, and identifies visual quality, prominent features, and scenic resources within the landscape units. In addition, viewpoints along the corridor where the project alternatives and options could affect existing visual quality are identified and evaluated with and without the project. The viewpoints were selected in each case to depict the alternative or option that would have the most significant visual impact. For example, at Dixon Landing Road the BART Aerial Option is shown, rather than the BART At-grade or BART Retained Cut Options.

A visual change would be considered adverse if it introduced elements substantially out of character with existing land uses or substantially obscured a scenic view or vista available to viewer groups in the vicinity of the SVRTC project. Viewer groups are corridor residents and business occupants, recreational users of parks and preserved natural areas, motorists, pedestrians, and students of schools in the vicinity of the project facilities.

The methodology used to define landscape units and conduct the visual impact analysis generally follows guidance published by FHWA, *Environmental Impact Statement, Visual Impact Discussion*. Under FHWA's guidance, the limits of the visual environment are generally established by the highway's viewshed, i.e., the surface area visible from the highway and from which the highway can be seen. This general methodology was applied to the rail corridor to establish the limits of the landscape units.

The SVRTC is relatively flat and is surrounded by urban and suburban development. The viewshed generally consists of a 600-foot corridor, centered on the proposed rail line. Where appropriate, the visual analysis includes more distant visual elements, but these are rare along the corridor and did not warrant expanding the landscape unit boundaries.

4.17.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.17.2.1 Corridor Visual Character

The existing visual character of the Silicon Valley Rapid Transit Corridor is described below. This includes the County of Santa Clara and the Cities of Milpitas, San Jose, and Santa Clara.

County of Santa Clara. Natural features form an essential part of the overall visual experience in the county. The Diablo Range to the east and the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west are prominent features that protect the valley from harsh coastal storms and are the source of numerous perennial and intermittent streams that run through the county to San Francisco Bay. Major waterways include Los Gatos Creek, Guadalupe River, Coyote Creek, and various tributaries including upper and lower Penitencia Creek and Silver Creek. Permanent bodies of water include the San Francisco Bay, Anderson Lake, and the Lexington, Guadalupe, Almaden, and Calero reservoirs. The valley floor itself is nearly flat.

Once a sleepy California agricultural county, Santa Clara is now a bustling metropolitan area with an expanding high-tech industry that attracts workers from around the world. The landscape fabric reveals the juxtaposition between old and new. Fruit orchards are located adjacent to modern office buildings or masonry sound walls that border residential subdivisions. Local convenience stores and restaurants still exist on street corners and in the older downtown areas, while big box stores and expansive malls have recently become a common sight.

City of Milpitas. Since the Ford Motor Company moved into the southern end of town in 1955, Milpitas has been transformed from an agricultural to an urban community. Busy restaurants and one- to two-story older commercial/retail buildings line Milpitas Boulevard through the older downtown area, which is near older single-family homes. Newer housing subdivisions have sprung up in the last few decades, while surrounding the downtown are modern office buildings with reflective glass windows and large single-level paved employee parking lots. The wide streets are lined with well-manicured grass and trees.

City of San Jose. San Jose is the urban hub of Silicon Valley, housing most of the county government buildings. San Jose initially developed around Mission San Jose, established in 1797. The city has undergone significant growth in the past century, becoming the largest city in the San Francisco Bay Area (with an estimated population of 917,971 in 2002).¹ From Victorian and Art Deco style to high-tech and modern, each generation has left its own imprint in the downtown area and in the residential neighborhoods. The majority of the county's high-rise buildings are in the downtown area, along with SJSU and the San Jose Civic Center. Residential, commercial, and industrial development occupies most of the urban landscape in San Jose. The Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek are two important visual features.

City of Santa Clara. Santa Clara initially developed around Mission Santa Clara de Asis, established in 1777, and contains many historic buildings in the vicinity of Santa Clara University, such as the mission and the historic train station. Additionally, different generations of development have grown up around the mission and university. The Silicon Valley high-tech industry is seen in the typical style and structure of the buildings in the area.

4.17.2.2 Visual Character of Corridor Landscape Units and Viewer Groups

The visual quality of the SVRTC is defined in terms of landscape units, distinct segments of the corridor that have a consistent or cohesive visual or physical character, although they may contain diverse visual resources. Their boundaries are often marked by distinct changes in visual character or spatial experience, such as a change in land use pattern. In general, for the SVRTC, the landscape units are 600 feet wide, centered on the proposed alignment.

Two landscape units are identified for the Baseline Alternative, as shown in Figures 4.17-1 and 4.17-2, and seven landscape units are identified for the BART Alternative as shown in Figure 4.17-3.

Baseline Alternative

Landscape Unit A. This landscape unit, shown in Figure 4.17-1, is characterized by areas of flat vacant land and heavy industrial uses such as the New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI) Car Assembly Plant and UPRR Warm Springs Yard. South Grimmer Road, Kato Road, and Fremont Boulevard are the main thoroughfares, serving commuter traffic to the industrial areas.

Landscape Unit B. I-880 and the on-ramps and off-ramps at Montague Expressway define this landscape unit, shown in Figure 4.17-2. The surrounding area to the southwest of I-880 is characterized by light industrial, high-tech, and commercial uses.

¹ California Department of Finance, 2002.

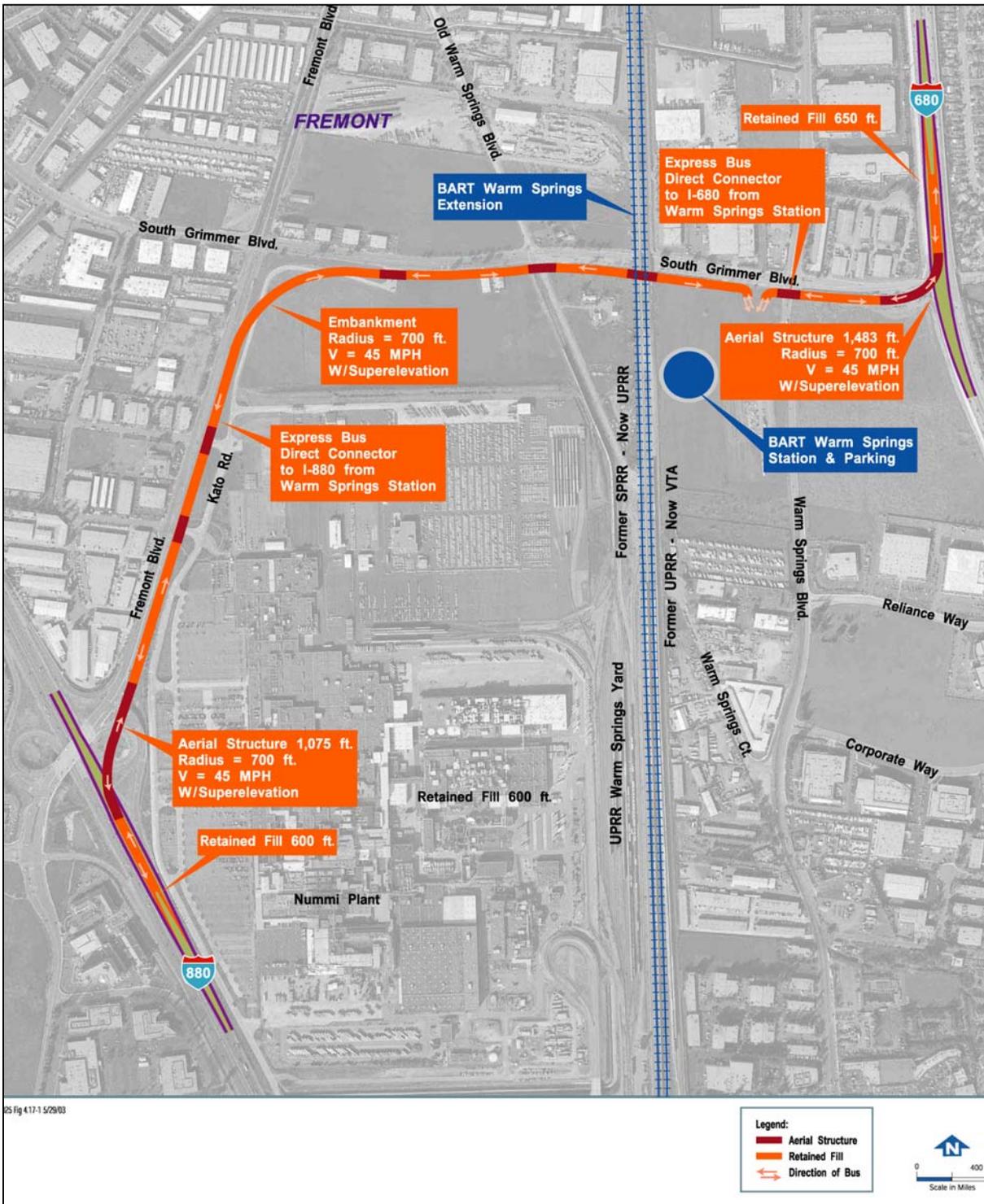


Figure 4.17-1: Baseline Landscape Unit A



Figure 4.17-2: Baseline Landscape Unit B

BART Alternative

Landscape Units

Landscape Unit 1 – Warm Springs to Dixon Landing Road. This landscape unit is characterized by a gradual transition from agriculture to modern office developments with interspersed heavy-industrial uses. No identified scenic resources are located within this landscape unit. Viewers in this area who could be affected by the BART Alternative include office and industrial workers, motorists, and pedestrians/bicyclists.

Landscape Unit 2 – Dixon Landing Road to Calaveras Boulevard. This landscape unit is characterized by residential and recreation land uses. Viewers in this area who could be affected by the BART Alternative include workers, residents, motorists, and pedestrians/bicyclists. The distinctive rolling hills of the Diablo Range to the east of this landscape unit form a scenic resource.

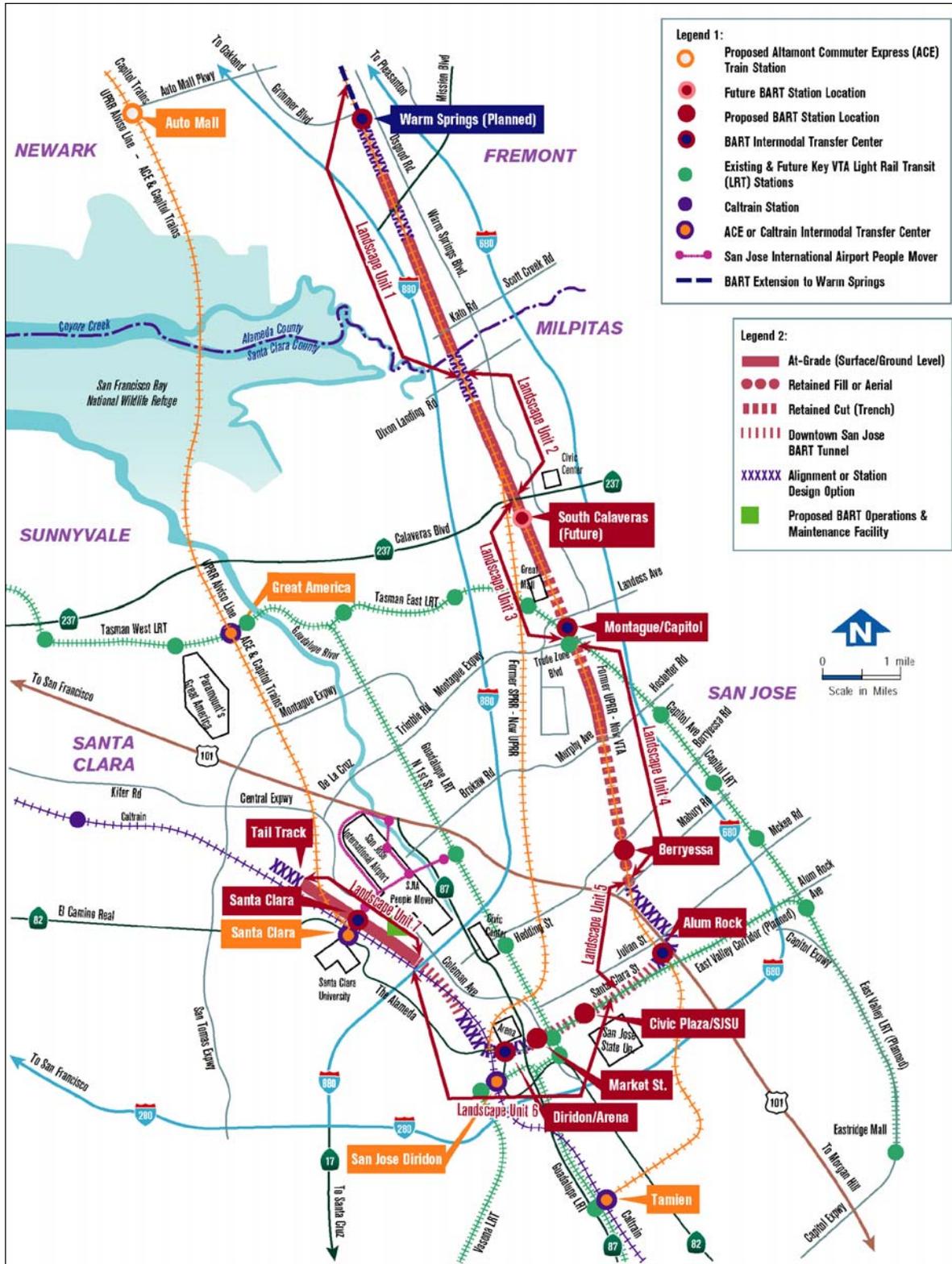


Figure 4.17-3: BART Alternative Landscape Units

Landscape Unit 3 – Calaveras Boulevard to Montague Expressway. This landscape unit is characterized by industrial and commercial land uses and buildings. Primary viewer groups in this area include motorists on Calaveras Boulevard and Montague Expressway and workers in local government, industrial, and commercial areas. No scenic resources are identified within this landscape unit.

Landscape Unit 4 – Montague Expressway to Mabury Road. This landscape unit is characterized primarily by residential uses. Viewers who could be affected by the BART Alternative include residents living in nearby residential communities, motorists and pedestrians/bicyclists traveling on Berryessa Road, and shoppers and merchants at the San Jose Flea Market. There are no identified scenic resources located within this landscape unit.

Landscape Unit 5 – Mabury Road to East Santa Clara Street. This landscape unit is characterized primarily by industrial uses that transition to a mixture of industrial, commercial, and residential uses as the unit extends toward downtown San Jose. Viewers include workers in the industrial area and pedestrians/bicyclists and motorists in the southern section of the landscape unit. The Five Wounds Church and School is a scenic resource within this landscape unit.

Landscape Unit 6 – East Santa Clara Street to I-880. This landscape unit is characterized by the urban downtown of San Jose with its mix of housing and high-rise commercial buildings. Viewers potentially affected by the BART Alternative include merchants, workers, pedestrians/bicyclists, and motorists. There are no scenic resources identified in this area.

Landscape Unit 7 – I-880 to Santa Clara Station. This landscape unit is characterized primarily by vacant land and industrial uses along the railroad corridor at the south end and small commercial mini malls and the historic Santa Clara Caltrain Station at the north end. The primary viewer groups would be workers in nearby industrial and commercial buildings and passengers at the Caltrain Station. The Caltrain Station and Control Tower are historic scenic resources in this landscape unit.

Corridor Locations Possessing Sensitive Viewer Groups

Corridor locations possessing sensitive viewer groups or offering scenic views were identified for the purpose of evaluating the visual impacts of the project. Proposed aerial bus connectors, new BART stations, or elevated BART tracks would introduce the most dramatic new features into the visual environment. As a result, most of the viewpoints were located where these types of features are proposed.

Viewpoint locations were also selected based on input from project stakeholders through public hearings, the EIS/EIR scoping process, and Community Working Group (CWG) meetings. The preliminary viewpoint locations were reviewed by key project stakeholders from each city at PDT meetings in August 2002. Viewpoints were added or their orientation revised to address stakeholder concerns. Fourteen viewpoint locations were eventually chosen that would experience the greatest visual change as a result of the project and/or were of the greatest interest by the cities. Figure 4.17-4 shows the locations of the viewpoints. Each viewpoint is discussed below.

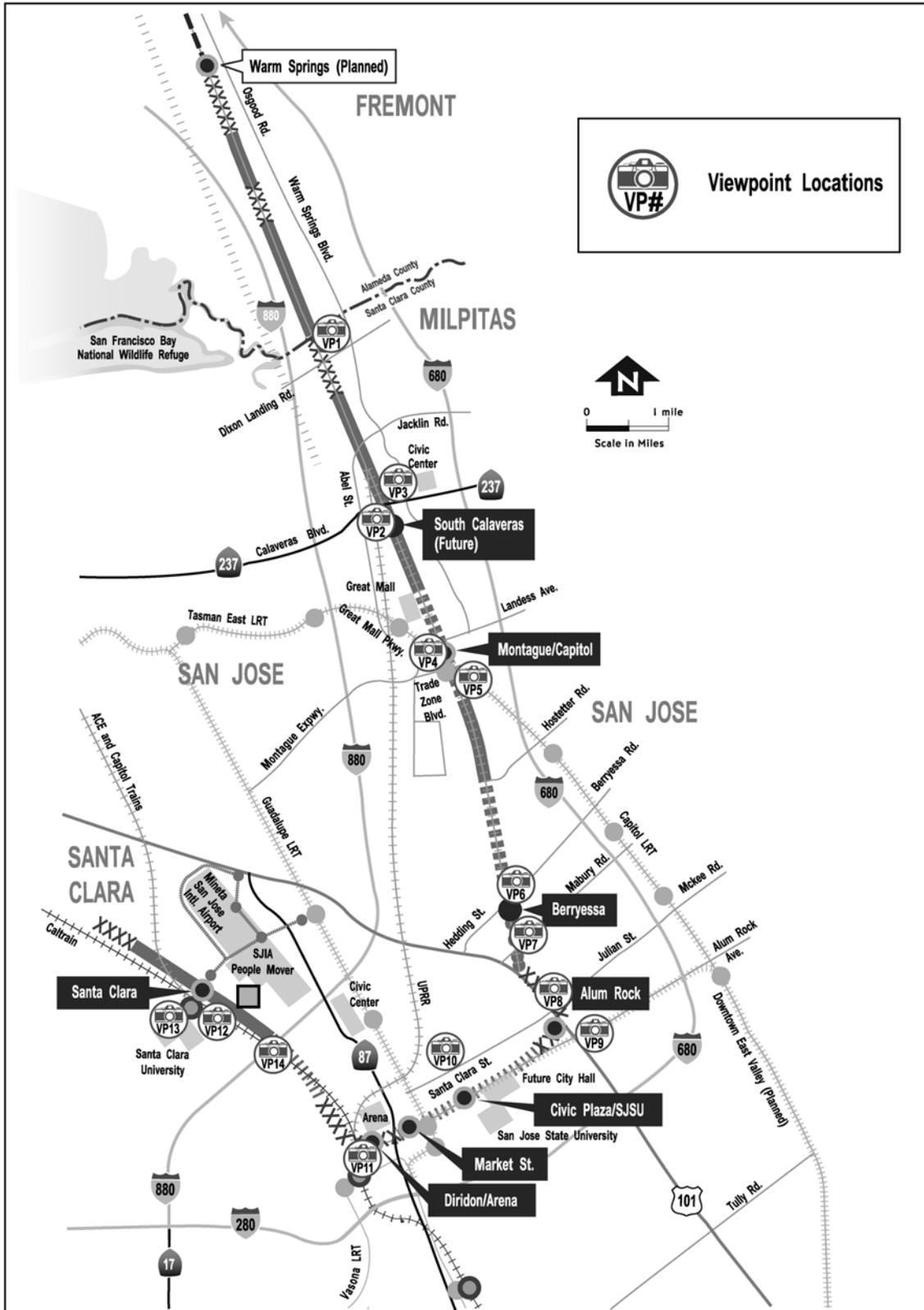


Figure 4.17-4: Viewpoint Locations

Viewpoint 1: Dixon Landing Alignment. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-5 is located on Dixon Landing Road looking west from the east side of the railroad tracks. Dixon Landing Road is a four-lane road with sound walls and residential and commercial developments lining the street. There are sidewalks on both sides of the street with landscape trees planted periodically. The railroad line crosses Dixon Landing Road and is identified by crossing barriers and lights, which warn pedestrians and motorists of passing trains. The primary viewer groups at this location are motorists and pedestrians/bicyclists.



**Figure 4.17-5: Dixon Landing Road
(View to the west from Dixon Landing Road)**

Viewpoint 2: South Calaveras Future Station (View from SR 237). The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-6 is located at the eastbound side of SR 237 (Calaveras Boulevard), on the overpass crossing the railroad tracks. It looks east towards the tracks and the site of the proposed South Calaveras Future Station. The Diablo Range is in the background. The area consists mostly of Milpitas City government buildings and commercial land uses. The primary viewers in this area are motorists.

Viewpoint 3: South Calaveras Future Station (View from Milpitas City Hall). The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-7 looks southwest from the top of the new Milpitas City Hall building on the corner of Calaveras Boulevard and Milpitas Boulevard toward an existing commercial development. The surrounding area consists mostly of Milpitas City government buildings and commercial land uses. The primary viewer groups in this area are workers, pedestrians/bicyclists, and motorists.



Figure 4.17-6: South Calaveras Future Station Location (View to the east from SR 237)



Figure 4.17-7: BART South Calaveras Future Station Location (View to the southwest from Milpitas City Hall)

Viewpoint 4: Montague/Capitol Station and Parking Garage (View from VTA Light Rail Station). The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-8 is located on the VTA LRT Station platform looking northeast towards the railroad corridor and Montague/Capitol Station. There are large industrial and storage buildings to the north and new residential apartments to the south. (These buildings are not in view on the figure.) The Great Mall and newer commercial and residential buildings, also out of view, are located to the east. The Diablo Range is in the background. The primary viewers in this area are commuters using the LRT.



**Figure 4.17-8: Montague/Capitol Station from East Capitol Avenue Location
(View to the northeast from East Capitol Avenue)**

Viewpoint 5: Montague/Capitol Station and Parking Garage (View from “The Crossings at Montague” Apartment complex). The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-9 is located at “The Crossings at Montague” apartment complex. It looks northwest across an industrial and storage area. The immediate area consists mostly of low-rise industrial buildings and large open lots used for truck storage. Adjacent to this area is the new VTA LRT line and station, visible in the left-hand side of the photo. The primary viewers in this area are residents of “The Crossing at Montague” apartment complex.

Viewpoint 6: Aerial Crossing at Berryessa Road. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-10 is located on the eastbound side of Berryessa Road looking west towards the railroad tracks. Berryessa Road is a four-lane wide road with single-family residences along the north side of the street. Upper Penitencia Creek runs along the south side. The street is lined with mature trees and there is a sidewalk and bike lane on both sides. Farther to the west are the large, paved lots of the San Jose Flea Market.



**Figure 4.17-9: Montague/Capitol Station Location
(View to the northwest from "The Crossings at Montague" Neighborhood)**



**Figure 4.17-10: Aerial Crossing at Berryessa Road Location
(View to the southwest from Berryessa Road)**

Viewpoint 7: Berryessa Station and Parking Garage. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-11 is from a multiple-family housing complex looking northwest towards a nearby industrial area consisting of warehouses and parking areas. The railroad corridor and San Jose Flea Market are beyond the industrial area and out of view in the figure.



Figure 4.17-11: Berryessa Station Location
(View to the west from the neighborhood east of the former Union Pacific railroad tracks)

Viewpoint 8: Alum Rock Station and Parking Garage. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-12 is located on the corner of Santa Clara Street and 28th Street looking northeast near the Five Wounds National Portuguese Church and School. In addition to the church facilities, land uses in this area are primarily commercial and industrial.

Viewpoint 9: Alum Rock Parking Garage. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-13 is located on the Julian Street overcrossing of US 101, looking southwest across US 101 to an existing industrial complex. The primary viewers from this viewpoint are motorists and pedestrians/bicyclists.

Viewpoint 10: Civic Plaza/SJSU Station Location. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-14 is located in downtown San Jose on the northwest corner of Santa Clara Street and 4th Street looking southeast. The vacant lot within the view at the southeast corner of Santa Clara and 4th streets is the construction site of the future San Jose City Hall. The primary viewer groups from this viewpoint would be motorists, office workers, students, and pedestrians/bicyclists.



**Figure 4.17-12: Alum Rock Station and Parking Garage Location
(View to the north from Santa Clara Street)**



**Figure 4.17-13: Alum Rock Parking Garage Location
(View to the southwest from the Julian Street overcrossing of US 101)**



**Figure 4.17-14: Civic Center/SJSU Station Location
(View to the southeast from the corner of East Santa Clara Street and 4th Street)**

Viewpoint 11: Diridon/Arena Station and Parking Garage. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-15 is located just north of the Diridon Caltrain Station looking south at the site of a proposed multi-level parking structure. The view is of a busy transportation hub for Caltrain and buses connecting to downtown San Jose. There are numerous parking lots and passenger loading zones in the vicinity. The primary viewers in this area are train passengers, motorists, and pedestrians/bicyclists.

Viewpoint 12: Santa Clara Station and Aerial Walkway. This viewpoint, shown in Figure 4.17-16, looks north from the passenger platform of the Santa Clara Caltrain Station. Large industrial buildings are seen along the east side of the track while the west side consists of more commercial uses, including parking and bus stops serving the Caltrain station. The BART Santa Clara Station, aerial walkway, and parking garage would be visible from this location. The existing historic Train Control Tower can be seen in this view, behind the existing landscaping to the west of the Caltrain tracks and platform. The primary viewer groups in this area are train passengers and pedestrians/bicyclists.

Viewpoint 13: Santa Clara Station – El Camino Real. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-17 is located on El Camino Real near Benton Street next to a residential neighborhood. This viewpoint looks east toward the Santa Clara Caltrain Station, historic Train Control Tower, and new police department building.

Viewpoint 14: Maintenance Facility. The viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-18 is located on the I-880 overpass, which crosses the UPRR tracks in Santa Clara. Viewers at this location are motorists.



**Figure 4.17-15: Diridon Arena Station Location
(View to the south from just north of the Diridon Caltrain Station)**



**Figure 4.17-16: Santa Clara Station Location
(View to the northwest from Santa Clara Caltrain Station platform)**



**Figure 4.17-17: Santa Clara Station and Parking Structure North Location
(View to the east from El Camino Real)**



**Figure 4.17-18: Maintenance Facility Location
(View to the northwest from I-880)**

4.17.3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The methodology used to assess visual impacts at specific viewpoints combines the two principal visual impact components: visual resource change and viewer response to that change. Visual resource change is analyzed in terms of visual dominance and other specific visual effects of facilities that would be constructed under the Baseline and BART alternatives, together with the change in visual quality. Viewer responses to these changes are interpreted on the basis of the viewer types identified.

Three terms are used to describe effects on visual quality, including:

- **Vividness** – Refers to the visual power or memorability of landscape components as they combine in striking and distinctive visual patterns. Effects would be evaluated based on the degree to which they affect the visual power or memorability of the landscape components.
- **Intactness** – Refers to the visual integrity of the natural and man-made landscapes. Effects would be evaluated based on the degree to which they encroach into the visual integrity of the landscape.
- **Unity** – Refers to the visual coherence and compositional harmony of the viewshed. Effects would be evaluated based on the degree to which they disrupt into the unity of the landscape.

Fourteen visual simulations, based on the fourteen viewpoints discussed previously, were prepared to assist the analysis, using computer-generated information overlaid on the photo images of the selected viewpoints. These visual simulations were developed to show height and massing of the structural elements that are proposed at each location. Architectural features have been included in the simulations to make the proposed features appear realistic; however, the simulations do not represent the final design or architectural expression of the proposed facility. Architecture and materials to be used in the design of stations, parking structures, and other station facilities would be developed through design meetings within each community.

4.17.3.1 Impacts

No-Action Alternative

Projects to be implemented under the No-Action Alternative would undergo separate environmental review to define visual impacts. (See Section 3.2.1.2 for a list of future projects under the No-Action Alternative.)

Baseline Alternative

Landscape Unit A – The Interstate 680-to-BART Warm Springs Station (I-680 WS) Aerial Busway Connector. This connector would not have an adverse visual affect because the aerial busway connector would pass through mainly vacant and industrial land and along busy roadways. Such a facility would not be inconsistent with the existing visual character in this landscape unit nor would it interrupt or obscure existing scenic views in this area.

The BART Warm Springs Station-to-Interstate 880 (WS I-880) Aerial Busway Connector. This aerial busway connector would pass through mainly vacant and industrial land and along busy roadways. Because of its height, however, the aerial structure would be a dominant visual feature for drivers along Kato Road and Fremont Boulevard and workers at the NUMMI Car Assembly Plant. It would not constitute an adverse effect because it would be generally consistent with existing views of similar infrastructure available to viewers in this area.

Landscape Unit B – The Interstate 880-to-Montague Expressway (I-880 ME) Aerial Busway. The aerial structure, because of its height, would be a dominant visual feature for drivers along I-880 and

Montague Expressway. The aerial busway connector would pass over busy highways and roadways and near transit-oriented and commercial areas. It would not constitute an adverse effect because it would be consistent with existing area infrastructure.

BART Alternative

This section describes the visual changes and impacts associated with the BART Alternative. For the most part, the changes and impacts are similar for the MOS scenarios, except for at the Berryessa Station.

Landscape Unit 1 – Warm Springs to Dixon Landing Road. The proposed BART alignment would follow the railroad corridor in this landscape unit and would be primarily at grade. In certain areas BART In these areas would be elevated to cross over local roadways; motorists and pedestrians would be affected by the change in view. The railroad tracks run behind mainly office developments; so, in general, workers in the office buildings would have their views affected.

Several new visual elements would be introduced as follows:

- A rail-truck tank car transfer facility would be constructed on a vacant parcel of land west of Grimmer Boulevard near the BART Warm Springs Station, where trains would be transferred and temporarily stored. This facility would be an at-grade series of tracks terminating in a flat open field surrounded by heavy industrial uses. Given this is a transportation use adjacent to other transportation and industrial uses, there would be no adverse visual effect.
- The BART alignment would be grade-separated from roads and thoroughfares in this landscape unit. In most cases, the roads in this landscape unit are or would be depressed, and the BART bridge and abutments would cross approximately at grade above the depressed roads. These bridges would be built new, or they would replace railroad tracks and bridges. This area consists of mostly low-rise office and industrial structures and vacant land. The bridges would not affect visual quality for pedestrians from these locations. They would briefly block views of the Diablo Range for motorists driving east on these roads, but this effect would not be substantial.
- Two traction power substations would be built in this landscape unit: one in an industrial area near East Warren Avenue and the other next to Scott Creek in an existing parking lot behind an industrial park. Traction power substations consist of small, single-level, shed-like buildings and numerous metal towers with high-tension power lines. Because both substations would be placed in existing industrial areas, there would be no adverse visual effect.
- Sound walls of 4 to 10 feet in height would be constructed on the east and west sides of the alignment as noted in Section 4.13, *Noise and Vibration*, Table 4.13-12. Since the sound walls would not be greater than 10 feet in height from the ground and 4 to 6 feet in height on the structure for the Aerial Option at Dixon Landing Road, and since the closest views would be from the backyards of residences in an urban area, there would be no adverse visual effect.
- BART trains would pass behind residences along the corridor. Although the BART trains would pass relatively close to some residences, this would not be considered an adverse visual effect since freight trains currently use the same corridor. Sound walls, fences, trees, and structures would reduce the potential for visual encroachment, and the visual intrusion would be of extremely short duration.

Dixon Landing Alignment. There are three options for the BART crossing of Dixon Landing Road:

- **Aerial Option.** Under this option, BART would be elevated approximately 25 feet over Dixon Landing Road, passing behind or alongside residential condominiums and a mobile home park. The

BART aerial structure would be visible crossing perpendicular to Dixon Landing Road, as shown in Figure 4.17-19, and would be seen by residents, motorists, and pedestrian/bicyclists along Dixon Landing Road. It would not affect the unity from this viewpoint, as the aerial structure is not out of place in a busy transportation corridor, although there would be some blockage of views for motorists and pedestrian/bicyclists looking east toward the Diablo Range. Views from this location are presently minimal, and the view blockage would not be substantial. At night, the aerial structure would be less dominant.

- **Retained Cut Option.** Under this option, BART would be constructed in a trench to pass under Dixon Landing Road. There would be no changes in visual conditions because BART would not be in view.
- **At-grade Option.** Under this option, Dixon Landing Road would be depressed, and the BART tracks would cross over the roadway at existing ground level. The bridge crossing would be at the same level as surrounding uses and not appear inconsistent with other infrastructure in this transportation corridor in an urban area. The new bridge would not be a major source of light or glare. Depressing Dixon Landing Road would change the visual character in the immediate areas, but would not affect scenic resources or block an existing scenic view.



Figure 4.17-19: Dixon Landing Road – Aerial Option

Landscape Unit 2 – Dixon Landing Road to Calaveras Boulevard. The proposed BART alignment would follow the railroad corridor in this landscape unit and would be primarily at grade. The BART alignment would create several new visual elements with effects as follows:

- The crossing of Dixon Landing Road as discussed above in Landscape Unit 1.

- A traction power substation, which would be built near the Wrigley Industrial Park. Traction power substations consist of small, single-level, shed-like buildings and numerous metal towers with high-tension power lines. Because the substations would be placed in an existing industrial area, there would be no adverse visual effects.
- Sound walls of 12 to 16 feet in height would be constructed on the west side of the alignment as noted in Section 4.13, Noise and Vibration, Table 4.13-12. Since the closest views of the sound wall would be from the backyards of residences in an urban area and no scenic viewsheds would be obstructed, there would be no adverse visual effect.
- BART trains would pass behind residences along the corridor. Although the BART trains would pass relatively close to some residences, this would not be considered an adverse visual effect since freight trains currently use the same corridor. Sound walls, fences, trees, and structures would reduce the potential for visual encroachment, and the visual intrusion would be of extremely short duration.
- The South Calaveras Future Station and parking garage. There are three options for the parking structure at the South Calaveras Future Station location:
 - **Parking Structure North Option.** As shown in Figure 4.17-20, the South Calaveras Future Station and three- to five-level parking structure would be located on the east side of the railroad tracks and would replace several existing commercial buildings. The station and parking structure would be visible from the eastbound side of SR 237. The height of the proposed parking structure would be similar to that of SR 237 and the existing commercial buildings it would replace and those that are located in the surrounding areas. From this viewpoint, the proposed parking structure would not block views or degrade the visual quality or character of the site or its surroundings. Since the area is presently lighted for commercial uses, light from the new parking structure would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

The surface parking and multi-level parking structure would also be visible from the new Milpitas City Hall. From this viewpoint, shown in Figure 4.17-21, the rooftop of the South Calaveras Future Station would be seen just beyond the parking structure. Due to its size, the multi-level parking structure would be a relatively dominant visual feature from this viewpoint during the day. The new parking lot and structure would encompass the majority of the viewshed, however, they would not be out of place in a busy suburban area. In addition, these facilities would not block views of the mountains to the southwest. The vividness of the cars parked on the roof of the structure could have an effect on views from the multi-story City Hall; glare from the cars parked in the parking lot, which is to the southwest of City Hall, could have an effect on office workers during the afternoon.

At night, the parking structure and surface parking area would be lighted, but lighting would be designed to focus on the BART facilities to minimize spillover into the surrounding areas. In proposed outdoor parking areas where there may be a potential for glare from parked cars, such as the outdoor surface parking and on the roof of the proposed parking structure, landscaping would be included to soften the visual effect on surrounding buildings.

- **Parking Structure South Option.** This three- to five-level parking structure would have the same general scale and mass as the Parking Structure North Option; described above. As shown in Figure 4.17-21, under the Parking Structure South Option, the structure would be shifted to the south and would be only partially visible; it would have a similar design with a more elongated front. This option would have similar visual effects to the Parking Structure North Option.



Figure 4.17-20: South Calaveras Future Station and Parking Garage



**Figure 4.17-21: BART South Calaveras Future Station
(View to the southwest from Milpitas City Hall)**

Parking Structure North Option with Parallel Bus Transit Center. With this option, the three- to five-level parking structure would be in the same location and have the same scale and mass as the Parking Structure North Option described above, however, a bus transit facility would be located on the west side of the structure. Buses and bus shelters may be noticed by motorists driving eastbound on SR 237, however, landscaping, once it is mature, would make the bus transit facility less visible from the roadway. From the Milpitas City Hall, the parking structure would be southeast along Milpitas Boulevard, out of view just south of the simulated photograph in Figure 4.17-21. Therefore, this option would have visual effects similar to the Parking Structure North Option.

Landscape Unit 3 – Calaveras Boulevard to Montague Expressway. The BART Alternative would follow the railroad corridor either at grade or below grade in a retained cut. The land uses in this landscape area are primarily industrial. As a result, new sources of light and glare would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. The project would introduce several new visual elements with effects as follows:

- The South Calaveras Future Station and parking garage is discussed above in Landscape Unit 2.
- A traction power substation would be built in this landscape unit near the Wrigley Industrial Park. Because the substation would be placed in an existing industrial area, it would not have an adverse effect on area visual quality.
- A sound wall 10 feet in height would be constructed on the west side of the alignment near the Great Mall as noted Section 4.13, *Noise and Vibration*, Table 4.13-12. Since the closest views of the sound wall would be from the backyards of residences in an urban area and no scenic viewsheds would be obstructed, there would be no adverse visual effect.
- BART trains would pass behind residences along the corridor. Although the BART trains would pass relatively close to some residences, this would not be considered an adverse visual effect since freight trains currently use the same corridor. Sound walls, fences, trees, and structures would reduce the potential for visual encroachment, and the visual intrusion would be of extremely short duration.

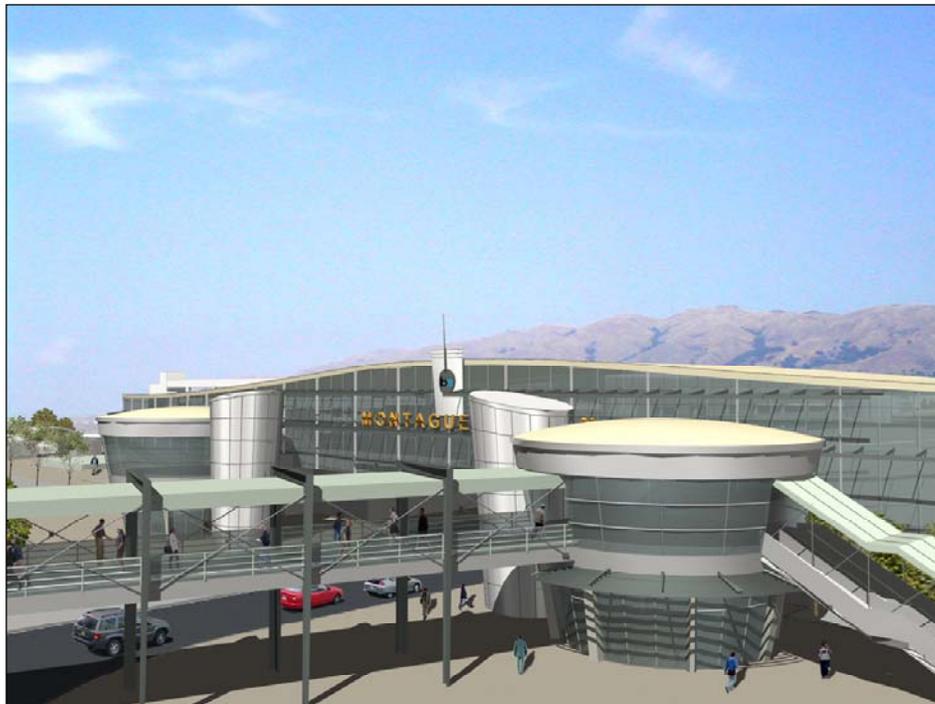
Landscape Unit 4 – Montague Expressway to Mabury Road. The majority of the BART Alternative would be constructed below grade and would not be visible from the surrounding area. Just north of Berryessa Road, however, the BART tracks would ascend approximately 22 feet in elevation and stay elevated throughout the rest of the landscape unit. The elevated structure would pass over Berryessa Road and Upper Penitencia Creek to enter the Berryessa Station located at the San Jose Flea Market. The BART Alternative would introduce several new visual elements, including the Montague/Capitol Station and the Berryessa Station, with effects as follows:

- Elevated BART structures would be viewed by residents living in nearby residential communities, by motorists and pedestrians traveling on Berryessa Road, and by shoppers and merchants at the San Jose Flea Market. Although BART would be elevated in the vicinity of Berryessa Road and the San Jose Flea Market, the area is already densely developed with structures, roads, and parking lots. Thus, the new BART infrastructure would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of this area or of its surroundings.
- The Montague/Capitol Station would be located at the northern border of this landscape unit near the Great Mall. The station would include a three- to five-level parking structure and would replace existing storage and warehousing uses. The new BART station and parking structure would be similar in height and mass to the existing buildings on the site and in the surrounding areas. The visual character of the southern end of this landscape unit is presently changing as a result of the new light rail extension and the development around the Great Mall. The BART station would not be inconsistent with these existing and developing land uses; there would be no adverse visual effect.

- Tapered tubular steel radio towers, approximately 60 feet in height, would be required at the Montague/Capitol and Berryessa stations. At the Montague/Capitol Station, the radio tower would be potentially sited at the southeast corner of Montague Expressway and the BART alignment, adjacent to the three- to five-level parking garage. The tower height would be visually mitigated by the adjacent parking structure. In addition, the tower would not be incompatible with the industrial uses on the north side of Montague Expressway.
- The radio tower at the Berryessa Station Parking Structure Southwest Option would be potentially mounted on the three- to six-level parking garage. Since the majority of the structure height would be absorbed into the parking structure, the visual affect will be minimized on adjacent development. For the Berryessa Station Parking Structure Northeast Option, the tower would be potentially sited northeast of the three- to six-level parking structure and the elevated trackway. The tower height would be visually mitigated by the adjacent parking structure. In addition, the tower would not be incompatible with the surrounding station amenities.
- Two traction power substations would be built in this landscape unit on vacant land just east of the Montague Station or near Berryessa Road. Because the substations would be placed in an existing industrial area, they would not cause an adverse visual impact.
- Two options exist for the parking structure at the Berryessa Station. Under the Parking Structure Southwest Option, a three- to six-level parking structure would be built in the overflow parking area of the flea market and would be visible to the vendors and visitors entering the flea market from Mabury Road. The second option, Parking Structure Northeast Option, would replace existing light-industrial warehouses to the northeast of the flea market with a three- to six-level parking structure. The area is densely developed with structures, roads, and parking lots; therefore, the parking structure would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of this area.
- Sound walls of 4 to 12 feet in height would be constructed on the east and west sides of the alignment as noted Section 4.13, Noise and Vibration, Table 4.13-12. Since the sound walls would not be greater than 12 feet in height and since the closest views would be from the backyards of residences in an urban area, there would be no adverse visual effect.
- BART trains would pass behind residences along the corridor. Although the BART trains would pass relatively close to some residences, this would not be considered an adverse visual effect since freight trains currently use the same corridor. Sound walls, fences, trees, and structures would reduce the potential for visual encroachment, and the visual intrusion would be of extremely short duration.

Montague/Capitol Station and Parking Garage. Four design options are being considered for the BART Montague/Capitol Station. These options include the South Bus Transit Center Option with Elevated Concourse, the South Bus Transit Center Option with At-grade Concourse, the Roadway Transit Center Option with Elevated Concourse, and the Roadway Transit Center Option with At-grade Concourse. All four options would have a similar visual effect as viewed from the platform at VTA's LRT Station, although the At-Grade Concourse options will have a lower profile than the other options.

As shown in Figure 4.17-22, the BART station, entry nodes, and aerial walkway connecting the BART station and LRT platform would be visible from the LRT platform. The aerial walkway and concourse would be elevated approximately 20 feet. During the day, the BART station and aerial walkway would be a dominant visual feature from this viewpoint, due to their size and proximity. The BART station and aerial walkway would partly block views of the Diablo Range, however, this would be consistent with the density and scale of development in the surrounding areas, which includes structures such as the Great Mall. Also, a BART station at this location would not be out of context, being adjacent to major



**Figure 4.17-22: Montague/Capitol Station from Capitol Avenue
(View to the northeast from Capitol Avenue)**

transportation facilities (e.g., VTA LRT aerial trackway, LRT station, Montague Expressway, and Capitol Avenue). At nighttime, the lighting of the structure would combine with the lighting of the LRT station and would not have a substantial visual impact.

As shown in Figure 4.17-23, the BART station, aerial walkway, multi-level parking garage, and station entrance nodes would be visible to the residents on the northwest side of "The Crossings at Montague" apartment complex. The proposed BART facilities would replace the low-rise industrial buildings and storage areas presently on that site.

The bulk and height of the proposed buildings would be larger than those of the existing buildings; however, the buildings are not immediately adjacent to the viewers. Therefore, during the day, the Montague/Capitol Station and parking garage would be only moderately dominant. The new BART station and multi-level parking structure would create a denser urban aesthetic. These structures would increase the intactness from this viewpoint, as they would replace a series of existing industrial buildings of inconsistent design with the BART station and multi-level parking structure of consistent design. Since this area is undergoing transition from an industrial area to a more urbanized transit-oriented area, the project would not substantially affect the visual unity of the site or its surroundings. The distance of the buildings and their location at the same elevation would minimize any effects related to glare.

At night, lighting from the parking structure would be noticeable from this viewpoint. The lighting would be designed to minimize spillover of light and glare into the surrounding areas. This would ensure that the station and parking structure would not be vivid at night and would not affect the intactness or unity of nighttime views.



**Figure 4.17-23: Montague/Capitol Station
(View to the northwest from “The Crossings at Montague” Neighborhood)**

Lights from trains and parking structures may create new sources of light and glare for residences southeast of the BART Montague/Capitol Station and parking structure that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Lighting would be designed to focus on the BART facilities to minimize spillover into the surrounding areas.

BART Aerial Crossing Over Berryessa Road. A BART aerial structure that would be constructed approximately 22 feet above Berryessa Road is depicted in Figure 4.17-24. The aerial structure would be visible as it crosses perpendicular to Berryessa Road at the railroad tracks. During the day, the aerial structure would be a dominant visual feature; however, it would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. The structure would be designed to be functional and would not be very vivid. The aerial structure does not block any views or disrupt scenic sightlines, and it is not out of place in a busy transportation corridor. At night, the aerial structure would be less dominant, because there are minimal views from Berryessa Road at night and the structure would not be lighted.

Berryessa Station. There are two options for the parking structure at Berryessa Station.

- **Berryessa Station Parking Structure Northeast Option.** As shown in Figure 4.17-25, a three- to six-level parking structure would replace existing industrial buildings to the east of the railroad corridor and a few of the stalls at the flea market. This structure would be visible from the nearby residential complexes. The BART station would not be visible from this viewpoint.

From this viewpoint during the day, the multi-level parking garage would not be a dominant visual feature due to its location in the middle distance and because of intervening landscape. The height



**Figure 4.17-24: Berryessa Road Aerial Crossing
(View to the southwest from Berryessa Road)**



**Figure 4.17-25: Berryessa Station and Parking Garage
(View to the west from the neighborhood east of the former UPRR railroad tracks)**

of the parking garage would be similar to that of the existing warehouses. Some of the trees that are presently making the existing warehouses less visible would be removed when the proposed parking structure is built, making the parking structure more visible. The parking garage would be similar in size, bulk, and mass to the existing buildings. The distance of the buildings and their location at the same elevation would minimize any effects related to glare.

At night, lighting from the parking structure would be noticeable from this viewpoint. The lighting would be designed to minimize off-site light and glare. This would ensure that the station and parking structure would not be vivid at night and would not affect the intactness or unity of nighttime views.

- **Berryessa Station Parking Structure Southwest Option.** With this option, a three- to six-level parking structure would be located on the west side of the railroad corridor at the south end of the flea market parking lot. The parking structure would be visible to the vendors and visitors entering the flea market from Mabury Road. It would not, however, be visible from the residential viewpoint in Figure 4.17-25.

The area is already densely developed with structures, roads and parking lots, and therefore, adding this parking structure would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of this area or its surroundings. Since the flea market itself would be largely unaltered, its activities would continue to contribute to the lively visual atmosphere of the site.

Under MOS-1E, deferring construction of the three- to six- level parking structure and lighting for the parking at the Berryessa Station would reduce the amount of visual change that would occur within this landscape unit. This would apply to both parking structure options at this station.

Landscape Unit 5 – Mabury Road to East Santa Clara Street. The BART Alternative would remain elevated for 860 feet south of Mabury Road before descending into a retained cut area. It would then drop into a tunnel through which it would continue for the remainder of this landscape unit.

The proposed project would introduce several new visual elements and effects as follows:

- An aerial BART structure would be constructed over Mabury Road. The aerial structure would be visible to motorists and pedestrians along Mabury Road, as well as to industrial workers in the surrounding areas. This type of structure would not be visually inconsistent with other facilities in this busy transportation corridor, and no adverse visual effect is anticipated.
- A three- to five-level parking structure for the Alum Rock Station would replace large modular warehouse buildings located at 28th Street between East Julian Street and East Santa Clara Street. The proposed BART parking structure would be of comparable height and mass to other buildings currently on the site; thus, it would not degrade visual quality.
- Station entrances and signage for the underground Alum Rock Station would be visible along 28th Street between Julian Street and East Santa Clara Street. There would also be new landscaping, streetlights, and sidewalks along 28th Street for the Alum Rock Station.
- Rather than contribute to visual clutter or degradation, the project would improve the visual quality of 28th Street by providing a consistent landscape theme.
- The project may create a new source of light and glare where BART is elevated at the northern end of this landscape unit. Because the land uses are primarily industrial in this section, this would not affect the scenic quality of the area. As the line moves south, BART would go underground and would not be visible from the surrounding area.

Alum Rock Station and Parking Garage. A multi-level parking structure would be located on 28th Street between Julian Street and East Santa Clara Street. The parking structure would be three- to five-stories high and would replace the existing Monarch Trucking Company warehouses. As shown in Figure 4.17-26, the parking structure would be visible to pedestrians and motorists at East Santa Clara and 28th streets. Both BART alignment options being considered for this area would have a similar visual effect from this viewpoint.

The multi-level parking structure would be similar in height and mass to the Monarch Trucking Company warehouses. Would increase intactness and unity from this viewpoint landscape and streetscape improvements along 28th Street.

The historic Five Wounds National Portuguese Church, at the southeast corner of East Santa Clara Street and 28th Street, stands just south of the Alum Rock Station and is considered a scenic resource. Since this station is underground, the parking structure would be the only structure of notable height and mass. In both station options, the parking structure is set 700 feet or more away from the church. Station entrances would be closer to the church structure, but are anticipated to be no more than one story in height, or station entrances may consist only of an aboveground parapet wall. As a result, the BART Alternative would not visually affect Five Wounds National Portuguese Church because the project would not block views to or from the church. Nevertheless, architectural sensitivity in the design of the parking structure and other station improvements on 28th Street would be important because of the scenic and historic nature of the church. Refer to Section 4.6, *Cultural and Historic Resources*, for a discussion of the impacts of the BART Alternative on the Five Wounds National Portuguese Church.

As shown in Figure 4.17-27, the parking structure would be visible to motorists on Julian Street and on US 101. The intactness and unity of the view from this location would be only minimally affected, because the multi-level parking structure would be similar in height and mass to the Monarch Trucking Company warehouses.

At night, lighting from the parking structure would be noticeable from both viewpoints. The lighting would be designed to focus on BART facilities and minimize spillover of light and glare into adjacent areas. This would ensure that the station and parking structure would not be vivid at night and would not affect the intactness or unity of nighttime views.

Landscape Unit 6 – East Santa Clara Street to I-880. This landscape unit is characterized by the urban downtown of San Jose with its mix of residential housing and high-rise commercial buildings. Viewers affected by the project include merchants, workers, pedestrians, and motorists. There are no scenic resources identified in this area.

The BART Alternative would be underground in this landscape unit. It would include three new underground stations: Civic Plaza/SJSU Station, Market Street Station, and Diridon/Arena Station. Several new visual elements would be introduced into the landscape unit, including station entrances, parking structures, and ventilation structures.

- Underground station entrances and signage would be visible to pedestrians and merchants along East Santa Clara Street between 7th Street and 4th Street (Civic Plaza/SJSU Station), 2nd Street and Almaden Avenue (Market Street Station), and Autumn Street and Bush Street (Diridon/Arena Station). The majority of station entrances would affect vacant areas, commercial parking lots, sidewalks and landscaping. The surrounding area is very urbanized and station entrances and signage would not visibly conflict with the urban setting.



**Figure 4.17-26: Alum Rock Station and Parking Garage
(View to the north from East Santa Clara Street)**



**Figure 4.17-27: Alum Rock Parking Garage
(View to the southwest from the Julian Street overcrossing of US 101)**

- Ventilation structures for the stations would be located at street level. The structures would be visible to merchants, workers, pedestrians/bicyclists, and motorists along East/West Santa Clara Street between 7th Street and 4th Street (Civic Plaza/SJSU Station), 2nd Street and Almaden Avenue (Market Street Station), and Autumn Street and Bush Street (Diridon/Arena Station). The majority of such ventilation structures would be sited in vacant areas, commercial parking lots, sidewalks, and landscaping. The surrounding area is very urbanized and the size and mass of the ventilation structures would be designed to fit in with the surrounding urban environment so they would not visibly conflict with the urban setting. VTA would continue to work with city, community, and business groups in developing project facilities that would become part of the streetscape.
- Two four- to six-level parking structures would be constructed in the vicinity of the Diridon/Arena Station. One of the parking structures would be located to the south of the station for BART parking. Another would be located north of The Alameda next to the HP Pavilion to replace existing surface parking that would be affected by project construction. Both parking structures would be noticeable visual elements. The multi-level parking structures would not be out of character with the surrounding land uses such as the HP Pavilion and the Caltrain Station.

The visual changes described above would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the landscape unit or affect a scenic view. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant visual impact within this landscape unit.

Civic Plaza/SJSU Station. As shown in Figure 4.17-28, although the BART station would be underground, station entrances, ventilation structures, and signage would be visible above ground elements. During the day, the station entrances and BART signage would not be dominant features in comparison to the busy street and the new San Jose City Hall building (depicted in the simulation as a multi-level office building and domed structure). The design of the station entrances would be simple and would neither distract from the surrounding architecture nor disrupt intactness or unity from this viewpoint.

At night, lighting from the station entrances would be minimally noticeable from this viewpoint. Additionally, the lighting would be designed to minimize light and glare on areas adjacent to the BART facilities. Therefore, the station would not be vivid at night and would not affect the intactness or unity of nighttime views.

Diridon/Arena Station and Parking Garage. The BART station would be located underground and would not be visible from the viewpoint of Figure 4.17-29. Two four- to six-level parking structures would be located in the vicinity of the Diridon/Arena Station.

- **South Parking Structure.** The South Parking Structure, shown in Figure 4.17-29, is a four- to six-level parking structure to the south of the existing Diridon Caltrain Station. During the day, the parking structure would be dominant in this view because of its height and mass; however, the structure would block views to the power station; however, resulting in improved unity and intactness. The BART station and parking structure would be similar in use and scale to the surrounding structures such as parking lots, the Caltrain Station, and the HP Pavilion. At night, lighting from the station entrance would be minimally noticeable from this viewpoint. In addition, the lighting would be focused on the BART facilities and designed to minimize light and glare in adjacent areas. This would ensure that the station and parking structure would not be vivid at night and would not affect the intactness or unity of nighttime views. Refer to Section 4.6, *Cultural and Historic Resources*, for a discussion of the impacts of the South Parking Structure on the historic Caltrain Station.



Figure 4.17-28: Civic Center/SJSU Station
(View to the southeast from the corner of East Santa Clara Street and 4th Street)



Figure 4.17-29: Diridon/Arena Station
(View to the south from just north of the Diridon Caltrain Station)

- **North Parking Structure.** The four- to six-level North Parking Structure would not be visible from the viewpoint of Figure 4.17-29. The multi-level parking structure would be built in an existing parking lot next to the HP Pavilion and Caltrain corridor. Potentially, a pedestrian crossover would be constructed over West Santa Clara Street connecting the north parking structure to the BART station. The multi-level parking structure would not be dominant because of its proximity to land uses of relatively similar size. As a result, this parking structure would have little effect on the visual setting of the area.

Landscape Unit 7 – I-880 to Santa Clara Station. The BART alignment would ascend from an underground tunnel just north of I-880, “daylight” through a portal at Newhall Street, and follow the railroad corridor to the Santa Clara Caltrain Station area. The BART Alternative would introduce several new visual elements and effects:

The BART Santa Clara Station would be constructed along the east side of the mainline railroad tracks across from the historic Caltrain Station. There is a group of historic buildings on the west side of the mainline tracks that would be subject to visual change, including the Caltrain Station, the Train Control Tower, and two small railroad sheds located just west of the tower. A pedestrian walkway would connect the Caltrain station with the BART station. There are three design options for this walkway. Two options are aerial walkways: one south of the historic Train Control Tower and one north of the historic Train Control Tower. The third option is a pedestrian tunnel under the tracks.

There are two parking structure alternatives proposed for the Santa Clara Station. Each would include a three- to five-level parking structure. The parking structures would be constructed in a primarily industrial area and the bulk and height of the structures would be similar to those of the existing industrial buildings.

Santa Clara Station and Pedestrian Crossing. As shown in Figure 4.17-30, the BART station and Aerial Walkway South Option to the south of the historic train control tower would be visible as it crosses perpendicular to the railroad tracks. The aerial walkway would be located 25 feet above the railroad lines. The Aerial Walkway North Option to the north of the historic Train Control Tower would be less intrusive since it would be approximately 200 feet farther to the north and behind the Control Tower. The Underground Walkway Option would be less intrusive than either of the aerial walkway options.

During the daytime, the BART station and aerial walkway would be a dominant visual feature from this viewpoint. The station and the aerial walkway would be intentionally vivid to create a gateway to the City of Santa Clara. Given the proximity of these facilities to the historic Caltrain Station and Train Control Tower, the architecture and materials of the new facilities would be sensitive to the historical context.

At night, lighting from the BART station and from the Caltrain Station would be designed to intermingle to create a safe environment. The station would remain vivid, but less so than during the day. Intactness and unity would remain high due to the nighttime lighting at both the BART and Caltrain stations.

The BART station and aerial walkway would improve the intactness and unity of the view by blocking existing power lines and industrial uses while strengthening the railroad/transportation aesthetic of the immediate area. While the BART station and aerial walkway would create a denser urban aesthetic environment, the facilities would not block any scenic views.

Architectural sensitivity in the design of the BART station, pedestrian walkway, and parking facilities would be important because of the proximity and historical nature of the Santa Clara Caltrain Station, Train Control Tower, and related facilities. Refer to Section 4.6, *Cultural and Historic Resources*, and Chapter 7, *Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation*, for a discussion of the impacts of the Aerial Walkway South and Underground Walkway options on the historic Santa Clara Station and Train Control Tower.



**Figure 4.17-30: Santa Clara Station/Aerial Walkway South Option
(View to the northwest from Santa Clara Caltrain Station Platform)**

Santa Clara Station Parking Garage. Two options are being considered for the Santa Clara Station parking structure. The visual effects related to these options are discussed below.

- **Parking Structure North Option.** From the viewpoint shown in Figure 4.17-31, the BART station and aerial walkway can be seen to the southeast of the new Santa Clara police station and just beyond the historic Train Control Tower. The parking structure is behind the station. The police station is the three-story gray building and the Train Control Tower is the orange wooden structure at the center of the figure. One of the two small railroad sheds is visible to the right of the train control tower. The primary viewer groups from this area are train passengers, pedestrians/bicyclists, and motorists.

During the day, the height and bulk of the structures would blend in with comparable surrounding modern buildings, and therefore, the station facilities would not degrade the existing visual character or quality. The new BART station would improve intactness by blocking views of utility poles and industrial buildings in the distance. The BART station would reduce the vividness of the Train Control Tower, however, by creating a solid backdrop of substantially larger scale and mass and by visually separating the Tower and sheds from the historic Caltrain Station. The architecture and materials used for the parking structure would be sensitive to the area's historical context.

At night, lighting from the three- to five-level parking structure would be noticeable from this viewpoint. This lighting would be subdued so that the lighted parking structure would not create a substantial source of light or glare for motorists. As there are minimal views in this area, the parking structure would not affect intactness or unity.



Figure 4.17-31: Santa Clara Station – Parking Structure North Option and Aerial Walkway South Option (View to the east from El Camino Real)

- **Parking Structure South Option.** Under this option, the three- to five-level parking structure would be moved to the south side of Brokaw Road, would not be visible from the viewpoint of the above figure, and would have no adverse effects on scenic quality. Architectural sensitivity in the design of the BART station and parking structure would still be important because of the proximity and historic nature of the Santa Clara Station, Train Control Tower, and related facilities.

Maintenance Facility. The BART Maintenance Facility, shown in Figure 4.17-32, would be visible to motorists on I-880 from the westbound lanes. The facility would entail multiple tracks and approximately four new single- to two-story buildings for BART maintenance and storage. An approximately 60-foot-tall, tapered, tubular steel radio tower would be required at this site adjacent to the new BART yard train control tower. The yard area is industrial in nature, and the tower will be compatible with that industrial character.

In the daytime, multiple BART trains at the Maintenance Facility would be a dominant visual feature from this viewpoint. The facility itself would not be very vivid and would not affect intactness, as this area is already industrial. The Maintenance Facility would increase unity, because there is already a train maintenance facility in the area and the new facility would continue this land use. It would not block scenic views or sightlines.

At night, lighting from the Maintenance Facility would be noticeable from this viewpoint. The lighting would not create a substantial source of light or glare for motorists, because the lights would be downward facing and the motorists would be above the lights.



**Figure 4.17-32: Maintenance Facility
(View to the northwest from I-880)**

4.17.3.2 Design Requirements and Best Management Practices

Baseline Alternative

The Baseline Alternative busway connectors would include some minimal landscaping to soften the impact of the structures. In addition, any lighting on the structures would be directed downward to the roadway to avoid lighting impacts to surrounding areas.

BART Alternative

The following measures are part of the project to minimize visual effects of facilities proposed under the BART Alternative and MOS scenarios. Lighting would be designed to focus on the BART facilities, minimize spillover of light and glare into neighboring areas, and ensure that the stations and parking structures would not be vivid at night nor affect the intactness or unity of nighttime views. Landscaping would be incorporated to soften the visual effect and reduce potential glare from cars on surrounding buildings.

Dixon Landing Road. The BART structure crossing over Dixon Landing Road would be designed to be functional and simple. As a result, it would not be very vivid.

South Calaveras Future Station. Lighting of the South Calaveras Future Station would be designed to minimize light and glare to off-site areas.

Landscaping would be incorporated into the design of the Parking Structure North Option with Parallel Bus Transit Center to soften views and make the bus transit facility less visible from the roadway.

Landscaping would be applied to soften views and reduce glare impacts of the Parking Structure South and Parking Structure North Options.

Montague/Capitol Station. Lighting would be designed to minimize light and glare to off-site areas.

Ventilation Structures. The size and mass of ventilation structures at street level along Santa Clara Street in San Jose would be designed to fit in with the surrounding urban environment. VTA would continue to work with city, community, and business groups in developing project facilities that would become part of the streetscape.

Alum Rock Station. Architectural sensitivity in the design of the parking structure and other station improvements on 28th Street would be important because of the scenic and historic nature of the adjacent Five Wounds National Portuguese Church. The architecture and materials would be designed and selected to be sensitive to the church.

Diridon/Arena Station. Architectural sensitivity in the design of the parking structure and other station improvements would be important because of the scenic and historic nature of the adjacent historic Diridon Caltrain Station. The architecture and materials would be designed and selected to be sensitive to the Caltrain Station.

Santa Clara Station. Given the proximity of the Santa Clara Station, parking structure (either option), and pedestrian walkway (all options) to the historic Caltrain Station, Train Control Tower, and related facilities, the architecture and materials would be designed and selected to be sensitive to the historical setting.

4.17.3.3 Mitigation Measures

No-Action Alternative

Projects to be implemented under the No-Action Alternative would undergo separate environmental review to define visual impacts and to determine appropriate mitigation measures.

Baseline Alternative

The aerial busway connectors associated with this alternative would pass through mainly vacant and industrial land and along busy urban roadways. Such facilities would not be inconsistent with existing area visual quality. The viewer population would be largely restricted to motorists. No scenic views exist or would be obscured. No mitigation is indicated.

BART Alternative

The alignment for the BART Alternative and MOS scenarios travels through urbanized area, including existing multi-story residential, commercial, and industrial development. At-grade or elevated segments of the alignment would be consistent with the existing visual quality of the areas surrounding the corridor, and no scenic views would be obscured. No mitigation is indicated except for the Santa Clara Station aerial walkway impacts to the historic Santa Clara Station, Train Control Tower, and sheds. Section 4.6, *Cultural and Historic Resources*, and Chapter 7, *Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation*, discuss the mitigation of the impacts of the pedestrian walkway on these historic resources.